

The End of My Soap Opera Life ☺

Book One: Death of the Sun

SAM

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This book is dedicated to my family and friends, especially those mentioned here. Your lessons were very valuable in helping me to grow. I will be forever grateful to you for sharing your life with me. I learned there is so much more to life than anyone could ever know.

Let the power games end and look within.

Acknowledgments

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Preface

Most people thought I went crazy when my son died. Some of them still believe I live in the twilight zone. I have had what many people would consider a full and colorful life. I've kept track of almost everything that's happened to me. Journals, poems, family pictures, videos, and recorded voices of family members helped me to write this book.

At 40-years-old, I started thinking about writing my life story. Things are finally becoming more in focus now that I am 57-years-old. There is an urgent need to share my struggles, joys, and resulting growth in book form. Sharing the odd things that have happened to me will help others and myself.

I've been trying to decide what kind of book to write for years. The book I started to write a long time ago would take me back. It would cause me to relive many of the worst years of this life. Now I know better. This book is about what Samantha experienced. I thought I was she but since my way of thinking has changed, I am not the same person I used to be. Since I am not Samantha anymore this book is written in the third person.

Samantha never paid much attention to what other people thought or how she conducted her life. So how did a Detroit-born girl from the projects get to Florida? The answer is both simple and complicated. Samantha grew by following her intuition and going through a lot of struggle, a lot of pain, and a lot of joy.

She never stopped to consider how she would fill her day. Samantha always read plenty of books, mainly romance novels to stop her from thinking about her own life. She never considered what she was doing or why she did it. The idea of cause and effect never entered her mind. She never thought about the consequences of her actions. "Work hard, party hard," was her motto.

Samantha very rarely second-guessed her own judgment. She mostly believed in her own ability to do anything to which she set her mind to do. She learned at an early age that all things are just a matter of time and effort. Samantha learned quickly to work for what she wanted when she stole a red, mohair sweater at 10-years-old and was caught. Other lessons took her much longer to learn.

Samantha met every major goal she made for herself. She rose above many years of having little food to eat to being middle class and eating whatever she wanted. She grew from being what appeared to be the abused victim to showing forgiveness and love to all people. Samantha accomplished a whole lot more than she ever dared to dream.

She learned that lust and passion often lead people astray because sometimes what we think of as love betrays our inner core. Now she knows that during those times we

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have chances to learn valuable lessons. We also have chances to bring children into this world. Newborns are pure, God-conscious points of white light sent to lead us.

A lot of unusual things happened to Samantha. She never regretted any of the relationships she had even when they were abusive. She learned that humans are not meant to live in limitation. This lesson was a hard one to learn as she married and divorced three times. She nearly died several times through attempted suicide and major illnesses. Now she realizes that in essence she is perfect, whole, and complete.

Giving birth to a son at sixteen and a daughter seven years later were godsend to Samantha's growth. The perception of losing her son thirty-seven years after he was born was the greatest thing that ever happened to her. His spirit helped her to turn so-called tragedy and loss into the best years of her life. The death of his physical body woke her up.

Samantha learned to always follow her intuition and gut feelings. She listens now to the voices inside her head that she believes are members of her spirit group. The voices are directed by a Supreme Being, whatever you care to call *It*; it is all God. Once we come to *It*, God guides our every thought and action towards the greater good of all.

We are all living in a dream world and it is time to **wake-up**. There are many new age books on spirituality. More get published every day both in print and on the Internet. Samantha began to read more of them after her son's transition. Some of the books made sense to her but she didn't agree with everything she read. She realized that most people write for people who think as they do.

This book helps Samantha to stay in tune with her new way of thinking. She is an evolving spirit, a teacher of God. The book reaches people at different levels of awareness. It lets them know there is much more to life than anyone can ever know. It helps people to open their minds to greater ideas and it is about waking up from the dream. If you decide there is nothing here for you, please give this book to someone else. It will reach the people it's meant to reach.

The book begins more than a year before Samantha was reborn and starts with the so-called death of her son Daniel. It mentions times of connection to loved ones in other planes. And it notes times when life just continued to seem unbearable until Samantha finally recognized the Truth.

Although there are numerous references to things that happened to Samantha, the book is not about her. However, it is written as is because we all seem to relate more to personal experience. Maybe that's why Samantha documented so much of her life, to write this book and help more people to **wake-up**. Unseen Beings wait on the other side of the veil of illusion. We need only to ask them to help us, and they will, but we must be careful to ask only for the *Lights of God*.

Readers can skip *Author's Notes* until they are ready to read them. They deal with the author's beliefs at the time she wrote the book. They are also about lessons learned or revelations the author had after certain life situations. No matter what state of awareness the reader may be in, there truly is something for everyone who reads this book. You are blessed, and oh, so very loved!

Each day is a gift to relish by doing what is right. Yes, everyone's perspective of what is right seems to be different here on earth. Samantha continues to recognize the unseen forces that guide her each day. She knows there is only one force, and in America,

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it is called God. She asks for daily guidance knowing that more and more people are beginning to seek God now too. There's a knowing that this work must be done quickly.

Thoughts are indeed things as Ernest Holmes teaches in *The Science of Mind*. Humans are meant to live a life of joy and abundance while here. Samantha learned that after fifty-seven years on earth and is now passing that message on to you.

As Ernest Holmes wrote in 1926, "The day will come when people will choose the thoughts that they allow to enter the mind as carefully as they now choose the food they eat. Staying close to the thought of the One Mind is a safe and sure protection from any and all wrong mental influence."

Author's Insight

The author received an insight prior to publication of this book.

“My pre-birth vision into this life was designed to teach. To teach, I must learn. To learn, I had to suffer. I am now done with suffering. It is time to teach here in this life on this plane.”

Readers must consider the contents of this book from their own level of awareness. The levels of awareness, of understanding, are different for everyone. Some readers may be interested in learning more about certain subjects by getting the references listed in the back of the book. While many people believe that we can communicate with our departed loved ones, knowing that it's all God helps the reader to more easily understand the lessons learned by Samantha. We are all parts of God and need only recognize this truth to improve our life.

Numbers in the text of the book identify *Author's Notes*. It is vital to read them for they deal with lessons learned or revelations the author had after certain life situations. The book can be depressing without the insights in the *Author's Notes*. Reading these notes helps the reader to understand that a path to peace and light was slowly emerging to guide Samantha.

There is much more to life than anyone knows. This is clear by the end of the book.

Chapter One The Ultimate Drama

The telephone rings loudly as Samantha tosses in bed hoping it will stop. After sleeping in the living room chair for hours, it feels as if she just crawled into bed. The nightstand alarm clock shows it's barely five o'clock in the morning. It has to be someone with an urgent message or need and she hopes it has nothing to do with either her son or daughter. She rises quickly with a sense of doom to answer the telephone in her home office. Samantha's husband, James, stirs but does not rise as she picks up the receiver.

"Daniel is dead," Joy, her son's mother-in-law, yells through the receiver with a panic-filled voice.

Joy's frequent harmful actions towards Samantha always leave her filled with rage. Today is no different as she reacts immediately filled with anger.

"You're f**king with me again, aren't you," Samantha snarls sarcastically.

"No he's really dead and the state police just left. Rachel asked me to call you because she is too upset to talk to anyone."

Rachel, Daniel's wife, is in shock. James is now next to Samantha listening in on her side of the conversation. Samantha still does not believe Joy and gets more information to verify her story. Joy tells her the name of the state police officer at the scene of the accident. To this day, she still can't recall if she ever thanked Joy for being the one to tell her of Daniel's death. ⁽¹⁾

1. Samantha wasn't sure about her beliefs but she thought certain people were in her life for a reason. Although she couldn't figure out why Joy now played such a prominent role, she knew their predestined relationship had a purpose. Reading John Edwards's book One Last Time, it was comforting to know that other people held similar beliefs. John also believed his destiny was predetermined.

We live many different lives, always planning each one before coming into human form, based on what our soul desires to experience. The primary goal is to experience unconditional love.

Humans take turns, living "good" and "bad" roles, throughout various lives. It's not easy playing what appears to be a "bad" role. Joy appears to play a great "bad" role, a role Samantha played in many previous lives. Samantha will soon learn that Joy is in essence her spiritual friend and ally. As a soul, Joy agreed to play her role because of their eternal love for one another.

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Consciousness transcends all space weaving both to and from the physical plane. Emmanuel notes, Love is an unbreakable connection that passes through every illusory barrier even time and space. Gary Renard, author of The Disappearance of the Universe, simply states that love holds no grievances for to do so would be to forget our true nature.

Joy is Samantha's "special hate" relationship but she will not know this until she becomes a student of A Course in Miracles. Now immersed in their perceived hate for one another, Samantha doesn't recognize she and Joy are unique parts of God, helping one another to learn the primary lesson of unconditional love. She will learn in time that everyone is innocent because we are in a dream world. Samantha will bless Joy for playing such a pivotal role in their lives and for helping Daniel to realize his true nature.

After many calls, Samantha finally speaks to the female Sheriff who arrived on the scene shortly after the accident. She asks to see her son. The sheriff promptly tells her all she can do now is contact a funeral parlor. Daniel's distinctive wizard tattoo and the identification in his wallet positively identified him. No one, not even his mother, can see his body.

The officer's report is very specific. Daniel was riding his motorcycle at more than 100 miles per hour before he hit the rear of a vehicle in front of him. He was tossed from the bike upon impact. Witnesses reported that he died "almost instantly." The sheriffs have already taken his personal belongings to his wife Rachel at their South Florida home.

Samantha's heart pounds loudly. Rage fills her body. Her chest heaves as she begins to hyperventilate and gasp for air. The drama is on and it increases with each thought of the past. She hangs up the telephone feeling overwhelmed with a complete and total sense of loss. Uncontrollable crying begins as she falls to the floor.

The agony comes from deep inside her gut. Sobs seem to heave up and out making her stomach and throat tremble. James stands in the room with her. He seems confused and looks around trying to decide what to do. Finally, he sits down on the black futon as she cries uncontrollably hunched up on the floor two feet away.

They stay there for thirty minutes, until Samantha can cry no more. She can't bear to tell her daughter Rebecca who is ill with a mysterious illness. Rebecca hasn't slept well for a long time. Today marks the last time she will try to sleep in the innocence of not knowing her brother is dead. It is so unlike the joyous Sunday mornings when they both were born.

Samantha wants Rebecca to have a few more hours of precious sleep. Her sister, Ruth, is usually up for work very early so she calls her. Ruth answers the telephone within seconds. She listens in stunned silence as Samantha sobs about Daniel's untimely death. Ruth is the one that tells Rebecca her beloved 37-year-old brother is dead.

Naomi, Ruth's partner, stays with Rebecca's 12-year-old son Samuel. Ruth and Rebecca race over in Ruth's black Chevy van reaching James and Samantha's house within the hour. Through her sobs, Samantha tells them what she knows of Daniel's accident. They cry together on the screened-in back porch as the sun rises in the South Florida sky.

Samantha already misses Daniel's infectious smile. She knows she will miss looking into his sensitive hazel eyes that look like hers. Daniel was always attentive to

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everyone but still traveled to the beat of his own drum. Truly a free spirit, he displayed the freedom she and others could not seem to grasp. Except for the last few years of his life, he always seemed to be the one having the most fun, enjoying each moment he lived to the fullest.

She thought about how thankful she was to have given birth to him, how thankful she was for his love. Samantha was especially thankful that he set up the situation of his death making it so much easier for everyone that knew him. No one had to go through the trauma of identifying his 5' 6" body. ⁽²⁾

2. *One of Daniel's favorite rock groups, Limp Biscuit, sings, "Life's a lesson, you learn it when you're through." She knew Daniel had learned his life's lessons and was finally free. Emmanuel's Book notes:*

"You will stay until your task is done, until your lessons are learned. And then we will all begin again in some other dimension to create in the name of God."

Fortunately, as reported by Renard, anything we learn stays in our mind forever. Ernest Holmes tells us in The Science of Mind, man is free. Yet to become aware of his freedom, "he must first go through experiences which will teach him how to use his freedom properly."

According to Dr. Christine Page, we all promised to come to earth and learn believing the illusion of this world until we accomplish what we have contracted to do. We've agreed to abide by the "rules" of this game on earth. All humans have the opportunity before birth to decide what to learn. We can make bargains "with others to turn up at specific times for particular events and develop a sacred contract." When our spirit body reduces its vibration to match the energy of earth, we are faced with "varying degrees of spiritual amnesia." We then forget who we really are, parts of God in human form.

It is now time for Samantha to wake-up to her true being. Based on information in Celestine Prophecy by James Redfield, there's a Fifth Insight to life that helps us raise our vibration level (www.celestinevision.com). This insight heralds an inner connection with Divine Energy and marks the end of insecurity and violence.

Years later, Samantha will recognize how the minute details of Daniel's passing made her experience of waking-up easier. As souls, they planned his death to help her realize her true reality. She gave birth to Daniel at 16-years-old and now with clarity of mind; Samantha knew her soul planned this event before they came to earth as humans. It takes her a while to understand why.

In her ignorance, she thought he was the one person that would always be there for her. In her denial of Truth, he was the only one she could love that would always love her. Samantha counted on him being there throughout her life.

A Course in Miracles notes: "When you make something to fill a perceived lack, you are tacitly implying that you believe in separation." Not recognizing her oneness with God as a human, she gave birth to a son who would remind her when he died that we are all parts of God. Her task to alert others to the Truth would then begin.

Samantha will truly recognize what she planned almost three years later while reading a paragraph in For the Aspiring Mystic.

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“The desire to be loved is really the desire of the Spirit to love our world through us. As we consent to its action, the Spirit itself fulfills our desire. We experience the deep and abiding love that is the Spirit in us giving itself to itself in others and in our world. Eventually, our need to be loved by ‘others’ is diminished, for we directly experience divine love as it flows through us.”

Many mystics note that love is the force that brings the greatest effect. The love Daniel and Samantha held for one another helped Samantha to break through the veil of forgetfulness. Dr. Page tells us, love is the state of being. It is a willingness to merge and connect without mental force. A state of wholeness is reflected in the individual within this force of love. We are then able to commune outside of time and space.

In human time, Samantha would realize Daniel’s death was the best thing that ever happened to her. From the very start of his life, Daniel made it so much easier for Samantha to recognize the Truth. So close in age, they grew up together and became comfortably close. And when they were apart physically, they felt an uncomfortable sense of loss. He was the new man of the house at only two-years-old when his birth father left. And when his sister came seven years later, he was her father when her birth father went away. Daniel was Samantha’s “special love” relationship for she loved him more than any one. It was easy to love him more than God.

Daniel made it easier for everyone in the family by dying as he did in a number of ways. He passed away on the grassy part of the highway, between the Interstate lanes going north and south, right before a cemetery that was visible to highway traffic. No one had to identify the remains or bear the anguish of watching him slowly die. The highway he chose would soon undergo construction and the guardrail would be replaced with a concrete wall. Construction crew would remove the roadside sign, which noted his passing, and later place it in two different spots making it more difficult to find. It now sits almost a quarter of a mile from where his body actually died.

Daniel was cremated after his funeral and later Samantha would discover why they had always wanted a cremation with the scattering of their ashes. Dr. Page notes:

“Air reconnects us to our Source by assisting us in releasing old outmoded bonds to people and attitudes... Although all the elements are involved in the grief process, air’s only concern is to return us to spirit.”

There is a powerful effect of “scattering ashes” after a cremation and burning memories that are no longer part of history. In simpler terms, Van Praagh notes, cremation is especially vital in cases “of suicide or a tragic accident.” If the spirit is still in an earthbound state, it feels physical ties that hinder the soul from becoming aware of its new situation.

Despite his cremation, Daniel will kept physical ties to earth, until he takes care of unfinished business. Samantha will quickly learn to help his spirit free itself in the months ahead. Rachel will bear the burden of keeping Daniel’s ashes. And the accident site will become the place where his family and friends, who refer to him as DOG, go to pass time with him. Their cars, vans, and trucks will park in the median between the highway lanes as they leave memories and write their farewells on the guardrail.

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No one yet knows there are no accidents. Everything evolves around the Divine Laws of Love, Balance, Order, Cause, and Effect. As souls, we all choose what family to be born into and when the day and time of our birth will be. We create our life by what we choose to believe. And we choose when we will leave our physical body behind. When a soul chooses to leave the physical body it leaves despite earth ties.

Daniel played his human life role well as a sensitive and caring individual. The people he knew always noted his generosity, cheerful presence, unending kindness, and love. He was a great son, a great peacemaker, a great friend, and father to Samantha who will be grateful to his essence, in future years, for helping her to realize we are all a part of God.

Samantha will soon learn there is nothing separate from the Creator of all living things. It is only in our beliefs, in this dream that we call human life, where we think we are actually in a mind-body. In later years, Samantha will only allow herself to miss him for short times. Then she will remember what Daniel tells her several months after he passes from human form.

“Forget about me Mom, I never was and never will be.”

Yet, his spirit will continue to guide her in the years to come. Loved ones are never lost. Once we believe that we exist beyond the physical world we will be in contact with the ones we love. And it will be more real than the physicality that we touched before. Samantha will soon begin to enjoy many experiences when Daniel’s spirit returns to be with her.

The family cries as the heat of Sunday morning raises, so unlike the cold February one when he was born. Pinwheels of blame began to turn. Samantha pulls out copies of the four sheets of paper she gave Daniel on the last day she saw him alive. She feels they have something to do with his death. Rebecca and Ruth read the sheets of paper in silence. They then sit and talk through their sobs. It seems impossible to stop blaming everyone in their life for Daniel’s death. ⁽³⁾

3. Thoughts contribute greatly to what we experience. What we think about others is what we believe about our self, and what we do to others, we do to ourselves so it’s vital to train our mind and consider only positive thoughts.

Thinking of anyone in a negative way is harmful for a mental medium exists between us. Ernest Holmes wrote in This Thing Called You, Mind Principle is reactive to thought and very susceptible to impression. It acts upon even the slightest vibration of thought producing a corresponding thing. There are no idle thoughts for all thinking produces form at some level.

What happens in your life depends greatly on how powerful you know your thought to be and how you portray that thought. If you know your thoughts are powerful, and speak them with great intensity, they will manifest much more quickly. The Third Insight speaks of this dynamic energy noting that our thoughts influence other energy systems and increase the pace of coincidences in our lives.

It’s vital to remember this is only a dream world. Problems show up as the ego’s attempt to get you to react, to feel things such as guilt, and anger, separating you from other people. Once you give validity to the ego’s world, you reinforce everything that seems to be around you.

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Projection of guilt unto others is a way of escaping from unconscious guilt. The guilt we feel is really about our seeming separation from God, the One in which we live and move and have all being. There is no separation from the One. A Course in Miracles explains:

“Your other life has continued without interruption, and has been and always will be totally unaffected by your attempts to dissociate it.”

All living things exist within that One. As a drop of ocean water is part of the ocean so too are we part of the One.

It's vital to invalidate the ego. There is just one thing to do when we negatively react to what happens around us. We forgive our self for believing the contents of the ego mind and recognize our Oneness with all people. Sometimes it helps at first to start by forgiving whoever you think has offended you for not knowing this is a dream world and there is just One.

Chapter Two Preparing for Change

The women continue to cry in shock over Daniel's quick passing. After a few hours, Samantha's brother Terrance arrives. Some of them began to feel angry. Daniel will never be bald and he won the family's game because he died with the most toys. By afternoon, James, Ruth, Terrance and Rebecca are anxious to see the accident site. They all pile into Ruth's black Chevy van for the drive.

The trip is not important to Samantha. She cannot bear the thought of actually looking at the spot on the highway where Daniel's body laid. Alone for the first time since they heard the news, she remembers another instant when she thought he was gone from her life forever. A quick look through journals finds the entry written in 1984.

"What causes me to write? It could be progress, regression, a need to view my thoughts in retrospect, habit, or sheer loneliness. Maybe it's a combination of them all. In any event, I find I can't sleep. I toss and turn, remember my firstborn is trying his wings (the ones I've strived so hard to mold for him so he could face the world head on) and mourn for the emptiness I feel inside.

"It's hollow and cold, dark and sharp with pinpricks. I remember when Daniel was only a few months old and his father took him from me. I felt so empty then. I still felt the loss even with the sleeping aids I used to escape life. At least then, I should have known I'd get him back. This, now, is his choice and perhaps even mine. For him to view the world as it can be when one is not fully prepared for all its demands.

"Unless life plays yet another cruel trick on me, I'll be able to once again feel peaceful and content in the knowledge that I have armed him with the things he needs to live a fruitful and productive life.

"Actually, I handled his move quite well. Daniel appeared to keep looking at me as if to say, 'Well Mom, are you going to have your tantrum? Will you test your power over me or melt into a weepy puddle?' Although I may have appeared upset, I didn't break down until several hours after his final load was off the truck and placed inside the first residence of his own choosing.

"Maybe he was surprised and disappointed that I didn't beg him to stay. I let him know he could always move back home. He looked sincere when he said that was nice to know. I know it will never be the same. We will never relate to one another as we have in the past. Although that is good, I mourn for this child who I fought for and struggled to hold close to me for seventeen years. And that is good too."

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The tears now flow down Samantha's face. Remembering that time, and comparing it to his death, leaves her no comfort. It occurs to her that having a friend, who lost her son a few years before, was meant to prepare her for the last loss of Daniel. She decides to watch family videos that remind her of how much Daniel learned over his thirty-seven years of human life.

Daniel became interested in Samantha's political emails three months before he died. Sensing impending doom, Samantha constantly taped House and Senate hearings keeping track of the loss of democracy. Daniel thanked her for enlightening him on issues that he normally didn't focus on. He'd been trying to make a difference in the world but was disillusioned as well. Daniel felt his efforts would not change the ultimate outcome that people with money, and power, would control the world.

Samantha made plans for her own transition only two months before his death. She'd never thought that human life was easy. Over the past few years, something on her right side, near the middle of her upper chest, bothered her a great deal. It made her fat throat feel odd. She repeatedly burped with her mouth closed until she gasped for breath. The throat problem made it nearly impossible to take medications. Pills often broke apart in her throat causing it to burn, leaving a bitter taste in her mouth.

Every time she saw a doctor, they made another diagnosis, prescribed another pill, ordered another test, or suggested another surgery. Having finished taking steroids for osteoarthritis, without relief, doctors asked her to consider epidurals to relieve the constant pain. She refused the treatment not wanting to fill her body with more drugs.

Another doctor wanted her to have an invasive endoscopy and that was the last straw. She was unwilling to take the test not knowing if it would negatively affect her medication schedule and other medical conditions. Her heart, irritable bowel and bladder always bothered her more when she was under stress. The test would just be one more thing to upset the status quo that had taken her years to achieve.

She signed a statement saying she did not want the test. She'd had enough of pain, enough limitations, enough drugs, and enough of not being able to do things most people her age could do. At 53-years-old, she had almost had enough of life, almost, but not quite yet.

Samantha told Rebecca her life force was getting weaker. She just didn't feel as committed to her work as she'd been in the past. There was a nagging thought that she had to do something. But even with the increased dosage for the hypothyroidism, she was tired all the time. She just wanted to sleep and never wake up again.

Daniel, Samantha believed, found his way after living through years of struggle, so she wasn't too worried about him. Yet, it was important for her to know that Rebecca and Samuel would be okay after she died. Rebecca suffered from serious medical issues and had recently left her fiancée of eight years.

Samantha was used to change. She changed her name several times over the years without knowing our frequency changes when we call ourselves by a different name. In the late 60's, people called her Squeaky because she was sick and couldn't talk. During the early 70's, Shar was the name some friends used, while in the late 70's, truck drivers at her waitress job referred to her as Sam. When she married James, her initials became SAM and by February 2002, most of her friends referred to her as Sam. She liked the nickname but had no idea that changing your name affects your way of life.

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A few weeks after Daniel's passing, Samantha will be led to buy a book about numerology. It will be months before she reads it, and years later before she opens her mind enough to try and understand it. In *Spiritual Alchemy*, Dr. Page notes numerology is "a means to explore the path the soul has chosen." Soul, personality, and destiny numbers differ based on nicknames, abbreviations, and other changes that occur throughout life.

Samantha decided months ago that she had learned her life lessons. There were just a few more things to do. She wanted to spend more time with the family to make up for missed time over the years because of her workaholic ways. Paying for a prepaid cremation sounded good and she wanted to make a CD of her favorite songs for the family to play at her memorial.

In her mind, her life was over but she wouldn't take back a single moment of it. There were few regrets, but she knew every experience had brought her to where she was. Samantha knew she'd lived many lives and was now fed up and tired of living. It upset her that the changes she thought necessary to help humankind were not apparent. She was no longer willing to change anything herself. ⁽⁴⁾

4. Samantha didn't realize the true meaning of race consciousness. She had no idea that what the masses believe often manifests on the earth plane. In 1909, Thomas Troward noted humans "are subject to a very powerful negative influence" from those unaware of affirmative principles. Thus, race beliefs and the thought-currents of our more immediate environment tend to affect what we think. The creative power of our thought used in the wrong direction produces limitations.

Ernest Holmes noted the "everywhere present" mental medium between humans in 1926. Individual mentalities are in sympathetic vibration with each other and can receive suggestions from one another. The accumulated mentality of humans living in different locations of the world serves to highlight why people have so many different beliefs.

Everything is part of the collective waveform of consciousness. We choose where to direct our attention, and energy, and each level of awareness offers us an opportunity to expand our idea of existence. As reported by Dr. Page:

"We exist in a holographic Universe which means that it's as real as our mind perceives it to be. If you believe it, there is the potential to create it."

Daniel's spirit will soon lead Samantha to new atmospheres where she will open her mind. She will clearly hear an unknown voice while reading about race-suggestions.

"New souls are now being born because there are just too many jaded souls now."

Watching the news stations every day brought fear to Samantha's mind. She sensed unwanted changes continuing to affect how people lived. As Daniel, she too felt helpless to change what was to come in the future. It seemed that more people were becoming fearful and ready to attack others before they were attacked. More people were willing to give up their personal freedom to be "protected" by the government from "attack." ⁽⁵⁾

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5. Emmanuel tells us fear is one of the cornerstones of the karmic condition. It's a distrust of Eternal Love, a disbelief in the self, and a perversion of Love, Truth, and Light. The world is all about healing these extreme distortions. Fear "closes off the Word and the Light of God," and separates humans from It. Renard notes that fear is one of the greatest denials of the reality of God. God, or pure Spirit, is the only true reality.

Samantha's greatest fear was that she would become totally useless and a burden to her family. Although there were a few more things to accomplish, she was tired of limitations and ready to go on to her next life. Samantha was tired of taking medications that lessened the pain but helped her to be somewhat useful. They only served to further decrease her quality of life.

Having a premonition of impending doom, she wrote a note to her family to read after she died. She told them death was a part of life but they would see each other again in a different life. Samantha sadly paid for her cremation depressed for those she'd be leaving behind. She paid the extra fee for international transportation of her remains even though she never traveled outside of the U.S. or Canada.

Back home, Samantha sorted through old record albums looking for music to record for her memorial CD. She wanted everyone to know she was finally happy because she died. Formatting "*In the Name of Love*" by Carole King onto the laptop computer was easy. But a strange thing happened when she listened to the song later. The speed of the music increased unexpectedly at the end. After Daniel's untimely passing, she realized her dad's spirit was with her when she recorded it. And if he could be with her then, Daniel could be with her now.

Chapter Three Daddy Wins the Lotto

A car accident fatally injured Sherman, Samantha's father, less than two years before Daniel died. She was still struggling with his loss for they had not been very close. The way he died disturbed her greatly. Seeing the way he lived before his death was equally disturbing.

Sherman wanted his first child to be a boy. As the first-born child, Samantha didn't like being with him and refused to go fishing. She now thought about how his death was part of "the plan." Sherman's "accident" occurred in Michigan, on a Friday, two weeks before Thanksgiving.

Most of the family planned to enjoy a weekend trip to Florida's West coast to experience the "Mystery Train Dinner Theatre." Everyone was excited and had looked forward to the work break for several months. It was a time to reconnect and strengthen family bonds in a relaxing atmosphere of leisure and fun. Samantha was packing her suitcase when she answered the persistent ringing telephone.

"Dad's in the hospital Samantha," her brother Aaron in Michigan said. "The hospital just called me and said he was in a car accident."

She sat down in shock. Most people referred to Aaron as the "slow child" when they were growing up. He now knew only the name of the hospital that cared for Sherman. The hospital wouldn't give Samantha any information over the telephone.

The workday would be finished in a few hours. If the family needed to go to Detroit, they'd need to make travel arrangements and plan time off from work. It was too much to think about for Samantha. She telephoned Ruth to discuss when to tell the family. It was a difficult decision to make but they decided to wait so the family could decide together. There was no sense in ruining their workday. It wouldn't make any difference since they were in Florida and Sherman was in Detroit.

Their parents divorced many years ago so Sherman was no longer a part of their lives. Last year however, Ruth, who was usually careful not to spend money, acted on a hunch and surprised everyone. She paid to fly Sherman, Aaron, and Aaron's wife Matilda to South Florida for the Christmas holiday.

When the rest of family heard the news, it was hard to decide what to do. They knew so little about the accident. Daniel was the first to ask, "When do we leave Mom?"

They decided to continue with the Fort Myers trip until they learned more about Sherman's condition. Daniel agreed to contact Aaron later since he and Rachel weren't

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joining the rest of the family until the next night. They knew Aaron would know more about the accident after he got to the hospital.

Ruth, Terrance, James, and Samantha drove with dread across Alligator Alley to Fort Myers. Rebecca couldn't get time off from work to be with the family. A ten to twelve hour day job as a restaurant manager kept her too busy to enjoy herself.

Later that night, Daniel telephoned the family with his report. A truck backed quickly down a driveway into Sherman's car as he drove along a busy street. Aaron told him there was now a tube down Sherman's throat. Feeling nauseous and somewhat sorry for learning so much by working in hospitals, Samantha was the only one who recognized the dubious sign. Her dad was now on a ventilator that helped him breathe. He could not breathe on his own. Aaron said he'd arrived at the hospital before the tube was placed.

Sherman told him, "Sue the bastards."

They laughed thinking it true to Sherman's form for he'd started many unsuccessful lawsuits. Daniel then announced a change in his plans. Joy changed her mind and would not be watching 11-month-old Abigail during their thirty-six hour weekend. The baby was coming with them.

Everyone decided to take turns telephoning Aaron for updates until they learned the full extent of Sherman's condition. Rebecca said she'd telephone him from work and try to telephone the hospital to see if she could rope an unsuspecting nurse into giving out more information. Since they wanted to go to Michigan, but needed to contact their boss to get the time off work, they were already making plans. Sherman might want to see them and they wanted to be there for him, and for Aaron.

Samantha called the hospital again to ask for her father's room number. She thought she could get the information she needed when the night nurses were not as busy. She made several telephone calls after midnight and finally got through to the Intensive Care Unit's (ICU) Nurse's Station. The nurse she spoke to told her only that her father's condition was the same as the day before.

Samantha began to telephone the airlines as Daniel, Rachel, and baby Abigail drove across Alligator Alley on that sunny Saturday to be with the rest of the family. It was lunchtime when they arrived. Rachel's hazel eyes looked sad as she wiped her long blonde hair away from her face for Daniel's kiss. The rest of the family left to find a public place to use computers while Rachel settled in with Abigail at the hotel.

Rebecca arranged for a rental car from her home computer while Samantha made airline and hotel reservations on a computer at Kinko's. They both wondered what they'd do without their charge cards. Daniel and Ruth frantically telephoned their bosses to get time off work. Terrance went from one family member to the other reporting on their progress.

Samantha telephoned Aaron to tell him they'd join him soon. She knew he wouldn't know what to do. With an overwhelming feeling of dread in her gut, she telephoned the hospital again. She wanted to ask Sherman's nurse to tell him his children in Florida were coming on Monday. She knew if he was on the verge of death, the knowledge of their visit would keep him alive until they got there to say goodbye.

Samantha asked for the ICU and spoke with a knowledgeable nurse who admitted Sherman's condition was serious. The nurse thought Sherman would still be alive when they got there. Samantha felt like a warrior coming back from the battle, weary, but

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joyful, because she'd succeeded in getting a message to her father.

Knowing they couldn't leave for Michigan for two more days they reluctantly got ready to board the dinner train. They needed the time on the train to pull themselves together as a family. Rachel reluctantly stayed at the hotel with Abigail because the dinner show people didn't want small children there. They were afraid that a baby might disrupt the experience of the adults who paid more than \$50 each to be there.

The rest of the family trudged onto the train. It was extremely difficult to pay attention to the show because they kept speculating as to exactly how bad Sherman's condition really was. Even though their alcoholic drinks were costly, they sopped up liquor like alcoholics. By the time the train arrived back at the small station they were all drunk and happy that the hotel was only a few blocks away.

All of them were bone weary tired. Samantha felt like she'd been beaten with sticks as she and James headed to their room. She left the room after a few minutes to get some ice just as Rachel came out into the hallway. Rachel appeared furious as she cradled Abigail in her arms. She saw Samantha and told her how very angry she was because she could not go to Michigan with Abigail.

Rachel implored Samantha to tell Daniel that Sherman would want to see his great granddaughter. Samantha thought differently, and again, felt an all too familiar pain in her heart along with a feeling of dread in her gut.

"He's never seen her," Rachel yelled as they stood in the hotel corridor.

Baby Abigail began to cry. Samantha was heart sick at the thought of such a fury of feelings for everyone. Hotel room doors quickly opened, and slowly shut, when the other guests saw what was taking place.

Samantha tried without success to explain that the only time babies were in a hospital was when they were born or sick. She knew it was out of the question to reason with Rachel. Rachel's voice rose as she stepped towards Samantha menacingly and the "fight" escalated. Samantha wondered if Rachel was going to chase her down the hall as she had chased Rebecca down the street trying to hit her one sad Fourth of July.

Abigail clung to Rachel crying and looking scared. Huge crocodile tears streamed down her tiny heart-shaped face but Rachel seemed unaware of Abigail's distress. Daniel came out of their room, stood between Rachel and Samantha, and waved Samantha calmly towards her room. She thankfully joined James who was totally unaware of what happened. The television blared loudly in the adjoining room as Ruth and Terrance watched a comedy show.

The next morning, Daniel brought Abigail down for breakfast while Rachel stayed in the room. He calmly asked Samantha to change his flight reservations so he could return home two days sooner. Although he said his boss needed him back at work earlier, she didn't believe it. He promised to meet Ruth, Rebecca, Terrance, and Samantha at the airport on Monday morning before trudging back to his hotel room to pack.

Ruth coughed and Samantha wondered if she too was fighting back tears. It hurt her to see Daniel looking so defeated but now it was a sadly familiar hurt. Daniel, Rachel and Abigail soon left for home. They followed his route an hour later. A sense of doom filled the van as they drove silently past the Indian Reservation and through the Everglades.

Chapter Four Sherman's Ultimate Gift

Daniel, Ruth, Rebecca, Terrance, and Samantha, flew to Michigan on Spirit Airlines Monday, November 18, at 6:30 AM, after hurriedly packing the night before. Ruth was coughing more and feeling like she had the beginning of the flu.

Frigid air surrounded them outside the Detroit airport. They all shook like alcoholics, coming off from a binge, even though they wore their Detroit winter clothes. The walk to the rental car agency, where the bus drove them to a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV), was short but enough to warm them.

Rebecca and Daniel appeared strong while mentally supporting the older adults. Samantha was proud to see her two kids acting like grownups. Rebecca signed for the beautiful limited edition cruiser and Daniel took on the responsibility of driving. They were the threads that held the family together when the others lost their composure. After checking in at the two-bedroom apartment to drop off their luggage, they all went to see Sherman.

