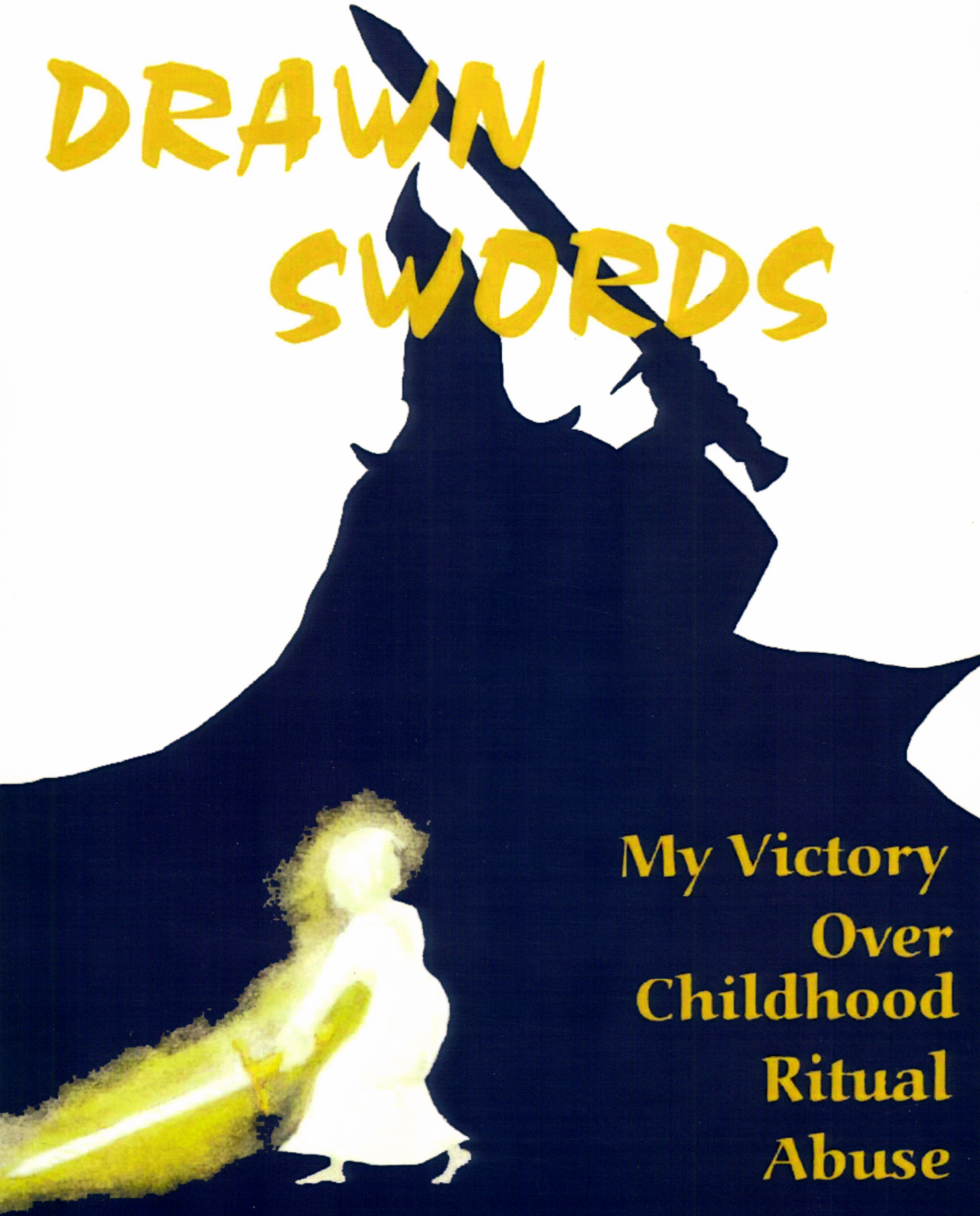
DRAWN SWORDS



My Victory Over Childhood Ritual Abuse

By Jeanne Adams

DRAWN SWORDS

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Drawn Swords
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Edited by Jeremy Adams

WARNING:
This material may be too intense for some readers.
Described events may trigger feelings and/or memories.

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To Jerry and our children
who have traveled this journey with me.
To Linda and Deborah
who are loving examples of beauty and strength.
To my fellow survivors who are growing
stronger.
To friends who have listened.
And of-course,
To Mr. Light

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PREFACE

Drawn Swords is a frightening introduction into the darkest side of the human spirit, through the underworld of Satanic Ritual Abuse. It takes the reader on a hand-in-hand journey with *Lil' Jeanie* into a demonic culture of unspeakable horror and sacrifice. This story is told to us through the echoes of a tormented spirit whose will to survive is almost silenced by the choking hands of her abusers. *Lil' Jeanie* begs to be heard, understood, comforted, and most importantly, loved and protected. Adult Jeanne finds the strength to heal, move forward, and protect this little girl who courageously shares her story with us.

I first met Jeanne in junior high school where we had several classes together with our friend Claire. At the time, and for many years to come, I knew nothing of Jeanne's tormented home life. At age twelve, Jeanne was very shy, quiet, and sweet. She never became spontaneously silly and animated like the rest of us giggly and giddy young teenage girls. I just attributed her quiet manner to astuteness, as Jeanne always made straight A's. Without her in my life I would have never gotten through French class! I was rarely invited to her house and I think Claire was the only person who ever really spent time in Jeanne's home. Jeanne missed a lot of school but I thought it was because she was so pale and sickly looking. I naively assumed she just had a weak immune system and an overly protective mother. Looking back, Jeanne was too nice, too generous, too passive, too compliant, and most of all, too guarded.

As young adults, we parted ways. I went on to become a school psychologist and moved to a different part of the country; but we always stayed in touch. There was and still is something very special about my relationship with Jeanne. I now know what it is. It's her ability to give of herself, to share something of her fragile existence in an attempt to protect the innocent, and to try desperately to make even a small part of the world a safer place.

About four years ago, Jeanne and her husband came through the Denver area. I was excited to hear from her, but I had no idea what the result of that visit would be. During this time, Jeanne shared her poignant story with me. What she experienced as a child was

beyond belief. If I had only known! Over and over in my mind, as I replay Jeanne's description of her torture at the hands of her parents and others involved in the satanic cult, my memories of Jeanne begin to make sense. The quiet, shy little girl who never questioned a thing anyone said or did to her, the friend who never invited anyone to her home, who always had to study, who was sick all of the time, was indeed well trained to accept the code of adversity and silence. The subculture of ritualistic abusers is so putrid, so vile, so unimaginable, that it is almost impossible for the average person to believe someone could do such wicked things to innocent children.

