



The Emergent Principle

Chapter 5



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Rite of Passage

Alchemy of Love

Nature teaches us that death is not the end. Many have received the message but without the knowledge of eternal recurrence there is no practical way to assimilate the information. We have lost the spontaneous cooperation that comes with clarity and must now use thinking to learn our way back; we must convert thinking to knowing and live accordingly. In the meantime the pure ones by their internal knowing maintain the balance of life so that it will continue as a means for knowledge to flourish. We meet them in our daily lives but they do not reveal. Most are not aware of the alchemy of love yet without them the candle of life has a short wick.



Simpson Desert, W. Australia.

Death in the Desert



In Jan. 2000, I travelled to Mt. Isa in central Australia to visit my brother's grave. I took an overnight bus from Alice Springs to journey through a dramatic landscape of distant bush fires and mesmerized kangaroo's that every now and then appeared wraith-like in the lights of the bus. I thought of Seanie (pronounced Shawnie) and his affinity for this odd desert world where beauty and death are lovers and I realised that the reason why flowers in bloom have no future is because their completeness is not limited by reflection. My brother was not a reflection either and just as a flower his early death contained a message. The night passed into a beautiful sunrise that incongruously silhouetted the distant billowing smokestacks of Mt. Isa. Mt. Isa is a small town set adjacent to a silver mining facility. It is located in the middle of a most forbidding and unforgiving desert that quickly allowed me to understand how it

claimed my brother's life back in 1978. Seanie was twenty eight years of age at the time of death. He worked the various mines as a heavy equipment mechanic and it was not unusual for him to travel large distances between jobs. He was travelling in the Simpson Desert between the towns of Birdsville and Bedouri when he lost his way by going off the already barely distinguishable track that only an experienced traveller in the area could decipher. His jeep ran out of petrol and he became stranded. He tried various techniques to survive but his desperate attempts came to naught. Two years later his skeletal remains were discovered under the jeep which had finally been spotted by a light aircraft flying over the area.

No family member attended the funeral. Perhaps, we were all in shock and did not want to allow in the information that Seanie was actually dead. Mt. Isa seemed like another planet to us and no one wanted the responsibility of saying goodbye. There was a service at the local church in our hometown in Ireland which was attended by family and his many friends, all in various shades of disbelief. I remembered when my mother turned to me before the service for assurance that Seanie was actually dead so that she could finally accept and instruct the priest to announce it from the altar. The

death was verified through the dental records so I nodded to her and put the final clasp on the fact that Seanie was gone. I still wonder. I'm sure we all do and every time I see a hitch-hiker or someone out of place I always look very closely.

Seanie left Ireland in 1972 to travel the world. He was curious about truth and felt that what he had experienced so far in his life did not measure to it. He based himself in Australia from where he worked to make the money he used for travelling. He had our mother mail funds to his various ports of call. She was his bank. He always travelled with a back-pack that was usually filled with books. His appetite for information was insatiable and he declared that he would not stop travelling and learning until something made sense. He back-packed through most of South East Asia, India, South America and North America, taking breaks only to return to Australia to replenish his money supply. He had a great affinity for Australia and spoke highly of it. Ireland, on the other hand, seemed to drain him and never became an option for him to return to. He was offended by the patriarchal control the Catholic Church had on the minds of the people and he recoiled against it to the depths of his intuitive soulful knowing. Seanie was pure and his intuition was crystal. I have a large

picture of my mother looking at me as I write this, she is smiling.

During his travels Seanie became lost in the world for a period of about two years. The family and I became very concerned. We notified the Red Cross to be on the look-out for him. Finally, I received a phone call at my home in New York. It was about Seanie. He had been picked up on the streets of San Francisco by a crisis intervention unit who evaluated him and then urged him to call me. I sent him the money to come to New York and when he finally arrived in Grand Central Station at 2 am I did not recognize him at first. He was skin and bone and it hardly seemed possible that he could walk at all. I cried but did not let him see - he knew anyway. I bought him boots and clothes and he spent the next two months with me and my wife.