It was a shock to see Sherman looking so helpless. They all found it difficult to see him in critical condition. He wore a neck collar and numerous tubes surrounded him. The tubes seemed to be coming from every hole in his body. Monitors showed his slow but steady heartbeat, blood pressure, and respirations. The ventilator hissed as Samantha watched fluid move through a tube from his stomach to the container that collected his waste. Bloodstained urine left his body and flowed into another waste container.

Sherman seemed to be totally unaware of their presence. His 5' 8" frame weighed several pounds more and his stomach looked huge. Most of his thin silver hair was gone. The hospital had shaved away his rough-looking beard but his mustache remained. Sherman's rotted teeth, stained from years of chewing tobacco, surrounded the tube down his throat.

Samantha quickly realized her dad was dying as she watched the red colored urine leave his body. She was silently thankful for the talk they had the previous Christmas. Sherman, with tears in his eyes, stopped her in the hall as she walked by the food pantry. He then apologized for his actions when his children were growing up. It was uncomfortable for them both as Sherman started to cry. Samantha was shocked to see his tears and despite his strong body odor gave him a hearty hug.

"Daddy, no one gets an instruction book when they have kids," she announced. "We all just do the best we can and learn along the way."

Sherman seemed comforted and went back to sit alone on the living room sofa.

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Samantha's focus changed when the nurse entered the room. He soon advised them to call the specialist that admitted Sherman to the hospital. Aaron arrived but didn't know any more than they did. Samantha quickly called her best friend Esther, who was a Registered Nurse, to ask if she had friends at the hospital that might help them learn more about Sherman's condition. Esther agreed to see them on her lunch hour the next day.

Esther and Samantha met while both in their twenties struggling through bad marriages. Their sporadically employed husbands rode motorcycles and both women had young daughters, a year apart in age. They helped one another through many trouble-filled days during their twenty-seven year friendship. The distance in miles made no difference for they still helped each other when they could.

The family spent a few hours staring mindlessly at Sherman. They left the hospital that night without seeing any doctors.

Daniel drove through a restaurant drive-through to make sure everyone ate. Their daily planning process began as they ate back at the apartment. Ruth was really sick by this time and unable to talk. The guilt she felt toward her dad was strong. Daniel and Rebecca remained steady, caring, compassionate, and patient rocks. Their positive attitudes helped the rest of the family deal with their pain as they did whatever was needed.

On Tuesday, and for the rest of the week, they called Aaron to coordinate their day's travel each morning before they left the apartment. Aaron's wife, Matilda, wanted to help but was confined to a wheelchair. The doctors found her brain tumor early, a month after they married. She had a stroke while in surgery and still could not walk after years of therapy. Aaron remained devoted to his red-haired wife.

The family saw Sherman's new neck collar when they got to the hospital. Six doctors now cared for Sherman. Samantha was thankful when Esther stopped by to give hugs and emotional support. Her opinion mattered a great deal. Sadly, she told them things did not look good and they needed to think about what to do. They thanked her and she returned to her hospital job a few miles away.

Sherman slowly opened his eyes after Esther left. Samantha could sense he wanted to die in peace and longed to see his dad, mom, sister and brothers. His eyes sparkled with delight as he saw most of his children and two grandchildren near his face. Samantha knew he felt like a big lottery winner with most of his family gathered around him.

Sherman looked into Samantha's eyes. She heard him inside her head ask about their mother. She told him mother wanted to come, and still loved him, but they just couldn't deal with her too. Their mom, diagnosed with schizophrenia many years ago, sometimes didn't understand what was happening around her. Although she divorced Sherman more than ten years earlier, they still loved one another.

Sherman appeared to understand and closed his eyes as if it was a great effort to keep them open. Samantha's cheeks began to redden as her blood pressure rose. She told the family it was time to say goodbye. One by one, they took turns talking to Sherman privately as the others stood in the cold hospital hallway.

When it was Samantha's time, she went in and kissed his cheek. As she looked into her dad's eyes, she knew he was asking for forgiveness. He wanted his children to forgive him for not being what most people would refer to as a good father.

"We forgive you Daddy," she said with tears in her eyes. "It's okay. You can let

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go now.”

His eyes closed and she sensed that he relaxed. ⁽⁶⁾

6. Samantha would feel guilt later because she had not asked Sherman to forgive her for ignoring his important role in her spiritual growth. She had snubbed him for many years, only communicating with him during the last five years of his life. Ruth made it possible for her to reconnect with him on Christmas the year before. Samantha was thankful she had a few moments alone with him then.

Years later, while reading, Samantha would realize how detrimental or positive words can be. She'd read about the studies of Japanese scientist, Masuro Emoto. Emoto showed, in graphic form, that words change the structure of water by reorganizing it around minerals and the vibration of words and thoughts. Dr. Page notes in Spiritual Alchemy, “Imagine the effects of words repeated several times a day on someone's crystalline cellular structure and especially on the delicately balanced immune system. Words and thoughts have power; use them wisely.”

Samantha wished she had asked her dad to forgive all of his children. She knew his visit during the Christmas holidays was not pleasant for him. Negative words flowed between him and some family members. She learned about these interactions after he went back to Michigan. Yet, the strain between other family members had prompted him to talk with Samantha on Christmas day.

Now she knew there was nothing to forgive. This life is a dream in an illusory world and we must wake-up to Reality. Each one of us must forgive others and ourselves for even thinking we are not still one with God. As noted in Spiritual Alchemy, “...true forgiveness occurs not in the head as an idea but on a psychocellular level which can never be undone.”

Van Praagh reports that souls who choose to be attached to lifesaving machines may help science, for future generations, or assist family members. Sherman's soul chose to help his family, as he remained attached to the machines that kept him alive. There were lessons to learn of love, receiving love, compassion, and appreciating the sanctity of life.

Since Sherman was an atheist, it was vitally important for him to pass astutely, surrounded by loving family. Being aware of love and forgiveness in his drugged state, he knew what he needed to do was ask for forgiveness. Yet, he wasn't asking for the forgiveness of his children. He was asking God to forgive him because he hadn't realized there is only One. There is no separation for there is only One in which we live.

Although he was not enlightened, Sherman's mind-body knew it was time to go home. Sherman sought the forgiveness of God as his soul recognized the One within. The drugs helped still his mind to the point where he could hear his soul, where he could hear the God within. And he knew that his life as an atheist had been a choice. That choice molded not only his life but the life of his children as well.

It was a choice his father made and his father had not died astutely. His father died alone in a hospital bed cringing and fighting the dark figures. Samantha again remembered the movie “White Noise” and the dark forces. And yet, knowing now that it's just a dream and thoughts are things, she remembered there are no dark forces in her dream. There is One, one Light, one Truth, one Love, one Being in which we all live, and

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move, and have all being. It is the Eternal Light of God flowing unerringly within all living things.

The first doctor who saw Sherman in the hospital tells the family Sherman was reluctant to use the ventilator. He didn't want to be kept alive artificially. Sherman said he had "lazy kidneys" but was in good health, he didn't drink, and wasn't on any medications. Samantha knew better but didn't dispute the information. The doctor then spoke slowly.

"There's something else going on but we don't know what. He has a strange paralysis. There may be internal injuries that we don't know about."

Each day, doctors ordered more treatments and tests. One ordered total parenteral nutrition (expensive nutritional therapy) for Sherman. The family had no idea what to do. They were totally drained of energy after numerous trips to the hospital and to Aaron's house. Their hectic schedule included visits to grocery stores, restaurants, and the towing company. A trip to the police station to talk with the reporting officer led them to the most exhausting trip of all, the junk yard where Sherman's car now sat.

They saw the car early Wednesday morning. Daniel, Rebecca and Samantha felt Sherman's presence but they didn't say anything to the others. Aaron and Terrance wanted lots of pictures for evidence. Terrance had stayed closer to his dad since his son Joel was the only grandchild Sherman saw after most of the family moved. Sherman spent more time with Aaron after Terrance moved his small family and mother to South Florida.

Monroe notes in *Far Journeys*, "A camera's film can see light frequencies our eyes cannot." Samantha had no doubt that digital cameras pick up those frequencies. Later, when she put the pictures on her home computer patches of white mist inside the car revealed that Sherman had indeed been with them in spirit form.

When they returned to the hospital, Sherman's fever was "somewhat" down and he was breathing more on his own. It was now a heart-wrenching situation for he did not have a Living Will and could only move his eyes. The Infectious Disease Specialist told them on Thursday that Sherman's oxygen rate was improving but he had pneumonia so the doctors ordered more antibiotics. The hospital planned to recheck his blood.

The family could do nothing but keep him connected to the machines. They sat or stood near his bed and watched as black floaters glided slowly through Sherman's breathing tube into the collection container. Later, an Intern told them Sherman's kidney function was decreasing. He also had Staphylococcal Aureus, a severe blood infection, a fatty liver, and his heart was beginning to weaken. His skin was breaking down as well.

Sherman's kidneys began to fail. A doctor finally told them much later in the day that Sherman's spine damage was due to a bone spur in his neck. His prognosis was dim. The spur sliced through his spine during the accident and only a thread of it was connected. Even if other conditions improved, he would still be paralyzed.

The male nurse then tried to help the family make a decision about his care. He decreased Sherman's morphine drip thinking he might be able to communicate with them. Samantha stood as close as she could to her dad. She realized, for the first time, that his eyes were a brilliant shade of blue.

Samantha knew her dad could hear. Looking into his eyes, she slowly asked him to tell her if he felt any pain. She asked him to blink his eyes twice if he did. Sherman

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managed to blink his blue eyes once but could not fully blink them again. She immediately had the nurse give him more morphine because she could not bear to see him suffer needlessly.

Two doctors came into the room and talked about hooking Sherman up to a dialysis machine. His family left quickly to discuss his condition in the family waiting room. No one wanted Sherman to continue suffering.

They all agreed to stop the doctors from hooking him up to a dialysis machine. And they agreed that Samantha would sign a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order. After more talking, they agreed to order the hospital staff to “pull the plug,” to disconnect the machine that kept Sherman alive. Samantha hurried to the Nurse’s Station to tell them of her family’s decision. She quickly signed the order for the hospital staff to disconnect the ventilator.

Upon returning to the room, the family noticed that both of Sherman’s legs were now wrapped, and connected to a machine, to keep his blood circulating. He had no arm movement but, oddly, had limited movement in one leg. There was no improvement in his condition. The family now waited for several members of the hospital staff.

Daniel’s job was done leaving Samantha thankful that he was always the patient one in the family. This time, he helped her to convince the rest of the family it was time to let Sherman go. It was now time for Daniel to return to Florida. Samantha’s cheeks again became a brilliant shade of red as she kissed him goodbye.

Daniel drove the SUV to the airport with Terrance and Rebecca. Ruth, feeling better, went closer to her dad. Her voice was hoarse but at least she could now talk. She whispered to him as Samantha stood in the hallway missing Daniel’s positive attitude.

The room filled with hospital staff several hours later. As they began to turn off the ventilator, Aaron stopped them.

“Wait,” he said, “maybe he doesn’t want to die.”

The health care team left the room immediately in silence.

“Let us know when you’re all in agreement,” the nurse announced softly before closing the door.

The family looked at Aaron in shock. Terrance, Ruth, and Rebecca took him into the family waiting room to review everything they knew again. Samantha was angry with Aaron and stayed to talk to Sherman. She didn’t know if he heard her but she talked to him anyway not caring. Her face was now beefy red as she told him it was okay to go home.

“You can go home now Daddy and see Grandma and Grandpa,” she said.

The rest of the family came back to the room and again agreed to let Sherman die. Samantha went to the Nurse’s Station with the news. The nurse at the desk told her she would relay the family’s decision to the doctors. A full staff would need to be in the room to disconnect the machines. Sherman had to wait one more day to die.

Doctors again confirmed what the specialist had told them the next morning. The accident caused a “partial severance of the spine.” Even if Sherman recovered from secondary complications such as infection, pneumonia, and failing kidneys, he would still be paralyzed and unable to breathe on his own. The family knew their decision to “pull the plug” was the right thing to do.

Several doctors and other hospital staff entered the room at 3:10 PM. One by one, they turned off a machine and left the room after doing their job. The heart monitor

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remained on but the alarm went off when the flat line appeared on its display screen. Sherman's family began to cry and the nurse went to stand outside the room.

Samantha watched and knew her father's death was very painful. For family members with medical conditions worsened by stress, the experience was close to what she thought hell must be like. Yet, even though the week was traumatic for his family, watching his organs fail one by one, Sherman took the brunt of the pain. She had no idea that seeing him die would make a big difference in how she thought about death in the future.

Suddenly, the heart monitor began to beep as the line rose on the machine. The family stared at Sherman with disbelief. Maybe Sherman didn't want to die. Perhaps he would have a miracle recovery. The alarm then sounded as the flat line appeared again on his heart monitor. Within seconds, the monitor once again began to beep as if Sherman's heart was beating.

The nurse came into the room when the heart monitor seemed to come alive the third time. He unplugged the machine and said it was common for it to act as it had. Sherman was clinically dead. They cried with relief but all of them felt totally drained of life. Aaron returned home to Matilda, as Ruth, Rebecca, Terrance, and Samantha left for the rented apartment. They fell quickly asleep exhausted from their ordeal.

Tasks associated with Sherman's passing were discussed the next morning. Samantha listed the chores as the family talked about what they had to do. Sherman hadn't planned for his funeral costs, even though their mother told him many times not to leave it up to his kids. His assets included a little more than \$400 in the bank and \$6,000 in life insurance policies that named his "boys" as beneficiaries.

The cost of his death was now a big concern. Sherman had nothing of value in his rented trailer. The list seemed endless as Samantha wrote down each chore. They needed to shut off utilities and contact his landlord. Someone had to give the junk yard the title to his totaled car to avoid the towing cost. There were funeral arrangements to make and relatives to notify. Everyone agreed to do something.

After little discussion, they decided not to have a service for Sherman. Ruth telephoned the crematorium to pick up Sherman's body from the hospital morgue. She put the cost of his cremation on one of her charge cards. No one possessed the energy, or will, to notify or visit relatives or friends. They all felt weak, totally drained of energy.

Terrance called the newspaper to print the death notice with as little information as possible. Ruth, Rebecca, and Samantha, having charged expenses for the past week, were now in debt. Neither Aaron nor Terrance had any money or even a credit card. No one but Aaron knew Daniel gave him \$500 to cover unexpected expenses before he left.

Ruth, Rebecca, Terrance, and Samantha drove to Aaron and Matilda's house that Friday. Aaron planned to take them and Matilda's grown son out to an early dinner. The bleak landscape fit their mood as they drove. Dead tree leaves clung to bare branches. Some of the brown leaves sat on the ground in the white snow.

Samantha realized Aaron lived across the street from a cemetery stone-making business when they pulled into his driveway. The dark house felt oppressive so she was the first one to go back outside into the cold.

They ate quickly at the restaurant and then went to see their Aunt Lois. She'd waited expectantly for them the night before and told them the cousins and their spouses had waited too. They apologized for not coming or even remembering to call her. Aunt

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Lois and Cousin Olivia listened to what Sherman experienced as they all drank.

On Saturday, they went to clean out Sherman's trailer. The movie, "8-Mile," about the white rapper from Detroit, was filmed in the trailer park where Sherman lived. Sherman had excitedly told them the film crew moved him out of his trailer and put him in a better one after the movie crew left.

Samantha was horrified to see the limitation her father had chosen to accept. She thought Sherman must have lied. Maybe, the trailer park people changed their minds, because she could not imagine a trailer in worse shape than his. It smelled so bad that she gagged and could not even step inside. Stray cats came in and out through several holes in the bottom of the trailer. The cats had been Sherman's only companions.

Ruth, Aaron, and Terrance ventured inside as Samantha stood outside holding the door open. The trailer was devoid of human value except for the family pictures Samantha sent Sherman throughout the years. They were scattered all around the place. Terrance and Aaron took some of Sherman's clothes and personal things but there wasn't much to take. Ruth gathered up any papers that she thought might be important. They handed the things to Rebecca and she loaded them into the rented SUV. They took the pictures and Sherman's things back to Aaron and Matilda's house and put them in the garage.

After everyone looked through Sherman's papers on Sunday, Ruth started the paperwork to claim the life insurance for Terrance, Aaron, and Amos. She then telephoned the Veteran's Administration so the government would recognize Sherman's service in World War II with a flag.

Aaron was adamant about suing the driver and the business he worked for so they discussed what to do about getting a lawyer. They decided Samantha would find one for it seemed an easy thing to do since she had Internet access and was more familiar with business people.

Samantha called the Social Security office so their mother could have her monthly check increased. Momma had repeatedly said she would be happy when Sherman died so she could collect his benefits. Samantha wondered why she could not collect them before he died for their marriage lasted more than thirty years. Her mom then lost some medical benefits because she got a few hundred dollars more per month. It was a lesson for the whole family to be careful what you wish for.

Aaron was left with taking care of the rest of Sherman's business including his address change and dealing with the landlord. He went back to his dad's trailer after Ruth, Rebecca, Terrance, and Samantha returned home. Aaron knew the many stray cats were important to Sherman so he wanted to care for them. He also thoroughly cleaned and sanitized the trailer because he was embarrassed to let anyone see the way Sherman lived.

He closed Sherman's bank account and paid some bills, including the cost of the ambulance to the hospital. Later, Aaron paid the rest of the bills with some of the life insurance money that he got. Terrance paid his own bills and their oldest brother Amos, a long-term addict, used his money for crack.

Amos was the favored child, the fourth live child to come out of his mother's womb and their first son. The day after he married, he lost his temper and hit his wife. She left and never returned. The thought of losing her and his newborn daughter was too much to bear. He used drugs in his teens and moved on to cocaine. When the cocaine

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wasn't enough to get him high he started using crack.

Samantha was ashamed and saddened by not knowing how poorly her father lived in his final years alone. She felt he punished himself for the things he did before he lost his family. Although they all felt totally drained of energy, Samantha knew there was a reason for it all. She just had no idea what it was at the time. ⁽⁷⁾

7. Sherman's family members needed to learn what someone with his conditions looked like. Keeping their soul agreements, they learned lessons of love, compassion, and the sanctity of human life. And they were all there to prepare for Daniel's upcoming death. Samantha's experience included lessons about limitation. She realized later that her dad's soul chose how to transition before he was born. He agreed to help his family members learn valuable lessons as his mind-body seemed to suffer. In return, they helped Sherman's soul to astutely leave, surrounded by love, when the mind-body finally died.

Samantha was very clear on this point five years later, shortly after reading Dying to Live Again-Channeled Interviews with Souls from the Otherside by Sally Baldwin. Sally notes when we come into human form we are aware of the exquisite experience of merging back within the One when the mind-body dies. The love, peace and joy felt by the soul at this time is unmatched by any other experience on any plane. Sally says:

"Souls need not be so excited about body, mind and ego and need to feel the astute energy now. The earth is so badly in need of astute energy of the soul."

Feeling this energy we are more likely to understand who we are as souls, individualized parts of God. Renard rightly explains that energy is mis-thought that will eventually be changed over to the Eternal.

Everything that happened after Sherman's death was preplanned as well. Daniel was there to help Sherman pass over to the Otherside. He helped the family reason with Aaron so Sherman's soul could leave astutely. Daniel would have been confined in the same vegetative state if he chose to live after his own accident.

Samantha soon sensed that both Sherman and James's father Zephaniah met Daniel when it was his time to pass over to the Otherside. She still didn't know how much her parent's had taught her. Without their human knowledge, or her own, she was now learning how to break the energy patterns that never fed their souls.

Samantha's soul chose her parents because they allowed her soul the freedom it needed to grow. Sherman taught Samantha valuable lessons, such as self-reliance, that helped her to break her soul's cycle of limitation and bondage. She learned to take care of herself and her family because he was irresponsible. Samantha's early struggles to survive made her strong. She knew what it was like to have people laugh at her because she wore rags. And she learned how to live without electricity, running water, or a steady food supply.

While her mother babysat for other families, Samantha helped to care for her sisters and brothers before she was five-years-old. Ruth and Samantha learned at a very early age how to make money to buy food. They climbed people's fruit trees and sold the fruit door to door. At 15-years-old, Samantha started a family of her own.

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Armed with lessons of love, learned from her mother and responsibility learned from her father, she was now the family's role model. Her personal strength helped her and her family through many tough times but she still had a lot to learn. She was nearly forty years of age before she knew that every second of life on earth is precious. Time shouldn't be wasted on "small stuff" and yes, everything on earth is "small stuff."

Chapter Five The Nightmare Continues

As Samantha sat in the brown lounge chair with her eyes closed her thoughts turned to Daniel. She remembered how he loved motorcycles. His father, Peter, bought one to build shortly after Daniel's birth but the parts were never put together so he rode other people's bikes. Aunt Ruth taught Daniel to ride her motorcycle well before he got his driver's license. Samantha smiled as she remembered Daniel working on his first moped at 16-years-old.

Suddenly, she heard his voice, "It was a temporary lapse of judgment Mom. I was going 140 miles an hour."

Samantha couldn't hold back the tears. They flowed like a river down her cheeks. She telephoned Rachel when she could cry no more. It sounded as if Rachel and Joy were playing the same "blame game" that continued at Samantha's house. They were talking about suing the driver of the car Daniel hit. They had an idea Daniel might have been racing with the car and the car cut him off. It made no difference to Samantha.

"Daniel always wanted to die while riding his motorcycle," she replied softly before asking if she could help with Daniel's arrangements. She told his widow how an 11-year-old Daniel signed and witnessed her wishes for cremation upon death. She was then preparing for her third surgery. Daniel told everyone he wanted cremation too. He continued to remind his family throughout his life that he didn't want his body to be buried in the ground.

Rachel listened as Samantha gave the telephone number to the Neptune Society. Samantha told her Daniel didn't want a funeral but a big celebration of life party. He wanted everyone to rejoice in the fullness of his life and remember him as a free spirit. He wanted everyone to have a good time. ⁽⁸⁾

8. Samantha would feel a certain satisfaction in reading about this subject years later in several books. Emmanuel notes dying is an exciting entrance instead of an exit. Death is like finally taking off a stuffy business suit to replace it with comfortable leisure clothes. It is of Divine origin and the process is always joyous once the fear of death is gone.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." Always defiant, Samantha chose to blaze her own trail disregarding the path taken by the masses. She believed humans lived many

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lives and there was a lesson in everything. Samantha never thought about how her choices affected others or if other people might follow her path.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross reminds us, "There are no mistakes, no coincidences, all events are blessings given to us to learn from." Learning lessons chosen in each life guides us back to our True Source. The illusory death of physical bodies is a graduation day, a celebration because it means we have learned our lessons. This experience allows us to go through a much greater version of life, another level of more intense existence. We are released to reconstruct "the image of Self into the Oneness of all things" without losing the Self. Edgar Cayce also believed soul growth depended on learning spiritual lessons. He noted three keys to soul growth: setting spiritual ideas; applying spiritual principles on earth; and personal attunement with the Divine.

The First Insight described by James Redfield notes a spiritual awakening in the human race brought about by a critical mass of people "who experience their lives as a spiritual unfolding, a journey in which we are led forward by mysterious coincidences."

Our free will can lessen or lengthen our time on earth. It is up to us to learn the lessons that face us or to walk the other way. Fear kept Samantha from learning lessons throughout her life. In her book Spiritual Alchemy, Dr. Page notes fear occurs when there is doubt and separation from the Self. Fear is an addiction more powerful than most chemical drugs. It's like shame for it holds the key to a deeper level of emotion. If we have the courage to face fear, we can release increasing quantities "of vital energy within ourselves in the name of excitement, enthusiasm and love of life." Dr. Page documents the words of a wise Hawaiian Elder: "Fear always separates us from our true self and makes us vulnerable to the whims of others...."

Samantha allowed herself to be vulnerable for most of her life. It would be another four years before she would fully realize the effects of her fear. She was not nourishing her soul or acting from a place of wisdom. The daily struggle of trying to protect her own needs drove her further away from Truth. Samantha found it hard to trust anyone, sometimes even herself. It was impossible for her to connect with the Eternal Source of power within us all.

Rachel listened to Samantha's suggestions and promised to let her know what kind of arrangements she made for Daniel. Samantha hung up the telephone feeling helpless and again broke out into sobs. The rest of her family returned two hours later glad to have found parts from Daniel's motorcycle on the highway.

The next day Rachel, Abigail, and Joy came to share their grief. Samantha tearfully took a small blackboard and chalk from the pantry. The blackboard held smiley faces from two weeks before when Abigail learned how to draw them. Daniel had come to pick Abigail up and gladly joined them as they sat on the floor to draw.

Daniel and Samantha shared a special attraction to the sun and smiley faces reminded them of it. She called him her sunshine boy, since his birth, even though the first few years of his life were turbulent in many ways.

Samantha remembered how two-year-old Abigail laughed at Daniel as he drew his first big smiley face. He made the face different from the way Samantha did. There were big circles for the eyes instead of little dots.

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“That’s not the way to make them Daddy,” Abigail said. As Daniel drew another face she put her small hands on her hips, raised her voice insistently and said, “You’re not doing it right Daddy.”

Daniel was confused until Samantha explained it was easier for his two-year-old to draw dots instead of circles for eyes. He laughed as he made the smiley faces easier for her to draw.

“I never knew there was so much to having a child,” he said as he pulled Abigail happily onto his lap.

Abigail now looked confused when she saw the blackboard. Samantha pointed out the big smiley face Daniel made for her the month before. She wanted Abigail to know that her daddy was happy and he wanted her to be happy. Abigail put her hand in her mouth. Samantha tried to show her how to draw the smiley faces again but Abigail turned and pointed as if she was seeing something no one else could see. Rachel, Abigail, and Joy left minutes later.

It was clear that many people besides her seemed to feel guilt after Daniel’s death. Samantha believed it was meant to be that way. As difficult as it seemed, it was time to carry on and put the past behind her. She suspected that she was living in a nightmare dream world and there was no way out.

Samantha sat and typed about her feelings into a computer but she couldn’t talk to anyone about Daniel’s death. Family and friends heard the news from Rebecca and Ruth while Samantha tried to deal with her grief. Through her tears, Rebecca wrote out her brother’s obituary. She then telephoned the local newspaper, read the obituary out loud, and put the cost on her charge card.

The undisputed facts were that Daniel had been on the way home to Rachel and Abigail when the accident happened. It was after midnight, before the time change occurred, on April 4, 2004. The date meant something to Samantha later when she heard that the number four is a reference to God.

A chance meeting with another conference attendee four year later gave her the information she needed. The stranger said God used the number three to get people’s attention and the number four refers to creation. She saw the numbers in many places but they didn’t prompt her to think of God who then walloped her with a bunch of fours.

Now, one of her teeth began to throb. She suddenly knew Daniel’s death was her planned wake-up call. She hadn’t listened to God so the triple four was a slap in the face. As she looked through family photo albums, it surprised her to see a picture of Samuel at two-years-old. He proudly held up two playing cards as Nana took his picture. The cards were faced towards the camera and it was clear to see they were the numbers three and four. God works through all humans and children are our best teachers.

Daniel flipped up over his bike, and landed near the middle part of Interstate 95, when the front wheel of his motorcycle hit the rear, driver side of the car in front of him. His neck was broken and he had many other injuries. Blood tests showed he was beyond the legal limit for alcohol. They also found prescription painkillers in his blood system.

The disputed truth is that Daniel and the driver of the car he hit were speeding, perhaps racing one another. Daniel may have tried to pass the car and misjudged the distance. Some family members joined Rachel and Joy in believing that the driver of the car cut him off from getting ahead of him.

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Rachel later told Samantha that when the ambulance arrived they revived Daniel at least twice before they “lost him” again. Samantha seemed to hear Daniel’s voice in her head. He said he drove by to see her on his way home that night. And when she heard that, she knew she was hearing the truth. Later when she read *The Afterlife Experiments* by Gary Schwartz, she knew that his energy consciousness would always be a part of her life.

Daniel knew Samantha didn’t usually sleep until 3 AM. She thought about how she was very tired before midnight that night. It seemed as if she was in some kind of a trance as she sat in the brown Lazy Boy. She reached up and turned down the living room light three hours earlier than usual. It was hard to see the light on from outside the house.

Samantha was on the cusp of sleep when she faintly heard a motorcycle drive by moments later. She thought that if it were Daniel he would stop to see her. She was one of the few people he knew that had not seen the fast, red motorcycle he bought for his thirty-seventh birthday less than two months before. Samantha drifted off to sleep when the motorcycle drove away after a very short hesitation. “It can’t be him,” she thought. “I know he would have stopped to see me.”

Chapter Six Shock City

Samantha's toothache was a blessing in disguise for the pain often took her mind off of Daniel. The painful tooth was the one a dentist filled during the year of his birth. It now throbbed constantly forcing her to visit the family dentist. He took x-rays of the tooth but found nothing that would cause her pain. The general dentist gave her painkillers and arranged for her to see a dental specialist.

The county medical examiner autopsied Daniel's body because his death was an accident. His body was ready for viewing at the funeral home three days later but Samantha refused to go. Sedated by painkillers, she seemed possessed. Daniel's essence was still in the middle trying to clean up the mess he had seemingly left behind.

Samantha sat working constantly in the brown Lazy Boy where she fell asleep on the fateful night of Daniel's death. There was a task to do in a hurry. As she reviewed the family videos, Samantha had to find bits and pieces of Daniel to make a new video. The video had to be of him happy, joking, as he did many, many times. It was a difficult task but she was up to the challenge. Everyone thought she was still in shock when she refused to view his body or attend the funeral. Family members told her she needed the closure of seeing Daniel's dead body.

"She's in denial, still in shock," many of them said. "Just leave her alone to deal with it."

Samantha slept in that chair for a number of days. Daniel's words continued to come to her as she sat in the dark living room, with the blinds closed. She recognized that, as before when he was alive, he was still telepathically communicating with her. Her family said she needed to "face reality" sometime and admit he was gone. She didn't tell them Daniel was talking to her. They would have told her she was crazy.

The words of Ernest Holmes would pleasantly surprise her four years later. Holmes notes mental telepathy operates through Universal Mind. "It is only when the instrument is properly adjusted to some individual vibration that a clear message may be received."

Samantha remained tuned into Daniel's vibration and she heard him clearly. As they did when he was in physical form, they now used mental telepathy to communicate. Although there were no audible words spoken, she received his thoughts from the Otherside. ⁽⁹⁾

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9. Emmanuel tells us, “The connection of love is never broken.” Love’s golden chain is eternal always reaching out when there is genuine need calling the soul wherever it may be. Samantha knew her connection with Daniel would never be broken. Even if he reincarnated, his soul would come when she needed him. Yet, her reliance on him would lessen as he led her to souls on higher levels.

Samantha believed the course of life is preplanned so she could not have changed what happened to Daniel. No one else could have changed things either. The more lessons she learned in one life, the fewer lives she had to live. That, Samantha thought, was the reason her soul chose a life of struggle, full of lessons to learn. Samantha felt Daniel chose as a soul to sacrifice his life so others could learn their lessons. She truly believed Daniel learned his lessons before he died.

Daniel’s funeral was held the day after the viewing at the church where he and Rachel married. Samantha still felt driven to work on the videotape even when Esther came to console her from Michigan. She felt a great urge to finish the video quickly but didn’t know why.

“You’ve been through enough Mom,” Samantha heard Daniel say to her each time anyone asked her to go to his funeral. “You don’t need to go to the dog and pony show.”

Everyone looked at her as if she was crazy when she told them she planned to stay home because Daniel did not want her at the funeral. ⁽¹⁰⁾

10. Many people believe we can communicate with our loved ones after they die. Mental telepathy takes place through the Universal Mind. It happens all the time when conscious thought is received without audible words being spoken. Fortunately, most people can receive only messages that match their own vibration and the receiver must tune in to the sender.

Samantha knew she was doing exactly what Daniel wanted her to do so she continued with the videos. There were so many to watch. She had at least thirty videotapes that were six hours each to edit. She still was not sure why she was doing the task but Daniel’s spirit was there guiding her. Samantha felt fortunate to have bought a double VCR player/recorder right before Daniel died. She hadn’t yet learned there are no coincidences. The purchase made the plan work.

Friends came to the house to offer their condolences and drop off food before continuing on to the funeral. Lydia, Rebecca’s friend since high school, Lydia’s husband Joseph, and Lydia’s mother Hannah arrived to set up tables in the back yard for the wake. Samantha hadn’t met Joseph or Hannah who had brain cancer. Their helpfulness overwhelmed her.

The trio set up chairs and tables and put food out on the kitchen counters as Samantha continued to work on the video. Later in the day, Hannah sat down to talk with Samantha. Hannah said she was getting cancer treatments and now lived with Lydia and Joseph. She wore a red bandana around her bald head and wrote a lovely poem for Abigail about Daddy Daniel in Heaven. Hannah ended the poem with an “Amen” so Samantha believed she was religious. Lydia told her all of Hannah’s poems ended in the same special way.

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Daniel didn't want sorrow but he knew people had to deal with his physical death. Few people came to the wake compared to the large number of people who attended his funeral. Some of his friends chose not to come to the wake. Samantha wasn't sure why but really didn't care. Daniel's spirit told her then the videotapes were for his friends and family, whoever wanted them.

Samantha stayed busy making copies of the master videotape. The videotape made it easy to see who Daniel really was. It covered his life from age seventeen until he was thirty-six years of age. There wasn't much more to add to the tape since the family saw him increasingly less during the last year of his life.

When Rachel, Abigail and the rest of her family arrived, Samantha was happy but a bit guilty. She hadn't gone to the house in West Palm Beach since the accident. She had not even considered that she should be with Daniel's wife and daughter. Samantha left her task when people started to go out to the back yard.

A strong gust of wind blew by her as she opened the back screen door. Samantha felt Daniel's presence in the wind and sensed he was happy to be free. Both knees weakened and she nearly dropped to the ground. The feeling was undeniable.

"I'm free Mom," Daniel shouted inside her brain. "I'm free!"

She didn't tell anyone for she feared they'd think she was crazy. Her heart filled with joy even as the tears flowed down her fat, red cheeks. It was the first of many times that she would feel his presence so strongly. ⁽¹¹⁾

11. In The Afterlife Experiments, it notes that electromagnetic energy within the body continues to circulate after death. This energy extends out into space and upon death is "freed" to "have all the consciousness, intent, and personality" of all that has occurred during physical life. There are people who view this occurrence as the soul and spirit now seeing with "new eyes."

Samantha was surprised to see Daniel's Aunt Claudia minutes later. Ruth telephoned her the day after Daniel died. Claudia and her husband had already planned to be in Florida, vacationing from Michigan, at the time of the funeral. Daniel had just reconnected with his father Peter's side of the family in 1997. Before then, he hadn't seen them for twenty-four years.

Samantha remembered the year Daniel said he wanted to find his father. He was angry, wondering why Peter never tried to find him. Daniel hoped to find a rich Peter to make up for all the years they'd missed. Samantha searched the Internet and found his address but when she telephoned, Peter wasn't there. She finally found a telephone number for his Cousin Joe in Michigan. Daniel was then able to talk with Joe's mother, Aunt Claudia, letting her know he wanted to see his father.

Later that year Daniel, Samantha, and Uncle Amos went to Michigan for Uncle Aaron's wedding. Daniel and Samantha went to visit the family he had longed for before they returned to Florida. They spent a few hours with Claudia, Daniel's cousin Eunice, and his Aunt Bathsheba. Aunt Anna and Cousin Joe, a few years older than Daniel, weren't there. Peter was a "wanderer." No one knew where he was.

Daniel was thrilled to see everyone. He didn't know he had two step-brothers and two more uncles. Learning about them made him feel like winning a casino jackpot. Daniel's grandmother Elisabeth married three times. His uncles were born with the help

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of Elisabeth's first husband. Aunt Claudia was born when Elisabeth married her second husband. Peter, Bathsheba, and Anna were born when Elisabeth married her third husband Beau.