As you read this story, you will witness the healing that begins to take place as *Lil' Jeanie* feels the protection, security, and love for the first time in her life. You will tremble from the empty cries for help that remained unheard. You will also feel the strength in Jeanne to move through the process of wounded to healed, from terrified to secure, from fearful to joyful. As Jeanne attempts to put the fragmented pieces together, your own spirit will be lifted with hers. Like a beautiful work of art that is shattered and glued back together, however, one can still feel the artificial seams of a life once crushed.

Reading this account will help all of us who are good of spirit and soul and protectors of innocence, develop some of the strength that young Jeanne had to continue to promote good against growing webs of evil. Jeanne learns as an adult, the unconditional love that should be the right of all children. In telling her story and sharing her heart-wrenching saga, Jeanne continues to do the work that God has intended for her. Someone with divine powers gave Mr. Light to this fragile little girl, and that Light has directed her to share her story. All of us who read this will be more keenly aware that a heinous subculture of ritual abusers does permeate our society and it is not just a sick twist of someone's vividly sordid imagination.

What happened to *Lil' Jeanie* is real. Parents, therapists, psychologists, social workers, ministers, teachers, daycare workers, and anyone who has contact with children, must face the realization that Satanic Ritual Abuse does happen. The responsibility belongs to all of us to listen to and protect these victimized children. Through the bravery of those who tell their stories, we have a view of this macabre underground world of fear, intimidation, and iniquity. We

must now arm ourselves to believe, react, and mobilize to mitigate these evils.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the ungodly shall perish.
- Psalm 1:6

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PROLOGUE

I felt drawn to the Adamses the very first time I met them. Jerry and his brothers laughed with each other. They would team up against their little sister and tease her until she screeched and howled or went running for her mother. They would bicker with each other and then get over it. When we sat down at the table for dinner, everyone talked at the same time. I watched in amazement. Jerry's mom said they were common folk, but they weren't at all ordinary to me. They were full of life and delightfully normal.

I left my parents to marry Jerry. It had been a decision based on logic and not silly romantic notions. My mother was a raving alcoholic and my father an exacting man whom I was never good enough to please. My life at home had been full of craziness. When Jerry received military orders for relocation to Germany, he asked me to join him. I had found a kind and gentle man who loved me. I was surprised at his adoration and grateful for it. His warm and caring nature was a treasure and I was smart enough to recognize my good fortune. With his family's blessing, we put together a small chapel ceremony and married a week before he left overseas.

On a moonlit night in June, we piled into the pick-up truck for a ride across town. Jerry's folks drove in the cab and assorted young people climbed into the back. It was a magical evening full of bright stars and warm breezes. I was a bride of five days. There was talking and hoots of laughter. Jerry's sister started singing camp songs. As I gazed up at the stars, Jerry put his arm around me. I listened to the engine sounds as the truck shifted gears and smiled as someone added a ridiculous verse to one of Judy's songs. I had found the family of my dreams. They even liked me. I was safe now.

The realization came to me slowly. I was too shy to join in their teasing. I couldn't bring myself to sing the songs. They had welcomed me into the family, but I wasn't comfortable enough to join in their conversations. I was an observer, but not a participant in their celebrating. It should have been the most joyous evening of my life. Why wasn't I reveling in it? I held tight to Jerry's embrace.

Something was wrong with me, but I couldn't fathom what it might be. Instead of the joy that I expected, I felt nothing, nothing at all.

More than twenty years would pass before I would find out why...

Chapter One: Childhood Lost and Found

Big Jeanne forgot, but she's old now
and it's safe for me to tell her.
So I did.
- Lil' Jeanie

In July of 1969, the Apollo 11 landed on the moon. From our apartment in Germany, Jerry and I stayed up throughout the night watching our little black and white television screen. We marveled as Neil Armstrong stepped on to the moon's surface with the words, "One small step for man, one giant step for mankind." Not everybody had the same reaction. One elderly man could not be convinced. He could not grasp the possibilities. It had to be a hoax, done with cameras set up in the outback of the Mojave dessert. In the years since then, others have expressed similar views. Did it really happen? Is there truly an American flag standing in the stillness of the moon's surface?

Thirty years have passed since the Apollo 11 mission. Blessed with stamina, Jerry and I have persevered together. We have traversed the country and survived the rigors of parenthood. We are ready to mellow into middle age. For the past few years, however, we have faced a trial of tremendous proportions. While it doesn't include a moon landing, it is every bit as difficult to grasp. I ask you to be open to the possibilities. I find that I have a great need to tell, to share those secrets that have remained deep inside me all my life, but it is a complex situation even to share. It will also make you very uncomfortable. Please stick with me if you can. I promise you a happy ending.

I am a survivor of severe childhood abuse. Fighting back did not free me from my tormentors, neither did my attempts to run away. Like inestimable other traumatized children, I then chose a third means of escape. Shortly before I turned twelve years old, I took flight through dissociation. A part of my own personality split

off and hid deep in the recesses of my mind. By sending this part of my identity away, I protected her from the bad people. By carrying the abuse memories with her, she protected me from an unbearable reality. Together, yet separate, we survived.

While I appeared quite normal, the emotional baggage I carried eventually became too heavy to bear. Depression, anxiety and physical illnesses played havoc with my health. Massive migraine attacks loomed larger each passing year. They were symptoms of my body's failing attempts to hold in the pain. When the dam burst, traumatic memories came flooding back and so did the child who had held onto my childhood secrets, Lil' Jeanie.

Dissociation is not a disease. It represents a wide range of trauma induced mental disorders. The victim of a violent attack may develop Dissociative Amnesia and experience numbness and distress while having no actual memory of the attack. Further along the spectrum, most folks would recognize the term Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), now called Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). Individuals with DID have shattered into alternate personalities or *alters* as a means to survive unfathomable childhood abuse. At its most extreme, children can develop Poly-fragmented Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) with the creation of more than one-hundred alters.

My separations fall somewhere in the middle of the dissociative sequencing between amnesia and DID. There is also a Baby Jeanie. She is the part of me who has held on to all the *good.* She is the toddler-age me who existed before the abuse began. She knows how to play and be happy. She is not afraid of life. But Lil' Jeanie thinks that littler kid is *stupid.* Lil' Jeanie knows there is a lot to be afraid of. Safeguarded and under her protection all these years, Baby Jeanie must wait until Lil' Jeanie feels it is safe enough for her to return. Sounds a bit like sibling rivalry, doesn't it? The person my family and friends know is the adult me, Big Jeanne. Maybe that explains why I've never been much of a fun person. Think of Jerry's surprise to learn, after twenty-seven years married, that there were parts of me he *really* didn't know.

Memory repression has become a controversial topic these days. Some experts compare this growing phenomenon to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a diagnosis first given to war veterans

who were observed dealing with nightmares and flashbacks of their battle experiences long after they had returned to the safety of home. Other professionals consider repressed memories a fraud; at their best, they are distortions of long ago experiences, and at their worst, they are prefabrications that convolute the past and destroy present day families. To this debate, I add my own biography as told by a young girl who has forever remained eleven years old.