Finally, at the urging of the family and myself he decided to return to Ireland. He arrived looking fit and healthy and was received with great love. But, of course, no one could understand him. His awareness had made him an outsider and as much as he tried he just couldn't fit in. He agreed to undergo psychiatric counselling at an out-patient clinic where they promptly labelled him 'borderline schizophrenic'. The Psychiatrist asked me why I thought Seanie had lost his way. I told him that perhaps

Seanie was closer to the way than we were. In later years I found this to be true. He accepted a position as a mechanic in a local garage and I remember my joy when the first engine he put together worked perfectly. I was relieved to hear this news because I felt it might entice him to stay in Ireland where I felt he would at least be safe.

But Ireland was not for Seanie and again, my father and mother and the rest of us had to reluctantly say goodbye to him. This time not knowing that it would be our last farewell. He returned to Australia and after a few months my mother and I received checks with a thank you note. Shortly afterwards he went missing again until finally his body was found under his jeep in the desert.

Back in Mt. Isa I booked into a motel in full view of the smoke-stacks. I was depressed. I prepared myself to visit the grave and next morning as I was about to leave, I turned on the TV to find it playing the life story of John Lennon. Seanie, in my mind was much like Lennon and as I watched I felt him deeply through Lennon's life. I proceeded to the grave with my niece Ciara's borrowed Walkman playing songs from the Beatles and Stones.

I spent about an hour at the grave. It was quiet and I was alone. I buried my

necklace under the grave-marker and did various rituals to honour him. I remembered my mother whom in her dying years came to visit the grave. I remembered John Lennon and his gift to the world and I remembered Seanie for the beauty of his purpose and the incredible loneliness by which he had to achieve it.

As I was leaving the graveyard there were two young men trying to fix a motorbike. They asked if I could help them. It was three miles to Mt. Isa and they had been stranded for hours. I should add that I am very far from being a mechanic, nonetheless, I decided to take a look. It took no more than a couple of seconds for me to see and fix the problem. I told the young fellow to try it out. He started the bike and took it for a test run. When he got back he looked at me astonished as if I had just performed a miracle. I had, or should I say, Seanie had. I simply reversed the sparkplug's cap to secure a connection. I realised immediately that this was a setup by my brother or, the higher love that guides us all. In any case it was a nice pat on the back and a sweet communication to honour my visit.

I thought about bringing his remains to Ireland to be interred in the local cemetery in our hometown but thought better of it because Seanie was in Australia,

the country he loved. Furthermore he was part of the history of the local Irish Club whose members so honoured him at his funeral and make regular visits to the grave. I visited the club and was received most graciously by the two noble souls most responsible for it providing a home away from home for the many Irish working in the mine. Ben and Chris informed me that the mine has very strict standards for pollution control and that what I viewed coming out of the stacks was not a threat to health. Chris took me around in her 4-wheel drive and introduced me to the beauty of Mt. Isa. I began to see it as a moment between worlds - Seanie's place. I knew he was at home here in the bosom of these good folks and when I finally said goodbye I felt at peace.

NOTE

During his stay with me in New York Seanie talked of many things that I felt intuitively to be true but lacked the background to comprehend. Years later after I began to write I realised that our information had become the same and that he had passed it on to me somehow. I sometimes feel that it was me who died in the desert that day and that Seanie is continuing his work through me. If we are indeed what we

'think' then I know Seanie to be very much alive in me now. The result of Seanie's sacrifice and the process of my subsequent education has distilled into the awareness I am attempting to share with you now.

The following poem was taken from a newspaper clipping dated June 29th 1978. It was found in the pocket of Seanie's jeans when the body was found.

The Outsider

He is an Outsider because he stands for truth
The Outsider is a man who cannot live in the comfortable
Insulated world of the bourgeois
Accepting what he sees and touches as reality.
The Outsider is not sure who he is.
The Outsider is not a freak,
But is only more sensitive than the
'sanguine and healthy-minded kind of man.

Over...