Claudia told Daniel about his half-brothers that Peter had with his second wife. Daniel remembered Scotty who was born before Peter and Samantha divorced. He was only a year younger than Daniel was. Peter had now left his second wife to travel, checking in with his family occasionally. Claudia promised to look for his half-brothers.

A surprised Rachel opened their front door seven months later to see Peter standing there. He spent several weeks in late June and early July getting to know his son. Daniel learned many things during that time. He also knew, without a doubt, that he was not going to get any money from Peter who remained unemployed most of the time. After a few weeks, Peter did get a part time job working on computers at the public library.

Several family members listened to a disappointed Daniel grieve about how Peter lived. Samantha was the first person he confided in.

"Mom, I'm sorry," he said. "For all these years I've been blaming you for taking me away from Peter. Now I see you did the right thing."

Samantha watched the tears swell in his eyes and as they flowed down his cheeks, she cried along with him.

Peter lived with Daniel and Rachel for less than a month. He left Daniel a computer, built using parts discarded by others. A very disappointed and disgusted Daniel found child pornography stored on the computer. Daniel never saw Peter again but continued to keep in touch with his Aunt Claudia through cards and telephone calls. He took Rachel to meet his Michigan family as well.

"I got a hold of Peter to tell him about Daniel," Claudia now told Samantha. "He's living in Georgia but he wasn't sure you'd want him to come so he stayed home. He has a little girl now."

Samantha told her Daniel was Peter's son too. He would have been welcome at the funeral and wake. She could not help but wonder about the little girl in the back of her mind. As she thought about Peter's side of the family, she felt guilt over taking Daniel away from his grandparents. Claudia, like everyone else, was in a state of shock. She couldn't believe that after finally reconnecting with him, he was now dead. Samantha learned a family secret when she explained to Claudia why she had removed Daniel from their lives.

"I had to stop telling you where Daniel and I were," Samantha said as she held back her tears. "Peter started sniffing glue when I worked midnights. He couldn't keep a job and I had to support us. He started using heroin and kept stealing the money I made for our bills. When I wouldn't tell him where the money was, he beat us and tore the house apart until he found it. It was the only way I knew to protect us."

Telling Claudia the truth made Samantha feel better. Claudia began to talk as Samantha wiped the tears that now rolled down her face.

"I don't know if Peter ever told you Samantha but Beau wasn't the best of father's. He didn't treat Peter very well. He beat him with a razor strap and made him sleep in the basement."

Everything about her relationship with Peter made sense to Samantha then. Peter had abused her and Daniel because he had been abused. He didn't know any better. Samantha quickly left to keep her appointment with the dental specialist.

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Again, x-rays failed to show anything abnormal. Fed up, she told the specialist to pull the tooth. She was not in the mood to get another root canal. A missing tooth didn't seem so bad after losing Daniel. The specialist cut through, and removed, a four-tooth bridge to pull the offending tooth.

Samantha now had two missing bottom teeth but she knew she'd never forget the relief when that last tooth was pulled. Later she had a nagging thought remembering something about how women got their teeth pulled on purpose after they lost a child in ancient times. She never did any research to verify her thought.

Samantha returned from the dentist to a house that seemed full of drunks. Everyone talked about the last time they saw Daniel. Jeremiah, one of Daniels best friends, appeared more upset than anyone did for he was the last one to see him alive.

Daniel had gone to his acupuncture treatment alone earlier in the day and then went to visit his friend Tim. Tim decided it was time to go to bed after they had a few drinks. Daniel left his house and went up to the bar several blocks away. He telephoned Tim a few minutes later to ask if he would come up and have another drink with him. Tim told him he was already in bed. Daniel drank for two more hours. Samantha shuddered at the thought that the bar was less than six blocks away from where she sat in her living room. Jeremiah spoke in a hushed voice afraid that no one would believe him.

“Daniel came to our house after he left the bar. He wanted a drink.”

It was clear to both Jeremiah and his wife Judith that Daniel was drunk. They refused to give him any alcohol and begged him to spend the night on their couch. They spent several minutes trying to get him to stay. Daniel said he had to get home because he had plans with Rachel and Abigail for the next day. He hugged them both.

“Bro, you know that I love you,” he told Jeremiah wrapping his arms around him. “I love you guys,” he repeated as he turned and walked out the door.

They heard his motorcycle start up. Jeremiah filled with indecision. By the time he rushed to the door to stop Daniel from leaving it was too late.

“I swear to God Daniel glowed white that night,” Jeremiah said. “I saw him as I stood by the front door and he was just white. I can't explain it. I started to go toward him but he drove away. As the motorcycle moved the white light just surrounded him.”

Samantha knew Jeremiah spoke the truth and broke into another round of sobs. ⁽¹²⁾

12. In the year after he died, Daniel would guide Samantha to Science of Mind teaching. Reading the major work of Ernest Holmes, she would first sense what happened to Daniel as he drove his motorcycle for the last time. A certain inner sense, Holmes notes, sees Reality at certain times in a flash that illuminates the whole being with a great flood of light. Mystics have seen this Cosmic Light and people have sensed that Truth is Light. The Light came as Daniel's consciousness expanded.

Nearly four years later, Samantha would read Spiritual Alchemy and learn that the soul's primary essence is pure white light. This vibrating energy source is the eternal connection to Universal Consciousness. Dr. Page tells us, “When the soul's consciousness is fully expressed, pure white light is seen, an event termed enlightenment.” Samantha knew Daniel experienced that moment as Jeremiah watched.

Much to her dismay, several family members and friends wanted to visit the accident site. She still did not feel a desire to go and heard Daniel telling her to stay

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home. Esther stayed behind to console her as the group piled into vehicles. The troop reported that they left flowers and gifts for him by the side of the highway when they returned hours later.

Many people appeared to feel guilt over Daniel's passing. Some of Daniel's family and friends were distanced from him. They missed important events in his life like his marriage to Rachel. Others, like Jeremiah and Judith, were with him on the day of his death. Samantha suspected that it was part of their contracts with him to learn and teach valuable lessons and to "wake-up" as she was doing.⁽¹³⁾

13. A Course in Miracles lets us know that in this illusionary world, sin represents the past, guilt represents the present, and fear represents the future. Most of the people at the wake drank themselves into oblivion not realizing they were dwelling on the past and the present. Living in the Now, knowing there is only one perfect state of love and forgiveness and that we live within that One, releases the need to feel any negativity. There is no sin, no guilt, and no fear in the Now.

It's not easy to explain how there is no need for sin, guilt, or fear but A Course in Miracles does it well. Ignoring the Truth, we make contracts with souls to interact with here on earth before we are born. The thought made a lot of sense to Samantha. We are all here to be teacher's of God. Some human beings come to that awareness sooner than others do.

We are born into human form after our souls design the details of our new mind-body life on earth. The tricky part of the process is that we agree to forget who we really are, spirits in human form in a dream. We agree to forget that being human is just a game.

Nothing in this or any universe is what it appears to be. Everything is just a projection of the mind. The unconscious mind is dominated by a "sick thought system" shared by everyone in this false universe. Humans are unconscious of the true reality, as they appear to live in a world of duality. "Consciousness is correctly identified as the domain of the ego."

God didn't create this world of duality, humans did. God knows only unconditional Love so it's not the nature of God to create anything of this world. Humans agree to not wake-up until it is time to do so. We may or may not have fulfilled our so-called contracts when we begin to wake-up. And we may not wake-up until we leave our mind-body. If you don't learn your lessons then you won't wake-up to Reality. Reality and Love are natural and abstract.

There are so many clues for us to tap into when we're ready to: movies such as "Chances Are" and "The Matrix," songs such as "Serenade" by the Steve Miller Band, "The Wall" by Kansas, and "Silent Lucidity" by Queensrÿche. There are numerous books, commercials, and even common sayings with the word "wake-up" that tell us things like, "Wake-up and smell the coffee." All of these are meant to prompt our little mind to wake-up to the fact that we are spirits in human form, part of One Mind.

In later years, Samantha would get many clues from books. One clue, while reading Ultimate Journey, would prompt her mind more than any other would. Monroe notes, "The entry ramps to the Interstate is physical death as perceived by most human minds." The words would not surprise her as she remembered her son's choice to die on Interstate 95.

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Some humans, maybe all humans, choose their own clues before birth to prompt them so they'll "wake-up" from this dream we call life. A lot of Samantha's time before Daniel's birth was spent choosing his name. His initials had to be a word and she finally decided on DAD. Daniel was very adamant about not having a child. It was a point of dispute for both of the women he loved.

Samantha felt lucky to have programmed in so many friends and family to help her deal with her grief. One of her friends told her, "There's no way over-under-or around grief, you just have to slog through it, however long it takes. Be patient with it. You will heal in time." Samantha knew she was right as she thanked God and continued to heal.

Chapter Seven Big Changes Ahead

Samantha felt guilty when she thought of Daniel. It shocked her to remember joking with everyone saying she chose a younger man to marry because being a widow was not going to be a part of her life. She'd been through enough trauma and pain. Samantha now faced something much worse realizing she agreed, as a soul, to "lose" her first-born. She felt responsible for some of the events that led to his death.

Things had never been perfect for Daniel and Rachel. He came to Samantha for advice and support many times. Those times increased after Abigail's birth and Samantha knew things were not as they should be. It was hard to hold the tears back when she learned of Daniel's hardships. Since it hurt to see Samantha cry over his troubles, he began to confide in other family members.

Intuition was strong in Daniel's close-knit family. They all sensed the baby would not be a big part of their lives when Rachel announced her pregnancy. The limited times they saw Abigail after her birth confirmed their beliefs. Most of the women in Daniel's family resigned themselves to not seeing her. Samantha knew it was only a matter of time before Abigail's treasured visits with her would stop. She poured as much love and family values into her as she could whenever she saw her beloved granddaughter.

Joy was now much more prominent in Daniel and Rachel's life. She moved in with them before pretty, blue-eyed Abigail was a year old. Daniel began to look for places where he could be himself without the fear of criticism. He stayed in his newly built workshop in the back yard as much as possible when home.

Samantha saw her granddaughter less often. She thought Abigail and Daniel were treated as possessions. Every gift Daniel's family gave to Abigail disappeared as Joy replaced it with something "better." Samantha was tired of being silent as people taught Abigail how to shop and collect possessions instead of spend time with family. She couldn't figure out why this, and other odd things, happened but she knew something was very wrong.

Samantha was very proud when Daniel got another promotion. He spent much more time away from home now. His drive to work was more than an hour each way. Rachel found a house closer to his workplace when Abigail was 19-months-old. Daniel came to tell Samantha the news.

"I don't know what to do," he said. "The commute to work is killing me but I don't want to move away from the family and my friends. Yet, I think if we move Joy will find someplace else to live."

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“You’ve got to do what is best for you, Rachel, and Abigail,” she said hugging him tightly while feeling a familiar sense of loss in her gut.

The next Saturday, Daniel came alone to show her their new house before they signed the papers. It was important to him that Samantha approved of their country home. Daniel quickly drove to his new house using the Interstate. It took a little more than an hour to get there.

Samantha was stunned to see the large lot beyond an electronic gate. Daniel had to get out of his truck to open it. The house was beautiful and larger than any they lived in before with a large plot of land. Samantha knew she would see less of them but approved of the purchase. It looked perfect for them with a small pond on the land and plenty of space in the house. Daniel’s family soon called it a palatial estate because it was much more than any of them ever dreamed of having.

Joy remained close to Rachel after they moved to their dream home but she stayed behind and moved in with someone else. Samantha tried her best to be supportive and helpful as Daniel and Rachel adjusted to their new home and parenthood. They had spent all of Rachel’s pregnancy swearing that Abigail’s birth would not change how they lived. Now they were realizing that having Abigail made a huge difference in every part of their life. They adored the beautiful and smart toddler who looked more like Daniel every day.

The days of washing dishes and tarring roofs for a living were far behind Daniel. He was the big boss man now. After twenty years, he finally had a career he loved and was happy to be close to his job. Rachel was elated to have a beautiful house in a great neighborhood. Everything seemed fine for a few months.

One day Samantha got an unexpected email addressed from Daniel. It said he knew she could not visit them as frequently as Joy did. The email confused her. She’d been waiting for an invitation to visit after announcing her intention to visit whenever they wanted her to. It was difficult to tell who sent the email as both Daniel and Rachel used the same email address. Samantha replied to the email letting them know she and James could visit them one weekend a month.

The family celebrated an unusual Christmas that year. They started a Florida tradition of bowling on Christmas Eve when on vacation there many years ago. Daniel and Rachel added a tradition of their own a few years after they met. At first, they saw their friends after the family bowl but in recent years, they spent Christmas Eve with their friends. The family missed seeing them at the annual bowl.

This year Daniel was sick with the flu. He called to let them know but no one was home so he left a message. It sounded to Samantha like it was a great effort for Daniel to talk. She kept the recorded message on her computer with the others.

“Hey Mom, it’s me. Are you home? Okay, see you in the morning, love you. Say bye Abigail,” he then said to his two-year-old daughter. “Say bye, bye, Nana.”

“Hi Nana,” Abigail said.

Daniel’s condition worsened on Christmas morning. When he threw up on the kitchen counter, he knew he was going to miss Christmas with his family. He stayed home alone in bed. Rachel and Joy brought Abigail to see them even though they felt sick as well. The drive was tiring for the two women so they didn’t stay long. Before they left, Rachel invited everyone to the zoo to celebrate Abigail’s second birthday the next day. Samantha decided not to go thinking that they’d delay the adventure until everyone was well.

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Samantha took the Christmas tree down earlier than usual and picked the scented needles off of it. She had never saved the needles before and had no idea why she striped the tree before James carried it to the curb. She filled several large containers with the Christmas tree needles and stored them away in a closet. A sense of unexplainable doom surrounded her.

Four years later, it would become clear to her why she'd saved the scented needles from the Christmas tree. ⁽¹⁴⁾ She never hosted Christmas again in the house on 47th Drive.

14. Dr. Page notes, the pine cone energetically stimulates the pineal gland and the essence of pine "is commonly used by those who wish to enhance their creative union between spirit and matter." The pineal gland in humans is the prime center for controlling all of the body's endocrines. In Life and Teaching of the Masters of the Far East Baird T. Spalding notes, "It is the Master, the I AM of the physical body." The gland normally shrinks as we age. This atrophy divorces us from the Kingdom of Heaven.

The next time Samantha saw Daniel was at Abigail's birthday party the following weekend. She asked him if he'd gotten her email reply telling him she could visit once a month. His evasive answer led her to believe he had not seen the email. She again made it clear that she would visit once a month, just like Joy did, with or without James.

Daniel and Rachel's relationship was quickly becoming more volatile based on his talks with Samantha. She telephoned the couple in early February offering to watch Abigail so they could go out for dinner on Valentine's Day. Samantha looked forward to spending quality time with Abigail and letting Daniel and Rachel have couple time together.

Rachel emailed to say it would be wonderful for James and Samantha to come and stay the weekend. Abigail missed her nana and Papa very much and Daniel missed his family. He wasn't used to seeing them so infrequently. Daniel was now going with his sister Rebecca every two weeks for their joint visit to an acupuncturist. Daniel's joint and back pain seemed to require an increasing amount of prescription painkillers to control.

It was becoming increasingly hard for Samantha to travel for it seemed that every drug she took decreased her quality of life. Doctors prescribed more drugs to deal with medication side effects. She let Rachel know their arrival time would be scheduled around her medications for she took eight prescriptions and each one had certain "rules."

Drug toxicities were an increasing issue for her. She added six supplements into her schedule to try and lessen the effects of the prescribed drugs. The research she did on P450 drug interactions resulted in a list of what to take and when. She considered drug inhibitors, activators, and substrates. It paid off as side effects such as nausea and vomiting lessened.

The computer in Daniel's truck needed repair before Valentine's Day and the repair shop was near James and Samantha's house. Samantha was elated to hear Daniel's noisy Chevy truck in the driveway one morning. She ran to the den door, opened it, and stepped out to greet Daniel and Abigail joyfully. Daniel left Abigail for a few hours while they worked on his truck. Samantha happily videotaped the visit.

When Daniel returned he didn't seem in a hurry to leave for he fell asleep on the couch. He talked with his mother about his life when he woke up. Daniel was resigned to

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living a life he didn't really enjoy. He wasn't happy at home but said he'd never leave his precious Abigail.

An invitation for Daniel's thirty-seventh birthday arrived a few days after he left with Abigail in his loving arms. Two-year-old Abigail wrote the invitation herself while Mommy Rachel helped with the postage and mailing.

Valentine's Day weekend appeared to help build a more cohesive relationship for Daniel and Rachel. Rachel's six year old wedding ring mysteriously lost its diamond so Daniel replaced it. He also bought Abigail a beautiful gold chain necklace, which Samantha thought a bit too expensive for a two-year-old.

James and Samantha arrived at the house early Saturday afternoon. Samantha hoped their visit would lessen the strain of her relationship with Rachel. Possessiveness filled the air when she was near Abigail so she stayed away from her granddaughter when Rachel was near. As usual, Samantha agreed with everything that Rachel said to avoid any problems.

Abigail seemed happy to spend time with her papa and Nana while her parents ate at a local restaurant. James and Samantha enjoyed their meal of stuffed lobster that Daniel and Rachel bought for them. The thirty-hour visit seemed to be a pleasure for everyone. Before James and Samantha returned home the following evening they promised to visit at least once a month.

The following weekend they celebrated Daniel's last birthday. The events that took place set the scene for his death. The party was a gala event and just about every one of Daniel's friends came. Even the best friend he'd been estranged from for years arrived to surprise him. Neighbors from their old neighborhood, new friends, and co-workers came to see Daniel and Rachel's big new house.

It was such a beautiful day. The party had already begun when James, Samantha, and Samuel arrived. Samantha sensed an uncomfortable hush in the air as they walked into the house. Most of the women were huddled around the kitchen. Rachel sharply told Samuel he could not go into the bedroom to play the PlayStation games he and Daniel usually played.

Samuel was disappointed and upset at the prospect of not being able to lull his over-active mind with games. Rebecca was delayed so he'd ridden with James and Samantha hoping to keep busy. Thinking it best to avoid a scene, Samantha chose to take him outside to sit at the table on the back screened in porch. Except for a few people in the back yard, everyone else at the party remained in the house. It now became a chore for Samantha to keep Samuel entertained.

Samuel ran off to play in the yard within an hour leaving Samantha to sit at the table by herself. She wasn't bothered to be alone for it was worth the cost of not having any unexpected trauma. It felt good to be outside where the wind blew softly and the air temperature felt just right. The smell of sweet country air filled her nostrils.

As Samantha sat looking at the people inside the house, Rachel's friend Reba came out and sat at the bar in front of her. She'd been with the other women in the kitchen moments before as they made frozen blender drinks. Samantha saw them sample several alcoholic creations. Samantha looked toward her and spoke.

"It's such a beautiful day. It is the perfect day to be outside."

When Rachel strutted out onto the porch and stood next to Reba's bar stool Samantha went into "alert mode" sensing something was about to happen. Reba asked

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how many people were expected to come to the party. Rachel glared at Samantha. Samantha replied.

“Well, Rebecca’s running a little late but should be here with Mom and Terrance in about an hour. Daniel asked her for a special gift so she’s at the store now.”

Samantha didn’t tell them the gift was a number of crystals to help Daniel heal his ills.

“I would think she’d have gotten his present before the day of his party,” Rachel answered angrily.

Samantha answered as quietly as she could.

“She’s going to a special store that’s not open at night and she works during the day so she can’t go then.”

“I know what she’s getting him,” Rachel said sharply raising her voice. “I work too but I could have gotten it before today.”

“Well, she did just start a new job so it’s difficult for her to take time off right now.”

Rachel’s glare looked ugly to Samantha. She realized Rachel was going to have another one of her “fits” and tried to remember what to do. Last time it happened when Samantha watched both Abigail and Samuel. Rachel started a fight with Samuel when she came after work to get Abigail. She hadn’t known he’d be there. Samantha told Samuel to run into the bedroom and lock the door but that hadn’t worked out well at all. Rachel banged on the door demanding that 11-year-old Samuel open it and apologize to her. It was hard for Samantha to deal with as she heard him crying on the other side of the door.

Samantha thought hard. What was it Daniel told her to do after the episode in Fort Myers? The discussion between Rachel and Samantha could have ended up in a fistfight if Daniel hadn’t stepped out into the hall to get between them. Had Daniel told her to walk away or agree with Rachel? Samantha couldn’t remember so she tried to look calm. Rachel’s voice rose as she continued.

“I am so f**king tired of hearing about how Rebecca works and I don’t,” she said. “I work just as much as she does. I am so f**king tired of hearing about how great Rebecca is and how much she does.”

“I didn’t say that Rachel,” Samantha replied.

“But you implied it,” Rachel ranted.

Rachel continued to go on and on about how she was always being victimized by Daniel’s family. It was clear to Samantha that Rachel was jealous of Daniel’s love for his younger sister.

“And I am outraged that she borrowed \$2,000 from Daniel,” Rachel yelled. “That’s my money too and I want it back.”

“You weren’t supposed to know about that,” popped right out of Samantha’s mouth.

Samantha sat in shock as Daniel came out of the house and sat behind the bar looking out at the three women. She didn’t believe he knew what was happening as she thought about the thousands of dollars she’d given Daniel when he was out of work. She remembered the \$2,000 she’d given to both he and Rebecca when she’d finally got a child support check a few years before. Samantha thought about the thousand or so that

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Rebecca loaned Daniel and Rachel when they needed it. And she thought about the diamond and the gold necklace Daniel just bought.

She was horrified as Daniel sat quietly while Rachel ranted on as a woman possessed with hate. Samantha sat like a stone and thought about how Rebecca was struggling to get back on her feet after major surgery. Rebecca had been disabled for eight months. She'd just left her abusive boyfriend after eight years. Now she was finally able to start a new career. The last thing she needed was more abuse. Although Samantha was appalled and outraged, she once again apologized.

"I'm sorry if I said something that upset you Rachel. I didn't mean to imply that you didn't work."

Samantha could feel her face and neck flushing. She began to wonder if she'd brought any extra blood pressure medicine with her. She continued to apologize as Rachel continued to speak badly of her and Rebecca. And then she realized this wasn't about Rachel and herself. It was about something else and no matter what she did, or said, Rachel would continue to rant and yell until she was sure that Samantha was sufficiently embarrassed and humiliated. Samantha sat there and let her continue hoping it would be over soon.

It saddened her that Daniel said only, "I wish that you all could respect the fact that this is my birthday and get along." With that, he got up and left the porch to reenter the house.

Rachel looked at Samantha with a smirk on her face as soon as the door closed behind him. She stopped yelling and stomped into the house with Reba following her. Samantha was left alone feeling victimized once again. She realized that Rachel was one of those people in the *Nasty People* book she'd read about who needed to invalidate others to boost her self-esteem.

Rebecca came onto the porch with her grandmother, Terrance, and his teenage son Joel a few minutes later. Samantha briefly told Rebecca what happened. Rebecca went right back into the house to make sure Samuel stayed safe. By now they all knew Rachel's method of operation but they didn't know they'd agreed to try and learn lessons from her. There's a time and a purpose for everything but Samantha didn't know this yet.

She turned toward the side window and saw Abigail staring out at her clutching her new dolly. Abigail's knees were close to her chest as she hid behind the curtain. Samantha quickly took Abigail's picture and then noticed she was crying. She looked like she was severely distressed.

Tears streamed down her little, heart-shaped face as she looked at Samantha. Her frown tore at Samantha's heart. Not knowing if Abigail had seen what happened, Samantha slowly got to her feet and slipped quietly into the house. She sat down next to Abigail and pulled the sheer white curtain around them. And then she gently pulled Abigail up onto her lap and asked her what was wrong.

The tears continued to trickle from Abigail's beautiful, blue eyes and ran down her face as Samantha stroked her hair. She told Abigail it would be okay. Daddy would make it alright. Samantha didn't know where the words came from. Rachel and Joy stood a few feet away in the kitchen talking about making more blender drinks with Reba and Rachel's best friend Patti. Samantha hoped they didn't see her holding Abigail. It was always a struggle for her to hold Abigail when Rachel and Joy were near.

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Abigail stopped crying and rested her head in Samantha's lap as she continued to stroke her long brown hair. She felt hot so Samantha asked her if she wanted a drink of milk or juice. After Abigail answered juice, Samantha slowly put her down and walked into the kitchen to get it. She knew if she made a big deal of Abigail's crying Rachel or Joy would take her away and she'd lose her chance to hold her a bit.

Rachel looked at Samantha and acted as if nothing had happened between them. She calmly asked what Samantha needed.

"Abigail feels a bit hot so I thought I'd get her juice," Samantha said.

"She's had that flu or a cold for a while," Rachel replied. "My mom must have rinsed out her cup but you can get another one from the cupboard."

Samantha slowly got the cup, filled it with juice, and returned to give it to Abigail. Joy walked over to them and carried Abigail into the bedroom saying she had to change her.

For the next few hours, most of Daniel's side of the family stayed outside at the back porch table. Rachel and the other women stayed in the kitchen mixing, and drinking, frozen alcoholic drinks. Rebecca got Samuel to go outside a few times to play in the yard with Abigail, Daniel's friend Jude, and Reba's son who was close to Samuel's age.

Samuel tried to stay clear of Rachel since her attack on him was still fresh in his memory. When he returned to the house, Terrance stayed inside to keep a watchful eye on him. After a short while, a very angry Terrance came out onto the porch to report that Rachel and Joy were talking about Samuel and Rebecca. Samuel was in the room next to them so he could hear their conversation. They verbally attacked Terrance when he asked them to stop talking about Samuel and Rebecca.

The party finale occurred after Samantha carried out Daniel's cake. She usually made Daniel a homemade birthday cake but this cake was store-bought. It was a very large cake and rather heavy. By the time he blew out the candles, Daniel was helping Samantha hold the cake up for it was breaking in half.

Daniel's family looked forward to playing their usual pinochle card game with him for he'd missed the last few card games. His absence at Christmas was still fresh on their minds. Rebecca sat on the back porch shuffling the cards so they could play after everyone finished eating the cake.

The sweet smell of fresh country air was all around them as Samantha enjoyed looking at the trees that were common to native Florida. She looked through the sheer white curtains into the house and saw Samuel. He remained curled up, alone at the corner of the couch, playing his Gameboy. Abigail and Reba's son were chasing each other around the couch. Samantha saw Joy go into the room and start talking to Samuel. Joy jabbed her finger toward his face, several times, as she spoke.

Samantha told Rebecca she'd better go in and assess the situation. Rebecca quickly tossed the cards down and ran into the house. She calmly asked Joy to stop telling Samuel what to do. Joy viciously told her what a rotten mother she was. Joy said Rebecca hadn't spent enough time with her child when he was a baby and that was why he had attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), a so-called bogus diagnosis.

It got increasingly uncomfortable as the violence level raised in the room. Samuel grew visibly upset as Joy continued to verbally, and savagely, attack Rebecca. Samantha remained on the back porch. Although she wanted to help her daughter, she'd had her

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share of humiliation for the day. Rebecca tearfully told Samantha within minutes that she was leaving with Samuel.

Samantha knew it wasn't good for the kids to see such inappropriate behavior. She remembered a poem placed on the wall of Daniel's room when he was an infant. Words to "Children Learn What They Live" stuck in her mind. She couldn't remember who wrote it but she remembered one line of the poem. "If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn." She told Rebecca that she and James would leave the party as well.

James, Daniel, and Reba's husband were smoking cigars out on the back porch. They had no idea what happened and looked settled in for the night. Samantha walked back outside to where they sat and told James they were leaving. He smiled and calmly asked if he could finish his cigar. She told him that she would wait for him in the van and asked for the keys.

As Samantha headed for the door, Rachel's friends asked her what was wrong. She told them it was one thing for Rachel and Joy to verbally attack adults, but it was totally inexcusable when they attacked Samuel. They looked at one another in shock. Samantha would truly understand what happened at, and before, the party years later. ⁽¹⁵⁾

15. Information about the Fourth and Sixth Insights in Celestine Prophecy (concerning power games) seemed vital to Samantha but she didn't know why. Samantha didn't know then that she, and the other members of her family, were players and victims of power games, i.e. physic or energy field theft. While reading the book, she saw that someone highlighted the information about energy stealing. She would soon learn the person who read the book before her was her daughter Rebecca.

Energy theft can lessen a person's confidence for humans are often fearful when threatened verbally or physically. They feel forced to pay attention to the person threatening them. This gives the "thief" their energy and helps them to feel stronger while the "victim" feels weaker. Controlling other people with your words or actions is usually done on an unconscious level. Usually, people have no idea that they are involved in "power games." They just know that saying and doing certain things to other people makes them feel stronger. This damaging type of control over others sucks vital energy out of those dominated.

Being conscious of our control drama helps us to focus more clearly on our own path. Learning our own drama (intimidation, interrogation, aloofness, or poor me) frees us to become conscious of our actions. If we are aware, we can find a higher meaning for our lives. We can determine the spiritual reason we were born to our particular families. We realize the Sixth Insight by recognizing how we steal energy from other people. Through awareness of this Insight, "our connection becomes more constant and we can discover our own growth path in life, and our spiritual mission – the personal way we can contribute to the world."

The information sounded familiar but Samantha's understanding of energy stealing was far from complete. A habit she developed in childhood to get attention, Samantha learned, guided the way she stole other people's energy. Yet, one could obtain energy without stealing it from others. Samantha had no idea how important this information would be to her life's purpose for she unknowingly chose to break that particular energy pattern within her soul group.

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Samantha would learn the key to stopping the game several years later. If people feel energy coming in then it is easier for them to give up their way of manipulating for it. Redfield notes the importance, of simultaneously looking beyond the drama at the real person (spirit) in front of you, and consciously sending energy to them.

We generate light energy, Dr. Page notes, by the creative cycle and our willingness to know ourselves more fully. This increases consciousness and exposes new areas for us to focus our attention on.

According to Emmanuel, the soul's greatest need is self-love, which leads us to grow and dispels judgments. Self-love helps to unify us all for we are unable to accept others until we accept ourselves. Expansion comes through the heart and every bit of kindness, and love, which we give to others, adds more Light and power to God's Truth. As Van Praagh notes in his book Talking to Heaven, "Ultimately we all are here to learn love. Without love and awareness of self, we will not know how to love others." Mastering the unconditional love of self, and others, helps us to become enlightened and respect the natural law of cause and effect because we know it is the only way.

Socially isolated people, with low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy, often play energy stealing games. Thieves have either forgotten how to create their own energy or have lost their spiritual connection to God, the Source. The theft is mainly linked to the lower three chakras and Dr. Page notes, it "creates a greater karma than any physical crime." It "mirrors the action of burglary, sexual abuse and the acquisition of land that is already inhabited by others."

Children and those who have a similar naïve view of life are easy victims. People at the highest risk of energy field theft include those with a need to be liked or needed. They may desire harmony at any cost and have a passion to help, or change others, as Daniel did. Some people may need approval or acknowledgment. Of special note, now being much more related to current earth time, fearful people are at high risk of being the victims of "power games."

A Course in Miracles helps us to understand more about the illusory dream world of "power games." Perception didn't exist until we, as individualized parts of God, decided to dream about separation from God. Separation includes all kinds of levels, degrees, aspects, and intervals. Energy, Renard rightly notes, is in the domain of perception. It is not true reality because it changes. God does not change, period.

Later, Samantha would know these "power games," just like everything else on earth, are illusions in a dream world. The thought would help her to get through her later years. This experience would help her and others to move forward in their awareness of God. It was all part of a plan agreed to by everyone involved before they became humans.

Samantha hated the thought of her upset daughter driving and went out through the two-car garage to give her a hug. She knew Rebecca and Samuel were going through a difficult transition period living alone together for the first time. They were opening up their wounds to the psychologist who helped them deal with Samuel's ADHD. Her efforts with psychologists, and research of ADHD, led Samantha to believe the day was a more traumatic event for them than it had been for anyone else.

James walked outside within minutes choosing to leave his cigar behind. Samuel climbed into the plush back seat of his sports van with Samantha while Grandma,

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Terrance, and Joel piled into Rebecca's little car. Samantha saw Joy come out to the front of the house as they all backed out of the drive. Joy stood looking at them shaking her head as if she had no idea what happened. No one knew the events of the day were necessary for "the plan" to work. Joy played her difficult but vital role well.

Samuel burst into tears as the van backed out of the driveway. He asked if the fight was his fault.

"Am I crazy?" he asked as the tears freely flowed down his face.

It took James and Samantha twenty minutes to calm him down and assure him that he did nothing wrong. Samantha resolved to end the humiliation of Daniel's family, at least in front of the children. She had no idea "the plan" included the death of her son.

Much later, she reviewed the photos taken during Daniel's party and saw many orbs around him in various pictures. It comforted her to know his spirit friends had never left him alone and indeed guided the events of the day to ensure that all went according to the Divine Plan.

Chapter Eight Time to Wake Up

Samantha put the pictures of the party on her desktop computer the next day. She enlarged and printed out the one of Abigail crying for she had to make sure the picture looked as bad as she remembered. The frown and crocodile tears that covered Abigail's cheeks were hard to ignore. Sadness and anger consumed her.

Not wanting to see Abigail cry again, Samantha decided she would never subject herself to hostility. Verbal attacks always happened when Daniel's family tried to interact with Abigail in the presence of Rachel or Joy. Samantha resolved to end the abuse by not seeing Abigail when they were around. She hoped it would spare Abigail, and Samuel, from more unnecessary trauma and taped the picture to her computer desk to maintain her resolve.

Samantha looked at the picture every day. She waited in vain for two weeks to get an apology from either Rachel or Daniel. The thought of Abigail seeing, hearing, or being the focus of more verbal attacks tore at her heart. She decided to alert Rachel and Daniel to the unhealthy habit by emailing a short note, along with the picture of Abigail crying.

Maybe, Samantha thought, the email would open their minds to realize what was going on. That would make her effort worthwhile. She knew they'd be angry after they read it but just didn't care for this was her battle. Samantha had to make them see that what Abigail saw, and heard as a child, would mold her actions as she grew up. She thought she'd made a lot of mistakes raising Daniel and Rebecca and wanted her grandchildren to be spared from abuse.

"Wake UP," Samantha wrote in the email subject line. "Here's a picture of Abigail after she watched her mother's irrational, hostile and caustic outburst on me for NOTHING that was my fault at your birthday party Daniel. This attack was only one of many since I've met Rachel. The attack was followed by an attack on Terrance, and then Samuel and Rebecca by Joy.

"I will no longer put Abigail in situations where she is subjected to this kind of behavior. Do not expect me to visit your home until these kinds of attacks are stopped. Rachel and Joy went way TOO FAR this time."

Samantha sent the note quickly without thinking more.

Since they missed their pinochle card game at Daniel's party, the family met at Terrance's the next Sunday. They were all upset and wanted to discuss the party. The rest of the family knew about Samantha's email to Daniel and Rachel. She asked everyone to read it and see the picture of Abigail before the card game began. Then she told them her

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blood pressure was still high after taking double her medication. If they kept discussing it, she would leave. One by one, they quietly read the email and dropped the subject.

Rachel answered Samantha's email a few days later.

"Hi Samantha, I just wanted to respond to your comments about the party. Maybe a little more thought should have gone into your insulting me in front of my friend and my husband. I know and he knows how I work to make a better life for him and our daughter. You, on the other hand, are not around enough to judge this for yourself. As for Joy, I have no jurisdiction over her and her actions. She is an adult and can make any kind of comment she prefers.

"I know for many years you have had a problem with me and my family. Unfortunately, for you I am going to be around for a long time. I love my husband and daughter very much and don't appreciate the continuous brow beating I am subjected to by the entire family. I am sorry you feel this way about me and hope someday things will change and you can give up trying to change me into someone else.