I have found that repressed memories resemble an instant replay with a bit of virtual reality thrown in. They are terrifyingly real. Along with the emotional trauma, the physical pain returns. I speak, cry and scream like the child I was when the abuse originally occurred. The adult me is the silent partner as we feel, hear and sometimes, visualize the experience as it happened. For those reasons, such episodes are sometimes referred to as traumatic memories or body memories. Lil' Jeanie and I actually relive the abuse together once again. Why must I go through these experiences a second time? I can only guess it is to bring us *parts* back together and allow us to finally let go of the pain.

In my case, the memories have returned by degree of emotional intensity, not as they happened chronologically. The easier ones came back first, although they did not seem easy at the time. The most challenging memories returned only after I had dealt with the emotional trauma induced by the earlier ones. In some of the repressed memories, I was able to repeat exact conversations and numerous details. In others, little more than the trauma and pain returned. We stopped tape-recording them after memory #222. I journaled the rest of them until the memories concluded at well over three hundred. Like a jigsaw puzzle, we have slowly fit the pieces back together in chronological order. The sequencing has fallen into place and the story of my childhood has reappeared.

My father held a significant position in the California State government. As an attorney, he was greatly admired by his colleagues. His public image was impeccable. My mother was a registered nurse. Both of them were alcoholics. My brother and I were taught to guard our father's reputation above all else. The private man was cruel beyond belief. At home, he was disgusted with his family. He was important, we were not. No matter how much we tried, we were never perfect enough to please him. When daddy got

angry, rape was the punishment. I was too young to know what he was doing and far too small to get away from him. It was the way daddy hurt me, the way he punished me when I "needed to learn my lesson." By the time I was eight years old, he was bringing his drinking buddies into my bedroom.

Around the time I turned nine years old, my father started taking me to nighttime meetings where a group of twenty to thirty people met together. I called them the "bad people." For the next three years, I was indoctrinated and programmed into this group. The best definition I have found that describes the organization my father belonged to is taken from *Occult Crime: A Law Enforcement Primer.* It is written under the title, "Traditional or Cult Satanists." It describes these groups as such:

> Traditional Satanists worship Satan as the Evil One described in the New Testament. They are involved in underground ritualistic activity, some of which involves the repeated performance of abusive Satanic rituals primarily on young children. Such Satanists are involved in deviant as well as criminal acts associated with the practice of their religion, most notably drinking blood, eating feces, witnessing animal and human sacrifice and eating the flesh of sacrificed humans, particularly infants.

I washed out of the cult shortly before I turned twelve years old. I attempted suicide and due to the circumstances of the attempt, it became too dangerous to keep me involved. The risk of exposure was too great. It was during this time that I sent Lil' Jeanie away. After the dissociation, the sexual abuse ended as well. My father spent more and more of his time away from home. During my teenage years, I became my mother's caretaker as alcohol became the most important factor in her life.

The following event took place during the year I was in sixth grade. I was eleven years old. It has been transcribed from a tape-recording of the actual repressed memory. The words are those of a child, the young girl I was many years ago. As I worked through the memory, the adult me felt the physical and emotional pain. Once again I saw my childhood bedroom and was able to describe the

examining room at the county clinic. The conversation between my parents was repeated word for word by Lil' Jeanie.

My tummy hurts. I don't know why. It starts and stops, stops and starts. Daddy doesn't want to hear me scream. He puts a scarf around my neck so he can teach me not to scream. It is like a man's tie. It is tied around my neck so it won't leave marks. Daddy knows how. When I start to scream, he pulls it tight.

Mommy says, "I warned you, Emerson."

Daddy says, "She brought it on herself, the little slut."

Mommy says, "Little girls don't do this by themselves." Then she says real quiet, "Why do I let you do this to my kids?"

Daddy turns around. "I didn't think someone that young could get knocked up. I have contacts. I'll get it taken care of later. It's mostly taken care of anyway."

My tummy is hurting bad again. Don't scream. Don't scream. There is blood on my covers. It is warm and sticky. I wish it would stay inside me like it's suppose to. Mommy puts a pad between my legs to hold it in.

Mommy says, "I can't handle this myself, Em."

Daddy doesn't care. He doesn't want to listen anymore. "Down a couple bottles and forget about it, Harriet." He walks out.

Mommy gets Scotty to help me to the car. She holds me up on one side and Scotty holds me up on the other. She takes me to a place with white curtains and cold metal tables. There is a man there. He is a doctor. There is a lady next to him. She is wearing white and pink. Please don't touch me. Please don't touch me. He presses hard on my tummy.

I am laying down on the table. My legs are apart. The doctor is sitting at my feet. Mommy is in the doorway. When I look at her, she walks away. The man shakes his head. He is getting angry, but I do not think he is angry with me. He keeps saying, "It's against nature."

He has something in his hand. It is tiny, like my fingers. It is red and white. It is a baby, a little girl.

I guess the bad people put her inside me. Like they did the snake. I killed her. I don't want to hurt anybody. I guess my body did it 'cause my tummy hurt so bad. I'm sorry.

It feels like the doctor put his fist inside me. He says there is a bleeder. Where is the mother? There is no time for blood typing. Get plasma. I am shaking and breathing real fast. Then it all stops.

I wake up. I'm laying on the table, but now it is near the wall. There is a curtain around me. The man comes and asks me,

"Who did this?" But I can't tell. He might be one of the bad people or they might find out I told. He tells the nurse lady to come ask me. But I can't tell.

They let me lie on my side. They turn out the bright lights. They want to wait and see if the bleeding stops.

As with many of the traumatic memories, my first reactions were numbness and disbelief. My emotions surfaced slowly over a period of days. The shame became overwhelming. My eldest son, Jason, had not been my firstborn child. The amount of grief I felt for that lost little girl amazed me. Lil' Jeanie and I had been writing letters back and forth to each other for several months. Yes, I know that sounds very strange, but it has been a helpful exercise as we have worked to reconnect with each other. It has also been very strange to find myself writing with a child's vocabulary. To "Little Baby No-Name," Lil' Jeanie wrote:

I'm sorry you died.
Big Jeanne forgot, but she's old now
And it's safe for me to tell her.
So I did.
Now we both remember.
We're trying to get well and be one person
Like we're supposed to.
I want to call you Sarah Jane.
Big Jeanne thinks that's okay.
I have a little dolly.
I hold her
And Big Jeanne and me feel sad.