The visionary is inevitably an outsider
The Outsider's problem is the problem of freedom
The Outsider is primarily a critic,
And if a critic feels
Deeply enough about what he is criticizing,
He becomes a prophet.

- Colin Wilson

Crossing Over



Crossing over I felt a breeze

A gentle, tempting seducing tease

An invite to become undone

A chance to live as few have done.

Over...

Sacrificed my security

My worries

My desires

My fear!

No more me

Removed & free

Dying is the way to be

Life is but a dream.

Initiation



My initiation to higher possibility began with the experience of timelessness. At the time I felt gifted without having to pay dues, but, in truth, my prior life had been a relentless working-up to a letting go.

I had an earlier turning point that pushed me to a desperate choice to die to my own fear and accept the consequences for a course of action completely against my character.

Prior to this event, I was at full gallop running away from all the perceived monsters generated by an abusive childhood. I was in full denial, always avoiding sensitive areas because my low self-esteem repeatedly told me that I'd only be found out once again if I choose to be brave. My fragile psyche could not withstand the embarrassment of any more failures.

It amazes me now to realise the deep roots of insecurity sown by my alcoholic father. He was essentially a good man, spoiled, uneducated, and kind-hearted. But all the kindness in the world does not repair the terror in a child's heart when the anger and violence is happening. I remember the desperate fear I felt for my mother and how the pain of my inability to do anything to help her made me feel. I prayed for his death.

There were however, short periods of peace when my father would become overly fastidious and order prevailed. Invariably, it was the calm before the storm and the

storms always came to destroy whatever comebacks he attempted. We kids always knew that it was only a matter of time before hell would break loose again. It was a life of constant fear and this was the modus operandi in my home until he finally died.

My father never supported the family other than when it suited him. He could get away with this because my mother was educated, intelligent, kind and capable. She just assumed his load because he offered her no option: eight children to feed and no support from anyone. She was alone in an environment dominated and validated by patriarchy. In Ireland during that time, men ruled and few dared to upset the order.

In school at age nine, I was beaten in front of my class by the teacher for being unable to understand long division. This event destroyed my confidence to learn anything in a formal setting. Consequently, I was a poor student and the best that could be done for me was to be put to work as soon as possible.

At age fifteen, my family found me a job at a relative's pub in Dublin. Dublin is at the opposite side of the country from my home and due to the distance and the long hours demanded by the job I had rare opportunities to return home. I felt very alone.

It was agonizing to go through puberty at the mercy of the indiscreet and cruel awareness of some patrons who enjoyed making fun of an innocent from the country. Of course I had no defence and always added fuel to the fire by blushing on cue. I had little information about sex and no coping skills to manage the wiles and wiles of passive cruelty.

I decided that the only way out of this hell was to go back to school and attempt to get a different kind of job. I tried interview after interview for every position possible at my level and as the rejection letters were piling up I began to develop a cavalier attitude. And so, with my game face on I finally got a job cleaning glassware in a chemical company, with the stipulation that I attend courses relating to the company's business and pass the exams at the end. I began a course of study at a technical school and worked very hard with a complete commitment only to realise that I was getting nowhere and still learning nothing. The teacher told me to 'pull up my socks' as he slid me by each exam. After two years I finally sat the qualifying exam and afterwards I convinced myself that there was no way I was going to pass. I knew the company's dismissal policy in the event of failure as another employee had

recently been let go for the same reason. So, in order to avoid the embarrassment of being asked to leave I gave up and quit the job. I decided to get as far away as possible and considered, South Africa, Australia and the United States. Finally, I left for New York. I did not want to be around to suffer yet another failure.

I escaped from the frying pan into the fire and at age twenty-four married an enigmatic woman who turned out to have more problems than I did. It was okay with me. At some level I felt confident that she would never free herself enough to observe me for the inadequate person I perceived myself to be. I worked very hard at manual type work eventually getting a low-level position in a chemical engineering company, where I remained for the next eighteen years.