"Abigail is a wonderful little girl and I am sorry if you do not put your own selfish feelings aside for her sake, as I have many, many times. I hope you can understand things from a mother's point of view. Always, R."

A very angry Daniel telephoned Samantha the next day. It was the worse telephone call she ever had. He told her she disrespected his wife at his birthday party. Samantha barely said a word as Daniel yelled and forbade her to ever send them email again. Her body reacted violently as she shook listening to him talk. She felt that she would vomit and tears began to roll down her face. In her mind, her actions caused her to lose her beloved son.

As she listened to Daniel, Samantha heard all of Rachel's words coming through his mouth.

"You have never accepted Rachel and Joy as family," he shouted.

Samantha thought of the many years they celebrated Christmas with Rachel and Joy, along with her father and brother as well. She remembered making the Christmas turkey, wrapping presents for them, and stuffing their Christmas stockings so they wouldn't feel left out.

"You have always put Rachel and Joy down and never had a kind word to say about them," Daniel yelled.

Samantha thought about how everyone in Daniel's family heard Joy and Rachel gossip about them. She remembered how, because of Joy's hostility, Daniel's side of the family hadn't come for Christmas dinner in 2002. Most of Daniel's family enjoyed their Christmas dinner at Ruth and Naomi's house that year. Joy rejoiced knowing they chose to come only for dessert.

Samantha listened to Joy that year as she laughed and repeatedly said, "It's so nice to not have those negative lesbians here. It's so nice to have quiet at Christmas and no one complaining."

Samantha felt bad thinking she betrayed Ruth and Naomi when she failed to disagree with Joy. She kept her mouth shut to avoid Christmas Day conflicts.

A veil of ignorance covered Daniel entirely now. He wasn't acting in his usual sensitive and caring manner as a peacemaker. Daniel's wife had convinced him Samantha was the one who humiliated her. As Daniel yelled over the telephone, Samantha realized what he said happened on the porch was not at all how it occurred. Daniel seemed to be

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unaware of what Rachel said to her. The way he recounted the “party episode” was distorted for it matched Rachel’s way of thinking.

Samantha could tell Rachel covered herself and didn’t tell him what was really said or who started the “porch episode.” When Daniel stopped yelling at her through the telephone, he hung up on her for the first time. Samantha fell to the floor crying over the loss of her son as she clutched her legs in the fetal position.

It was easy to recall the last time she felt the loss of Daniel. Rachel handed her a single, red rose during their wedding ceremony and when she took it, shivers ran up her spine. No one knew she was crying then because she felt Daniel was lost to her. Yet, the feeling in her gut was undeniable at the time. Now she also cried for the loss of Abigail who she feared she would never see again.

Samantha knew Daniel had not meant what he said. He was only acting as protector of his family as she had told him to do months before. She felt he acted according to “the script.” Daniel called his sister in tears as soon as he hung up on Samantha. Rebecca then called to verify that Daniel knew what he said was not true. He was sorry for yelling at his mother and was now distraught over the whole situation.

Samantha had to deal with the issue now because she suspected it was an issue in some of her other lives. She needed to “make things right” this time. She decided to write a letter to reinforce her decision to stop Rachel and Joy’s abusive behavior. The letter wasn’t addressed to anyone but written quickly as the words came into her head. The pen seemed to move quickly by itself as she wrote.

“Through the years after becoming educated and getting counseling, I have tried to teach my children that hostile, caustic, and aggressive confrontation is inappropriate. It is even more inappropriate when practiced regularly by someone who uses this method of invalidation on people by whom they feel threatened.

“In my humble opinion, allowing this kind of behavior to continue, from a key role model in front of a child, only reinforces the belief that it is okay to belittle people in front of others and project ones inadequacies onto others. Until the core issues are dealt with, the behavior will most likely continue. Life skills counseling may be appropriate. People who tend to gossip about and judge others do so to avoid facing their own life issues. Many use projection, meaning they accuse others of what they do themselves.

“These hostile and inappropriate verbal attacks are not new to me. For the sake of family, I have put up with these attacks since before the wedding, at the wedding itself, and over the past seven years. I have been with Abigail when her mother verbally attacked Daniel, Samuel, Rebecca, and me on several occasions for no valid reason.

“I have heard her call Daniel names, such as bastard, in front of Abigail and tell her that “Daddy is leaving us,” both of which are inexcusable. The first time Rachel verbally attacked me was in a public restaurant, when I barely knew her. She scolded me because Rebecca could not meet Rachel’s scheduled bridesmaid dressing appointment due to her full time day job, night school, and caring for her son as a single mother.

“At the wedding itself, two major attacks on me personally and Daniel’s entire family occurred that were totally inexcusable. As my father lay dying in a hospital bed, I had to be subjected once again to a public attack against me by Rachel in the hall of a hotel. The time Rachel ran through my home screaming at Samuel to apologize, with Abigail crying in her arms, and Samuel crying behind the closed bedroom door for something he had not done, was horrifying.

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“I have watched everyone try their best to keep Rachel calm by building up her self esteem with praise, overlooking valid issues, and basically trying to be on guard so as to not “set her off” or give Joy fuel to harm us. And I have “sucked it up” every time Rachel has disrespected us all and tried to keep peace in the family; but now I see that this only leaves the path wider for Rachel and Joy to take advantage of our gracious behavior.

“This abuse must stop. I will no longer be involved in teaching Abigail, and Samuel, that hostile verbal attacks on people, especially for no reason, are normal or appropriate. I love Abigail and Samuel and I realize that their future actions as adults will be based on the actions of their key role models.

“I feel very saddened knowing that Abigail has never really been allowed to visit with her father’s family without some kind of confrontation. This behavior has happened even when we have been especially careful through our words and actions to not do anything that might be misconstrued. It has always been stressful and a chore to defend oneself against unwarranted verbal, and as happened to Rebecca, physical attacks as Rachel chased her down the street in front of Rebecca’s friends.

“Now, when the attacks occur, despite careful monitoring of our behaviors and words, it is inexcusable to continue to allow oneself to be subjected to such abuse as that displayed by Rachel and Joy to myself, then Terrance, Samuel, and Rebecca on the occasion of my son’s thirty-seventh birthday. I realize that they both may have had a bit too much alcohol to drink but that is no excuse.

“I live with enough stress daily, due to numerous medical conditions, without having to increase it by worrying about how my grandchildren will be affected by these verbal attacks and trying to “tiptoe” around Rachel and Joy to avoid them. It is time to no longer be abused verbally for the sake of temporary family cohesiveness.

“I think that the best I can do in order to be a good role model, and protect my grandchildren, is to not put them in situations where they may be harmed again. I will do this by not having contact with Rachel or Joy as this is when the verbal attacks and hostile attitudes occur. I will try my best not to allow the children to be placed in a position where they are set up to experience more behavior that is inappropriate.

“I will no longer see Abigail in the presence of her mother, or Joy, and perhaps that action will spare Abigail from having to see this kind of inappropriate behavior again. As much as I am able, I will protect Samuel from this abuse as well. If Rachel and Joy seek the counseling that they appear to need, perhaps I’ll change my mind when the threat is no longer there. Signed by Daniel’s mom.”

It felt good to write down what happened, to get it all out. Samantha wasn’t quite sure what to do with her letter but as she printed and read it, she knew she’d give it to Daniel. Four years later, she would realize the full extent of what she’d done and why. ⁽¹⁶⁾

16. Samantha now realized the Seventh Insight noted in Celestine Prophecy. She knew her personal mission. The flow of so-called coincidences would continue to guide her toward her destiny. The Seventh Insight became more real as answers to her questions came through dreams and intuitions. Eventually, she would realize we are truly each other’s angels as we synchronistically provide words of wisdom for one another.

Samantha was finally on her soul’s chosen path. It was time for her to clear old patterns of suppression and raise consciousness to new levels of compassion and

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tolerance. Energy stealing was common in Samantha's family. As Dr. Page notes, bullying is common in homes where those bullied regain their self-esteem by shaming others "who are weaker and less able to answer back, such as children, partners and animals." Samantha was no longer willing to play the family's power games but it would be years before she learned exactly what to do.

Her soul knew Abigail's self-worth suffered every time she was affected by the shame and abuse around her. Dr. Page notes, "Whatever the reason, one person gains at the cost of another and the cost to the weaker of the two may be their life as the more delicate systems of immunity, hematology, endocrinology and neurology take the brunt of the power loss." Samantha realized that Daniel had been fatally affected by this human drama. Rebecca's words only weeks before Daniel's accident rang through her head.

"You know Mom; he's not as strong as we are."

Increasing humiliation stripped Daniel of his self-respect and self-worth and robbed him of his power. Yet, Samantha knew Daniel agreed to live through the drama before he came into human form. She would learn, in time, to stop judging others and start listening to the spirit within. As Renard notes, since this is a dream world, it's not valid to judge anything. Yet on earth we can, "Judge ideas, not people. Then accept the true ideas."

Dr. Page stresses that, "...energy generated by the human form is more highly valued spiritually than any material or mineral wealth. In other words, one of the cost-effective forms of fuel is human power, especially from those who are young or in the flow of creativity. Energy stealing is happening all the time and is more successful when an individual is shamed, fearful or in despair, for then they will easily surrender their energy to the lowest bidder."

Chapter Nine The Last Visit

Samantha's mind filled with too many thoughts. She had lived many lives, even in her current life, and was haunted by the past. It was again time to change how she lived. When she thought of her past, it seemed as if someone else had gone through the experiences. She no longer associated herself with this person but kept the memory of lessons learned. Someone else's bruised body stood behind a locked bathroom door as a man screamed on the other side for her to let him in.

"Yeah," this someone thought. "Let him in so he can continue to beat me because he feels inadequate. God, what a life this one has been. I need to write a book."

Samantha believed writing a book would help women who felt locked into an abusive lifestyle. Now, she wanted to help her family grow and contribute to the world. She wanted to help people realize they can change their lives and leave the world a better place. Yet, it was difficult to get any work done because she wanted to enjoy the little things in life again like the sun, on her skin, and the clouds as they rolled by in the sky.

Exhausted from doctors, tests, and treatments, Samantha was tired of getting back to a point where her quality of life was up to an eight, on the doctor's scale of ten, only to get another diagnosis with suggestions for more tests, invasive treatments, and surgeries that again decreased her quality of life.

Restrictions seemed to rule her world. Samantha was tired of not being able to eat and drink certain things, weary of taking medications, and worn-out fighting the nausea they caused. It bothered her when she had to drink more, and more, water just to get pills down past the lump in her throat. Because she wanted to stop hurting, to stop the constant pain in her body most of all, she continued to take the drugs hoping they would eventually help.

Samantha was tired of "sucking it up" when dealing with inadequate people whose low self-esteem led them to try and make others feel bad. It was becoming more difficult to agree for the sake of keeping peace in the family, holding back her thoughts derived out of more than fifty years of experience. Watching other people and knowing their harmful words hurt Abigail and Samuel exhausted her. She was tired of living life, as she knew it. There had to be a better way to live and she was going to find it.

Thoughts about the granddaughter she rarely saw constantly filled her mind. She began to do things differently attending more family events instead of working on her failing business. Forcing herself out of the house to watch Samuel play T-ball at the ball

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field seemed to increase her energy. The weather was hotter than she cared for but it felt good to breathe fresh air.

Even as the sweat rolled down her face, and the sun burned, it still seemed worth the effort to get out of the house. It made her feel more alive and part of the world again. She felt good while playing catch with the smaller kids even if the girls reminded her of Abigail. Samantha looked into one girl's huge, brown eyes and tried to pretend they were blue like Abigail's, like Sherman's had been. She missed Abigail and Daniel terribly.

The "party episode" ran repeatedly in her brain and she wondered what could have prevented it. Rachel's verbal attack was part of their contract. Samantha thought a change in her tone of voice when she replied to Rachel might have made a difference. But she was tired of coddling her so she could see her son and granddaughter.

Daniel telephoned his mother nearly a month after his birthday party. He asked if she would watch Abigail the next day while he went to see the acupuncturist with Rebecca. A happy Samantha readily agreed. She was ecstatic to learn of his plan to go with Rebecca, at least once a month, leaving Abigail with her during that time. She hung up the telephone planning to videotape Abigail's visit for her collection of family tapes.

Daniel didn't know of her plan to video their visit as she set up the camera in the corner of the living room. It turned out to be the last video of her son. Samantha set up the little table and chair stored away before they arrived the next day. She had taken it apart after Daniel's call and hid it in the hall closet so she wouldn't be reminded of Abigail and Daniel. She then placed Abigail's toys where she last left them or could easily see them.

The video camera recorded the sound of his noisy truck as it pulled into the drive. Abigail's loud crying filled the air as Daniel opened the truck's door. He carried her through the kitchen and into the hall that led to the living room. For the first time, he did not walk through the dining room to the living room where the video camera was set up. Samantha watched the video with disappointment later and saw Daniel wasn't on it.

They stood together in the small hallway as Abigail cried in his arms. Daniel apologized for yelling at Samantha through the telephone.

"I understand," Samantha said, but she wasn't quite sure that she did. She did not say it was okay.

Daniel returned his attention to Abigail who appeared upset over being at Nana and Papa's house. She wanted to go back to Grandma Joy's house. They all spent a few minutes in the bathroom as Abigail proved what a big girl she was by going to the bathroom all by herself.

Abigail calmed down and stopped crying after Samantha spoke softly to her but seemed very shy. Daniel kissed his beautiful daughter and told her he would return after his appointment. He lovingly handed her to Samantha who counted on two hours of caring for her. Abigail seemed more at ease as Samantha pointed out her toys and they began to play with them.

They had five precious hours together before Daniel returned. He didn't explain why it had taken him so long and again avoided being filmed, even as he joined them on the floor to draw smiley faces. Samantha knew he wanted her to have as much time with Abigail as possible. She handed him copies of the four sheets of paper written weeks before. They held her account of what happened at his birthday party along with the page written twelve days before while waiting for an apology.

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Samantha told Daniel it would mean a lot to her if he read them. He glanced at the papers, shoved them in his back jeans pocket, and told her he would. Then he picked up Abigail while Samantha got her bag of toys. They joked and laughed all the way to his SUV. After he put Abigail gently into her car seat, he kissed and hugged Samantha and announced that he would see her later.

Daniel called her back after she again said goodbye and headed for the house. He stood in front of his SUV and paused as if deciding what to say. And then he told her he didn't think he and Rachel would be able to join the family for vacation in May. She said she understood and they kissed one another and hugged tightly again.

The last two years of their family vacation was different from other years. Daniel and Rachel drove down to the Keys in their huge recreational vehicle (RV). The RV held both of their Skidoo's along with everything else they needed. It was too big to go under the bridge to camp near the cabins where the rest of the family stayed. Daniel and Rachel camped at a spot almost two blocks away from the cabins.

The entire family was disappointed to have Daniel further away. They all missed their usual closeness at mealtimes and card games. Daniel and Rachel spent less time with them than in previous years. Daniel's mood, at the time, seemed to be less upbeat and the family worried about him.

Now as Samantha and Daniel stood in the driveway in front of his SUV they seemed reluctant to let go of each other. Samantha finally began to walk towards the house again. Daniel called her back as he opened the driver's side door to his SUV. He promised to bring Abigail to see her at least once a month. Daniel wanted to continue his visits with Rebecca to the acupuncturist. For the third time, they hugged tightly and kissed each other goodbye before he and Abigail drove away.

It was the last time she saw her son, the precious baby she planned to conceive at 15-years-old. She thought his conception insured that she would have someone to love for the rest of her life. Samantha believed he would always be there to love her.

Now, Samantha thought her action to have him was selfish. Maybe that was why God took him away from her. She didn't have a clue that his death would help her to wake-up to who she really was.

Samantha thought later that they both knew it would be the last time they would see each other. Watching the video of that day again, she heard his voice but never saw the full image of his body. Daniel always liked to be videotaped and made home movies fun by joking around in them but this time he avoided the camera. Samantha didn't think he consciously knew the video camera was on. It was clear his mind was distracted on the last day she saw him.

Rebecca asked for help days after Daniel's visit. In a constant state of panic, she suffered many ruptured, ovarian cysts over the past year. The health insurance counted on while working was gone. Money was hard to get so going to the hospital emergency room was out of the question. Rebecca counted on being with her mother when the pain got intense. Samuel stayed with his aunts because she did not want him to see her in pain. Samantha kept busy caring for her and forgot about everything else.

Rebecca was always afraid of dying during the attacks. She took the pain pills prescribed by her doctor and together they waited for the cysts to rupture so the pain would stop. Samuel was doing better than before but was now on three medications. The

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doctors prescribed a drug for asthma, one for ADHD, and one for depression. It seemed that Daniel, Rebecca, and Samuel were suffering as much as Samantha was now. ⁽¹⁷⁾

17. As noted earlier, we are here as humans to further our spiritual growth. Earth is the only place that allows us to take on human form. Areas of our body that resist the soul consciousness can develop dysfunction depending on the needs of our soul. Illness often occurs when we deny our soul's needs.

It was time for Daniel, Rebecca, Samuel, and Samantha to begin the process of awakening to their true nature. As noted in The Disappearance of The Universe, "You must be vigilant only for God. This state of mind does not come all at once; it takes a lot of practice." Samantha would later believe that the "process" would be much shorter for returning souls in future years.

James decided to take a full week off to fish in the Everglades during the last few days of March. He planned to return late on Sunday, April 4, 2004. He returned home unexpectedly on Saturday, hours before Daniel's accident. Rebecca was back home by then. Samantha couldn't help but wonder if the four sheets of paper she gave Daniel had something to do with his death. She intuitively knew he had read the pages.

Chapter Ten The Aftermath

Most of the family made a special attempt to share Easter together. Fond memories of celebrating the day with Daniel and Rachel filled their minds. They wanted this day to be happy and filled with fun activities. Everyone remembered the Easter egg hunts and fun atmosphere Rachel created after Abigail's birth. Samantha took many pictures and later saw the first evidence of what she believed to be orbs, evidence of spirits around them.

She learned about orbs after Daniel died by searching for "spirit orbs" on the Internet (www.psychicinvestigators.net). What guided her to search the phenomenon was a mystery. Samantha knew what she suspected was true when she read books by John Edwards three years later. There is a life beyond this one and the ability to receive, and send, messages from the Otherside is real.

Samantha still cried throughout the day while James worked. Sometimes Daniel's spirit broke through her grief to let her know he was near. She looked up at the window screen in the bathroom one day and saw a smiley face. From then on, she sat on the toilet whenever she grieved, to look at the smiley face. It was a bit odd getting used to talking with him there but as Daniel's spirit connected with her, it became easier to do.

She knew Daniel had found a way to put the smiley face there. It was etched into the side frame of the screen. Daniel's voice spoke to her inside her mind as she looked at the face with delight. It was a comforting reminder that her sunshine spirit was still around. She decided he spent a lot of time in-between worlds visiting people who thought he left.

Rachel, still reeling in shock with the sudden death of her husband, had to deal with news reporters. The South Florida Sun-Sentinel quickly published an account of Daniel's accident. It noted he tried to change lanes while driving his Suzuki Hayabusa motorcycle on the Interstate and hit the rear of a car. Rachel's local paper published their account as well adding that Daniel's Chinese-made motorcycle could travel at high rates of speed. There was no doubt in Samantha's mind that Daniel pushed his motorcycle to the limit. "Take it to the Limit" by the Eagles was one of their favorite songs.

Samantha knew Rachel was having a difficult time dealing with the loss of Daniel. She emailed her links to Internet Web sites that might help Abigail deal with her daddy's death and offered to visit. Depressed and distraught, Rachel emailed back and admitted she also communicated with Daniel. She invited Samantha to visit for a few days.

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Daniel's spirit prompted Samantha to show Rachel only unconditional love. She was ecstatic to sense him and did everything she could to keep his presence with her. When Samantha arrived the following week, Daniel's spirit supported them as they grieved together. Samantha sensed she was there to help them both deal with the guilt they felt over his death. She apologized to Rachel for their stormy relationship, especially during the past year.

Samantha said things sometimes without knowing why. She told Rachel that she was precious to her and let her know how grateful she was for Abigail. Samantha knew it had not been easy for her to give birth to a child in her late thirties. She was thankful Rachel did it with great anticipation and love. Rachel was very careful not to smoke, drink, or do anything that might affect Abigail's development as she grew in her womb.

Samantha stressed the vital role Rachel played in helping Daniel to get home to heaven. She told her it was part of Rachel's contract with Daniel to bear his only child before he died. No one was to blame for his death. He met his destiny with Rachel's help and that was a good thing. Sometimes Rachel's face showed a hint of recognition as she listened.

It wouldn't be easy for Rachel to live in the home they'd bought less than eight months before Daniel's death. Samantha knew by her own experience, and Rebecca's, that it wasn't easy to raise a child without a father. Everyone else in the family held memories. Some had pictures, family videos, cassette tapes, presents and cards he'd given them. Rachel bore the burden of hanging on to everything they accumulated over the course of their twelve-year relationship.

She knew his ashes and other things in the house would remind Rachel of Daniel. It would have been too much for Samantha to bear looking at his things every day. She told Rachel she was grateful for the strong role she continued to play caring for Abigail. At the time, Samantha failed to see this as a blessing. She didn't thank Rachel for keeping his things.⁽¹⁸⁾

18. Gratefulness would be more common for Samantha as she realized that Rachel's role was to help her. Samantha's supposed loss was easier as Rachel bore the burden of keeping the things Daniel and Rachel had shared. Raising Abigail while working a full time job would not be easy for her. With Daniel's prompting, Samantha learned to periodically encourage and thank Rachel for the wonderful job she did.

Years later Samantha would realize that Rachel helped her to learn the most valuable lesson of human life, forgiveness. Renard notes our "real life" depends on completely forgiving others. Dr. Page reports, "...true forgiveness is the result of recognizing there is no separation between ourselves and the person who has offended, for we are all one." Since we are in a dream world anyway, there really is nothing to forgive. There is One in which we all live, and move, and have all being.

Samantha knew she would not have learned the lesson of forgiveness without Rachel's efforts to help her. In essence as her spiritual friend and ally, Rachel agreed to play the difficult role of 'a bad guy' because of their eternal love for one another. Her role in this game of life was of utmost importance to Samantha's increasing spiritual awareness.

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It was hard for Samantha to watch Rachel and Abigail deal with the challenges of their new unwanted lifestyle. She kept trying to stop Rachel from feeling guilty about Daniel's death. She told her his "accident" was preordained. It was something she sensed strongly. A few years later, author James Van Praagh confirmed her suspicion in *Talking to Heaven*. He notes we all choose how we will die before we enter the earth plane.

Samantha spent a lot of time telling Rachel that Daniel knew it was his destiny to help her have Abigail. There were several times when his girlfriends could have bore him a child. But Daniel refused to be a father. Daniel knew what it was like to grow up without a father and he did not want that to happen to any child of his. He knew in his gut that when he became a father he would die. Daniel subconsciously knew he would not be there to help raise his child. He adored Abigail and never wanted to leave her.

Rachel looked confused to hear that souls wisely plan their earth life before birth. ⁽²⁾ She listened as Samantha noted how carefully she chose Daniel's name so they'd have a clue as to his destiny. Samantha didn't realize then that part of his reason for being on earth was to help her wake-up to Reality.

We make this dream world with our thoughts. Samantha thought it was very difficult being with Rachel and Abigail. She didn't care for herself but carefully watched Abigail, ignoring her rigorous medication schedule, as Rachel talked endlessly on the telephone. The pain in her body was intense but she felt she deserved it.

Samantha was grateful to be with Rachel and Abigail and didn't care if she had to suffer through small inconveniences. They all slept together in the king size bed Daniel and Rachel bought for their new house. Samantha kept quiet even though she thought it odd to sleep on Daniel's side of the bed. She rarely went to the other end of the house where the guest room remained empty. It became known as Joy's room several months after Daniel and Rachel bought the house.

Daniel's spirit was with them. Sometimes when she tried to take pictures her new camera refused to work. She finally sensed Daniel didn't want her taking certain pictures. He seemed in constant contact with her using non-verbal communication (NVC). She was unfamiliar with the term NVC but later recognized the phenomena after reading books on the subject by Robert Monroe. She called it mental telepathy.

Samantha tried to establish a new relationship with Abigail for the girl now seemed distant to her. She was not acting as she had when Samantha watched her alone. It was an effort for Samantha to refrain from holding Abigail, singing to her, and rocking her as in the past. She felt in her gut that she needed to learn the lessons of forgiveness and patience. Samantha was there for Rachel, not for Abigail, and remained silent many times when she would otherwise have spoken.

Daniel told her to look in his beloved work truck on the third day of Samantha's visit. Rachel agreed to let her search it. Her knees hurt when she raised them so the climb into his truck was slow. Trying to ignore the pain, she climbed up on the floor board and lifted her overweight body into the passenger seat.

Daniel's presence was strong when the truck's silver door closed behind her but she had no idea what to look for. Samantha closed her eyes and then would have bet her life that he was there in human form. Holding back tears, she began to look around the seats while talking out loud.

"Just tell me what to look for," she asked Daniel's spirit.

The words coming into her mind were clear.

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“Look inside the glove box.”

She noticed a bulky black case that took up most of the space inside the large storage area. With a sudden flash of recognition, she realized it held his music CD's. Music had always been a big part of their lives. Samantha unzipped the case and looked through the CDs. Some of them were the ones she repeatedly played in the 1970's when Daniel became interested in music.

She heard Daniel directing her to take the case home the next day but had no idea why. It was enough that he communicated with her and she was grateful to feel him near her. Samantha cried as she left the truck wondering if his presence would ever return. She took the CDs home the next day, with Rachel's permission, after promising to return them the following week.

The drive home that evening seemed short as she sped down the turnpike. Samantha was in a hurry to review the CDs and learn why she had them. James was asleep when she pulled into their driveway so she entered the house quietly and closed the door of the home office behind her. She put her headphones on and as the music played, she was grateful to feel Daniel's presence again.

Daniel guided her by choosing songs for her to copy. His soul was still in transition choosing certain songs while she tried to listen to them all. She realized he was showing her through his music exactly how he felt when he died. He wanted her to know his state of mind when the accident occurred. Her goal was to believe that Daniel had been miserable for she felt better thinking he was now happy to be free. Daniel's goal of making the new CDs was much different from hers.

“No, not that one Mom,” she heard. “Listen to the song that's next.” Sometimes she heard, “Move on to the next CD.”

There was a lot of misery in the music and it saddened her to hear it. Yet, she also heard uplifting songs, about Spirit and the Otherside, which she never thought would interest him. Samantha copied all of the songs as directed onto new CDs. She made eleven CDs of songs Daniel listened to often in the months before he died. The songs seemed to reflect both his state of mind when he died and what his state of being was when his spirit guided her to make them.

The following week she returned Daniel's CDs to Rachel. And then something out of the ordinary happened to Abigail and Samantha. She felt Daniel's presence on the first night of her visit while standing in front of the sliding glass doors that led to the back porch. They were watching Bruiser, the big, brown, pit bull puppy out on the back porch. Daniel had gotten the puppy shortly before he passed away and it was quite a handful for Rachel and Abigail to take care of.

Bruiser had never acted the way he did on that day. He moaned and growled at the same time as he pressed his nose to the sliding glass door. Abigail and Samantha watched and in unison both said, “Yes, it's okay.” Samantha didn't know why she said the words. They just popped out of her mouth. Abigail touched the window where Bruiser's nose was.

“It's okay Daddy,” she announced in a calm, grown-up voice.

Samantha was awestruck. A startled Rachel bolted up from the kitchen behind them. She swept Abigail into her arms as Samantha held back tears. Bruiser seemed very distraught, still trying to communicate with them. She felt Abigail got the message and

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knew the child's power to connect with her daddy was strong. Later after reading *The Secret of Shambhala*, Samantha learned that all babies are more in tune with God.

Samantha returned home the next morning. Rachel telephoned her a few days later to report Bruiser died suddenly. Rachel, Abigail, and Daniel's friend Jude took him out to run around the county roads by the house. Bruiser collapsed at the side of the road and quickly died. Abigail watched as the dog died to be with her daddy. It was the second of several deaths Abigail would experience.⁽¹⁹⁾

19. Samantha consoled herself believing that Abigail, as we all have, chose what her experiences would be in this life. The decision to return to human form is based on unconscious guilt. Souls choose things to help them learn and grow with help from their teachers and companions before they are born. Every aspect of the soul's needs are "profoundly studied" before incarnation. Abigail's soul chose lessons to help promote spiritual growth.

It's common for souls to travel in the same group many times. Yet, Samantha really didn't feel as connected to Abigail as she did to her own children. She knew the connection between Abigail and Rachel was much stronger. Abigail's soul chose to learn about loss at a very early age. Compassion would come easily to her in later years as she remembered what it was like to lose her loved ones. She would learn other lessons at an early age as well.

Rachel didn't think Abigail knew her daddy "had passed." But Abigail repeatedly went around the corner outside to "talk to Daddy." All three of Daniel's dogs moved on to the Otherside to be with him within ten months. Blind Sassy, the black malamute that had been with him for sixteen years, died quietly of old age before Christmas. Bear, the German Shepard, died the next year when his stomach turned upside down. He lived for a short time after his late night surgery.

Samantha felt guided to visit the used bookstore before she returned for a third week of spending time with Rachel and Abigail. She hadn't been there in a long time but knew she could find a book that would help her deal with Daniel's death. Since she didn't know where to look for such a book she asked one of the clerks for help.

The clerk knowingly directed her to the book section she wanted and told her to just look at the titles. In a self-assured voice, he noted that the books would choose her. She would feel an undeniable urge to buy a book that was meant for her. She chose six books including *Celestine Prophecy*, *Journeys out of the Body* and *Many Lives, Many Masters*. The store's owner let her get two more free books when she paid for the first six.

Daniel directed Samantha to show family members the books three weeks before their annual family vacation in the cabins at Bahia Honda State Park. Each one, including Rachel, was to pick a book they wanted to read. They were to return the books so another book could be read if desired. Samantha did as she was told and almost everyone in the family chose a book to read while on vacation.

The books Samantha read helped her learn more about death and the afterlife. Guided to read books by authors such as John Edwards and Dr. Brian Weiss, she learned about past lives and destiny. As she read *Many Lives, Many Masters* she got the feeling

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that perhaps she had wronged Rachel or Joy in a past life. Samantha intuitively knew this time she must rectify the past to clear the karma created in other lives. ⁽²⁰⁾

20. Karmic Law works through the Medium of the World-Soul according to the teachings of Ernest Holmes. This mental tendency is both individual and Universal and the result of how humans use their mentality. Things that the individual sets in motion through the law ultimately “swing back” to the thinker.

Emmanuel’s Book notes karma is really a mode of learning not “a balancing of books.” Karma is a set of circumstances humans choose in each life they live “to find areas not yet in truth.” We are the creators of everything that happens to us to help us have experiences that propel our transformation back to the Light. No soul gives itself more work than it can do. There’s a resolution to every experience, either through karmic action, or by the grace of God.

Karmic ties are released through our willingness to grow. After humans live many lives, it becomes possible to “put the limited, doubting mind to the service of the heart.” Humans seek Truth to finally return to the One in which we live, and move, and have all being. “The very act of incarnation is the statement of a soul’s yearning to become one again with the Light.”

Daniel’s spirit prompted Samantha to get out of bed in the middle of the night during the third time she stayed at Rachel’s house. He directed her through the breakfast nook and kitchen to his home office. She thought Daniel might have written her a note before he died. They had the habit of writing one another notes since he was ten-years-old.

His last written communication was a series of faxes showing that James and Samantha could easily live nearby. Daniel read the daily newspaper and circled jobs that fit their abilities so they could see there was work nearby. He faxed them listings of houses for sale as well. Samantha was touched at the time. She treasured the faxes and hoped they would soon be near one another again.

As she sat in his home office trying to figure out where to look, Samantha saw a pile of condolences. The number of people who sent their thoughts amazed her even though her family said many people were at the funeral. She had no idea that so many coworkers and neighbors from their old neighborhood came to say their goodbyes. Samantha was also amazed to see notes from people they had known before Daniel met Rachel. She hadn’t seen the notes before and wondered if the people had gotten a thank you card.

Samantha suddenly felt Daniel’s presence in the room and began to cry in a state between grief and joy. He told her to make copies of people’s names that had sent flowers and cards and of those who signed the book at the funeral home. She returned to bed within an hour after storing the list in her bag. Rachel and Abigail were still sleeping soundly.

In the morning, Rachel again jokingly told Samantha about Abigail’s talks with her daddy. Abigail was still going outside and around the corner of the house to “talk to Daddy.” And now she was demanding that Rachel put a plate of food down for him at the dinner table for he was sitting with them in his usual place. Abigail was a very insistent

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and perceptive two-year-old and Rachel put the food on the table to please her. ⁽²¹⁾ She then thought about taking Abigail to see a child psychologist.

21. Samantha would hear information several years later, which verified that Abigail indeed had seen her daddy at dinnertime. While listening to The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying on cassette tapes she would learn that many entities still feel hunger for a number of weeks after death, including those who have died suddenly such as Daniel.

The dead may not realize they are now out of their bodies. They often return to their loved ones acting as usual and trying to communicate with them. Some require more time to recognize they are no longer in human form. Daniel was one of those entities since his death was so sudden. Samantha remembered watching the movie "Sixth Sense" starring Bruce Willis. He played the role of a man who didn't realize he was dead for a long time.

Samantha made the best use of what little time she had alone with Abigail. She told her that Daddy Daniel and Nana would always be in her heart, and in her blood, and nothing could ever change that. All Abigail needed to do was to talk to Nana in her mind and she would hear her. Samantha didn't understand why but the words just flowed from her lips.

She also didn't recall why Daniel wanted her to copy the list of people but remembered when she got back home. Daniel's spirit directed her to type up Rachel's address on postal return labels. Samantha sent thank you notes to many of the people on the list. Daniel wanted them to know he cherished their time together. She was amazed at the specific messages he gave her for his friends. She signed every message as if it had come from Daniel's family and was thankful to do something to help her son.

The visits to see Rachel and Abigail ended the following week when Rachel found the four sheets of paper Samantha gave Daniel to read two weeks before he died. She telephoned Samantha and told her to never visit them again.

Now Samantha was even more depressed for she felt the loss of Rachel and Abigail. She watched the videos of their visits and noticed a lot of static on the tapes. It was the first time on her videos that static made it hard to hear recorded sounds. She learned that static could be a sign of paranormal activity when videotaping, while watching the movie "White Noise" the following year. As in the movie, the white noise looked like "static" or "snow." The phenomena continued to occur in subsequent family videos.

Chapter Eleven Woo, Woo Times

The telephone rang several times after Daniel's death but no one was on the line when Samantha picked up the receiver. After saying hello, she'd listen intently for the caller to identify themselves. There were no human sounds to hear, no dial tone, nothing but static. She always hung up the receiver, confused, thinking someone was playing tricks on her.

Samantha realized later that other people were also familiar with after-death communications (ADCs). In a popular book, *Hello from Heaven*, it's noted that ADCs are spiritual gifts intended to increase our spiritual awareness of who we are and why we're here. They also alert us to the truth that there is no death and we all have a love for others that's eternal.

Daniel's spirit soon told her it was time to stop listening to the eleven CDs they made. The CDs had served their purpose. It was time to move on and so they were weaned down to three with his guidance. She still listened to some of the original songs but began to play the last three CDs more often. Daniel then directed her to stop listening to some of the songs on those disks. They no longer reflected the awareness of his spirit. Now she had to make a memorial CD to give to family and friends.

The memorial CD held songs related to his accident and the Otherside. They acknowledged there is no loss, no death. Samantha was surprised to hear "Inside Us All" by CREED. The song notes a piece inside everyone that helps them to carry on. Her awareness of that piece in the core of her heart grew daily, as the song became her mantra.