Even as Lil' Jeanie and I dealt with the emotions, my logical mind was debating the reality of the entire experience. I surmised that something like this could have happened to an eleven year-old, but could it have possibly happened to *me*? In the book *Safe Passage to Healing*, the author discusses the nature of traumatic memory and the coping mechanism of denial:

If there is a substantial number of survivors in North America, one may well ask why they haven't been identified as such? There are many reasons. The first is that survivors typically use repression and denial to distance themselves from the abuse.

> In addition, multiplicity and dissociation are coping mechanisms designed to make traumatized survivors function as normally as possible. These mechanisms protect survivors from knowing their own truth. Additionally, violators use a person's natural survival defenses of repression and denial for their own purposes. Using mind control, violators program survivors to not know, see, hear, or remember what has happened to them...As one therapist observed, "Psychotics will try to convince you that they were abused; survivors will try to convince you they weren't."

Throughout this ordeal, I have questioned myself over and over. I finally stand in defense of Lil' Jeanie, but I have also examined every detail that has returned along the way.

After several weeks of waffling back and forth, accepting and rejecting this experience, I called my sister-in-law Phyllis. I needed a woman to talk to and Phyllis is a very nurturing individual. I knew she would listen to me in her sympathetic, motherly way, but I also knew I had to be careful with what I said. Phyllis is married to my brother, Scott. My brother says our childhoods' are a black hole to him. He remembers only in bits and pieces. He tells me that he stayed in his room and tuned out everything around him.

Lil' Jeanie has remembered many events that included "Scotty." Being seven years younger than my brother, I hid numerous times as our father took out his wrath on Scott. My brother also attended some of the rituals. Lil' Jeanie has remarked, "When Daddy takes Scotty and me there, Scotty's eyes glaze over. It's like he's there, but he isn't." When Scott is strong enough, he will face these memories. Until then, I have not wished to harm him further by sharing them with him. I was walking a fine line by sharing the miscarriage experience with Phyllis. I didn't think it would be threatening to Scott as he was only minutely involved. A few days after our phone conversation I received a letter from Phyllis. It was dated August 6, 1995:

> Again, it saddens me to hear the details of what occurred to you as a little child. In some ways, you get to see them through the eyes of an adult now, even though the eyes of little Jeannie are bringing you the information. I think it must be pretty special (and unfortunately also difficult) to be able to have a second chance at really seeing what happened to you so long ago. *I told Scott what*

you said, and he reminded me that when we there visiting you last April, he told me he was sure you had had the experience that you just related to me [the miscarriage]. *He didn't know the exact details, but at some level he was able to remember.*

Scott had told Phyllis about the miscarriage in April, but the memory had not returned to me until July, almost four months later. I was grateful he had not said anything to me. No thoughts had been planted in my mind that would lead me to further doubt myself. Now I had the validation I needed in order to accept the truth. Even the time frame was correct. Scott left home for college shortly before I turned twelve years old. Except for short visits, he never lived at home again. If Scott remembered the miscarriage, it had to have occurred when I was only eleven years old.

To help me grieve the loss of *Sarah Jane*, Jerry and I went to the store to purchase a tiny doll. We walked up and down the aisles of dolls until we could find one that best represented a very tiny baby, one that could have fit in the palm of a doctor's hand. I decided on one that was wearing a yellow polka-dot jumper suit. I gathered some yellow ribbons and placed tiny bows on her collar and around her head like a hair band. Then I wrapped her in a soft blanket and put her in a small box where she fit snugly. I placed the box on my nightstand. I rarely opened it, but I noticed that box every time I walked by. For some reason, it was a comforting presence.

A memorial to Sarah Jane sounded like a good idea. At first, a little funeral service appealed to me, one like children devise when they wish to say good-bye to a beloved pet. I could see myself burying that little box deep in the dirt outside and placing a flowering plant to grow above it. Then I thought about putting a small statue out in the front lawn, something funny, like a goose or a bear that I could dress up on different holidays. People would drive by and smile, but I would always know that it was actually for Sarah Jane. I considered many things, but that tiny box still remained on my nightstand.

The spiritual beliefs I have accepted as an adult are the opposite of my father's. I suspect I have been running from the *bad people* all my life. As I ran, I was searching for the *good.* Many churches and religions are instruments for good in our world. My

quest led me to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is our belief that we are all spirit children of our Heavenly Father. While our earthly parents help in the creation of our physical bodies, the spirit inside each of us is a literal child of God. He has sent us here to be tested. Some of us get short tests. Other tests are longer, but none of them are easy. If they were, it wouldn't be much of a test. While all of us will be given immortality, the place we will live in God's many mansions will be determined by the choices we have made during our mortal lives. At the highest levels in the eternities, some of us will be allowed to continue as families.

So I asked myself, where does Sarah Jane fit into this picture? Was she stillborn? If she breathed the breath of life for only a moment was her turn over? Someday in the eternities would I be able to hold her? Would she be my daughter? While the adult part of me hoped she would get a whole new life with loving parents and a happy home, the child part of me desperately wanted to keep her as my own. Mostly I just needed to know...

I have learned that prayers are answered in various ways. Most often those answers are subtle: a warm feeling in my heart; a verse of scripture; or by the comfort of a compassionate friend. Sometimes the answers are more profound. The Lord has heard a lot of prayers from me, especially as these memories have returned. Sometimes I begin praying as Big Jeanne and as I become more emotional, my voice becomes Lil' Jeanie's. He kindly listens anyway. He knows of my sincerity and my despair. I have asked him many times about Sarah Jane. In October, my entreaties were answered. I wrote in my journal:

> I received the most wonderful blessing today, an answer to my prayers about Sarah Jane. This morning I went down to the basement to workout on the treadmill. It really calms my anxiety if I use it every day. I pray before I start. It is a good time to pray, because I am alone and its quiet there. And because it is quiet and I'm alone, I remember to pray.
>
> I was on the treadmill, maybe one-mile, when suddenly my heart felt full, as if it would burst, not in a bad way, but warm and wonderful. Thoughts were instantly in my mind. Right then I knew Sarah Jane was going to get another turn. She is going to be born under the covenant to a family that loves her and won't hurt her. She is going to be born to Jason and Shaina. Next week she

is going to be sealed to all of us when Jason and Shaina are sealed together in the Oakland Temple.

She is going to get a whole new turn! *I can let her go now* because I know she is getting the very best chance and she will still be in our family - the right way - and I will get to be her grandma. Thank you, dear God, thank you.

The covenant I referred to is the Everlasting Covenant of Marriage, a temple ceremony that can seal a family together forever, rather than "until death do you part." To members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, it is a sacred ordinance and a wonderful blessing. It entitles the participants to a forever family on the condition that they continue to live virtuously. It not only includes the husband and wife, but all the children that have been born or will be born to them. It is a simple ceremony, considered so sacred that it is only held in the temple.