I found a way of being of value and proceeded to create the 'American Dream' through hard physical labour. Two children completed the picture and my commitment was complete. Years went by with pressures mounting as my wife continued to decline, due partly to my obliviousness to her pain. She took it out on me and the home became a pretend spectacle where on the outside all seemed perfect but on the inside there was utter dysfunction.

At my job there was increasing pressures due to lay-offs. Many people were insecure and banded into survival cliques. I was isolated and attacked by one individual in particular who, for whatever reason, felt that I threatened his position – imagine! He began to undermine my work by sabotage, always in a clever way that suggested nothing other than my gross carelessness. He was committed to my destruction and for two years went about it most diligently.

Finally, he resorted to threats of violence and once even attacked me physically in the company parking lot. I had no friends or family to rely on and the only peace I knew in those years was when I worked my side business as a floor scraper. This work was extremely demanding physically but I believe it saved my sanity. In time I began to experience short-term memory loss: I was forgetting the names of people I worked with every day. This really scared me but then I rationalized that it probably was a result of all the pressure I was under. I began to accept and deal with the condition by figuring out clever ways of avoiding conditions of compromise. I hoped that it would go away in time. It never did and even today, if any pressure is applied to me I

will easily forget simple things. It was a precursor to the heart dysfunction that was soon to follow.

I was and am deeply committed to my children. They were very young at the time and I was concerned for them if anything was to happen to me. I saw no way out, my persecutor was not letting up and was increasing the pressure to match the support he was getting from those around him. Secretly, his supporters feared and hated him and went along mostly to protect their own security.

After an incident where I acquiesced completely even apologizing to him in front of his friends, he left me alone for a couple of months. Then, he got restless and accused me of something absurd and untrue. He threatened me with the words 'do you want things to go back to the way they were?' I looked directly into his eyes and said 'things will never go back to the way they were.'

That night I considered my options and came to the conclusion that there was no way to diffuse this situation other than to confront him at his own level. I considered the possible repercussions for the action I was about to take and accepted all. I prayed and simply put myself in the hands of God.

Next morning I went to work earlier than usual knowing that he would be holding court with his clique. I approached him and challenged him to confront me in the street, and, after a show of threatening me he was left by my lack of response with no other option but to face me outside. I was terrified as the entourage proceeded to the street. Word spread in the space of minutes and a crowd seemed to appear out of nowhere. It was mid-December and there was frost and snow on the ground. He grabbed me around the neck and I remember saying to myself almost amusingly, 'He's as strong as a bull and he is going to kill me!' Then almost as an afterthought I hit him somewhere and immediately he went down. I was astonished but also now even more scared than before because I realised that at this point there was definitely no turning back. Out of raw fear I hit him a few times into an opening by his head and he actually began to cry. I was again astonished as were all those watching. He did not come back to work for a week and thereafter treated me with great respect. I was a different man after this event because I realised that it was my own courage that had initiated my healing process, my coming home. I was aware that after my commitment to go beyond my fear the outcome was automatically taken care of. It

was unavoidable not to recognize the action of my higher power in this event. It was beautiful and wonderful to feel so loved by one so close and of whom I had kept so far away because I did not know it existed. I now knew how to invite it in. It changed my life as it slowly dawned on me that I am incredibly more than my wildest dreams. I went to a movie that afternoon. There was no one to tell, no one to share it with. I would never be the same again and that began my recovery to who I am; the first time the angel of death came to me and found me home.

Infinite Care



To exist in the rhythm of infinite care
Is just a thought from here to there
A shifting gear to ease our fear
A view to see all things more clear.

Over...

A decision to live within the flow

All things perfect in its glow

The flow knows all we need to know

Have to trust and just let go.

The world attacks our wisdom home

The demon has no home to own

Wants us lost on ego's throne

Can only live when we disown.

Every person ever born

Is complete in every way

Just as flowers - no doubts delay

It's just this fear that makes us pay.

To exist in the rhythm of infinite care

Requires a leap beyond despair

A sacrifice of fear on its altar of care

And know the gain is what we dare.