The first year after Daniel's death was the hardest for Samantha's spiritual growth. Grief consumed her. Years before he passed, Daniel announced that her business efforts were a waste of time. He reversed his thinking a few months before he died and told her to keep the business going. Staying focused on work helped because it was something she could control.

Odd things were happening but she usually ignored them. Her desktop computer that had worked so perfectly before was now making work difficult. The desk was in the back corner of her home office. Samantha sat with her back turned towards the windows and away from the door. She often sang as she worked. A strange thing happened several times when she sang along to "I Miss You" by Sandra Pires, the one song that reminded her of Daniel. She sang as tears ran down her face.

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“I miss you. No one could take the place of you. No one could love me like you do.”

The first few times she felt a presence, she stopped singing thinking James had walked into the room. Yet, when she turned around to greet him, no one was there. After searching the house several times and finding no one, she recognized Daniel’s presence.
(22)

22. More than three years later, as Samantha edits this section of the book, the radio begins to play “Heaven Knows” by Donna Summer. It was, at one time, a favored song. Her attention is averted, from typing to the song, when she hears, “Heaven knows it’s not the way it should be and Heaven knows it’s not the way it could be.”

Those words mean more to Samantha now. Singing was one of the ways that relieved the pain and grief she felt. Singing always makes her feel better. It is as if she’s connecting to God sometimes when she sings certain songs. Samantha doesn’t believe in coincidences and knows the song played to let her know she is finally back on her soul’s chosen path.

Just like everyone else in the family, Rebecca and pre-teen Samuel also find it difficult to get over Daniel’s death. Rebecca feels Daniel’s presence as well. She is now able to work but major medical issues continue to make her miserable. Samantha picks Samuel up from school several days a week and keeps him until Rebecca finishes her workday.

Samantha had always liked to drive when times were difficult for her. She was in control of where she went and that made her feel better. Driving her car was more enjoyable now because Daniel’s spirit usually came through when she listened to his CDs. One sunny day a small part of “Keep the Faith” by Bon Jovi started to play erratically. The same words repeated over, and over again.

“Mother, Father, there are things I’ve done I can’t erase.”

This continued for several minutes while Samantha became increasingly distraught. Tears began to run down her face as she heard Daniel asking for forgiveness. Samantha wiped them away with the back of her hand so the other drivers wouldn’t see them as she cried and continued to drive. She called out to the air around her.

“Stop it. There is nothing to forgive.”

The CD player then switched to play another song. Samantha felt a strong sense of relief as she patted the seat next to her knowing Daniel’s spirit got the message.

Daniel’s spirit continued to reach out both day and night. When she was too tired to do any work, she’d sit in front of the television and cry filled with grief. The sound of the television drowned out her sobs. One night the television channel switched to MTV where a music video was playing “The Power of Love.” The television continued to switch channels on its own over the next few months. She then started watching late night comedies waiting for Daniel’s spirit to come.

Every chance she got Samantha watched the video finished on the day of his funeral. One night, she repeatedly watched the part when they were on a Keys family vacation. Being the jokester that he was, Daniel had bought a huge, blackish, brown, plastic, palmetto bug. He planned to trick everyone with it.

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He attached the plastic bug to the door leading out to the view of the Bay in the morning. It was hard to miss seeing since everyone went out that door. Some of them were frightened but they all had a good laugh. The fake palmetto bug remained a source of laughter throughout the day.

Samantha cried bitter tears thinking of how they would have to bear their first family vacation without him. After a while, she got up to get a drink to get her through the night. She saw a palmetto bug as soon as she turned on the light in the kitchen. It was just about the size of the one in the video and ran across her right foot. She screamed in terror.

James jumped up out of bed and ran into the kitchen. He chased the bug around the room and squashed it with his left foot. It was the first of many palmetto bugs Samantha saw in the house over the next year. They appeared every time she watched the video segment of Daniel's plastic palmetto bug. She finally stopped watching the video but occasionally saw a bold one in her kitchen or living room.

Sometime later in her spiritual progress, Samantha learned that Daniel had been trying to break through the veil to communicate with her. She was so wrapped up in the grief of thinking he was gone that it was harder for his spirit to break through from the Otherside.

Many times the bugs would appear when James was not home. Samantha eventually learned to chase them herself. She killed them and flushed them all down the toilet at first. But then she began to think she was to let them live. They were messengers sent by the spirit of her son to let her know he was still around. She was to treat them with love.

Samantha started to talk to them in her mind and thank them for coming. Then she let them know they belonged outside and she was going to release them. She told them she would not hurt them. All they needed to do was be still to be picked up and carried outside. She used a paper towel to pick them up and was amazed that they let her. James really wondered about her sanity when he saw her do it.

Depressed after midnight one night, she opened the kitchen cupboard to get a cup for ice cream. A palmetto bug quickly jumped onto her chest. She panicked immediately, screamed, and brushed it off onto the floor. James was fishing in the Everglades so she was alone in the house. She began angrily cussing at Daniel out loud.

"This isn't funny," she said stamping her feet up and down on the linoleum floor.

"Oh, come on Mom," she heard Daniel reply. "Lighten up. You have to admit it is."

Samantha could see him laughing in her mind. He thought it was funny because he scared her more than he had when they were in the Keys. It was his way of letting her know he was still around. She wasn't happy about the way he did it and asked him to find other ways to alert her of his presence. Daniel told her to stop grieving. He wanted her to be happy. He wanted her to have some fun for a change. She agreed to try and then made a new rule that she only wanted to see certain creatures. Her preferred list started out as only butterflies, birds, and cats but soon expanded.

The rest of the family tried to stop grieving as well. The following month before their annual Keys vacation, Rebecca, proudly but with great sadness, graduated from community college. The day was spectacular with scattered clouds in a bright blue sky that contrasted the green, finely manicured lawn. Samantha stood in the crowd of people

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on the lawn with Samuel and Terrance who had just dyed his brown hair a hue of red orange. The perfect temperature only hinted of heat when they massed tightly into the throng of people.

Graduates began to file by them in what seemed to be a never-ending line. Samantha fought back tears as she looked for her beautiful, short daughter. She knew Rebecca's graduation was a bittersweet experience without her brother. Daniel and Rebecca dropped out of high school before graduating just like their mother. They also got their equivalency diploma but did not wait as long as Samantha did to get it. Daniel followed his little sister's lead and got his equivalency diploma years after her. Rebecca finished the requirements for her associate's degree at age twenty-nine.

Samantha knew Rebecca could not stop thinking about him. None of them could. She knew Terrance missed Daniel too. Daniel and Terrance were only two-years apart in age. They grew up together as if they were brothers. Samantha knew Daniel was with them in spirit and her feelings were verified when a stranger approached them.

Samantha spotted Rebecca in front of a tall, younger blonde. She wore "that" fake smile on her face. The all too familiar smile said, "I am pleased with myself but can not be happy because Daniel is gone."

"There she is," Samantha yelled out as Rebecca stood among people a foot, or more, taller than she was.

A stranger's voice filled the air, "Even though you're the shortest person, you're ten feet tall today," he announced loudly as Rebecca passed by.

Samantha knew with all of her broken heart that the words came from Daniel. The experience gave her new insight knowing that God does indeed work in mysterious ways. God works through stranger's words, angels and other unseen beings. God also works by putting thoughts into our minds that we would never have known on our own. We are never alone. All we need do is ask God for help and we get it.

Other things were happening to alert Samantha of Daniel's presence. She missed seeing Abigail and Rachel, as well as Daniel, and learned she had the power to reach out to Abigail. Sometimes Daniel came to take Samantha to his daughter. In Samantha's mind, she saw Abigail with Daniel in the wee hours of the morning. She seemed to fly with him from her house to Rachel's the first few times. Samantha remembered flying over certain landmarks that were between their houses. After a few trips, it seemed that she was in her room one minute and at Rachel's house the next.

Abigail was always sleeping in bed with Rachel when they arrived. Daniel lovingly picked Abigail up out of bed and together they took her to the next room. He'd sit down on his favorite, green, leather, Lazy Boy and hold Abigail in his lap. Samantha would then sit on the edge of the chair. They always rocked back and forth, as Samantha stroked Abigail's long hair. And then Samantha would sing songs as she did when babysitting. She seemed to stay with them for a few songs before she returned to her own bed.

The first Mother's Day without Daniel was tough. Samantha began her work early trying to update her nutrition handouts. The computer refused to work properly. It wouldn't install her camera software. The software helped her to print out PDF files that were vital to her business. She sat quietly trying to decide what to do.

A sudden thought came to her that she might have lost or deleted a necessary file. She opened up the Windows Explorer and looked at all the file names. One file name

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grabbed her attention and she clicked on it without thinking. A screen saver quickly covered the computer monitor. It read, "WE LOVE YOU MOM." The pink letters scrolled across a solid blue screen. Samantha broke down and cried tears of grief and joy.

She found it odd to find the file on Mother's Day. Daniel obviously hid it for her before he died. It was a heartbreaking thought but it filled her with joy to know that his spirit guided her to find it. She tried to remember when he could have changed the screen saver. In a short time, she learned that he made the file a few months before he died.

Daniel and Rachel had come over after work to pick up Abigail. They planned to go out to dinner so Samantha left the room to change her clothes. The video camera was in her hand when she returned. Daniel sat at her computer desk as Rachel changed Abigail's diaper. She asked him what he was up to but he just smiled, got up, and led her out the door. God is always reaching out to us through other people.

Rebecca came to pick Samantha up minutes after she solved the mystery. They spent the rest of the day at Lydia's Mother's Day family gathering. It was the first time Samantha left the house for a social event since Daniel's death. She spent some time talking with Hannah who was still undergoing treatment for brain cancer.

Chapter Twelve Family at Play

Daniel's family vacations with heavy hearts the following week. They all thought Daniel, Rachel, and Abigail would be with them when they made the reservations eleven months earlier. Their two rented cabins sit next to each other so most of the adults travel back and forth before lulling themselves to sleep with alcohol.

Samantha feels Daniel's presence and is happy every time something odd happens. She no longer feels like videotaping family events, but since vacation fills with unexpected happenings, she is glad to have brought the video camera.

A majestic, blue sky, with puffy white clouds, greets them in the morning. Walking out the door to see a beautiful landscape feels great. The water looks rough as small waves cascade out in the blue-green ocean. They have eight days to fish and snorkel so it doesn't bother them.

As her family makes breakfast in the other cabin, Samantha looks for an outfit to wear. She stands looking at clothes on the left side of the closet. A soft plop catches her attention. There is now a shirt on the floor on the right side of the closet. Another shirt falls as she stoops to pick up the first one. She senses Daniel's presence but shrugs it off thinking it is just her imagination. A pair of pants falls to the floor before Samantha stands. She now knows Daniel's playful spirit is letting her know he is there. Daniel is fooling around as he usually did in human form.

"Please Daniel," she cries filled with emotion. "My back and hips are hurting so I'd appreciate it if you'd stop dropping my clothes onto the floor."

The fire alarm goes off in the other cabin. Its shrill sound pierces the air reminding her of another family vacation when Daniel, Rachel, James, and Samantha left everyone else to spend a few days in Key West before Abigail's birth. Samuel was upset to see them go but seemed happy when Samantha traded hats with him before climbing into the van.

The weather was perfect. James and Samantha rented motorbikes in Key West so they could ride along with Daniel and Rachel on their motorcycle. A small breeze served to cool them as the temperature rose above 80 degrees. Scattered clouds shielded them from the sun's rays. Samantha was happier than she had been in a long time. She felt lucky to spend more time with Daniel than usual and to ride a motorbike alone for the first time.

Samantha was confident she could drive the motorbike well after a few hours of riding. She rode behind James as he followed Daniel and Rachel. A strong gust of wind

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suddenly blew Samuel's hat off her head. She turned the motorbike around without a second thought to get the hat. As she neared it, she was relieved to see nothing disturbed it. It lay near the curb in the right hand lane of the two lane paved road.

Samantha was driving at about fifteen miles an hour. Without a thought, she slowed the bike down and reached out with her left arm thinking she'd easily scoop the hat up. She quickly lost control of the motorbike and found herself in a panic as it went down. Instead of turning the bike off, she turned the handlebar connected to the gas line and gunned the motor, twice. Intense pain filled her right leg as it scraped across the paved roadway.

She finally stopped the motorbike after she'd scraped her leg half way down the block. Samantha didn't know it then but she'd vividly remember that road burn after Daniel's accident. She'd know without a doubt that his injuries were at least a thousand times more than hers on that day.

A police cruiser saw the accident and blocked traffic as Samantha turned the motorbike off. She assured the officers she was fine and got back onto the bike in shock. Her heart pounded erratically and her right leg burned badly but she didn't want to ruin her family's day. The police cruiser followed her until she caught up to them. She blotted the blood that oozed from her right leg with tissues she had in her pocket as she drove. Her plan to snorkel the next day in the crystal blue waters of the Dry Tortugas was spoiled.

Later at a small motel in the evening, she admitted the pain in her leg was severe. They all went to a drug store where Daniel chose a cream that she applied liberally throughout the night. Everyone awoke to the piercing shrill of a fire alarm shortly before 3:00 AM. The deafening noise filled their room so they ran outside to get away from it. The sound was just as loud outside the building. They soon learned that a prankster returning from the local bar set off the alarm just to have some fun.

There's a reason for everything. Samantha would recall that trip after Daniel's accident and later remember the fire alarm incident while on vacation. The Key West trip filled her mind as she dressed and went to the cabin next door. Everyone was laughing by the time she entered the kitchen. They told her the smoke alarm went off without a reason. It continued to blare for a short time even after James removed the batteries. Samantha told them it was Daniel's prank to let them know he was there. They all ignored her. It was an unexplainable event to them.

Although she was not fully aware of it at the time, that day was the first time Samantha acted as a channel. All of Daniel's family felt his loss strongly and eleven-year-old Samuel was no exception. He missed wrestling with Daniel and rough housing as most boys did.

"I wish Uncle Daniel was here to play games with me," he said.

A surge of energy seemed to rush into Samantha's body and she found herself asking him if he'd like to wrestle with her. The general state of her ill health did not even enter her mind. She'd lost weight but still had more than 165 pounds on her 5' 2" frame. Samantha and Samuel tied their hair up like sumo wrestlers as Rebecca set the video camera to tape the action.

Samantha's body was in no condition for wrestling a young boy but that didn't stop her. With no regard to her heart arrhythmia, obesity, high blood pressure, spinal conditions, or osteoarthritis she stood before Samuel like a sumo wrestler. She had 130

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pound Samuel down on the floor begging for mercy in less than a minute. It was no small feat for Samuel was a strong boy.

“Ya ha, ya ha,” Samantha said loudly. “That’s what Daniel said.” Samuel looked at her strangely as she announced, “He’ll always be with you.”

“Why can’t I have a normal Nana,” Samuel angrily shouted pushing his way up from the floor.

He hurriedly rushed out the cabin door to get as far away from Samantha as he could. She looked at Rebecca and shrugged not knowing what to say for Daniel had interacted with Samuel while using her body. She suspected she could be a channel for other spirits too. Samantha merrily squirted people with the water hose hours later. She laughed and ran up stairs that were usually difficult to climb as they yelled. It was a typical “Daniel prank.”

This was their first nine-day vacation. The family planned to watch the sunset together, at least one night during their stay, from the old Bahia Honda Bridge. They scheduled the sunset event weeks before thinking Rachel would share some of Daniel’s ashes to toss into the ocean. Lydia and Joseph soon arrived with friends to participate.

It was extremely windy for the first time in all the years they’d vacationed in the Keys. Fishing was nearly impossible so most of the adults spent their time drinking. Some of the family started joking around as they began their climb up the hill to the top of the old bridge. Samantha was among them. Samuel again asked why he couldn’t have a normal Nana when her jokes began to touch upon spiritual topics. She then grumbled of aches and pains all the way up to the top of the hill.

Daniel’s memorial CD was ready to play but they didn’t have any of his ashes. They said their farewells to him anyway. Having friends to break the silence of their grief made it easier to do. The rest of the family videotaped as Samantha dealt with her grief. She stood looking in the distance at the bareness of their favorite island. The last hurricane had cleared the island of trees and mangroves. Her heart felt as empty as the island looked as she remembered how they snorkeled there.

Samantha noticed for the first time colors and shapes coming from the sun when she finally took her turn videotaping. Two white puffs seemed to move in line with the sun along with green and fuchsia colored shapes. The sunset was spectacular with various shades of orange, yellow, purple, and pink. Colors appeared throughout the clouds as the sun went below the horizon. As they watched it sink, Samantha apologized to Samuel for not being a “normal” Nana. Samuel forgave her.

The windy conditions continued causing the family to spend more time together than ever before. When they ventured out to the National Wildlife Refuge, Samantha found herself channeling her Aunt Deborah. Deborah wanted her sister to know she was proud of her and glad to see her outside walking a nature trail, despite her blindness and other medical conditions. Samantha relayed the message to her mom who walked slowly with a cane.

Everyone complained about the wind and blamed their bad luck on timing. Many of them complained that it wasn’t worth the trouble to tow the boat to the Keys. They could have stayed home and fished more where the wind wasn’t as strong. Samantha was the one to blame as far as they were concerned because she’d reserved the cabins. Samantha was tired of taking the blame for things that went wrong. The next morning Samantha told Terrance it was time for someone else to make the family’s vacation plans.

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“Well we can’t control the wind,” Terrance said. “We’re not God.”

“Oh yes we are,” Samantha replied, “each and every one of us.”

Terrance kept silent but shook his head and hurried away from her.

The entire family thought Samantha was crazy by the time they went home. She ended her vacation video playing one of the songs Daniel’s spirit led her to record, “Only God Knows Why.” It seemed a fitting end to their first family vacation without him in his physical body. She felt him beside her in the van as she videotaped her family pulling the barely used boat out of the water.

Later while viewing a picture of Samuel on old Bahia Honda Bridge, she saw an unexplained bright, white circle of light. She had snapped the shot feeling Daniel’s presence strongly. Author James Van Praagh notes, spirits often show up as whitish spots, “lights” or “flashes” on photos. Samantha would soon recognize these oddities in other pictures as well.

Chapter Thirteen More Time to Grieve

Samantha's grief led her to dedicate a Web site to Daniel. She'd soon begin to write books about him to post there for Abigail. In time, the site would change as she offered information to help people increase their awareness of God.

She still thought only of her loss and decided that the world consisted of "us" and "them." People in the "us" category always seemed to have health issues and hardship in the physical state. They taught others and learned life lessons. People in the "them" category had priorities like wealth and fame. In her mind, they were mainly selfish people who rarely changed. Samantha decided her kids, herself, and a few people she knew were in the "us" category. There were more people in the "them" group than there were in the "us" group. Samantha knew it sounded paranoid but she believed it just the same. ⁽²³⁾

23. Race-consciousness often plays a major role in our lives. Samantha would shortly know without a doubt that we are all a part of the One. Each mind-body is in a different state of awareness but the same in essence, perfect, whole, and complete within God. As noted by Dr. Page, we exist within "consciousness known as the Quantum Hologram. This becomes organized into patterns or form through the power of our intention or thought."

*Earth is the only place where souls can grow spiritually. We go through experiences to see what it's like so we'll know. Humans believe in duality and make up differences such as good and bad, pain and pleasure, light and dark. There are no differences when we wake-up from this dream world. There's nothing to separate us from each other. We are the same in every respect, One, having never left our **Father**.*

God doesn't know we're here because God only believes in Love. There is no duality within God. Jesus is the one that communicates between humans and God since he was the first human to become enlightened. Some humans believe in Buddha or other enlightened figures. Everything here on earth is meant to keep us thinking we are separated from one another but we are not.

Fortunately, new souls agree to come to earth to help raise human awareness. Some of these souls are known as those with "medical conditions" such as Autism and ADHD.

Many more souls coming to earth now are more aware of their telepathic, whole-brain thinking. Unlike most humans, they are not insisting on breaking everything down into a language that makes no sense to collective thinkers.

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Samantha thought James was one of the people in the “them” category. Despite Daniel’s passing, he still seemed to be obsessed with fishing. He was now a member of a fishing club so he wasn’t alone as much as before. Samantha didn’t know then that going out into nature is a great way to connect with God.

Short family outings helped her to get out of the house. The dysfunctional family’s night out at the racetrack was always a good excuse to drink. She sunk deeper into the drama of her dream world and thought only about her own pain when she was drunk.

Listening to Daniel’s music as she grieved seemed the best way to do her work. Samantha loved to help people deal with hiv by teaching them about good nutrition. She met her goal by helping people learn that good eating habits could lessen the side effects of medications. James continued to ask why she didn’t help him financially support the household. She now put more effort into making money.

Drama heightened as Samantha spent more time at her self-made Wailing Wall. The chalkboard with the smiley sunshine faces hung in the pantry but she could not bear to look at it. She’d lean on the other side of the wall, where it stood, every night at midnight. Very quietly, sobs shook her fat body as she continued to mourn Daniel. Samantha felt as if every pore of her body was pouring out blood. And she begged God to let her die so she could be with her son.

Everything she experienced was a part of her journey to spiritual awareness. When she learned about past life regression, she decided to try it. Samantha believed she could learn why things happened as they did. She decided that she might be dealing with issues from a past life. The feeling that she wronged Rachel and Joy in a past-life haunted her. ⁽²⁴⁾

24. Things began to make sense as Samantha put the puzzle pieces together. Daniel was her sunshine boy from the day he was born. When Rebecca gave birth to Samuel, Samantha called him her sunshine boy. It was hard to forget 27-year-old Daniel’s reaction when he first heard her refer to Samuel as sunshine boy for they were his treasured words.

Daniel had been out of a job for a number of weeks and needed money so Samantha paid him to fix some things around the house. Samuel arrived for her to babysit while Rebecca worked just as Daniel was finishing his task. Samantha excitedly opened the den door.

“Hello my sunshine boy!” she said letting Samuel in.

“I thought I was your sunshine boy Mom,” Daniel said filled with surprise.

“You’re my sunshine man now Daniel,” Samantha replied.

Daniel’s hurt look before he turned his head away was hard to miss. Samantha’s thoughts about that day changed four months and eleven days after his death. Her friend Mary invited her to a special event at the last minute. Samantha then heard Daniel’s voice inside her head while listening to the Dali Lama.

“Samuel was born to help you get over the loss of me,” he announced softly.

Samantha lost interest in her hiv nutrition work. Editing the company newsletter was no longer a concern but she persisted because Daniel told her to before he died. The

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rest of her family continued to say the business was a waste of time and money. She decided to publish the newsletter for two more years if she could bear to live that long.

Rebecca and Samuel needed her and she wanted to help Daniel's spirit in any way that she could. Samantha believed Abigail needed saving from a life of misery that Rachel, Abigail, and herself suffered through during many lifetimes. She hoped Daniel would be able to tell her what to do.

Samantha also hoped to find a way to make things better. The thought that Abigail needed her preyed on her mind for now it was nearly a month since she'd seen her. Samantha felt distanced from Abigail but knew the girl still felt the bond that Daniel helped to build. Despite appearances, their bond, like hers with Samuel, Rebecca, and Daniel would never be broken. She felt it in her gut and decided to see someone to help her deal with past lives.

Daniel's spirit was coming to her in dreams. Yet, she could not communicate with him because every time she saw him she cried. It was now difficult to sleep for she woke after a few hours in bed with tears streaming down her face. Both Rebecca and Terrance admitted they'd seen Daniel in their dreams too. Terrance was shocked to see his face floating near the ceiling fan one night as he tried to fall asleep.

Daniel's spirit continued to find ways to reach her when she was awake. It helped her deal with her grief and helped Daniel with his unfinished business. One day she sensed his presence and clearly heard his words. He asked her to contact Alfred, the man who had tried to act as his father from the time he was ten-years-old.

Daniel reconnected with Alfred after a lapse of more than fifteen years just three months before he died. He'd sent Alfred information about Samantha's newsletter. Alfred then contacted her by email asking about her business. They continued to email one another over the next few months. Alfred then learned of Daniel's death through an email that Ruth sent him.

Knowing it was important to contact him, Samantha quickly emailed Alfred. He emailed back with his telephone number and she telephoned him the next day. Alfred was surprised when she told him Daniel wanted them to talk. He'd been shopping for a new house and felt Daniel's presence in the one house he liked. Alfred also felt the presence of his close friend Rene who was also on the Otherside.

Alfred realized Daniel and Rene, who'd been a psychic and medium, had guided him to the house. Rene described the kind of house he would be living in years before she died. The house had all of the things she'd described to him. He decided to buy the house because he felt their spirits there. Alfred was disappointed after he bought it because he no longer felt their presence.

Samantha told Alfred that Rebecca, Terrance, and she all felt Daniel's presence. Rebecca and Terrance often wondered if they were just imagining Daniel was there. It seemed to Samantha that she didn't feel Daniel's presence as much as before. She had no idea that grief and sorrow affect how often spirits break through "the veil" to communicate with loved ones on earth. Alfred delighted her because he also felt Daniel's presence and didn't call her crazy.

Alfred then told her how he'd met Daniel. Daniel's friends had dropped him off because he was high on drugs. They didn't know what else to do with him. Alfred was a court appointed guardian for wayward boys and began to take an interest in Daniel's welfare. He learned that Daniel spent a lot of time caring for Rebecca since Samantha

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went to college during the day and worked at night. Alfred then helped ten-year-old Daniel by caring for three-year-old Rebecca so Daniel could have some time to be a child.

Samantha hadn't known the extent of Daniel's drug addiction the last time Alfred had seen him. A few weeks later, she mailed Alfred a copy of the videotape she'd made of Daniel. She thanked him for sharing a part of his life with them and for helping Daniel to grow. Then she let him know that a Dale Carnegie course, Daniel took as part of a construction manager's job, changed his whole outlook on life. Daniel made positive changes and seemed to know that his lifetime was ending. Alfred was relieved to hear Daniel's life improved.

Samantha kept odd hours and often worked until 3:00 AM. A lot of her business was Internet based and it was easier to work late at night. Her dial-up connection was always slower during the day and other things often captured her time. Daniel's spirit began to be with her in the wee hours of the morning since she was up then anyway. Samantha cherished their many times together over the next few months.

Daniel didn't like the television programs Samantha watched. After she heard him say she needed to laugh instead of fill her mind with doom and gloom, she began to watch late night comedy shows. The programs changed her mood considerably as she laughed instead of crying all the time. Before bedtime, she now sat on the carpet facing the sliding glass doors in the dining room. She'd look out into the back yard and wait for some sign of Daniel.

Every night she felt his spirit along with other spirits that had been in her family. Sometimes they gave her gifts as she looked out beyond the yard at the empty manicured lot behind the house. Golden balls of light would appear by the back yard tree. They'd slowly come toward her as she watched. She was not afraid. In fact, she was still begging God to let her be with Daniel. She heard Daniel's voice as the orbs of golden light came through the sliding glass doors.

"Take the light into your heart Mom," he said. "Take the light into your head."

Samantha felt calmer with each ball of light she scooped into her hands to place into her head or heart. She thought that perhaps life must be accepted without judgment or question. Now a firm believer in reincarnation, Samantha felt her life lessons were to learn forgiveness and patience. She had no idea what forgiveness really meant but a strong sense told her she was nearing her life's goal.

Although she knew very little about regression, she tried to learn of her past lives by meditating on them. The few fragments of information she got convinced her she was on the right track. In one sequence, she saw a freckle-faced young Irish girl in a castle running from a fire. Many other people were there too but they all ran the other way. She was the sole survivor. Now Samantha thought she had to save them all.

Samantha sensed her children and she knew what the outcome of their lives would be. Fragments of their past life made sense and she knew their current life dealt with the same issues they'd faced in previous lives.

After recalling more of her past lives, she decided to see a credentialed Hypnotherapist. It seemed almost too easy to find one that specialized in past life regression. The medical professional had several academic degrees and she needed permission from Samantha's doctor along with a written prescription for a medical

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diagnosis. It wasn't difficult for Samantha to meet this doctor's requirements. She had three incurable conditions and a long list of other illnesses.

It surprised Samantha that the Hypnotherapist was in the same medical complex as her doctor of fifteen years. The experience of being hypnotized was odd. She recalled being a five-year-old Irish girl who was in a castle that was set on fire by the "Scots." Everyone in the castle was trying to get away from the fire. She noticed many of the people there were now in her current family.

The red-haired Irish girl began to run against the stream of panicked people. They all thought she was crazy telling them there was a safe way to the outside.

"Follow me," she cried. "I know the way out."

No one followed her as she ran through a secret door in the castle wall. She escaped the fire alone. They all ran the other way and burned to death in the fire. Samantha told the Hypnotherapist she now had to "save them." She felt tears rolling down her face but was not emotionally upset.

The therapist ended the regression and Samantha realized she'd already recalled the past life using information in Dr. Weiss's book. The session was \$175 but it was worth the cost even though it wasn't covered by insurance. It verified that she could do past life regression on her own. She decided to do more regressions when she wasn't tired and would be less likely to affect any results.

Samantha's beliefs were quickly changing. She now thought souls were reborn into physical bodies and often traveled with the same souls. There were lessons to learn in each life. It was time to pass on to a new body when lessons were learned. Sometimes if a soul wasn't ready to enter a physical body, its spirit could do other things. Some souls stayed between planes of existence to take care of unfinished business as Daniel did.

Samantha thought she could help Daniel's spirit continue on its journey and leave the transition state. The sense that he was between realms trying to protect his daughter, and offer his family comfort, was strong. Samantha's heart ached for Abigail. Her arms longed to hold her, to comfort her, and tell her she was loved beyond anything she now might feel.

By most human eyes, Abigail appeared to have lost most of her family. Since her daddy's death, she saw no one from his side of the family. It seemed she was stuck in a sea of negativity. Samantha knew everyone in the physical state has a special role to play. In the grand scheme of things, she knew there was only so much she could do for Abigail.⁽²⁵⁾

25. Abigail chose her life before she came into human form just like everyone else. Emmanuel explains the relationship between mother and child well. We all chose our mother before birth because they were loved ones in previous lives. There's no deeper relationship on earth than that of a mother and child.

Father's were mothers too and once there is the bonding there is never separation. There is always Oneness even when we choose not to share a physical life together. Meeting one another in dreams is common. Samantha knew Abigail met her father, not only while she slept, but during her waking hours as well.

Samantha remembered the words to one of the songs on the CDs Daniel helped her make, "... just believe in who we are and nothing else matters...open mind for a

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different view...” She was still locked into the “us” and “them” way of thinking. Samantha’s mind was not yet ready to open up to greater possibilities. ⁽²⁶⁾ As her awareness increased, Samantha’s mind slowly opened up to new ways of thinking.

26. It would be some time before Samantha would realize that terms like “us” and “them” are just more ways the ego uses to keep us thinking we are in a body. It’s all about separation for the ego.

As Renard notes, “Whenever you respond to your ego you will experience guilt, and you will fear punishment.” The ego represents a delusional system, and speaks to it creating a whole new level. This delusional level is a thought system of sin, guilt, fear, attack, and defense. It can be acted out “to protect your seemingly separated mind, which you think of as your soul, from your terrible, yet completely unconscious guilt and fear.” The ego’s method of dealing with unconscious guilt and fear is to project it onto others.

A so-called coincidence began to take shape when Mary emailed her a link from a Web site that advertised seminars and classes. Isaiah and Priscilla held the seminars and classes on past lives and other topics. They both helped people connect with loved ones on the Otherside. Mary and Samantha didn’t know their relationship was changing. A friendship would quickly grow between them that would increase their awareness of God.

Samantha continued her quest for enlightenment by searching the Internet for ‘new age’ information. She always found the answers to her constant questions. Many useful Web sites about understanding spirituality guided her thoughts. It was as if an unseen hand chose the links for her to follow. The information helped greatly two months after Daniel died as they celebrated Rebecca’s thirtieth birthday and Terrance’s fortieth. Both birthdays were milestones without also bearing the loss of a loved one.

Samantha noticed white noise while viewing the video of their joint party. The same sporadic static first appeared in the videos she took of visits with Abigail and Rachel. It was also in some later family tapes and seemed a common occurrence amid the sound of laughter.

Chapter Fourteen New Life Begins

The family stayed upset over Daniel's death. If they didn't have medical conditions like Rebecca, Ruth, and Samantha, they were considering serious lifestyle changes. Terrance was questioning his lifestyle. Now used to his diagnosis of multiple sclerosis, he was considering divorce. He wondered what life as a gay man would be like. Soon he'd part from his wife and son and his new life would begin.

Samantha planned her days and nights based on health issues and medication schedules. She kept busy editing her company's newsletter and doing volunteer work. Samuel was out of school for the summer and she got him from camp every day. The trip got her out of the house and left less time to grieve.

Sometimes she thought she was going crazy for she still heard Daniel talking to her. Her family and some friends said that she lost her mind. They told her Daniel was dead and he wasn't talking to anyone. She needed to know if what they said was true. Samantha believed Isaiah could give her the verification she needed to set her human mind at ease but she wasn't quite ready to see him or to focus on spirituality.

Strange unexplainable things continued to happen. Samantha always took the portable CD player with her in the car so she could listen to Daniel's memorial CD as she drove. The CD player had been acting odd for weeks. Songs on the CD would not play normally even after she cleaned it. Sometimes the player would pause or repeat certain words. She thought Daniel was communicating with her through his favorite songs.

Samantha had a vivid experience in her car that June. When Daniel was seven-years-old, she bought an insurance policy to give her enough money to bury him if he died. She never expected him to die before she did. The purchase was made as a favor for one of her friends. The woman's husband needed to make his monthly quota to keep his new job. Daniel's MetLife policy cost only \$16.34 a year for a \$1,000 of coverage. Since it was a whole life policy, she could cash it in for a certain amount of money at any time. The policy seemed like a good investment.

Samantha was surprised to get thirteen shares of MetLife stock the year before Daniel died. The company restructured and offered the shares to certain policy holders. It seemed silly to let the policy lapse so she continued to pay for it. There were several times when she thought of giving Daniel the policy but she didn't. After his death, she decided to get the insurance money for Abigail but heard Daniel say she wouldn't need it.

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“Don’t you remember Mom?” he said. “I told you that I had good life insurance. The house will be paid off and there will be enough money for Abigail and Rachel to live well.”

Samantha still insisted on trying to open some kind of account for Abigail. When she got the insurance check, she decided to visit a MetLife representative. It was a beautiful day as she drove to his office. The temperature seemed perfect and there wasn’t a cloud in the pretty blue sky. She fought back tears as she drove and noticed that the song “*Hang Tough*” kept playing. Samantha felt blessed when she realized that what she suspected was indeed true. Daniel’s spirit chose to get her undivided attention through music.

The MetLife representative had a big Indian statue in his office. She felt an unexplainable bond with him as they talked about how it got there. Emotions took over her mind and body as she cried uncontrollably telling him of Daniel’s death. The man consoled her throughout their forty-five minute meeting. He agreed to open an account without a fee as long as the money remained untouched for at least ten years.

As Samantha left, he shook her hand and said, “Stay tough. Daniel is still around.”

The tears started falling again as she walked out to her car. She wondered how he could know such a thing. She hadn’t told him of how the “*Hang Tough*” song played repeatedly while driving to his office. She jerked the car door open as the sobs tore out of her throat.

It took a few minutes to start the car because her hand shook. The key just wouldn’t fit properly into the ignition. Samantha turned on the CD player and tried to start the car again. This time it roared to life and she started to back the car out of its parking spot. And then she noticed the CD had not started to play yet. It began to play the second she looked down at the CD player to make sure it was on. The player skipped over the first several tracks on the CD and began to play “*Silent Lucidity*” by Queensrÿche. Samantha sensed Daniel’s presence and concentrated on the words of the song.