The following week, Jerry and I flew to California to be with our son, Jason, his wife and daughter as they were sealed together in the temple ceremony. In that holy place, I took a few minutes to tell them about the miscarriage. I did not go into much detail about the experience, nor did I mention the name Sarah Jane.Their eyes grew wide as I described the extraordinary answer I had received to my prayers. Shaina was two months pregnant.

The following May, Shaina gave birth to a healthy baby boy. I took a deep breath and then added my joy to theirs. Boy or girl, any child would be fortunate to be born into such a loving home. My heart is at peace. For me, it is not a question *if* she is coming, only *when*.

Chapter Two: The Indoctrination Begins

Tonight we are playing
Feeding Souls to the Snake.
- cult game

The men in Jerry's family are avid hunters and fishermen, well, all except for Jerry. On family camping trips, he would set his fishing pole in the water, then sit and read a book for the next several hours. While his dad and brothers were exploring the wilds and carrying on the family tradition, Jerry would be meditating. Pretty soon, they started leaving Jerry at home.

I never quite adapted to the hunter mind-set of the Adams' men. In my anthropology classes, I had read about the primitive hunters and gatherers. I understood their need to kill wild game in order to feed themselves and their families. It was the sport of killing that made me queasy. Why would anyone choose to kill a wild animal when domestic parts were already cut, packaged and ready to purchase at the grocery store? Let's face it, it's not a matter of survival economics when a power rifle, ammunition and supplies alone cost hundreds of dollars. Why do so many people enjoy the kill?

My views didn't exactly make me popular with Jerry's brothers. I was timid by nature, so we never actually debated the issues. But during my first few years in the family, there was some no-so-light-hearted teasing. I held a grudge for quite a while after Jerry's brother, Jim, put a dead gray squirrel in my face. Later, it was Jim who asked me, "If you don't like killing animals, why do you eat meat?" I had to think about that one. If there was one thing I liked less than a sportsman, it was a hypocrite. A few days later, I announced to Jerry that I was going vegetarian.

I took to vegetarianism like a natural. I read through cookbooks and came up with unusual recipes. I decided dairy products were okay since their use didn't require the killing of an

animal. For some reason, excluding meat from my family's diet lightened my heart. Jerry's family didn't say much. How could I explain to them what I didn't understand myself? After a time, we compromised. I decided I would use meat occasionally, especially after one of Jerry's co-workers let his secret out. Jerry had developed a three-hamburger lunch habit at McDonald's. Later, after we joined the Church, I studied the revelation we call "The Word of Wisdom." As to the usage of meat, we are advised:

> Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving; nevertheless they are to be used sparingly;
>
> And it is pleasing unto me that they should not be used, only in times of winter, or of cold, or famine.
>
> - D&C 89:12-13

It was the compromise I had been looking for. Now if I could get someone else to do the cooking.

My brother Scott and I have looked through the old family photographs. Some of those photos have startled us, as we notice the hollow-eyed children we once were looking back at us. Other photos have helped us remember the pleasant times. Unfortunately, often those pleasant events slide into the darker memories so long hidden by Lil' Jeanie. Together they tell the whole story. It appears that my vegetarian tendencies began quite early.

In 1956, my parents and Scott and I moved to the southern part of Sacramento to a location not far from the Sacramento River. The river was often brown and muddy, but fishermen caught huge catfish in those waters. I have always remembered watching two of those fish swim round and round in a large metal bucket in our backyard. I was reminded not to touch them. They had long whiskers that could cut like glass. Fascinated, I sat there with them most of the afternoon. They were the most unusual creatures I had ever seen. That night they were on the dinner table. Scott says that I refused to eat them. Our parents made fun of my behavior, but they didn't force me to eat my meal.

One day on an outing with my parents, we stopped to visit a man who raised rabbits. He had been disabled in the war. In his

wheelchair, he took me around to the back of his house where he kept the rabbit pens. Oh, how delighted I was! There were white rabbits in various sizes everywhere. I spent most of my time sitting near a box of little, white bunnies. Their fur was incredibly soft. While the adults talked, I nuzzled with those bunnies nose to nose. When it was time to leave, he showed us back through the house. I barely noticed that my parents were carrying wrapped packages under their arms. That night I sat at the dinner table horror stricken. They told me it would taste like chicken. I wasn't about to find out. There was no way I was going to eat one of my new little friends.

This time, I was punished for my defiance. In a sequence of three traumatic memories, Lil' Jeanie has shared the rest of the story.

> I hate it when my daddy brings me here. It's the place where the bad people are. My hands are tied together. I'm on the floor. They're pulling on my arms and it hurts. There is something around my neck and it's hard to breathe. Mostly, I feel groggy and sleepy. Except for the pain.
>
> Why are they hurting me? I feel the pain up and down my arms. They want me to cooperate. They can't make me. I don't want to be bad like them. I won't hurt nobody. I won't do it. They can't make me. I gotta not think about it, then it won't hurt so much.
>
> My arms and shoulders feel like they're pulling apart. [Stretching motions, arms overhead] They say it's my fault. If I cooperate, they won't have to hurt me. But I don't want to be like them.
>
> I hear a big noise, like a BOOM. People are going over there to see what it is. I can't move. If I could, I would run away.
>
> [Later] My arms are down now. I'm in a dark corner. I'm trying not to throw up. What a bunch of jerks! Why do they think it's fun to hurt kids? I want to go home and wake up and not remember. Just leave me alone. I feel sleepy again. [Quiet]
>
> [Next memory sequence] What are the people doing around me? I'm bending over something and crying. There's blood on my hands. [Screaming] I did it. I did it with a knife. They held him down and told me where to stick him. They said stick him right there [through the heart]. Someone pressed the knife in my hand. Just stick him. Stick him. Stick him.
>
> I did it. [Hysterical screaming] Why? Why did I do it? Why? I don't know. I put my face against his tummy. Oh, please

don't die. You poor little thing. I want to hold him and tell him I'm sorry. I want to pet him. It's a bunny and I killed him.

I hate my daddy! At a man's house, they had lots of bunnies. I wouldn't eat it. So my daddy buys a bunny and wants me to kill it. A white bunny. It was a bunny. [Sobbing] Why did I kill the bunny? I'm so sorry.

[Next memory sequence] It's in the morning. I feel really cruddy. I get sick all the time. Hot and cold, my head and tummy hurt. Gotta be the flu again. Don't know why my arms hurt. I have to stay in my bed. Mommy's going to be mad at me. I don't know why I make myself sick. I want to go to school and play, but I always get sick.

Mommy says my arms are dirty. She says for me to rest and close my eyes and she'll come in and wash them for me. My mommy's being nice to me. She brings in warm water and washcloths. She wants me to pull up my sleeves so she can wash my arms. Oh, they hurt. How can dirty make arms hurt? Mommy says just rest my head.

I shouldn't have opened my eyes. [Starting to cry] My arms are brown and crusty. [Screaming] Mommy says stop imagining like I do. I mustn't think of scary things. She wants me to take off my nightie so she can wash it. I'm being real careful taking it of, 'cause I don't want to look.

Mommy wants me to lay down so she can wash me up real good. She wants to wash between my legs, but I don't like anybody to touch me there. My head feels tingly and funny. Oh, I pretend too much. Mommy's going to bring me something to eat. She's going to take care of me. She's not mad at me today. Just don't think about it. Mommy says she washed it all away in the water.

As the emotions from this memory returned, I felt waves of remorse and guilt over the death of the rabbit. It was not the guilt of a rational adult, but the mournful sorrow of a young child. We purchased a bunny. I held her everyday for as long as she would let me. I would put my face in her fur and cry.

As an adult, I have always had a peculiar affection for cats. When we lived in Tulare, an agricultural town in central California, I collected them. It was an area with an over abundance of strays and the sad little creatures would follow us as we took evening walks. Most often I was the one who dragged my heels and gave in, picked them up and took them home. Some were covered with fleas and

ants. I got rather adept at cleaning them up and finding homes for them.

We ended up with five cats at our house and I never could get them all to get along. When Loud Mouth, true to her name, marched in the front door, Ghost could be found cowering at the back door, begging to be let out before she was trounced on. We played that game for years. In the front door, out the back door. Cats, kittens, dogs and kids, it was a very full house. Only once did I refuse to take in a cat.

Jason brought home a scruffy white kitten. It belonged to a friend, the last of the litter.He was just about the ugliest little guy I'd ever seen. Normally that would have made the kitten all the more endearing to me, but not this time. I couldn't bring myself to touch it. I was relieved when Jason gave up his pleading and took him back to his owners. I told myself that I had just reached my limit. I hadn't touched it because that would have made it more difficult to hold to my decision. I breathed easier when it was gone.

> I like kitties. They meow and purr. They eat kitty food and wag their tails. I like to tickle their tummies. It's like they giggle in kitty language with their itty-bitty meows. I don't want to hurt kitties.
>
> I'm at the place with the bad people again. I'm on the floor and I can't move. It's kind of dark and there are walls they put up sometimes, so I can't see very much. There's a little kitty here next to me. He's a light color, maybe white. He wants to play with me, sweet little baby. I am laying on my back. He is rubbing up next to my face and snuggling into my neck and my shoulder.
>
> Hi, little friend. What are you doing here? You'd better go away. It's not a nice place to play. Bad people are here. He's bouncing right next to me. You're awful sweet baby. Maybe I can take you home with me. Okay? But I don't think you ought to be here.
>
> No! [Sobbing] No! He's just a baby, a sweet, little baby. The grown-ups are standing by my feet. They're going to do something to him. Please leave him alone! [Begging] Please let him go! He's my little friend. No! They have the knife. They're taking him apart. I don't want to hear it. Oh, please, stop him from crying. He's crying. No! [Screaming]
>
> Get it away from me. They're putting the parts back next to my face. I don't want to touch it. How could you do that

to my little friend? He wouldn't have hurt nobody. I don't want to look at him. I don't want to touch him. Please get it away from me.

The grown-ups want to know if I learned my lesson. Do I want another friend? He was my little friend for just a minute. See what happened to him? I'd better remember that and not have any friends.

I'm not suppose' ta be close to nobody. I'm not suppose' ta have friends. I don't want any. He cried. They took him apart and I heard him cry. Just leave me alone.

Lessons in the cult often included the use of animals. Small, white animals such as mice, kittens, rabbits and lambs were sacrificed. Animal sacrifices have been done historically and throughout many cultures for diverse purposes. Sacrifices in the cult were used to terrify the children, ensuring our compliance and deadening our will. Snakes and large, black dogs were placed in the role of perpetrators.

I am at the place with the bad people again. There are grown-ups and kids. A lady is the 'structor [instructor] tonight. She says that we are all going to play a game. It's called, "Feeding Souls to the Snake." Everybody has to play.

There is a big bucket. It is filled with water and blood. I can't see to the bottom of it, but she says there is a snake that lives there. He likes it there, but the other animals don't.

They have little animals behind the bucket. Baby mice, bunnies and kitties. They are all white. The snake in the bottom of the bucket is a magic snake. He doesn't eat their bodies, he eats their souls.

We watch as one of the grown-ups puts a mouse down in the water and blood. He says that mice aren't important. Little animals are nothing. He brings the mouse up out of the water and blood. He isn't white anymore. See, he is dead. He doesn't move. The snake has eaten his soul. Now, the 'structor says, everybody gets to feed souls to the snake.

I don't want to do it. I don't want to drown little animals. They tell me they will put my head in the bucket, if I don't take my turn. I say that I don't care if they put my head in.

Then somebody says that he thinks a baby will fit in this bucket. This snake can eat baby souls too. He brings over a baby to see if it will fit. Not an animal baby, a person. Yes, he says the baby will fit in the bucket.

I start to feel really sick. I throw up on the floor. They tell me if I feed the snake a little animal, then they won't need to give it the baby. I don't want them to drown the baby.

They give me a little mouse. He doesn't know he's not important. He just wants to live. They put my hand tight around him. The 'structor says to hold him tight under the water until he stops moving. That is when the snake takes his soul. I can feel him wiggling in my hand. He wants to breathe. He wants to be free. But I can't let them drown the baby. I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. Please.

He stops moving. I feel dead inside too.

In our present day home, it is our family custom to pray together before we eat dinner. One night when it was my turn to say the prayer, I thanked the Lord for the food and acknowledged that everything on our plates, both animal and *plant*, had given its life so that we might continue. That was a bit much for the kids. Instead of picking up their forks, they stared at their plates. My younger son, Jeremy, put down his napkin. "Oh, thanks a lot, Mom," he said with his silly half-grin, "Now we're really hungry." For a moment they understood. "All these to be used with prudence and thanksgiving." All life is precious.

Chapter Three: Tracing the Generations

Mommy says I'm an ugly little whore.
I don't want to be ugly.
I don't know what the rest means,
but I know it's bad.
- Lil' Jeanie

Lots of people are curious about their family history. They wonder about their ancestors. What country did great-grandpa immigrate from? Was he a soldier in the Civil War? Did he fight for the Union or the Confederacy? Was he an Indian fighter or an Indian? The study is called genealogy. At my house it's called *jeanie-alogy*, because I am the one that studies that stuff.

My interest in family history began when I was a young adult. My parents had kept Scott and I distanced from their extended families. Sacramento is separated from Los Angeles by the Tehachapi Mountains and a long day's drive through the center part of California. The distance might as well have been clear across the country. We rarely saw them. Neither did we correspond with them, but on a very limited basis. To my father, my mother's family was made up of inferior people. His own family appeared cold and aloof. I didn't feel like I had a family, so I decided to get to know my dead ancestors.