“Hush now don’t you cry. Wipe away the teardrop from your eye. You’re lying safe in bed. It was all a bad dream spinning in your head. Your mind tricked you to feel the pain of someone close to you leaving the game, of life.”

A combination of extreme joy and human grief consumed her. It was the first of many times Daniel’s spirit would embrace her in such a way.

In late June, Rebecca, Lydia, Hannah, and Samantha went on a whirlwind weekend to Florida’s West coast. Hannah’s cancer treatments were over and she hadn’t seen the Mystery Train Dinner Theatre. Lydia decided her mother needed a break. The foursome left Lydia’s house on Saturday planning to return twenty-four hours later. There was little time to relax during those twenty-four hours.

They listened to “*Take it Easy*” by the Eagles as Rebecca drove. Samantha sensed Daniel’s presence when a motorcycle drove quickly up from behind them from the left lane. It changed lanes to zip in front of their car before it zoomed out of sight. Samantha noticed the rider looked a lot like Daniel and wore a shirt with the familiar “*No Fear*” logo that Daniel had loved. She knew he was reminding her to let go of her fears. The other women ignored her when she told them Daniel was free and happy and wanted them to be happy too.

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The short trip was much too quick for either Hannah or Samantha to enjoy themselves. Samantha knew it was Hannah's last holiday. She was in the final stages of brain cancer and her head was still bald. Hannah's surgery souvenir was a two-inch scar on the side of her head. A tiny tuft of hair was barely visible near the scar. The women spent a few hours talking together after the dinner show when their daughters left for the bar.

Hannah knew Daniel's death greatly affected Samantha. She asked a few questions about her spiritual experiences. Most of Hannah's questions were about paranormal things Samantha had just learned. Hannah was especially interested in learning if she could return to her family after she died. Samantha was happy to fearlessly, and honestly, answer the questions as they sat by the outdoor swimming pool.

Daniel's presence graced them during the drive back to Fort Lauderdale. As Samantha videoed the clouds, she saw an unexplainable diamond shape. It seemed to come out of nowhere. A round pinkish light later appeared directly in front of her for about thirty seconds. She was joyous to know that Daniel's spirit was with them.

Samantha now sensed Daniel hadn't yet found peace and would be between worlds, between lives, for a long time. She hoped she was wrong and got an unexpected surprise a few days later. The record player stopped working so she dropped it off at a local repair shop. They replaced the belt and she picked it up on July 3. She dusted off the shelf it had been on and started to put the player on it. A 45-rpm record fell to the floor. The record wasn't hers or James'. The names on the record were hard to read. She had no idea where it came from. Its title was "When it's Time to Go."

Although the record had a large scratch on it, it played flawlessly. It was not her type of music. She thought it was a sign that Daniel's spirit was getting ready for its next level. It concerned her greatly that all the things his spirit did to help them get over his death might stop. The next day would be July 4, 2004, exactly three months since his transition. The thought of a different kind of Independence Day for Daniel saddened her. She wasn't ready to let him go.

The Fourth of July without Daniel's physical presence was hard on the entire family for most of them always celebrated the day with him. Several things alerted Samantha of his presence. She saw an orb drift from Rebecca as she joked and a mist that seemed to come from her cup on the counter. Rebecca was now drinking Daniel's favorite alcohol, Jack Daniels.

Daniel's friend Jeremiah, who was the last one to see Daniel alive, became the topic of discussion. Daniel's death was very difficult for him because he thought that maybe if he'd done something different Daniel would still be alive. Jeremiah seemed lost in his own grief and wasn't reaching out to others. Everyone in the family stopped trying to contact him.

The gathering ended before dark making it the first year the family didn't watch the fireworks together. They all decided to deal with their loss alone as fireworks lit up the sky. Samantha stayed alone in her home office for by this time she rarely slept with James. Occasionally she looked up through the windows to see fireworks from the small cities around the house. The knowing that there would never be another Fourth of July with Daniel consumed her.

She fell asleep with a book in her hand after midnight but something woke her several hours later. As she listened intently trying to figure out why she was awake, the

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word “cat” filled the air. She’d heard the word in her office several weeks earlier and knew Daniel had found a new way to communicate.

Samantha was crying the first time she heard the sound. She stopped crying, wiped her tears, and listened for the sound again. The word “cat” seemed to be coming from her closet. Samantha slowly slid the louver door open and heard “cat” repeated several times. She knew where the sound came from when she saw Abigail’s toy telephone on a shelf.

The telephone was one of Abigail’s favorite toys to play with when Samantha had babysat her. It had six buttons and a dial to spin at the bottom. Each button had a picture on it. The spinning dial held four different pictures. When a button was pushed, or the dial was spun, the telephone said what the picture was. Samantha picked up the toy and saw it was turned on. She didn’t know what to think so she just put the toy back on the shelf and closed the closet door.

She later thought the toy might have acted oddly because the batteries were old so she put new batteries in it. The word “cat” sounded throughout the room whenever she thought of Daniel. She turned the toy off but it seemed to come on by itself. Samantha finally got used to the toy acting oddly and felt comforted to know Daniel’s spirit was still around.

As usual, James was not sharing his feelings. He didn’t seem to be as affected by Daniel’s death as the rest of the family for he remained his usual quiet self and never spoke of Daniel. Samantha would soon learn that God works through both humans and animals. Without a doubt, she would realize Daniel’s spirit had been trying to tell her that cats would soon be there to help him share his feelings.

James finally told Samantha about a dream of Daniel telling him he wasn’t dead. James told Daniel to go away because he was dead; James had seen him in his casket. He was very fond of cats. The next day kittens were on the back porch. A bold orange-striped kitten was the first one to show up. Two more kittens came onto the porch a few days later. ⁽²⁷⁾

27. A Course in Miracles notes, the ego is against communication, which is controlled by the ego’s need to protect itself. The ego disrupts communication when it feels threatened. Opening our heart to others including animals, the environment, or through community work is an opening to love. Emmanuel notes, “The purpose of human love is to awaken love for God.” Sometimes one may think they’re in love but instead are immersed in the physical body and human ego. The relationship between James and Samantha had always lacked the closeness of friendship. The cats would become James’s confidants.

Daniel’s spirit guided the kittens to the back porch to help James. Samantha was certain four years later while reading *Destiny of Souls* by Michael Newton. “Pets have the capacity to lift our spirits and foster healing while providing us with love and companionship without reservations.” Animal souls are not ego-driven so identity issues do not overwhelm them. Humans can learn from them as they accept and blend with their environment.

Every morning and every night James sat with the kittens feeding and talking to them. He named the bold kitten Bart and the others Wylie and Casper. Samantha was

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glad James now talked to something even if it wasn't human. All three of the animals were afraid of people but ate out of James' hand. They got nervous when he tried to pet them but canned cat food always brought them near.

Samantha knew the kittens were not sent for her. Bart was the only one that looked at her from a few feet away. The other two just ran when they saw her. Rebecca also knew Daniel sent the kittens. She told Samantha her brother always said when he died he wanted to be a cat in his next life. Samantha didn't think humans could regress but knew the kittens were there for a reason. She told James Daniel sent him the kittens a few days after they arrived. James still thought she was crazy.

It had been hard for James to train their other cats to use a cat door to enter the back porch. Constant night raids by local raccoons forced him to move the door a foot higher so now it was harder for animals to use. Surprisingly, all three kittens used the cat door without any training.

Their older cat Missy accepted the kittens easily. She'd seen many cats come and then die leaving her alone. Many of Missy's own kittens died and others left the porch never to return. Batman, Rebecca's first cat, lived to be 20-years-old. He died one morning as James held him the year before. Daniel and Rachel then gave him a cat but a neighbor ran over her a month after Daniel died. Missy didn't seem to mind at all when Bart stayed to keep her company.

At the end of June, Daniel's spirit told Samantha the world was changing. She was to cash in the government savings bonds held for Abigail and Samuel. The value of these bonds would not be as much as expected and they would continue to lessen. Samantha did as she was told. She gave Rebecca Samuel's bonds and told her to cash them in. It was the first of many communications from Daniel's spirit that would alert Samantha to future world events.

Samantha's depression got worse every day. The need to stay more in her spiritual self was stronger now. It was much too depressing to focus on her human state. She often avoided the work she had lived for since the kids left home. She began to watch other family videos as well as the last video of Daniel. Her intuitive friend Mary often contacted her by email. Their friendship deepened when Mary asked Samantha to join her and another friend for a session with Isaiah and Priscilla.

Mary arranged for the trio to see Isaiah. He agreed to the meeting and told them the cost for individual work would be \$95 a session. It sounded like a bargain to Samantha after her visit with the costly Hypnotherapist. She wanted to know how to help Daniel and Abigail but feared there was nothing she could do for Abigail.

The session with Mary, her friend Tela, and Samantha went well. Isaiah told Samantha she had a lot of past-life experience in metaphysics and spiritual areas. He hinted they would be able to do some good work that would be helpful for everyone both in and out of the body. The thought excited Samantha but she told him money was a big issue. She wanted to help Daniel pass out of transition if that was his wish. It troubled her that she felt Daniel's presence much less now.

The subject of channeling interested her as she learned more about it through the Internet and her reading. Samantha was relieved to know that Isaiah could channel but he wanted to teach her how to do it alone instead of depending on him. He was certain they could work out an agreeable fee. Although she was anxious to see him again, it would be almost two months before she finally did.

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Samantha had an excuse every time Isaiah scheduled an appointment. Prescription medications, along with bladder and bowel issues, made it hard to plan her days outside the house. She'd stopped trying to work a "regular job" ten years before because of the diseases in her body. Her declining health now seemed to take up more time every day. She refused to leave the house before 11:00 AM.

It was hard to explain what happened around her. She kept hearing Daniel tell her to call Rachel but hesitated even though she missed her and Abigail. Strange noises that sounded like things falling on the floor caught her attention one day. She tried to find the source of the noise. It was clear that it came from the pantry when she opened the door and a can of soup fell to the floor. She looked at the blackboard with the smiley faces and cried as she sensed Daniel's presence.

Daniel's spirit succeeded in getting her attention despite her refusal to hear him. She felt forced to push her feelings aside and telephoned Rachel leaving her a message asking how everything was. Daniel told her to keep leaving monthly telephone messages. She was also to continue sending Abigail the monthly cards she started to send last year.

Samantha cried with joy knowing without a doubt that Daniel was communicating with her, more now than ever before. As she read *Transformed by the Light* by Dr. Melvin Morse, she was grateful to know that other people were guided from the Otherside too. It was comforting to talk with Mary about the 'woo woo' things that kept happening. Mary never told her she was crazy and in fact did everything she could to calm Samantha's fears. Everyone else continued to ignore Samantha as they gossiped about how crazy she was.

Shortly after Samantha's call, Rachel began to drop by James' workplace so he could see Abigail. Samantha was thankful Rachel was trying to reconnect with Daniel's family. James began to see them regularly and reported that they were doing well. Sometimes he took them to lunch when Rachel was in town. And sometimes James drove over to see them at their house.

Chapter Fifteen Spirit Contacts

Friends began to talk about the death of their loved ones. Samantha consoled them explaining what she had learned. Rebecca and Samantha still felt Daniel's presence and odd things happened when they did. Daniel was with her in past lives and she knew she would see him again. Her belief in reincarnation was strong as she sent Web site links to the people who asked for them. She also sent links like Isaiah's that focused on spirituality and the Otherside.

Samantha knew things happened for a reason and felt everyone subconsciously knew about past lives. It was just a matter of opening up their mind to different ideas. Everything is preplanned based on lessons taught or learned. She comforted people with the suggestion that their family, just like hers, would be together again.

It was a bit scary opening her mind and going into unknown territory. Her family and friends were not pleased with her increasing spirituality. Rebecca was the only one that tried to understand. Samantha often felt and saw resistance in people when she explained the change in her beliefs. They crossed their arms and stared at her as if she was crazy. Rebecca often reminded her people were entitled to their own beliefs. "Be careful, other people won't understand channeling or the telepathy we share," she said.
(28)

28. Our souls hold certain subconscious beliefs. These opinions include beliefs from past lives. Humans base conscious opinions (ones we are aware of) on many things. The environment we're born into plays a role in our belief system. We choose the type of environment we will live in before birth based on how we need to grow as souls. It's up to us to be aware of our ability to evolve once we're in human form. Our environment includes what we learn from caregivers and role models, especially from birth to six-years-old. Peer groups and other people can affect our beliefs as well.

Dr. Page notes people can help us grow spiritually or harm us by taking our sense of self and power away to feed themselves. Beliefs can sometimes be smothered by persistent and aggressive lost souls in current lives. These souls disregard the truth others speak because they feel inferior. They are not aware of the true nature of humans.

Humanity's goals are to love and cherish all living beings, be in harmony with one another, and live in peace without the aggressive, fearful, and destructive threat of war. Our species depends on how well we care for one another. We can help each other

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by realizing the true nature of our being. We are all Good, we are all Light, and most importantly, we are all Divine Love, a part of our Creator.

Opinions can change based on how we spend our time. What we choose to do and where we choose to go affects our beliefs greatly. Our awareness of what is “out there” can greatly change our belief system. Fearful people tend to limit themselves by always making excuses as to why they can’t do something or go somewhere new.

Keeping an open mind and considering new information helps us to grow. Although it’s hard to go out of one’s comfort zone, it helps immensely to open the mind to greater possibilities. Attending classes or reading ‘new age’ materials opens the mind much more than reading romance novels or watching television. Sadly, some people may not have the access to “new” things as easily as others.

Many people believe that we travel in spirit/soul groups throughout eternity. There’s always a spirit from our group nearby when we are in need of direction or protection. There are both sincere spirit/soul groups who “live in the light” and insincere spirit/soul groups comprised of lost souls in need of love and help to evolve. It’s important to only communicate with sincere, astute souls for they are aware of our Oneness.

The opinions held by Samantha’s family were the same as other ego-driven people. Beliefs of race consciousness caused them to sink further into limitation. No one thought they could have a better life. Daniel was the one family member that dared to go beyond the limited thinking that everyone else now seemed stuck in. They were in a sea of negativity and unaware of affirmative principles. It greatly affected the way they thought. Rebecca didn’t think anyone in the family was ready to change their beliefs.

Samantha was amazed when her daughter gave her advice about health and personal time.

“Go for a walk,” she said. “You will not be any good to us if you’re not good to yourself. Take some time everyday to sit outside even if it’s only for five minutes.”

Samantha took Rebecca’s advice and started to walk short distances. She was finding life easier to deal with as a spirit instead of a human. Business no longer mattered to her. Rebecca’s health continued to decline. She went from one emergency room to another when the pain got unbearable. Samantha spent much more time with Samuel and found herself calling him Daniel a lot. He seemed to understand.

Samantha decided to write a book when the golden orbs stopped coming in July. It would be a book of her love for Daniel, about his life. She gathered his baby books and the things he gave her. The memories reassured her of their closeness throughout the years. Parts of the book later helped her to write books so Abigail could learn about her daddy.

The realization that Daniel prepared her for his passing long before he died hit her like a brick in the head. She thought he got some insight during his last accident. Her human form was devastated with the thought but she was profoundly grateful for this recognition.

Daniel was in the hospital a few years before because he hit a pole while riding his four-wheeler. The pole hit him directly in the heart and he remained unconscious for some time. She wasn’t sure of the details but remembered Rachel calling her to come see him in the hospital days after his accident.

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As a spirit, she was happy Daniel graduated to a better life but she continued to grieve as a human. Sometimes she thought about pretending that he was still there in his physical state. It would be easy for her to believe his accident was only a grandiose way to escape from his life situation. He'd telephone her from an exotic location and apologize for having handled the situation as he did. She would happily forgive him. They'd be together again at a secret location to peacefully and happily live out the rest of their lives with everyone who meant the most to them. The thought was comforting.

Samantha knew in the back of her mind that she couldn't lie to herself because bargains had been made and must be kept. She sensed again that Daniel and she planned their lives before they were born into human form. And she understood that she had to continue to live. It was a heart and gut-retching truth. It was her turn to live out the rest of her human life without Daniel.

That year her family had more events together than ever before. They enjoyed Ruth and Naomi's swimming pool again after the Fourth of July. The weather was hot and humid. By that time, Samantha was surfing the Internet a lot and learning more about spirit orbs. She knew the white spots in her family videos and pictures were spirit orbs. The orbs were more prominent in certain places and especially visible in pictures taken by the pool table at Ruth and Naomi's house. Daniel's aunts taught him how to shoot pool at an early age. They'd often gathered around the pool table as he played during family gatherings.

Terrance and Momma went home in Samantha's car when the party ended. Terrance wanted her to come into the house and see his new dog. Baby, a tiny Chihuahua with pointed ears, sat at his doorstep one day when he opened the door. He was very happy believing Daniel sent him Baby just like he had sent James the kittens.

Samantha felt compelled to take their picture. Two orbs were clearly visible in the picture of Terrance holding Baby as he stood near his son Joel and their brother Amos. Amos was now living with Terrance because he was once again homeless. He swore this time he really was free of the crack habit he had let rule his life.

Sensing Daniel's presence in early August, Samantha listened as his words filled her mind. She had to take books off of the bookshelf in the den and relocate those that were important to her. She placed the books in Ziploc bags and stored them in the linen closet. Daniel's spirit told her not to look up at the den ceiling. She knew then it was going to be a busy season of storms in South Florida. The roof on the back porch continued to leak even though roofers "repaired" it.

Forecasters predicted six to eight storms to become hurricanes during the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season. Two to four of them would develop into major hurricanes ranked as Category 3 or higher. Samantha had no idea that Florida would take an unprecedented hit feeling the brunt of four hurricanes and a tropical storm.

Samantha was into the drama of human life letting it pull her away from waking up to the Truth. It would be more than three years before she finally realized that her mind-body was an illusion. She kept putting off her appointment with Isaiah as ego directed her words and actions. The ego of race consciousness still consumed her like the rest of her family.

Her gynecologist announced a new lump and prescribed a mammogram. The prescription remained hidden in her dresser for she remembered what Aunt Deborah went through. Deborah died a painful death after a series of operations and tests. Doctors

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completely removed one breast but the cancer returned even after bouts of radiation and chemotherapy. After they partially removed the other breast, she went through more radiation and chemotherapy.

The memory of her Aunt Deborah taking Samantha's hand and placing it on her chest where her breast had been still filled Samantha's mind.

"Don't ever let them do this to you," Aunt Deborah demanded as grabbed Samantha's hand to move it over her bony ribs.

Samantha decided right then and there that she didn't want breast cancer. If she got it, she would live joyously and not decrease her quality of life by wasting time and money on costly treatments.

Another doctor suggested a bone scan because of her constant joint pain. Samantha was concerned about what the dye for the test would do to her already diseased bladder. She became severely depressed and began to watch television for most of the day instead of working.

It seemed more and more difficult to do the work she loved. She was losing faith in herself and felt her time was wasted. There seemed little reason to continue after eight years of losses without meeting expenses or getting paid. Eight volunteers helped to edit the newsletter but some were now talking of ending their commitment.

Things were not falling into place as easily as in the past. Money was not an issue to her but seemed to be for James. He continued to push her to make cash. It seemed that her commitment to do all the household chores, help him further his career, and watch Samuel meant nothing. He had no idea how involved she was in community volunteer work. His job and fishing continued to be priorities as she fulfilled family commitments.

Samantha decided to place the newsletter on the Internet to reduce costs. She hoped to meet her business goal of ten years by working two more years. Going to a conference in New York for people working in the field of hiv/aids seemed the perfect thing to do. She thanked God upon receiving a full scholarship. That meant money for airfare, her hotel room, and the cost of the conference itself, which included many meals.

It occurred to her that taking Rebecca along would be good for business. It seemed a good way for them to get away from the increasing negativity around them. Both Rebecca and Samantha had made recent changes in their appearance. Rebecca wore blue contacts with her now long auburn hair. Samantha got her hair cut extremely short and dyed it so she'd have auburn colored hair one last time before she died. She was still ready to die.

By this time, she decided that her only option was to be more spiritual than human. It totally changed how she saw things. Many things no longer concerned her. Knowing that humans lived to learn and teach lessons helped her realize that everything happened for a reason. In her gut, she knew she was needed a bit more to help her family through more trials. She was determined to make the best of it and tried not to "sweat the small stuff." Samantha made a new rule, "Forget about it if it won't matter in three years."

Samantha was pleasantly surprised days before Rebecca and she left for New York. James rarely spoke about what happened during his visits to see Abigail and Rachel but after one visit, he brought Samantha a short video of Abigail. Abigail was wearing one of her stuffed toys like a cape on her back. It consisted of two long brown

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monkeys linked together like a backpack. The thought of someone with a “monkey on their back” entered Samantha’s mind.

James asked Abigail in the video to sing a song as she walked toward the bed. He was expecting her to jump up on the bed and sing about monkeys, too many monkeys on the bed. She sweetly sang “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” Samantha knew Daniel’s spirit prompted her to sing the song for it was one of their favorites. She had sung it many times to both Daniel and then to Abigail as she rocked her to sleep. Daniel’s spirit was letting Samantha know, once again, that he was still around and doing his best to guide those he’d loved on earth.

Electronics were now a strong source of communication. Samantha liked to use the new refrigerator’s ice cube dispenser while James preferred crushed ice. The small difference in their preferences often caused a shouting match. One night the refrigerator stopped dispensing ice cubes. The setting stuck on the crushed ice dispenser and wouldn’t change. Samantha sensed Daniel’s spirit made the change for James to limit fights. It didn’t seem too much of a chore to reach into the ice bin for her ice cubes.

Daniel’s spirit was with her more now than when he was in physical form right before he died. The songs on her CD player in the car continued to change frequently as she drove. Daniel’s voice filled her mind when she recognized his presence. Samantha told him it was funny, weird that he could still make her heart feel full even though he was dead. Yet, she was beginning to feel more as if she was crazy because she listened to everyone else’s opinion.

Daniel’s spirit stopped coming to get her to be with Abigail in the wee hours of the morning. It upset her so she started to imagine going there herself. After just a few mind trips of her own, he told her to stop. If Samantha continued to visit Abigail with her mind, it might harm her. Samantha thought since two family members were schizophrenics, people could think Abigail was too if she told others about Samantha’s visits.

It seemed possible that along with talk of her daddy’s visits, which she had already talked about, people might think she needed “help.” They might do something that would harm her mentally. Samantha decided to stop her frequent visits in mind to Abigail. ⁽²⁹⁾

29. Years later while reading Emmanuel’s first book Samantha’s perspective on so-called insanity would change drastically. Emmanuel notes insanity is a wise soul decision and people are spiritually in control of their condition. Many humans appearing insane may have experienced circumstances or trauma that they were not equipped to cope with. The decision of insanity helps them to learn while they contribute to the learning experience of others.

Samantha was pleased as she read, “insanity is a healing.” What Emmanuel wrote resonated with her as she thought about the family members that experienced traumatic events in their lives. She lived through a very rough year after her second divorce as she adjusted to being alone with her two children. Instead of committing herself to an institution, she sent the children to Ruth and Naomi’s while she toughed it out in private counseling.

Chapter Sixteen Confirmation at Last

Many issues surfaced but helping Daniel with unfinished business remained Samantha's top priority. James and Samantha were not getting along. Money seemed to be a big problem but she thought they had more than they needed. James was increasingly unhappy with his \$60,000 a year job. Samantha now spent additional time with her family and thought Isaiah might find ways for her to help them. After hearing of her issues, and the instability of her marriage, Isaiah agreed to see her for a reduced fee.

Confirmation that Daniel was indeed communicating with her came when Samantha finally met with Isaiah on August 8, 2004. It was four months and four days after Daniel died and the perfect time for her to start reaching out. Isaiah's wife, Priscilla, sat in on the first session for a short time and verified a number of things. Samantha was missing many memories from the first ten years of her life. She still suffered due to post-traumatic stress syndrome from abuse that occurred in her youth and throughout her adult life.

Isaiah told Samantha he was going to help her break through more clearly to the Otherside. He knew she could channel. They talked about reading auras, which was something new to Samantha. Learning how to read auras was on his list of things to teach her. Samantha just wanted to communicate with Daniel's spirit.

Priscilla left the room and Samantha watched Isaiah as he sat with his eyes closed. A few minutes passed before he looked up at Samantha with a smile. He slowly told announced the first words from the Otherside.

"Don't bug me."

She was stunned because she watched part of a family video before seeing Isaiah. Daniel had held up a Christmas present his Aunt Naomi gave him. She crocheted a bug and the words "Don't bug me" on a fly swatter. In the video Daniel held it up, wagged it back and forth as if to slap at a fly, and said, "Don't bug me."

Samantha now had no doubt about Isaiah's ability to bring through spirits from the Otherside. He let her know that Daniel was having a ball. He didn't want to be back in human form until he absolutely had to. He just wanted Samantha to have fun. That was a big request because she was still a workaholic. Daniel told her all she could do for Abigail was to send her white light and energy. Isaiah helped her learn how to do it.

Isaiah then told her there was a young man standing to her right side. He described the image but she had a difficult time figuring out who it was. An image of her coworker Luke, met in the early 1980's, came to her.

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“Yes,” Isaiah said. “Luke is one of your spiritual guides.”

Luke told Isaiah that he was the one to blame for getting Samantha to start her hiv nutrition business. ⁽³⁰⁾

30. Samantha learned years later that we all have many types of spirit guides. They are always with us. Personal Guides, entities known in previous lives, between lifetimes or even in our current lifetime, share a special affinity with us. They help us by impressing our minds in subtle ways. Yet, these guides do not interfere with lessons or challenges that we chose to learn and grow from. She sensed Daniel was also a Personal Guide.

Luke fit the category of Mastery or Specialized Guide for he was the one that led her as she became involved in hiv, the virus that causes aids on earth. Van Praagh notes it's “simply a matter of being receptive” to your guides. She was open to Luke's guidance as she worked hard to start and continue a business that never seemed financially stable.

Diseases such as aids and cancer force us to learn the lessons of compassion, tolerance, understanding, and acceptance. This helps to balance the negative karma “created by our wrong way of thinking about and behaving toward each other.”

Nurse Esther fit the description of a Spirit or Master Teacher. These guides come to us based on our evolution and understanding. Esther and Samantha met and bonded quickly as they faced the same situations of limitation and bondage in their twenties. Esther was the first person to help Samantha recognize her spiritual gifts.

Meditation, prayer, and opening our heart are the best ways to reach our spirit guides. These guides speak to us while we sleep or when we are inspired. Some guides are with us throughout our lives while others may suddenly appear to take care of a need and then disappear forever. Spirit communications occur in many different ways. Yet, it is important to remember not to accept anything that does not sound right to you.

Samantha was shocked. She had held many jobs but spent most of her time working as a server. She worked as a baker, a luncheon waitress, and then a banquet waitress after moving to Florida. Luke was one of the bartenders she liked while working banquets at the Holiday Inn. He was one of the friendliest men she ever met, her first gay friend.

Luke was always inviting Daniel, Rebecca, and Samantha to his little rented house behind the landlord's big house. They spent many good times together after work swimming in his pool. He lived less than a mile away from them so they got to enjoy the pool on hot summer days. Samantha loved being his taste-tester when he made new alcoholic drinks.

Luke was in an automobile accident after he and Samantha were friends for two years. He and his young lover Mark were returning from the baths in Miami. Luke lost control of his car exiting off of the highway in the wee hours of the morning. The car overturned as he tried to make the curve at a high rate of speed. Mark died from injuries related to the accident.

Police arrested Luke on the scene because he was drunk. He telephoned Samantha and several other coworkers days later. They all agreed to keep some of his belongings until he got out of jail. Samantha stored several boxes of his things in her garage. Luke

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was sentenced to prison for manslaughter several months later and began to write her. He was diagnosed with aids within his first year in jail.

Samantha was dumbstruck. Along with her concern for him was a concern for her children and herself. It was early in 1987 and she didn't have a clue as to how people got aids. She became a fanatic learning all she could about the disease.

Samantha never saw Luke again. He died within a year and she sent his things to his mother who lived in another state. She now had an associate's degree in Dietetic Technology and worked at a local hospital. Something told her that nutritional status was vital for people with aids. She felt drawn to hiv positive people like a moth to a flame.

Few people knew about aids and there was a great stigma attached to the word. Samantha was one of the few nutritionists who saw aids patients as part of her job. She talked to them about food safety and good nutrition. Most of the hospital patients she saw were secretive about their positive hiv status. Visitors were required to take certain precautions when entering their room. Everyone had to wear a hospital gown, mask, and gloves. It made the patients feel isolated and very uncomfortable.

Samantha continued to help aids patients as she dealt with her own pain, extreme fatigue, nausea, bloating, and diarrhea. It became easier to help people as her health worsened because they experienced the same conditions. After two periods of physical therapy for neck and back conditions in late 1993, she had major surgery. It was the last of five abdominal surgeries. Her medical conditions worsened as she again started physical therapy for back pain. She began to have symptoms of an incurable disease after a series of respiratory and urinary tract infections. Years later, doctors diagnosed her with Interstitial Cystitis.

Many of the dietitians she worked with were now asking her how to nutritionally treat their aids patients. Medical conditions forced Samantha to think about working at home on her own terms. She volunteered her services at a local food bank for hiv-positive people. Doctors of food bank clients began to use her advice on nutrition as part of their patient care plans.

With the help of another volunteer, Samantha wrote her first nutritional services proposal for Ryan White funds. She treaded into unknown waters as the food banks first nutritionist when the grant was approved. Many people in her community now considered her an expert in the field of hiv nutrition. Yet, she was not a dietitian for she had only a two-year degree instead of the four years required for dietitians.

Many of the food bank clients were patients met at local hospitals. Their doctors increasingly asked for dietary advice to help them. More local dietitians also asked for free dietary advice for their hiv-positive clients and patients as well. Everything seemed to be going well until politics reared its ugly head.

As hiv disease became more common, dietitians began to question why she didn't have a dietitian boss. They were not pleased that she was making a living using her expertise. There were no complaints about her free dietary advice but some of them felt they should do the nutritional counseling.

Her health continued to get worse and by the time the grant job ended, she decided to build her small business. Unfortunately, a new Florida licensure law passed concerning nutritionists. Registered Dietitian's (RD's) were protected by licensure but Dietetic Technicians who were registered (DTR's) were not. Samantha spent some time

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dwelling on the effort put into her hiv nutrition business. She didn't think she got the professional support that she deserved.

No one told Samantha about the possibility of being "grandfathered" into the new law. She was no longer legally allowed to be a nutrition consultant in Florida without supervision. DTR's could make a living only under the supervision of RD's or a variety of health care professionals that were "grandfathered" into the law. The list of those people included eye doctors, masseuses, chiropractors, medical doctors, and others. DTR's could work for non-profit companies or freely give away their services. They could not otherwise work on their own to make a living.⁽³¹⁾

31. It was easy for Samantha to get into the drama of being a victim once again. That drama helped her complete another part of her mission on earth. Many years later as a student of A Course in Miracles she recognized the lessons learned. The world's effort to separate humans into divisions is just another ego trick to keep them from knowing that earth is a dream world.

Samantha learned that everyone is a part of God. Each one is unique and has different gifts to offer the world. Yet no one is separate from another. We are all part of God. She forgave herself and the world for thoughts of separation. Samantha then asked for forgiveness for thinking she was in a real world and not a dream.

Samantha began to concentrate on educating dietitians who saw people with hiv/aids by designing a newsletter about nutrition and hiv. It was an intensive project and she had no idea where the energy came from. Still unable to pay herself, she thanked God that James financially supported them. Her lack of income soon caused serious disputes. But she remained committed to helping those with hiv. Samantha felt driven to increase the quality of life for people with hiv even when James threatened to divorce her.

There were many times when she worked more hours than she thought she could. New thoughts would occur to her as she climbed into bed. Samantha would get up to follow the ideas and work several more hours. Every time she thought the business was totally bankrupt whatever she needed to keep it going would come to her. Strangers would ask if they could write articles or become editors. Some would offer to help in different areas. Now, because of Isaiah, she knew that Luke was the reason for it all.

It made sense to her as she sat listening to what Isaiah said. Luke put the thought of starting her business into her mind. She laughed and thanked Isaiah as he told her there were two other people named Luke who needed recognition. She could not think of who they might be.

Samantha then remembered James's nephew Luke. Isaiah verified with Daniel that she was to give him a message. Daniel wanted Luke to know he was sorry he hadn't spent much time with him. Luke had recently come back home from college after being disillusioned by the death of his roommate from a drug overdose. Samantha was to let Luke know that if he stayed living at home, for now, everything would come together for him in the future. He would get the freedom he wanted and so richly deserved.

She promised to relay the message to Luke. The session with Isaiah ended before she learned the identification of the third Luke. Weeks later she knew who to contact after Daniel put another thought into her mind. The funeral guest book copied while at Rachel's house had one Luke listed. It turned out to be a coworker of Daniel's.

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She felt strongly that the man had something for her. It could be a message or something Daniel entrusted to him. Luke had moved on to another job by the time she got through to Daniel's old boss. She spent several more months trying to track him down but the trail went cold when she learned he moved further north. The urgency to contact him lessened the next year.

Isaiah and Samantha had several sessions before he took her through a past life regression. By this time, *Through Time Into Healing* by Dr. Brian Weiss enthralled her, and based on the instructions within it, she'd investigated more past lives. Yet, she was surprised when Isaiah asked for permission to go back to a past life where they lived at the same time. She readily recognized the past life he took her to as one recalled on her own a few months before. This time, she was able to recall more of the life than when on her own.

Samantha saw her past life very clearly in her mind. She was a young, black, slave girl riding in the back of a carriage through a field of wheat. Her body looked very thin and she was about 10-years-old in age. The girl's master was driving the horse and buggy as his wife sat beside him. He was a very big and stern looking man. Both he and his wife were dressed in black. The man had a white collar and a big, black hat like a pilgrim. Isaiah and Samantha continued to share what they saw and verified that they saw the same things.

Isaiah then started describing things Samantha did not see. He asked her if she saw anything else. They ended the regression when she became uncomfortable and failed to see anymore of the scene. A visibly upset Samantha then told Isaiah that she sensed her task was to now end her lives of bondage. She felt that all her lives including her current one had been of sexual, physical, and/or mental abuse.

Isaiah looked at her compassionately, hugged her like a father, and told her she no longer needed to live in limitation. He told Samantha she was much more than she thought she was as they walked to her car. Without knowing why, she told him that if he had abused her in the past, she forgave him. Isaiah thanked her. She promised to call him for another appointment when she had time to think about their visit.

It was 2005 by this time and Isaiah now saw Samantha without asking for a fee. Isaiah and Priscilla moved up to northern Florida two weeks later. Samantha was stunned but sensed they were traveling the country for a reason. Maybe their mission was to search for certain people and she was of them. The whole situation seemed preordained.

Samantha opened her mind to spirits on the Otherside shortly after she first saw Isaiah. She hoped her dad's spirit would come through. One afternoon Sherman's spirit did drop by to let her know all was well. She was in the bedroom office working and felt a strong urge to take a break. Rising from her chair, she walked into the living room to find the television on. She hadn't turned it on and pushed the power button off.

The television refused to turn off and she realized that there was no sound as she watched the show. People were running wild in streets that looked familiar. Many of them were starting fires by throwing bottles of gasoline that they lit with matches. Cars all up and down the street were on fire as people ran amuck smashing storefront windows. Samantha picked up the remote control and tried to turn the television off again. It again refused to turn off.

She figured out that the television sound was muted as she pressed the mute button and the sound came on. Again, she tried to turn the television off and realized the

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program focused on Detroit. This time it turned off but came back on when she started to walk away. Samantha was stunned as she then sensed Sherman's presence.

She sat down and began to watch the show. It was about the Detroit riots in the late 1960's. Samantha was then seventeen-years-old while Daniel's father Peter was twenty-one and jobless. Peter hung out with a motorcycle club as Ruth and her friend Matilda helped Samantha care for Daniel. Sherman surprised them the morning after Detroit Police put them under a curfew. He went to their house to make sure they were okay.

Sherman got the biggest surprise. Samantha's house was full of people from the motorcycle club who were forced to spend the night when the curfew was announced. There were people scattered throughout the house. Some slept on the floor; some hurriedly got up and pretended to play cards. Others stood talking as they drank their beer.

Now Samantha felt that Sherman dropped by to let her know he was okay on the Otherside. She thanked him for coming, told him she loved him, and again turned the television off. This time it stayed off. She didn't feel her father's presence anymore. Now she knew she could sense and channel spirits on her own.

Chapter Seventeen Revelations

Rebecca and Samantha left for New York remembering that Daniel hoped to be with them. The trio had taken many trips together and Daniel was excited about seeing Manhattan. Samantha sensed his spirit would be there and she wasn't disappointed. Besides the sporadic static and colored lights on the videos she took, a variety of other things let her know he was around.

Both Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricane Charley were heading for Florida but Samantha knew all would be well. Her excitement was not dampened even when the pilot rerouted their airplane over deeper waters due to the bad weather. She was happy to not feel the pain in her left hip that always came before a hurricane. Their late arriving flight turned out to be useful while checking in at the hotel at 2:30 a.m. They got a great room on one of the higher floors with a view of Broadway. It was the first of many wonderful hotel room views Samantha would enjoy over the years.

Later in the morning, they walked through Central Park. Samantha hid her video camera inside a small tote bag that had a hole for the lens to stick out. She laughingly called it her secret Nana Cam and videoed their first New York adventure.

The blue and fuchsia-colored lights she saw during playback were different from anything seen before. Diamond shaped lights seemed to move in line with the sun's reflection. They didn't appear to be the result of a dirty camera lens for the camera was thoroughly cleaned before the trip.

Later, round lights appeared to be in line with the city's lights as they toured on a red double-decked bus. Samantha suspected that some of the lights were associated with spirit activity. Both Rebecca and Samantha felt Daniel's presence, especially when they talked about the architecture of New York buildings. They knew he would have loved them for he worked in the construction field most of his adult life. As they rode the bus, Samantha could see him in her mind playfully moving his head in a circle as he did when alive. He tauntingly said repeatedly, "I'm in New York, I'm in New York."

His presence was so strong that she still sensed it even when filling her mind with constant chatter. If she wasn't talking, or singing out loud, there seemed to be lots of unimportant things to concern herself with. It would be another year before Samantha began to still her mind through meditation.

Rebecca and Samantha filled with a sense of something bigger than they were at Ground Zero days later. Some of the rubble of September 11, 2001 still lay beyond the gates surrounding the site. The drama heightened as the crowd looked at pictures posted

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of that fated day. “The Heroes of September 11, 2001” list was long. Samantha wondered why they hadn’t named them victims as she read the names.

The area suited her state of mind about the government. Building signs such as “Dissent is Patriotic,” “No More Lies,” and “No More War” fit what she believed in. A middle-aged woman walked back and forth in front of the crowd. “Bush and the CIA attacked America on September 11th,” she yelled repeatedly using her hands like a microphone. Feelings of tragedy and sadness surrounded the area.

Samantha sensed there would be change that is much more destructive for humans in the years ahead. She did not want to be a part of it. She had no idea how her view of the 9-11 event would change more than three years later after reading *A Course in Miracles* and *The Disappearance of the Universe*.⁽³²⁾

32. As noted in The Disappearance of the Universe, we all agreed to be here on earth during these trying times. Everyone came here with an unconscious knowledge of what was going to happen. The trick is that we have to remember who we truly are. Events such as September 11 are meant to be wake-up calls for us. They are undeniable symbols to help us remember that we created this dream world. We have never, nor will we ever, be apart from God.

Tropical Storm Bonnie made landfall at 45 miles per hour south of Apalachicola, Florida while Rebecca and Samantha attended conference meetings. Bonnie’s rainfall caused flooding and minor damage that worsened the next day. Category 4 Hurricane Charley went through Florida on August 13 and hit Punta Gorda harder than any other area. Their family remained safe throughout the storms.

The pictures Rebecca and Samantha took in New York verified for Samantha that spirits were around them. They both felt Daniel’s presence strongly at a cocktail reception on the evening that Hurricane Charley went through Florida. It was the first time they experienced what it was like to be in a New York nightclub.

Samantha was amazed that she drank and danced with joy despite her medical conditions. Her face often flushed red when her blood pressure rose despite the medication she took to control it. When she moved she often felt short of breath and her joints ached. Yet, a sudden surge of energy kept her up just when she thought she would collapse on the dance floor. She knew, as in the Keys, Daniel was helping her to enjoy herself.

Daniel’s spirit helped Rebecca and Samantha to have a good time and kept them safe. Samantha knew he somehow prompted a man from the conference to escort them back to the hotel. After stumbling down several streets, they crawled into their separate beds and passed out. They both screamed and promptly sat up at 4:00 AM. Samantha looked at Rebecca shaking and asked her if she had a nightmare. Rebecca quickly told her she had and what she saw upset her.

The women were shocked to know they had the same dream. The image that stuck with them was of Daniel in a wheelchair like Christopher Reeve. Daniel was a quadriplegic. Rachel stood behind his wheelchair smiling. Abigail was at his left side with her right hand holding his. They heard Daniel tell them he had a choice after the accident. He chose to leave his physical body. The revelation upset them greatly as they cried together.

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Samantha remembered reading about dreams that people shared of loved ones on the Otherside. Yet, she never imagined it would happen to Rebecca and her. Rebecca, Terrance, and Samantha had dreamt of Daniel before but the women seemed to be more in touch with Daniel's spirit. They knew there was a choice to make. They could choose to stay open to such communications or they could close themselves off from them. Rebecca chose to do the later.

"I can't take it anymore Mom," she said with determination. "I have to go back to how I was."

Samantha said she understood but she would never close her mind again. She'd seen and experienced too much. Samantha knew there was something much more to life than anyone believed.

Rebecca and Samantha took a final walk down Broadway the Sunday morning before they left New York. The streets were full of people from different cultures. It was very exciting trying to figure out where they all came from. One man dressed in a white shirt with tan slacks stood on a street corner in the rain. He yelled as loudly as he could.

"Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh. I am you, I am you, I am you."

They stood and listened to him for several minutes.

"Thank you, Thank you. Yahweh, Yahweh," he called out raising his arms to the sky.

"Do you know what he's saying?" Samantha asked Rebecca. "Yahweh is another word for God. He's praising God."

It would be another year before Samantha truly understood what the man said. ⁽³³⁾

33. The light of God is in us. We exist in a Universal God soup connected to all living things. We are, in essence, parts of the Divine Being.

Samantha's beliefs continued to change when she returned home from New York. She started writing a book for Abigail. It was now vital that her granddaughter know what kind of person her dad had been. Friends and family continued to try and get her out of the house but getting the book done consumed her.

Samantha gladly spent one Sunday afternoon at a birthday party for one-year-old PJ. His father was one of James' employees. PJ's parents spent time with the family during their last two Keys vacations. They also shared family dinners and other times with them. The loss of Daniel affected them more strongly now that they had their own son.

PJ's first birthday party was at the Rainforest Café. Samantha thought it was an expensive place to eat and wanted to see it. She spent most of her time there making a video of the party for his parents. It was easy to do and made her feel good.

Near the events end, she held back tears as PJ's parents picked him up for a group hug amid his many gifts. She thought about how differently she had raised Daniel. Samantha heard his words in her mind just as the tears were about to fall.

"It's okay Mom," he said. You did what you could."

Her joy increased later when she played back the video and heard the static that alerted her to Daniel's presence. ⁽³⁴⁾

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34. *Samantha knew what Daniel communicated was true. She had seen information on a number of Web sites about spirituality. We all choose who our parents will be. We choose wisely trying to assure that our soul will get the best possible growth in each lifetime. Samantha gave Daniel's soul the experiences it needed to grow. She would later be drawn to a variety of books that held the same information she intuitively knew.*

Mary was the next person to distract Samantha. She offered her a free ticket to see the Dalai Lama on Sunday Sept 19. Samantha was anxious to hear what the Dalai Lama had to say about the turmoil in America. Many people thought the last two elections were stolen from the Democratic Party. The polls turned thousands of people, eligible to vote, away before they cast their ballots. Computer votes were changed. Workers found many untallied ballots after Republican Katherine Harris made the final decision.

Government intrusion seemed to be increasing with each change to the familiar system. Samantha felt that the only real news was on CSPAN and some of the foreign television channels, available only through satellite dishes. Two companies now owned 78% of the media. She sensed it was going to get worse. Samantha believed that cable television severely limited what people could see. The thought filled her with dread and fear.

She was fearful of other things as well. Her brother Amos was in jail again for assaulting Terrance. He succumbed to the urge for drugs after living with Terrance for several months. It was again hard to see him in jail but at least they knew he was safe.

The weather also concerned her. More hurricanes were forming and she felt guided to put the family videos onto DVD's. She thought the reason was because they would be easier to store and transport. It seemed like a good idea since DVD players were becoming more common than VCR players were. She used those DVD's years later, for something she never thought about, to write her books accurately.

Transferring the family VCR's onto DVD's was a huge project. It took a lot of time and effort and she had to buy special equipment to do it. She easily found whatever she needed. The project was more rewarding than anything done since Daniel's transition. It kept her mind free from grief and fear of the future. She became more open to Daniel's communications because she wasn't as consumed with his loss. It seemed that Daniel's spirit now guided her daily.

She saw how her son helped his family through a gradual transition as she watched the movies. He spent less and less time with them the two years before he died. Samantha still missed him terribly but knew his spirit helped the people closest to him on earth. Her nephew Joel confided that he too felt Daniel's presence as he thought about starting a wrestling career. Samantha fondly remembered the wrestling matches her grandpa took her to at Cobo Hall in Detroit.

Samantha decided it was time for a break when it was Ruth's birthday in late August. Several family members went with them to a local restaurant for dinner to celebrate. She sensed Daniel's presence but didn't tell anyone. The family still believed she saw and sensed things that were not there. She was tired of them teasing her.

It's hard to believe in things if you don't have the experiences yourself. Having a mind that is closed to new information doesn't help the soul to grow. Samantha saw that

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five of eighteen pictures she took had what looked like spirit orbs in them. She showed the pictures to her family. No one believed that the white spots were spirit orbs.

Ruth and Naomi's birthdays were less than a week apart. They decided to celebrate them with a family party at their house several days later. Ruth was going to have surgery for a hernia. She was scared and depressed. It seemed that hernias were part of their family history. Sherman, Daniel, and Samantha experienced the same surgery. Samantha would learn to disbelieve what she thought about family genes as her spiritual education progressed. ⁽³⁵⁾

35. A mental attitude keeps people locked into believing they must suffer through illness. Holmes notes the subconscious mind is "the builder of the body" and the subjective mind creates what we think. Subconscious suggestions become memories that externalize in the body unless we change the way we think. If we believe that a certain illness "runs" in the family, our body makes it so. Conscious thought can erase memories and heal disease.

Her family was not happy with her that day. Following Daniel's instructions, she brought part of a family video for Ruth to see. The video was of Daniel taken during a family vacation. He stood before the camera with a smile on his face and a joint in his mouth.

"You're going to have to edit this video," he teased Samantha.

"I don't edit my videos," she said. "When I die you'll be the one to see it, not me."

"Die, die, die, that's all you talk about is dying," Daniel replied. "What you need is an attitude adjustment," he jeered as he pretended to be a boxer punching his fists towards her. "Life is good. The world is good. Enjoy yourself," he joyously told her.

No one in the family was ready to see his face. They all thought showing Ruth the video was wrong. No one believed her when she told them it was Daniel's way of telling Ruth not to worry.

Samantha felt Daniel's presence that day especially when she played the video. She later saw a pinkish orb in the new video she took during the party. Several digital pictures held what looked like orbs in them. It seemed that every time the family gathered, and she took pictures, at least one picture held spirit orbs. The family remained skeptical of what they knew nothing about. They secretly talked of getting her committed to an institution for the mentally unstable.

Hurricane preparations were again a focus for Floridians in early September. It was nearly midnight as Samantha videoed the contents of her home office. She thought having a video of her business equipment would be a good idea if the storm turned out to be bad. As she watched the video later, she saw an orb accompanied by static. The static was so loud it was hard to hear her describe the value of her equipment.

The next evening she videotaped the kittens on the back porch. A small orb passed in front of the camera and went slowly out through the glass of the door. Samantha replayed the videotape at half speed several times to confirm what she saw. She decided not to show it to anyone. She was tired of hearing about how crazy she was.

Nearly three million Floridians left their homes before the storm hit. Fifteen people died as Hurricane Frances battered Florida for more than thirty hours. The brunt

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of Hurricane Frances spared the area near most of the family. They were left without electricity, as many others, but considered it a minor thing.

Frances made landfall on Hutchinson Island as a Category 4 hurricane in the early hours of September 5. The storm affected Rachel's house more than anyone else's in the family. She and Abigail spent two days together on the floor of Rachel's home office. Samantha knew Daniel's spirit had been with them. Several of Rachel's trees were uprooted and shingles were torn from the roof as the storm raged on. James went to help her clear storm debris when the catastrophe was over.

Daniel's spirit urged Samantha to shut down the desktop computer and printer and store it safely away after Frances hit. It was a difficult thing for her to do. She kept all of her business equipment on constantly as she communicated with people from all over the world. Having Daniel's special Mother's Day gift on her desktop computer made it even more precious to her.

She resigned herself to working on the laptop purchased earlier in the year. The older equipment was quickly packed and stored in her closet. She would realize later this effort was one of many that made it easier for her to let go of worldly things.

Her computer system had become her life. She felt the full brunt of empty nest syndrome when Rebecca left home in May of 1991 at only 16-years-old. Samantha's health began its downward trend as the doctors diagnosed her with more heart and bowel conditions. She lost sixteen pounds that year as she fought one infection after another and weighed ninety-nine pounds. Time was easier to deal with when she worked her hospital job and volunteered for the hiv community.

Hurricane Ivan hit Alabama on September 16 and crossed over southern Florida on September 21, 2004. Samantha went to see the Dalai Lama with Mary two days before the storm hit Florida. The audience sat spellbound by the Dalai's sense of humor and boyish charm. His message was moving and Samantha was happy to be there. She suddenly felt Daniel's presence as the Dalai Lama spoke.

"Samuel was born to help you get over the loss of me," he announced softly.

She immediately recognized the truth of his words and began to cry. Rebecca played in the South Florida Junior Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by James Judd while in high school. She dropped out of school before graduation just as Samantha had. When Rebecca became pregnant at 18-years-old, Samantha had no idea what a pivotal role Samuel would have in her life. She didn't want Rebecca to have the child but thought her daughter would come back home, finish high school, and play the violin. Now Samantha was spending much more time taking care of Samuel. Watching him was one of the few things that made her feel happy.

More than one million homes and businesses lost power in several states including Florida when Hurricane Ivan hit. Ivan is blamed for twenty-five deaths in the U.S. Eight of them were in the Florida Panhandle. The eastern edge of the storm led to tornadoes before the eye hit. Like Frances, this storm's force was closer to Rachel's house. James again helped Rachel after the storm.

James was now Samantha's only physical link to Abigail and Rachel. She began to think that perhaps she was meant to lose him. Maybe he was supposed to be with Rachel and act as Abigail's new Dad. The thought was comforting to her. Most of Samantha's family members remarked about the closeness between James and Rachel

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over the years. She knew no one would be surprised if Rachel and James ended up together.

Hurricane Jeanne came next. Later, as she watched the movie of Samuel and herself clearing out a closet, she again noticed static on the videotape. On September 25, Hutchinson Island was targeted for a second time as Category 3 Jeanne hit it after devastating Haiti. Hurricane Jeanne made landfall just two miles from where Frances struck (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Atlantic_hurricane_season).

Rain from the hurricanes caused more damage to the leaking roof at James and Samantha's house. The den ceiling cracked and began to leak near the bookcase. As rain seeped through the wood, the back porch ceiling began to break apart again. James put coolers on the floor to catch the rain as it seeped through the roof.

Constant criticism seemed to surround Samantha whenever she was near James now. What little communication they developed in the past was gone. Her connection to the Otherside through Daniel consoled her. She was glad his spirit warned her to be ready for bad weather. The season turned out to be well above average in activity with fifteen named storms. Experts could not fully explain the shift in hurricane activity to more hurricanes, and storms that were more powerful.

Daniel asked her to stop working on the book she was writing about him when she got to the last Christmas they should have spent together. She still felt that it was just too difficult to be a human. She enjoyed knowing of her connection to the Otherside and longed to be there. She did not want to be a human again. Her thoughts dwelled on staying between realms to be a teacher for humans after her body died.

Chapter Eighteen The Burden Increases

Samantha felt Daniel was slowly pulling himself away as she became more able to cope with his loss. She knew it was his destiny to die when, and as, he did. He graduated learning his lessons and fulfilling his goals. Her intuition told her earth was a place to learn, and teach one another, to come to love and feel what it was like to be human.

She was now used to Daniel's spirit changing the songs on her CD player. As she listened to his memorial CD, it skipped over songs more frequently. Daniel's spirit chose songs that he thought were better for her to hear. When she was sad, or depressed, the CD player would play "Soak up the Sun" by Atlantis Morissette. The song is about enjoying oneself and not blaming anyone for anything. Daniel made sure it went on the CD because he didn't want anyone to be blamed for his death.

Samantha continued to believe being human was a burden. She sensed that world situations were changing more every day. She didn't want to live for much longer for she felt world conditions would continue to worsen. There would be more weather trials, more illness, and more problems for her to get through.

Daniel would always be with her, as he promised, just not in the way she had hoped. Her beliefs were verified years later while reading *Spiritual Alchemy*. The veils between dimensions are extremely thin, Dr. Page notes, and those of the spirit world who love, and support us, are meeting us in dreams and meditations. They are "offering encouragement and guidance at this crucial moment in our evolution."

Daniel's spirit continued to guide her spiritually as she gained more insight into the unknown. He rarely came to her in dreams for she always woke up crying, filled with grief. Her loss was devastating in human terms. She didn't think she would ever recover. Daniel found much better ways to communicate with her using the music they loved. He spoke to her as she tried to study and concentrate on working. She still had no idea what "level" Daniel was on, or if he had the information needed, to guide her flawlessly.

The Shangri-la Samantha lived in and loved was negatively affected when James quit his job in October. Daniel's spirit continued to try and cheer her up. She had filled the house with sadness and grief and now it was time to clear all of that away. It was time to raise the energy within the house so that when Daniel finally made his transition she would be able to make it on her own.

Her family stopped listening to her so she branched out to anyone else who would. Passing on the information she heard, Samantha made suggestions as to what part

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of the country to live in. She advised people to stay away from areas with faults (making it more likely for earthquakes) or military bases where the chance of attack might be greater.

Samantha felt the need to help the world towards reaching its goal. She wasn't sure what that goal was but told her friends humans were meant to learn lessons and be reborn many times. She sensed humans must love one another and strive for world peace.

Ruth and Samantha took Momma to visit their sister Sarah who lived four hours away in late October. Pink colored diamond shapes from the sun's reflection caught Samantha's eye for the first time. Hurricane Ivan had turned at the last minute, in September, and spared their area. Other areas along their drive were not quite as lucky. There were still many missing and damaged road signs. It was sad to think of people getting lost because there were no signs to direct them. Ruth counted fourteen dead turtles along the roadway as Samantha videotaped the destructive path of the hurricanes.

They joked later about the missing tiles on the roof of their rented weekend villa. She knew Daniel was laughing with them for static on the video blocked out the sound of their laughter. The next morning they drove down I-4 near Orlando to get Sarah. A lone bird flew next to the van the entire time she sang along to "Soak up the Sun." She knew Daniel wanted everyone who heard it to understand the message.

A few days after their trip, they took Ruth and Naomi's boat out for a family event. James tried to help by taking Daniel's place as boat captain. It was Ruth and Naomi's thirty-fourth year together. Samantha was still feverishly working on getting the family videos onto DVDs. She was happy for the break. Rebecca reminded Samuel that memories were all they had left of Daniel when he got upset because Samantha videotaped him.

Samuel and Samantha yelled out their hellos to Amos as the boat passed by the county jail. Samuel told him to say hello to Martha Stewart for him and the family roared with laughter. Of course, Amos couldn't hear them. Samantha spent the entire trip trying to entertain everyone but it just annoyed them. She wasn't sure, but felt that Daniel's spirit directed her to say certain things during their four hour boat ride.

An odd thing happened when they got back to the dock. James got out of the boat to get the van so he could back it onto the boat ramp. Ruth leaned over, just a bit, and started to get onto the dock. It looked as if someone shoved her for suddenly her butt moved forward as if pushed by an unseen hand. Her knees went down and she fell into the water. They all roared with laughter for everyone knew Daniel's spirit was right there.

Samantha was thankful James was spending one day every week with Rachel and Abigail. It gave her a way to keep in touch with them. She also felt fortunate to spend more time with Samuel as well. But it was harder to live in November when James' unemployment benefits were approved for only one-third of what he made at his job.

Everything in her life seemed to be changing. Although she had lost sixteen pounds since Daniel's death, she was still obese. Medical conditions required more of her time. A pinched nerve in her neck further affected how she slept. She planned her days around medications, gastritis, food and fluids, and other bodily limitations. After filing for disability the year before Daniel died, she was still waiting for Social Security approval.

Samantha and her friends were now concerned more than ever by the loss of democracy. Traffic cameras (<http://host.maptuit.com/fdot/?config=TrafficW.FDOT&aoi=0>)

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were becoming increasingly evident on many roads and places like public parks. Samantha wondered if the lights were hooked up to satellite dishes like the ones in New York.

Each day she sat in front of the television and taped hours of CSPAN, which showed live Senate and House hearings. She planned to save the tapes for her grandchildren. Most Floridians voted for Kerry and Edwards but Harris secured the presidency for George W. Bush. Samantha had tried to get around the corruption of the first election by mailing her absentee vote for the second election. Yet, thousands of absentee ballots were “lost.”

No one with any political clout was talking about the elections. Samantha suspected it was to keep the stock market up and limit riots. So where is the underground movement to take back democracy? she wondered. How can Americans teach democracy, to other countries, when they don't have it themselves? She was disgusted to be an American, especially one in Florida.

Rebecca and Samantha still felt the loss of Daniel immensely. They were both thankful that James was spending more time with Samuel. Rebecca's medical issues didn't seem to be much better than Samantha's as she went from one emergency room to another. She finally, as her mom had, resigned herself to having another exploratory surgery.⁽³⁶⁾

36. Life situations occur as our soul planned them to before we came into human form. Everything happens for a reason. Illness is a wake-up call. It occurs when we don't listen to our soul and aren't growing spiritually. Emmanuel notes, “areas of our body that resist the soul consciousness can develop dysfunction depending on the needs of our soul.”

If we allow them to, illnesses offer us an opportunity to mentally, and emotionally, confront what we are reluctant to see. How we deal with situations and conditions matter. Changing our perspective may not be easy to do but can help greatly. It's much easier to change the way we think when we change our lifestyle habits. Reading self-help books and watching less television makes a big difference.

Samantha began to accept things as they came. She hoped they would get better but her faith in God was sorely lacking. Things were not coming to her as easily as before and she decided to cut down on her workload. People were not sending articles to publish in the business newsletter. Volunteers stopped asking if she needed help. And the telephone line seemed constantly busy with personal issues. It was almost as if an unseen force cut the cord on her business. Feeling it was time to take care of herself, she decreased publication of the newsletter from six times a year to four.

It seemed that each drug prescribed only caused her more limitations. It was time to find a new way to good health and well-being. Western medicine was failing Samantha so she finally made an appointment to see one of her editors after months of uncertainty. Michael was a Doctor of Oriental and Naturopathic Medicine.

Her first treatment results were better than Western medicine had been able to achieve. It was the first time in more than a year that she felt such relief. Both sinuses opened for the first time in years allowing her to breathe deeply and the swelling on her right side lessened. Her senses heightened and she felt an increased awareness of being as

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she drove home. One treatment helped to free the pinched nerve in her neck and decreased the numbness in her body as well.

Samantha's body didn't tingle or feel numb during the night now. It was easier for her to walk for the first time in more than a year. Michael was just as happy as Samantha when she telephoned him days after her treatment. He offered to continue helping her even if she couldn't pay him as much as many of his patients did. She decided to keep getting the scraping and cupping treatments for his method worked well.

Chapter Nineteen Drama All Around

Terrance hosted the family's first Thanksgiving Day without Daniel. His wife and son had moved to another state by then and he referred to himself as Terry. Everyone tried to be on their best behavior as they helped to place food on the table. Samantha sat in the living room as they ate. She had to wait two hours to eat because of her medications.

Everyone was happy to see Rachel and Abigail when they arrived later in the evening. A new energy seemed to flow between James and Rachel. Rachel acknowledged everyone with a hug and a kiss except James. They continued to ignore one another for the first hour she was there. It seemed odd to Samantha that they weren't talking because he was still visiting Rachel and Abigail at least once a week.

Abigail wore new, red, cowboy boots, which she got to ride a horse for the first time. She sat next to Papa James as soon as she walked into the house. They both wore red shirts. Abigail excitedly told unemployed Papa she wanted a horse for Christmas. As they sat next to one another, he kept moving her long hair from in front of her face. It was clear James was mesmerized by Abigail. His loving gestures as they sat together surprised Samantha. She never saw him act in such a loving manner. James' love for Abigail looked much stronger than any love Samantha had seen him display.

Photos taken as James and Abigail sat together showed unexplainable bright, white lights. The lights first appeared on James' torso and upper lip. The next picture, taken right after the first, showed a bright, white light on the bridge of his nose and three more on his right eye, which was closed. They didn't appear to be reflections. Spirit orbs floated in other pictures taken that day as well.

Samantha longed to hold Abigail but consoled herself with the thought that she was videotaping the day on her Nana Cam. Everyone listened as Rachel announced her holiday plans. It was the first time since her wedding to Daniel that Samantha saw Rachel wearing makeup. A hush fell over the room as Rachel talked about how she and Abigail would be celebrating the Christmas holidays out of town. It seemed to Samantha that Rachel was trying hard to make someone jealous.

Rachel had recently reconnected with a male high school friend. He invited her and Abigail up north to spend the holidays with his family. His wealthy family owned a lot of land and looked forward to their visit. Samantha was not the only disappointed one in the room. It saddened her to think they would miss Abigail's third birthday.

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Samuel's birthday was the next day. Samantha and Rebecca tried not to think about how the only strong role model in his life was now gone. Daniel had always made an effort to be there for Samuel because he knew what it was like to grow up without a father. The boy was older now and really needed that male connection. James took Samuel fishing sometimes but never seemed to have a strong interest in him.

Rebecca had a small family birthday party for Samuel at their house. Two of his friends joined in his twelfth year celebration. Most of the family stayed outside on the back porch to enjoy the wonderful, late November weather. Samantha felt since it was nearly 80 degrees outside that it was still too hot for her. She kept going into the air-conditioned house to get away from the heat. Samuel played video games in his bedroom with his friends while James watched television in the living room alone.

Samantha videotaped the event and felt Daniel's presence several times. Everyone felt his loss the most while playing their usual pinochle card game. Samantha got two double runs in a row.

"I'm not stacking the deck," she said. "I can't help it if someone else is stacking the deck."

Rebecca, who was her partner, got a double run in the next hand after Terry dealt the cards. A tiny flash of light passed to the right side of Samantha's head as they played. She leaned towards Rebecca as she sang along to a popular song on the radio.

"I've got to keep moving on," she said before she got up.

"Yup, he had his fun," Rebecca replied.

"You realize that when Daniel died I lost my pinochle partner," Ruth reported sadly to the group.

"We all lost a little piece of ourselves," Samantha replied. "But inside us all there's a little piece that helps us carry on."

They all knew Samantha referred to the first song on Daniel's memorial CD.

"And that little piece sticks around and gives us three double runs in a row," Rebecca announced with a wide grin.

"And then he goes and plays with his daughter," Samantha told the group. "Right now Abigail is pointing to his side of the bed going, Daddy's there. Don't put your hand there Mommy, Daddy's there."

"Yeah, did you hear Rachel saying that?" Rebecca asked Ruth.

"Yeah, she did," replied Samantha. "She still sees him. Daniel's spirit will always be with Abigail."

Words from a song on the radio waft through the silence, "and you heal yourself away, and you heal yourself away. And you heal and you heal." Rebecca jumps up from her chair.

"I've heard enough," she shouts while turning the radio off.

"And he checks in on each and every one of us," Samantha tells them all.

Rebecca shoots an angry look toward Samantha who looks at her still standing near the CD player.

"What are you doing girlie?" she asks taking a swig of her drink.

"I was trying to put a CD in but it won't play."

"Maybe your bo, bo doesn't want to hear it. Put a different one in. It works for me."

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The family looks at Samantha as if she is crazy. Rebecca places a CD by Journey, one of Daniel's favorites, into the player. It is one of the CDs they played repeatedly while driving from Michigan to Florida to begin a new life. The CD begins to play flawlessly.

"Is that the one you wanted to play?" Samantha asks Rebecca.

"No," Rebecca replies sitting down in a huff.

Samantha knows Rebecca put the CD in for her brother.

"Don't stop believing. Hold on to that feeling," she sings while pointing to Rebecca.

No one knows Samantha's thirty-two ounce container of diet soda had four shots of rum in it. She is now feeling its effects.

Samantha later looks at photos taken of the party and sees numerous spirit orbs. She knows Daniel's spirit was among them. Daniel continues to tell her everything will turn out okay. He wants her to have fun. His words, said during their family Keys vacation in 2001, ring through her brain.

"Life is good. The world is good. Enjoy yourself."

She loved to watch that video more than many of the others. Samantha knew she was a survivor and had already lived a few lives within her current one. She changed her life so many times it made her head spin to think about it. Her first teenage marriage lasted little more than a year. The marriage to Rebecca's father took place after the couple lived together for four years. It ended in divorce three years later.

By December 2004, James and Samantha were again seriously questioning their relationship. The arguing reached new heights one evening in the living room. As soon as James raised his voice, the television turned off. There was no power outage and the new television always worked well. Samantha sensed it was Daniel's spirit letting her know he was there. The yelling match ended before it began when she thanked him for being there. James put his arm down, shook his head in disbelief, and walked back to his den.

Their marriage, unstable since 1992, worsened after Daniel died. They both realized it was time to talk about the relationship again. It seemed that Samantha was being given words to say but she wasn't sure why. She followed James into the den and announced that his reality was not hers. They had very different priorities in life and very different beliefs.

James and Rachel, she confided, were meant to be together. He was to be a father to Abigail. There were no strong blood ties between James, Daniel, Rachel, Abigail or anyone in the family so she didn't see it as a concern. Rachel and Abigail felt comfortable with him and they looked forward to his weekly visits. Samantha told James it would be okay if he and Rachel got together.

"You know," replied James, "Abigail really cares for and depends on me to tell her how Rebecca and Terry are doing."

Samantha let James know her priorities were not money, possessions, or power but spiritual growth. She thought she had at least nine more years left to live and at least two of those would be spent on continuing to educate the world on hiv nutrition. She finally told James that her friend Luke was the one that helped guide her into the business she now operated. James told her she was crazy.

Samantha had never really felt James truly loved her. It was usually a struggle to communicate with him but words just poured out of her. She told him there was more to a

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marriage than financial support. She felt their marriage drained her human host of life and stopped her from helping her children the way she wanted to. After carrying the burden of a variety of health conditions for more than ten years, she was finally ready to return to her true path.

She calmly told him that she knew sometimes love wasn't enough and perhaps they would each go onto different paths. And that was okay. She let him know she loved him and was willing to stay in the marriage but if he decided he wanted a divorce, she would agree to it. Sadly, she felt he was one of "them," people who had no concerns over war or the loss of democracy, or the rape of spiritual growth, world peace, and universal love.

When he asked how she would care for herself, she told him he didn't need to worry about how she'd live. Things would happen, as they should. Friends with similar beliefs would meet her needs as they arose. Samantha had no idea why she said the words. The only close friend she had was Esther and she was still living in Michigan.

Samantha's appointment with Michael that night was a blessing as he relieved her pain. His scraping and cupping method worked amazingly well. She felt and saw the blood flowing more quickly through her hands and down her inner thighs as he did the treatment. With great relief, she felt the burning in her bowels lessen.

Michael talked about Chinese medicine and spiritual things while he worked. Samantha gratefully felt in the presence of someone with her belief system. They talked for several minutes after he was done with the treatment. He told her not to worry about the cost as they hugged goodbye.

Feeling the dread of having to return home, Samantha fought the tears as she walked toward her car. She then rejoiced after pushing the play button on her CD player. It beeped several times while skipping over songs. Just as she would begin to start singing, like when he was in his human host, Daniel's spirit changed the song.

She listened to the CD player gliding through the songs for at least five minutes. It was hard to tell what song played but she knew Daniel was right next to her. She placed her right hand on the passenger side of the seat as she felt his presence. He communicated to her again that everything would be all right.

Daniel's comforting presence stayed until she got home thirty minutes later. She heard only her two favorite songs play all the way through. Samantha knew without a doubt that nothing else matters. We are who we truly are. She still did not remember that we are spirits in human form.

Samantha made James dinner as soon as she got home. She ate in what she now referred to as her bedroom trying to work as he ate in front of the television. A short while later she heard him switch channels and realized he was watching a show with Dr. Wayne Dyer. She remembered reading one of Dr. Dyer's books about pulling strings many years ago. He was now discussing being our spiritual selves.

It was no coincidence that James was directed to listen to Dr. Dyer after Samantha discussed her newly recognized spirituality. She felt sure that Daniel's spirit led him to the program for the short ten to fifteen minutes that he watched it before leaving the room and returning to change the channel. Free will," she thought, "there is always free will."

Samantha now offered blessings, and thanks, to the force within us all, Universal Consciousness. She always asked the white light to surround her "chosen people" to help

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them find the path to their true destiny. She had not yet learned that we are all an individual part of the One. ⁽³⁷⁾

37. Samantha didn't know that by blessing people she increased the frequency of guiding coincidences in her life. She achieved the Eighth Insight but she did not know how to increase the effectiveness of her thoughts. Daniel's spirit would soon lead her to groups of people with heightened awareness to propel her further toward her mission.

Author James Redfield, in the book Celestine Prophecy, notes the extreme importance for children to be among people who nurture their energy, for early security, and growth. Her children, Samantha thought, were not raised in a secure and nurturing environment, especially not Daniel. She now directed her actions towards creating that perfect environment for her grandchildren.

Chapter Twenty The Holiday's Begin

Everyone in the family seemed to be going through life changes. Samantha had a new incentive to get better physically for Rebecca was having surgery. The treatments from Samantha's Eastern medicine friend now allowed her to begin to decrease her medication burden. Still out of work, James asked her what it would cost him to divorce her.

Samantha asked Ruth and Naomi to have Christmas at their house. Hosting Christmas herself just did not seem possible. She knew all things happened for a reason but she didn't know the reason. Samantha only knew she was where she was supposed to be. She was doing what she was supposed to be doing. Yet, sometimes she was not sure why she did or said certain things.

She was finally taking the time to care for herself. Besides continuing her business, she also offered support to help her family with their spiritual growth. No one seemed to understand and sometimes Samantha didn't either. The family just catered to her pretending to listen. They all thought she had lost her mind.

Both Rebecca and Samantha gave up their cell phones since the costs were beyond their means. It was nearly impossible for Samantha to do any business on the house telephone. James was usually on the Internet or talking to his fishing buddies. She made it a source of stress instead of recognizing it for what it was. It was another clue for her to let go of the business and move on to a greater cause.