Genealogy is like a treasure hunt. I've searched through old maps, dug out court records and deciphered moth-eaten documents. It's great fun, at least for a *jeanie-alogist*. After I discovered there were pedigree charts for people, not just dogs and cats, I treasure hunted until I'd filled out pages. I learned a lot of names, dates and countries of origin. Sadly, I realized, I still didn't know the people behind those names. What kind of folks were they? There was only one way to find out. To get to know my dead ancestors, I had to talk to my living relatives.

It's been twenty years since I first wrote to my aunts, uncles and assorted cousins. My mother's family responded with exuberance. I received letters from her sisters, her brother, even her Aunt Hattie, whom she was named after. Her oldest sister wrote me a five-page family history. My mother spent most of her childhood in a poor farming community in rural Oklahoma. Her own mother died when she was fourteen years old. It was during the 1930's, the Great Depression, and the family fell apart. A maiden aunt took Hattie to live with her in Los Angeles. She found her to be a "helpful child" and thought she would make a good nurse. So Hattie became a nurse. She met my father and they dated while he was in law school. He thought the name Hattie sounded unrefined. So by the time they married, she had become Harriet.

Although their circumstances were poor, my mother's family eventually pulled themselves together once again. Most of them settled in the Los Angeles area. They were a joyful people whose love for each other seemed quite genuine. My father's family did not have those qualities. They prided themselves on their intelligence and education, but they couldn't seem to reach out to each other as people. When they met together, their moods were often sullen and quarrelsome. They did not readily respond to my interest in family history.

I was finally able to meet my father's sister, Gladys, when she came through town on a short trip. My children were quite young. They were excited to meet her and we all liked Aunt Gladys immediately. I was surprised to find her a warm and caring individual. A few days after her visit, my five year-old Jeremy, asked when "that lady" was coming back. I wasn't sure to whom he was referring. "You know," he responded, "that lady, Aunt...Aunt Lettuce." It was a name that stuck. She was as delighted with her new nickname as we were.

My friendship with Gladys developed slowly as I kept writing *Dear Aunt Lettuce* letters. We combined our family history knowledge to gather folklore on our shared ancestry. But when I asked Gladys about her own mother, she said that it was too painful for her to talk about. She glossed over my inquiries about her life at home with her own parents and brothers. Until my repressed memories began surfacing, I had hardly noticed her exclusion of that

information. Then when I pressed for details about my father, her younger brother, her correspondence with me stopped entirely.

Fortunately, I was able to find others who could talk to me. My brother, Scott, and I have circumvented our parents' generation by finally getting to know their children, our own cousins. While we will never know our father's family history with a certainty, we have gathered some significant clues that suggest it was highly dysfunctional.

Our grandfather was born in Switzerland of German heritage. He lived with his father and stepmother on the family farm in Iowa, until he was in his mid-thirties. Then he abruptly left for California. Our grandmother was a schoolteacher in Arkansas. Her relationship with her own family was strained, so she headed west as well. They met and married in Los Angeles. He was thirty-six, she was twenty-one. At the turn of the century, the Los Angeles basin was a huge agricultural area, well known for its vast groves of orange trees. Our grandfather found work as a farm laborer. Our grandmother stayed home to raise their four children. Neither of them had any extended family nearby. Gladys once remarked to her son, "They were two very insecure people who never should have married."

Our grandfather had a tendency towards violence and the abuse of alcohol, although it is impossible to say how early in his life these abusive patterns developed. His oldest son left home at age eighteen, after the two of them injured each other in a fist fight. A grandson recalled being terrified of his grandfather's rage. Other grandchildren remembered Grandpa's frequent nips out of the bottles he'd stashed around his house. Shortly before his death, he was committed to a sanitarium. Of that experience, one of his sons wrote:

> Dad is not happy, and has been highly belligerent. Suddenly yanked out of seclusion into the company of many persons, he is distrustful, and his prompt impulse, highly characteristic, is to fight. He has started in on the other men patients, offering to whip them...There are many fenced yards, so that they are able to segregate, as need be, the violent ones -- such as Dad.

Extending the scene through all three generations - my grandparents, their four children, through my brother, myself and all our cousins -

definite patterns emerge. There is molestation. There is a high incidence of migraine and depression and there is rampant alcoholism.

In my pages and pages of pedigree charts, I have compiled ten generations of my grandfather's family as they lived in their village in Switzerland. In every generation, the eldest son was given the name of Caspar. Family names and family traditions are passed down from generation to generation, so are the patterns of abuse. It's hard to admit when there is a chink in the family armor, but if it is left to rust, it will only continue to corrode. In the book, *Reach for the Rainbow*, the author states:

> Child abuse is a learned pattern which is often passed down from generation to generation. The way to break the chain is through awareness...Recent studies report that 80 percent of fathers who commit incest have been sexually or physically abused as children. Many victims have no conscious memories of their abuse and thus do not respond affirmatively to abuse studies. Until a study is devised which can account for repressed memories, I will continue to believe that all abusers have been abused as children.

It's time to look at the past square in the eye. There was something very wrong with my father. When did the chinks in the armor begin to form?

Dad was the third child born into the family. He was small for his age in elementary school, but by the time he graduated from high school, he was a full six feet tall. He was in the popular crowd. He excelled in scholastics and debate. He got the lead in the senior class play and was the valedictorian of his graduating class. Although it was during the depression years, he continued his schooling through junior college, college and graduated from Southwestern University with his law degree. In a letter to relatives in Iowa, dated Nov. 26, 1935, his father wrote:

> ...Emerson is on his last year of Junior College and works in a grocery store part time. He sure is doing fine. He is six foot tall and is a fine looking chap.

During the US involvement in World War II, Emerson served in the navy. He remained stateside, assisting the military effort by updating the navy law manual. After the war, he went into private law practice and then began his public service as a city prosecutor. He was a brilliant attorney. His life-long career was distinguished and honorable.

So what's wrong with this portrait? The private man led a very separate life than the one the public knew. His need to control his family was all encompassing. Our actions were closely monitored. We were allowed no thoughts or opinions of our own. Even if we'd had the courage to challenge him, what chance would we have had against a master litigator? He was prosecutor, judge and condemner. We scurried like frightened mice around him, yet we still faced his rage and somehow, we endured his punishments.

> Scotty and me have to learn our lesson. We have to do exactly what Daddy says. We're standing in the backyard. It's dark and it's raining harder and harder. Scotty is standing on this [left] side of me. I can't see the porch very good, but I know where it is. Daddy is standing there in the dark.
>
> We're not suppose' ta move. Don't move. Not one little bit. Like soldiers, we have to stand at attention. Be still, until Daddy says we can move. I'm scared to make Daddy mad.
>
> It's a long time. Water is dripping off my nose. I want to get it off, but I can't move my fingers. I keep saying [to myself], "Don't make Daddy mad. Don't make Daddy mad."
>
> [Later] I'm in my bed. The coughing in my throat won't stop. Mommy says, "Now you've done it, Em, she's sick again." She tries to give me medicine, but I fuss. She clamps open my mouth with her hand and I choke the medicine down me. Now I'm getting sleepy.