Samantha's case for disability was undecided after seventeen months. Money was a constant worry. After more than twenty years, Samantha received child support from her two ex-husbands the previous year. It was now time to use the money in that bank account for more than just family vacations.

She was thankful James continued his visits with Rachel and Abigail. She rarely saw pictures of their times together but knowing Abigail had fun when James visited was enough for Samantha. An avid angler, James's fishing trips were now more frequent from one to three times a week.

The atmosphere in her home felt more negative with each passing day. James tried to fix the roof, which had leaked for almost a year, and closed the large gap in the back porch ceiling. But he ignored the hole in the den ceiling inside the house. That hole bothered Samantha much more. She feared that anything in the attic could come into the house so she kept her bedroom door closed and tried not to think about it.

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Her workroom became her sanctuary and she spent many nights sleeping there. Samantha lit candles before she slept but didn't know why. Sometimes she lit candles during the day and prayed for God's deliverance. She felt that it would soon be her time to go home.

Getting health care was a constant worry without insurance. She didn't realize God was behind the scenes to assure she was cared for. Visits to her regular doctor of many years were free. He gave her complimentary samples of many drugs prescribed in the past. The two specialists she saw regularly also discounted the cost of their services. And the one drug that took away the fire in her bladder now came free through the company. The drug's cost was almost \$400 a month so she was grateful to have her specialist arrange for the free prescription.

Several family members still felt Daniel's presence at certain times. Most of them ignored the so-called "coincidences" but Samantha continued to pay attention. Daniel's spirit guided her to make friends with people that believed in the things she did. She tried not to think about human issues and opted for the attitude that, "It is what it is."

Samantha spent more time alone now. She felt like the black sheep of the family because no one held her new beliefs. The way she talked, along with the pictures she showed of spirit orbs, made them all feel uncomfortable. She didn't fit into the family mold anymore and felt very different from the people she loved. It reminded her of receiving her first community college degree. No one else in her family felt the desire to attend college. They all told her she was too arrogant when she got her degree.

Rebecca asked what she wanted to do for her fifty-fourth birthday. Her last two birthdays ended in disappointment when everyone became negative. Samantha still missed seeing Daniel during family events and didn't want to celebrate. She decided to join the family for dinner only because of Rebecca's request. They had celebrated her birthday at her favorite seafood restaurant before but she felt empty when it was over. Samantha hoped this year would be different. Maybe this year everyone would be in a good mood.

The dinner party started out badly before they entered the restaurant. Samantha didn't mind the short wait outside for a table during the early bird hours but other family members did. Naomi, known for being critical of just about everything, arrived later than the others in a negative mood. She was usually the first one to criticize. Other people were wrong if they didn't act like her. Family interactions often changed from positive to negative as others shared her opinions.

Samantha sensed Naomi's moodiness when she joined the table and complained about the fancy restaurant. Complaints began with a look at the silverware and continued about menu prices and choices. Customers at other tables looked at her family with dislike in their eyes. Ever critical Naomi ordered chicken while the rest of the family ate seafood. She continued to complain saying the service was either too slow or too attentive.

Naomi was the perfect "mirror" or "shadow" for Samantha because they both demanded perfection. *Emmanuel's Book* notes if we always insist on perfection it will stop our growth as souls. Accepting imperfection helps us to grow. Change begins within us, as we love the part of ourselves that we think is imperfect. Samantha didn't know why Naomi continued to disrupt her birthday celebration until she started to read *A Course in Miracles*.⁽³⁸⁾

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38. *Samantha was just like the other members of her family feeling separate from everyone else. The only difference for her now was a change in how she thought about things. She learned that many people feel inferior to others instead of realizing we are all the same, part of the One. They accuse others of wrongdoing to feed their own ego.*

When we think we are not as “good” as others we tend to project our feelings unto them. Our ego is happy to separate us from other people. It loves to see us accuse others of doing what we do, or feeling as we do. The ego is pleased when people feel negative emotions such as guilt, shame, fear, and humiliation. Having negative emotions is a great way to ignore that this is a dream world.

As noted in A Course in Miracles, “Projection is a confusion in motivation, and given this confusion, trust becomes impossible.” Blaming others for how we feel happens when we think something is lacking in us. There is no reason to put others down once we become aware of the Truth that God is within us. Although it seems very real to humans, in essence, we are not here. In essence, there is no we, no them, no us. There is only One in which we live and move and have all being.

Renard puts it simply, “There is only one ego appearing as many.” The real world is what we see with our attitude. Unconscious guilt from thinking we are separate is healed knowing there is One. The act of asking God for help is vital to free oneself from the ego mind. It then becomes easier to stop projecting unconscious guilt as God shows the way to One.

The rest of the family tried to ignore Naomi’s frequent and loud complaints. The more they tried to be positive to offset her negative remarks, the more complaints they heard. Naomi’s power play worked well. She got their energy as they gave her attention. She left feeling strong when everyone else felt like they had been run over by a huge truck. Samantha didn’t know what was really happening until she learned about power games from the *Celestine Prophecy*.

The book details how earth life will change. as more people understand certain insights to life here. Power games are ways that humans use to steal other peoples energy. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Stealing someone’s energy causes the victim to feel powerless and fearful. Everyone steals energy by making people pay attention to them either aggressively or passively by playing on people’s sympathy or curiosity. The action usually takes place without either person knowing what is happening.

The night could have turned out differently for Samantha with a change in how she looked at what happened around her. Everything became clearer as she studied *A Course in Miracles* years later. By then, she knew Naomi took everyone’s energy. Learning why people take energy from others opened her mind to a whole new world. ⁽³⁹⁾

39. *The ego is all about making people feel fearful and separate. Yet, there is no duality in God’s Kingdom. There is One, simply One, and One is Love. God is love and we are love because we are a part of God. Treating people differently based on different beliefs takes us away from the One.*

There are no negative emotions at all in the Kingdom of God. Thoughts of fear, guilt, shame, and humiliation are negative emotions in the ego’s world but are unrecognized by God. As stated in A Course in Miracles, the body’s eyes are not the means to see the real world for they, as well as the rest of the body, are illusions.

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Everything they see “lends itself to thoughts of sin and guilt. While everything that God created is forever without sin and therefore is forever without guilt.”

“Every attack is a call for His patience, since His patience can translate attack into blessing.” Having negative thoughts and acting out the separation ruse is really a call for help as one looks for love. When someone acts negatively, they offer you the opportunity to bless them. “You need the blessing you can offer him. There is no way for you to have it except by giving it. This is the law of God, and it has no exceptions.”

All negative behavior is really just a call for love. Samantha’s ego often used the “poor me” power play to passively steal energy so it was easy to recognize when someone else did the same thing. She didn’t realize that when people act badly it’s because they’re seeking love. They feel an unconscious separation from their true nature but cannot identify the need. It surfaces as a vague feeling that something is missing in their life.

In *Celestine Prophecy*, James Redfield explains a bit about religions. Religion is meant to help nurture the relationship to One but many structured religions fall short of that goal. God is within everyone but often, religious leaders explain God’s will based on their beliefs. They may not show people how to find the God within everyone. Once we are aware of our true nature, we get our energy from God. We no longer feel the unconscious need to steal energy from others.

It was an odd birthday for Samantha. No one brought a camera to document her birthday for the family photo albums. She left her camera at home since the family didn’t want to see the pictures she took. James had bought himself a new camera but he left it at home too. It was time to stop noting the past but Samantha would not know that for years to come.

Samantha gained another insight to life when the family went to see Rachel, Abigail, and Joy before they went out of town for the holidays. Christmas decorations filled the large house and grounds in West Palm Beach. Rachel had bought and decorated a big Christmas tree as well. Samantha hadn’t gotten a tree for the first time since she’d left home so she was happy Rachel had. She missed smelling the pine needles.

Abigail was asleep in the guest room where Joy stayed when James and Samantha arrived. Rachel led her into the room not knowing that Samantha had already turned on her Nana Cam. Samantha wanted to get as many movies and pictures of Abigail as she could. The room was dark as she and Rachel entered it.

“How are you Miss Abigail?” Samantha said as she knelt down to kiss Abigail’s cheek.

“Who’s that?” Rachel excitedly asked Abigail.

Suddenly the video camera’s light came on to startle Abigail. Samantha told Abigail and Rachel as she turned it off that funny, strange things were always happening to her. Rachel pointed out the angel light in the window before she left the room. Strange things were happening at her house too. Their only surviving dog Bear left the room with her. His thick coat of fur was gone and Samantha thought he looked odd. Abigail began to talk quickly as if she wanted to tell a secret before someone caught her.

“He got all shaved yesterday,” she said.

“Do you like him that way?” Samantha asked.

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“He was leaving his hair all around the house,” Abigail said exasperated. “We pet him and his hair went all around the house. Every night we found them all the time with ...,” Abigail’s voice lowered making it impossible for Samantha to hear the rest of what she said.

“Well, when you have things you love, you have to take care of them,” Samantha told her with a hug.

“Sassy passed away,” continued Abigail in a whisper.

“Oh, I’m sorry. Sassy is with Daddy. That makes Daddy happy. Do you see Sassy with Daddy?”

Abigail got out of bed and grabbed her new dolly, a gift from Grandma Joy. Bear barked in the living room and Abigail ran out to see what was happening. James scooped her up into his arms as she tried to run past him. Samantha greeted Joy in the kitchen as they went to look out the large, living room window. Joy looked years younger than she was.

“You’re looking good,” Samantha told her as they hugged.

Samantha’s video camera continued to tape the event. She was the only one who knew it was on. The memorial posters Rachel made for Daniel’s funeral were still on the walls. It was the first time Samantha saw them. She was upset when she saw there were no pictures of Daniel’s side of the family in them. She noticed too that all the pictures of his family were gone from their usual place on the walls.

Joy told Abigail to show her the new train set she got for Christmas. Abigail had already started to open her pile of Christmas presents since they were leaving town for the holidays. Samantha videotaped the huge pile of gifts under the tree pretending to turn on the already working Nana Cam. Most of the gifts were Abigail’s and seeing them filled Samantha with dread. Abigail had gotten many gifts from Grandma Joy including a wide array of toy horses. Samantha knew possessions would never replace the family Abigail seemed to have lost.⁽⁴⁰⁾

40. Samantha was again somewhat consoled to think Abigail’s soul chose her life before birth. Emmanuel tells us souls choose the childhood environment that is most effective to bring into focus distortions our soul selected to work on in this lifetime. The experiences we have “are there in the interest of truth and Light.”

Possessions are nice to have but can become limitations. Unless someone does it for us, we have to take care of the things we own. We may value them more than their true worth pulling us further away from our Creator. Having too many possessions is just one of the many other human diversions that may limit our time spent connecting with God. The ego loves it when we pay more attention to possessions than to our True Source.

Things take our focus away from God on the human level. However, they end up instructing us and helping our consciousness to grow. Obstructions to God are painful, but once we realize this, we can move through them getting closer to God. Emmanuel notes, “In the faith of knowing that all things are moving towards God the obstructions take on a different meaning and form.”

Abigail ran to the window as Joy walked outside to see horses ride past the house. Rachel said Abigail had seen a boy riding a big horse the day before.

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“He had no shoes on his feet,” Abigail said visibly upset.

“Do you think he held on to the horse with his toes?” James asked jokingly from his spot on the couch.

Later Samantha would watch the video amazed to see an orb rise up from the seat beside James and drift away.

Rachel saw Samantha looking at the walls and told her she changed the pictures to put new ones up. Samantha was surprised to see some pictures forgotten long ago. Peter stole the infant pictures of Daniel before their divorce. Rachel got them from him when he lived with them for a short time. Samantha was thrilled to learn that Rachel had made copies of one picture to give to Daniel’s family.

Rebecca, Samuel, Terry, Ruth, and Grandma arrived. Samantha wondered how much longer she’d be able to video everyone without them knowing they were being filmed. Samuel asked Rachel if he could play with the PlayStation game in her bedroom as she gave him a hug. He played the game with Daniel for years. Rachel told him no and Samuel left the room upset and disappointed.

Samantha set the video camera on a chair in the breakfast nook facing the Christmas tree and then something odd happened. It looked like a dark gray mist came from the top right hand corner and covered the video camera display. The color stayed somewhat as if the camera was switched to a still picture, yet it was not. Schwartz notes in *The Afterlife Experiments*, problems with recording equipment are common when one “connects with the realm of the spirit world.”

The video playback shows a screen with various hues of gray, and yellow, that lightens every so often for fourteen minutes. Family voices are heard but there are no pictures. Samantha later tested the camera by putting the lens cap on while recording but the video field remained black. She knew then Daniel had not wanted her to video that segment of their time.

Samantha picked up the camera when she finally saw the gray screen and asked Abigail if she could video her. The video screen went black and then began to work normally.

“My camera has a mind of its own,” Samantha said as she videotaped Bear who was lying on the cool floor.

He looked as if he had lost weight but it was hard to know for sure because his fur was gone.

The video camera now focused on the kitchen where James was helping Rachel prepare food. Samantha had never seen him be so helpful. He spent more time in the kitchen helping that day than he ever had in his entire life. Samantha didn’t know if it was because Daniel’s spirit influenced him or if he preferred on his own to stay near Rachel. Ruth called Samantha into the garage to see Rachel’s new four-wheeler.

As Samantha walked towards Ruth she whispered, “My camera keeps doing strange things. It will be interesting to watch this video later.”

Ruth impishly showed her a piece of Daniel’s motorcycle now hidden in her pocket. For the first time, Samantha saw the red motorcycle her son rode before he died. She couldn’t imagine why Rachel kept it and grief overwhelmed her. Abigail quickly ran up to Samantha.

“I want to tell you something,” she announced. “Let’s go outside.”

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Joy overheard her and got between them. She opened the sliding glass doors onto the back porch and they all went out the door. Joy sat down in a large camping chair near the back door as Abigail got on one of her riding toys.

“What was it you wanted to tell me Abigail,” Samantha said.

Abigail looked down at the floor but didn't answer her.

“Why was it you wanted to come outside,” Samantha asked as she videotaped her.

Joy quickly replied, “She likes to go outside.”

Samantha knew then that whatever it was Abigail wanted to tell her would not be said in front of Joy. Rachel opened the sliding glass door and stepped out onto the porch.

“Oh, you're talking about these lights out here,” she said pointing to the green and pink lights her and Abigail set up in the back yard.

Just as she ended the sentence, a strip of multicolored light whizzed past the video camera lens. It was a fast moving, unidentified object that made a noise somewhat like a model airplane as it flew past the top of the camera's range. Samantha knew it was Daniel's way of letting her know he was there when she later saw the video.

“That's Daddy's chair,” Abigail said pointing to one of two children's chairs.

The chairs were next to where Joy sat.

“Come here,” said Abigail to Samantha.

“Can I take a picture?” Samantha asked.

She then took one of Abigail sitting on her toy a few feet away from Joy. Samantha looked at the digital picture and was surprised to see several orbs in it. The brightest orb was right above Joy's head.

“Do you want to see the picture,” Samantha asked Abigail.

“Yes,” Abigail replied adamantly.

“Look I did get a nice picture,” Samantha told Abigail as Abigail looked at the camera display.

Abigail smiled knowingly and Samantha knew her granddaughter recognized her daddy. Samantha later counted more than twelve orbs all around Abigail as she looked at the picture again on her computer.

“Take a picture of that,” Abigail said pointing.

“You mean without you?” Samantha asked.

“Yes,” Abigail replied shaking her small head.

Samantha took a picture of the two small chairs with Joy sitting next to them. Abigail started walking towards Samantha.

“Oh, did you want to see it?” Samantha asked.

“Yes,” Abigail said as she looked at the camera display.

Samantha pointed to the tiny bright orb above Daddy's little chair and quietly asked Abigail, “Do you know what that is?”

Abigail smiled widely, shook her little head yes, and walked away.

“You're a very smart girl,” Samantha called out to her.

Joy had no idea what they were talking about. Abigail had found a way to tell her that she still saw her daddy.

James stood outside on the patio a few feet away from them. Enthralled by a Cope's Gray Treefrog, he tried to get its picture. The frog sat still as it stared at James. The first picture showed an orb to the right of the frog. The frog looked pure white

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because of the camera's flash. The third picture clearly shows the white spot beneath the frog's eye on the upper lip. That white spot is typical of this species of frog.

Suddenly, the doorbell rang just as Rachel began to talk about Santa Claus. She had arranged for a local Santa to give Abigail her first bike. Santa stayed for less than ten minutes but delighted everyone by the visit. Several pictures taken during that time have orbs in them.

It was finally time for Abigail to open the presents Daniel's family brought her. She suddenly seemed very shy. Aunt Ruth quickly ripped the wrapping off a gift to show Abigail how the family opened their presents. Samantha made sure the first gift Abigail opened was the one she brought. Daniel had given her a small stuffed teddy bear the Mother's Day before he died. She wondered why he would give her such a gift. The special mail order bear was dressed as if it was on vacation.

When she opened the box, she remembered the three-foot furry bear Daniel gave her after one of her major operations in 1993. She felt his compassion for what she was going through. James had gone fishing the day she got home from the hospital and she had been alone. Daniel made her promise not to give the bear to Samuel as he hugged her tightly.

"I might not be here all the time but you can hug the bear if you want to Momma," he said.

Samantha now hugged that big bear a lot but she could not figure out why Daniel gave her the small vacation bear. She put it back inside its gift box, stored it in her closet, and promptly forgot about it. Daniel's spirit reminded her of the gift a week before their visit with Rachel and Abigail.

"It's for Abigail Mom," Samantha heard him say.

She understood perfectly and wrapped it up in Christmas paper. Daniel had bought his daughter her Christmas present nearly a year before he died. As Abigail opened the gift, Samantha told her Daddy gave it to Nana. Now he wanted Abigail to have it. Abigail was delighted. Samantha named the bear Sunshine but told Abigail to pick a name for him.

Abigail removed the bear's sunglasses, put them on her nose, and said, "Cool Dude."

It was a term Daniel had frequently used. Samantha knew she did the right thing. Her stunned family remained silent. They all remembered Daniel, the "Cool Dude."

A small orb appeared near Terry as Rachel began to open the presents Samantha gave her. It passed onto his face and then disappeared from view. Samantha had made everyone in the family gifts of love. She felt driven the night before they came to give both Joy and Rachel small photo albums. During the night, she learned how to pull the pictures off of the videos she had of them with friends and family. Daniel wasn't in any of the pictures. Rachel began to cry as she flipped through her photo album.

Samantha had no idea that Rachel had distanced herself from everyone. All of the friends she and Daniel had known were no longer a big part of her life. The tears rolled down Rachel's face as Samantha tried to comfort her. She didn't realize Daniel's spirit put the thought of making the albums in her mind. It was his way of telling Rachel to reconnect with her friends. Samantha handed the video camera to Ruth and hugged Rachel. She didn't want Rachel to think she'd wanted her to cry.

"Don't cry," she said. "It's going to be okay."

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“You’re so good,” Rachel replied.

Samantha whispered in her ear.

“We’re all good. It’s just that some of us don’t know it yet.”

She had no idea where the words came from and she wasn’t sure what they meant. She would realize later that Daniel’s spirit had channeled through her once again.

The family then watched Samuel play games with Abigail on the screened in back porch. Samuel was still angry about not being able to play with his Uncle Daniel’s game system but he tried to hide it. Samantha felt compelled to take a picture of him as he held his hands up to play peek-a-boo with Abigail. She knew he missed her a lot.

Samantha transferred the day’s pictures onto her computer when she returned home. It was amazing to her that Daniel talked the family into buying her the perfect printer before he died. Pictures and videotapes verified his presence. Samantha saw numerous spirit orbs. She especially loved a picture of Rebecca holding Abigail as they sat in Abigail’s bedroom. Samantha had taken two pictures in succession. The first one showed Rebecca with her eyes closed. The second picture showed a bright, white orb directly in front of Rebecca’s vision. Another smaller orb sat directly in front of Abigail’s eyes.

A smoky, white mist appeared in the picture of Samuel playing peek-a-boo with Abigail. Samuel sat on a big, red ball in front of the sliding glass doors that led to Rachel’s bedroom where he’d played the game system with Daniel. A small spirit orb sat on his fingertip as he held his hands up over his face. The cloudy mist was in the bedroom beyond the closed sliding glass door. There was no smoke in the house and no physical reason for the mist. Samantha knew Daniel’s spirit was not happy that Samuel had been unable to play with the game system he grew to love.

In another picture, Samuel held an etch-a sketch in front of his face. On the screen he had written, “not Samuel” with a smiley face below the words. He was wearing a t-shirt that said “Bike Week” on it with the picture of a motorcycle. Samantha knew as soon as she saw the picture that he got the thought from Daniel’s spirit. Samuel didn’t associate smiley faces with Daniel.

Chapter Twenty-One The Holidays End

Things were tough to bear in all areas of Samantha's life a week before Christmas. There was too much to do at home and with her business. She decided it was time to cut down on her workload again. It was time to let go of some volunteer jobs. She consoled herself knowing Daniel's spirit was still around.

Samantha remembered the poverty of her childhood. She missed the little things she'd do for nearly thirty years to make Christmas special for her family. Almost everyone arrived early, year after year, and enjoyed most of the day at whatever house she lived in. She made quiche for breakfast so her family could eat when they arrived. The quiche and other treats lessened their hunger while they waited for dinner.

Samantha was always happy to welcome surprise guests even if they were strangers. Every year, she wrapped generic gifts in case someone showed up unexpectedly. Each year she made a Christmas stocking for everyone. Opening the stockings kept them busy while she finished making dinner. In later years, opening the small gifts became a fun guessing game for Daniel and Rebecca.

James was still out of work and went fishing often as the roof continued to leak. Daniel's spirit consoled her almost every day. His presence was the only thing that kept her from thinking about suicide, again. He continued to warn her about worldwide changing weather patterns. She stayed in her workroom with the door closed most of the time.

Samantha decided to make everyone photo albums for Christmas. James had taken over the checkbook duties for the first time in their seventeen-year marriage. He was still out of work and now didn't think she handled their finances properly. Her monthly charge card bills became the subject of much discussion. Whenever she asked for a check to pay for a doctor or dentist visit, James conveniently forgot to give her one.

It was difficult to buy the things she usually did. The dollar store held everything she needed to give gifts of love but she had to pay in cash and that seemed impossible to get. She prayed and was surprised to get a small rebate check in the mail.

Jude stopped by the house on Christmas Eve. He brought his small daughter with him who was just a month younger than Abigail was. He told Samantha he had been "clean" for ten years. He was happy to report that he dreamt of Daniel congratulating him as he smiled. Samantha let Jude know it had not been just a dream. She knew Daniel's spirit broke through the veil to communicate with him.

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As Samantha listened to Jude talk, she recalled the dream shared with Rebecca in New York. Daniel made it clear to them then that he had a choice whether to live or die. His soul was ready to leave its physical host. She shared the experience with Jude as he listened intently.

Daniel spent most of his life trying to help people. Jude lived with Daniel and Rachel when he decided to break free of his crack cocaine habit. Having used cocaine himself, and having other friends and an uncle addicted to crack, Daniel knew how hard it was to stop the habit. Addiction was a huge issue in his family, for many of the people he loved depended on alcohol or drugs to forget about their life. Daniel got Jude a job and they lived and worked together for several years.

Samantha felt Daniel's spirit was also communicating with his Uncle Amos who was still in jail. Like the rest of the family, Daniel's attempts were unsuccessful to help his uncle break his addiction. Jude gave Daniel another chance to help himself by helping someone else. Thinking of the many people in her life who continued to fight drug or alcohol addiction made Samantha's head spin. ⁽⁴¹⁾

41. Emmanuel notes, "The family is a hothouse for spiritual growth." Everything on earth has a purpose. Illnesses such as substance addictions are one of many choices the soul makes before birth. Sometimes we choose these illnesses to help other souls with their growth. Learning lessons such as compassion helps our soul's evolution.

Although she hadn't planned to make her quiche, Samantha baked it on Christmas Eve because her family requested it. She also decided to make her usual turkey stuffing. It was the first time that James helped her in the kitchen as he chopped onions and celery for the stuffing. He made a Key lime pie for dessert as well. Samantha was happy to think Daniel's spirit was still affecting him for he usually stayed out of the kitchen.

Rebecca and Samuel arrived early Christmas morning. The missing Christmas tree surprised them but they said little about it. The foursome spent several hours watching television before going to Ruth and Naomi's for dinner.

No one was interested in seeing Samantha's pictures. They didn't want to know about things they couldn't explain. James took pictures with his new camera but Samantha rarely saw them. When the family got together, James usually went fishing taking his camera with him. James took pictures that Christmas day. Samantha then decided to show Rebecca the pictures taken during their visit with Rachel and Abigail the week before.

Rebecca knew Daniel's spirit had been with them when she saw the picture of Samuel sitting on the red ball with the smoky mist beyond Rachel's bedroom doors.

"I wonder if she dumped the PlayStation game, got rid of it," Samantha said as she handed the camera to James to give to Rebecca.

"Wow," Rebecca agreed as she looked at the picture, "spirit energy."

She handed the camera back to James but James didn't say a word. He thought they were both crazy.

Christmas dinner at Ruth and Naomi's wasn't the same for Samantha. She missed the Christmas stockings and the other people who usually came to eat. The family spent most of their eight hours outside around the patio table. A lone motorcycle rider periodically drove past the house. And every time the motorcycle drove by, Samantha

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thought of Daniel and missed him. Everyone happily took home the quiche but Samantha still felt empty.

Samantha recognized Daniel's presence back home as she reviewed the Christmas video and pictures. Spirit orbs were in many of the pictures. White lights were brighter in some pictures more so than others. A beautiful fuchsia colored orb appeared on her video as the family laughed together. Samantha knew Daniel's spirit was again going from house to house visiting everyone he loved.

The 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake occurred the next day as Abigail turned three-years-old (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Indian_Ocean_earthquake). The earthquake triggered devastating tsunamis killing more than 225,000 people in eleven countries. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in history and the second largest earthquake ever recorded. It caused the earth to vibrate, triggered other earthquakes, and is estimated to have released the energy of 23,000 Hiroshima-type atomic bombs (http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/12/1227_041226_tsunami.html).

Samantha was grateful to communicate with Daniel even if she couldn't change the things he told her would happen. Having the information ahead of the disasters helped her to prepare herself mentally and verified her connection to the Otherside. She still warned her family of increasing bouts of severe weather conditions even though they didn't believe her. They were only interested in the storms that came to their area.

Rebecca hosted the family's New Year's Eve party the next week. Samantha decided to bring copies of her pictures for the rest of the family to see. The printer Daniel talked the family into giving her did all the things it took to process the pictures. It had slots for her to put in her camera's disks. She could print them off of the disks, put them into her computer, or make copies of pictures. She could use the printer to scan pictures into her computer as well.

Samantha now joked when she felt Daniel's presence, especially if Rebecca was around.

"What's that Timmy? Lassie fell in the well?" she'd say.

Rebecca was not pleased that her mother thought it funny the family didn't believe Daniel's spirit was still around.

This New Year's Eve, the small gathering consisted of Rebecca, Samuel, Ruth, Naomi, Terry, James, and Samantha. As usual, James went inside the house with Samuel to watch television. The rest of the family began to play pinochle. "Take it to the Limit" started to play on Rebecca's CD player. Samantha knew Daniel took it to the limit the night of his accident. As she started to sing, the CD player began to act as it usually did when Daniel's spirit was near. Samantha told everyone his presence was there. Rebecca got up and changed the CD.

"It only messes up when you're by the CD player," Terry said gruffly to Samantha when it happened again.

She told them Daniel had a lot of stops to make that night. Even knowing Daniel's alcohol level was way beyond the legal limit to drive when he had his accident, no one stopped drinking.

"Daniel told me to do this," Rebecca said as she poured everyone a shot of Jack Daniels.

Samantha swore she would never drink it again after they all toasted with the vile tasting whiskey. She was already on her third rum and coke. She looked at Rebecca as

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they continued to play cards and reminded her she was not going back. Rebecca was the only one who knew what she meant. Samantha planned to stay open to the unseen forces around them. But she had a lot to learn not knowing that her actions, and words, make a difference in what she experiences. Fortunately, after the New Year, Daniel's spirit would lead her to a place where she would learn the power of her words.

Rebecca jokingly reminded the family Samantha had gotten a lotto ticket for Christmas but didn't scratch it off to see if it was a winner. Samantha spoiled the joke for the lotto ticket was fake making the bearer think they had won.

"I'm not meant to be rich in this life," she had said while handing it to James. "I'm meant to pave the way for you all."

James went back to his station alone on the couch when Samuel went to his room. He had stayed up the night before until midnight and woke to go fishing at 4:00 AM. James was exhausted by the time he arrived at the party. After helping Rebecca open her second bottle of wine, he dozed in front of the television. The rest of the family continued to play cards on the porch before midnight.

Samantha had her Nana Cam and digital camera despite the family's dislike of seeing her pictures. She saw a small orb as she videotaped the room and took pictures with her camera. Some of the pictures she took had spirit orbs in them. As they played cards and talked, the family joked and made fun of Samantha. They mocked her by saying Daniel was responsible for things happening around them.

She showed the rest of the family the pictures of their visit to see Rachel and Abigail before Christmas. No one made any comments when they saw them. As Samantha took more pictures, she showed them to Rebecca pointing out the orbs. One of the pictures she took, outside as they played cards on the porch after dark, showed a greenish mist with a few visible orbs in and around it.

"Mom you're camera was one of the first digital camera's to come out and it's old now. There is nothing mystical about it. It's a piece of shit now," Rebecca said with disgust.

Terry tried to take Samantha's picture as she talked but the camera refused to work. She let them know that some pictures were not meant to be taken until the "right" moment. She assumed that moment was when Daniel's spirit was in position. Samantha told them she was writing a book now for Abigail about her daddy. The family was still certain she had lost her mind.

A nearby bridge began to rise as the Jungle Queen sounded its horn. It was before midnight and the boat held many guests. Always fond of "mooning," Terry decided to run over to the water's edge. Samantha videotaped the action as Terry pulled down his pants to moon the crowd.

"Happy New Year, Happy New Year," he yelled out wagging his white butt back and forth.

The guests on the boat roared with laughter, hoots, and applause.

Samantha's beliefs changed as she became more aware of God. She would later learn that the land they invaded for Terry to "moon" the crowd was sacred. She was thankful not to have felt the disapproval of spirits that night.

Everyone else drank another shot of alcohol while James drifted in and out of sleep on the couch. "*Nothing Else Matters*" played in the background.

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“So close, no matter how far, couldn’t be much more from the heart. Forever trust in who we are and nothing else matters,” Samantha sang along to the music.

She had no idea what the words would mean to her in future years. Samuel was still in the house and decided to lock the rest of the family out of the house shortly before midnight. He knew they were all drunk.

When Samantha and Rebecca realized he locked them out, they yelled at Samuel to open the sliding glass door. They both had an urgent need to use the bathroom. Samuel refused to open the door and left the room as James came out of the kitchen. Drunken Terry threatened to break through the small kitchen window.

“You better open the door or I’ll pop the f**king window,” he said. “You don’t think so? I’ve done it before cause I got my ass stuck between these windows. You want to see?” he laughed while grabbing the window frame.

The family roared with laughter as Terry began to open the window frame wider. James opened the sliding glass door and started to walk back to the couch. Samantha asked him if that was his fun for the evening. She looked up then and saw a fuchsia colored orb. It drifted from the wall, passed over James’ head, and went into the living room.

It was now 11:45 PM so they decided to call Rachel and avoid the midnight rush. Rachel sounded genuinely happy to hear from them. She invited them to Abigail’s belated birthday party where she might get her first horse. Rachel believed the miniature horse was perfect for Abigail.

The family toasted each other with cheap champagne as the midnight fireworks began. Samuel and James shot off fireworks in the yard for several minutes. Although they all missed Daniel, most of them were so drunk they didn’t think about him. By 12:30 AM, James and Samuel were back in the living room. The rest of the family continued to try and play cards.

Samantha took pictures of Samuel and James during her trips to the bathroom. A shot of James sleeping on the couch became one of her favorite pictures. The large, white, spirit orb, directly above his head, was hard to miss. She knew the orb was the essence of either Daniel or James’s dad Zephaniah who died in the house years ago. Either way, she knew spirits from the Otherside were there for the New Year.

The card game ended before two o’clock in the morning. A sober Naomi drove Ruth and Terry home. James went home alone as Samantha stayed to be with Rebecca and Samuel. Her health had worsened and she knew her third marriage was over. The negativity in her house was just too stressful now. It was just a matter of time before she experienced another divorce. She knew Daniel’s spirit would continue to guide her into unknown territory. Samantha looked forward to knowing more about the Otherside. ⁽⁴²⁾

42. Schwartz notes having loving relationships appears to improve the health of humans. Samantha would be astonished to know that the author called spirit-assisted medicine SAM. Her initials became SAM when she married James. And her friends began to use the new nickname as they referred to her. James disliked the nickname.

Samantha felt she would die soon as her health continued to limit everyday activities. She still hadn’t been guided to read Emmanuel’s Book. As noted in the text, “Your body in illness is not your enemy but your faithful friend. It has been programmed by your soul to react in that exact way at that exact time.”

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Samantha's soul would stretch immensely during the next several years as she reestablished her connection to God. She would no longer ignore the gifts of Clairsentience, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance and Inspirational Thought. These gifts are within every human being on earth. Two years later, she would read in Emmanuel's Book:

"This is a schoolroom of illusion. Do not give permanent reality to temporary things. Once you have learned what you came to learn the illusion can be left."

Samantha would eventually leave the illusion behind as she left her home to begin a new life of teaching.

Epilogue

We seem to be living in a dream. If your dream is unwanted or appears as a nightmare, you have the power to change it. How you look at things makes a huge difference in your life. This difference also affects other people, other lives, and dimensions we can only imagine.

There is only Now. Each day lived in the Now is another opportunity to help all spirits get back home. Like humans, every day is unique and filled with possibility. This unique nature makes it even more vital to live each day in the Now for it only happens once.

A common question is, when you look at a glass that is fifty percent full, how do you see the glass? Samantha always saw the glass as half empty. She has learned over the past few years to train her brain and see a half full glass, which continues to fill with each change in awareness of who we really are. We will be home when we all picture the glass as brimming over and overflowing all the other glasses.

Future books will continue to document the saga of Samantha's life as she increases her spiritual awareness by looking at each drama in her life with a new perspective. As noted by Alan Cohen, M.A. (www.alancohen.com), energy and happiness have a lot to do with what is going on inside you. Although environment and physical factors may influence us, attitude makes or breaks us. Samantha's changing attitude helped her to create joy and rise beyond the external factors of her life and you can too.

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About the Author

SAM's compelling journey of rising from the projects of Detroit, to living on her own at fifteen led to the realization that there must be more to life. A near-death experience at the age of sixteen helped to spur interest in the unseen world. Since that time, SAM has aggressively searched for the answers to questions asked throughout the ages. The awareness that we are spirits in human form having a physical experience came after her son's transition on April 4, 2004.

SAM owns HIV ReSources, a Florida based company that distributes resources on nutrition and hiv/aids. Involved in the nutritional aspects of hiv/aids care from 1988 to 2008, she was the Editor-In-Chief of the HIV ReSource Review, HIV Nutrition Update and the weekly electronic HIV Nutrition News Update. A strong advocate of human rights and nutritional services, SAM served the public and private sector by volunteering in a variety of Federal, State and County positions.

SAM authored and co-authored numerous articles on nutrition and hiv/aids, some of which are still available at www.hivresources.com. She was also the Nutrition Editor for NUMEDX HIV and NUMEDX Hepatitis and co-authored HIV Medications Food Interactions (And So Much More).

Guided by messages and synchronicities to her current home in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, SAM knows her most valuable asset is the ever-increasing awareness of our true being.