Repressed memories have returned from various ages in my childhood. In some of them, I have been very young almost pre-verbal. I grew frightened listening to my parents as they argued. While I didn't understand most of their words, I sensed their anger and I felt scared. In these instances, it was my older brother who was at the center of the controversy. My mother was trying to protect him from my father's punishment. By the time I was school age, my mother had taken to hiding me from my father. For the rest of my

childhood, she used the same lines of defense with only slight variation. She hid me or gave me medicine. When her protective measures failed and the abuse occurred, she took out her frustration on me. Along with my punishments, she made it very clear - I was the ruination of her life and a spoiled child who made up stories to get attention.

It's dark. It's always dark when bad things happen. I don't know where I am. It's dark and little and I can't hardly breathe in here. I'm not suppose' ta move. I've got to stay in here until my Mommy comes to get me. My tummy hurts like it's scared and it wants to throw up.

My Mommy and daddy are mad. They get mad a lot in the night. They're mad about me. I'm not in my bed. Please don't be yelling about me. Daddy's mad at Mommy. He used to like me, but not anymore. He's not nice to me anymore. Mommy doesn't like me either. Better if I didn't get born. I didn't mean to. My Mommy doesn't want him to do things. She tells him to leave me alone. He doesn't want her to tell him what to do. It's my daddy that tells everybody what to do. He's important.

Mommy's not going to do stuff for my daddy. She likes her job a lot and she doesn't want to do that. She can decide for herself. He can't tell her that. He says he can tell her.

Mommy's tired of what daddy does to Jeanie and Scotty. She says it's wrong. He doesn't care. He's the dad, he decides those things. So where's Jeanie? Daddy says, "I will not be defied! I want to know this instant!"

I know where I am now. I'm in the big cupboard and there's towels in front of me so daddy can't find me. I don't know what to do. I don't want him to hurt my mommy, but I'm not suppose' ta come out. Maybe I should go and hide with Scotty. Don't throw up, tummy.

Daddy says, "Where's Scott? Better tell me right now. You're going to pay for this." I bet Scotty hid too. I hear throwing things, like things swishing off the counters. Something banged against the wall. Maybe it was my mommy. He's taking her into a different part of the house. He slammed a door. It's not fair. Mommy's a lot littler than Daddy. She's just trying to help me and Scotty. I want to come out and say, "Daddy, it's my fault I hided. Don't hurt Mommy," but I'm too scared. I don't want to hear anymore. [Crying]

[Later] My mommy's quiet. He says that'll teach her to hide the kids. He won't put up with this crap. We better stop hiding and face our punishment. He makes the rules around here

and we better know it. He's going to get Scott now. Time to teach that whelp a lesson. Nobody defies him. Scott better come out right now. He's too big to hide for very long.

Daddy makes a big noise, like a fist, against the cupboard. He doesn't know I'm in here. He doesn't know I can fit. I gotta be quiet. Scotty, run away and don't let daddy find you. Stay away 'til daytime. The hurting daddy comes at night. No! No! Scotty don't come out. No!

He's taking Scotty back to his room. He's going to hurt Scotty where nobody can see it, but its going to hurt him real bad. That's how you teach a boy. Got to humiliate him. He won't be defied. He thought Scotty knew that, but I guess Scotty didn't know it.

I've gotta be quiet, but I don't want to hear. Oh please, Scotty, fight him back. You're almost as big as he is. Don't let him hurt you again. Why did you come out? [Sobbing]

[Later] If I were big, I'd come out and beat him up and tell him not to hurt Scotty and Mommy no more. I hear him in the hall. His steps are loud, 'cause he's mad. He went to the kitchen to get a drink.

The first traumatic memories to return dealt with the physical abuse I had received at the hands of my mother. It was a relief to know those incidents had happened, for I had always held some vague feelings of hostility towards her. When the incest memories returned, I was devastated. Up until that time, I would have denied any suggestion of sexual abuse. Afterwards I felt crushed, shattered into a thousand pieces. When Jerry asked our Bishop to come visit us, I could not even look him in the eye, so great was my shame. I cried for days. I began stuttering. The memories kept coming, one after another. Describing one experience, Lil' Jeanie wrote:

I hate my Mommy.
She doesn't believe me.
She says I'm lying.
My tummy hurts.
Daddy hurts me in my bed.
Mommy doesn't believe me.
She grabs my clothes to look.
She says I'm an ugly little whore.
I don't want to be ugly.
I don't know what the rest means,
But I know it's bad.

In the fall of 1957, my widowed grandmother was diagnosed with colon cancer. The family decided she should come to Sacramento for surgery. My mother, the nurse, would give her the care she required as she recuperated at our home. It was a disastrous decision. The cancer was inoperable, so she was given a colostomy. She remained in our home only weeks before she arranged for the purchase of a plane ticket back to Los Angeles. Once there, she was cared for at the home of her youngest son. Shortly before her death, she was placed in a convalescent home, at her request.

Mommy and Daddy are fighting. I hate to hear it. My stomach hurts and my head hurts from listening to them. Mostly I'm scared. They're mad about my Grandma. She'll hear them if they keep yelling.

She's sick. She stays in Mommy and Daddy's room. I don't see her very much. She doesn't come out and Mommy doesn't want me to bother her. The grandma lady scares me. She doesn't smile very much. Mommy says she won't hurt me, but I've gotta stay away from her. Don't tell the grandma lady anything. You'll make her sicker if you tell.

I bet Grandma can hear them. Nobody's suppose' ta know, but if they're fighting, Grandma's going to know. They get louder and louder and then Daddy has to teach everybody a lesson.

Mommy says leave her alone. Don't touch her. She's done all she can do. How does he expect her to do it all? He's got to help. She's his mother. Instead, he's gone and she does everything. She's gotta take care of me and a sick mother-in-law and he goes out just to do what he wants to do.

Oh, Mommy, please don't make Daddy mad. He'll come into my room. I don't like grown-ups. I've gotta be quiet. I want them to all leave me alone. Wish they'd go to sleep.

They gave Grandma their room. They're in the other room by the kitchen. They can drink and she won't know. She's not suppose' ta know what my Daddy does, 'cause she's his mommy. Daddy doesn't want to be around his mommy. He doesn't want to see her like that.

It's up to Harriet to take care of her. He says, "Harriet, you do it. Do you hear me? You see that she's taken care of. Just lay off the booze, lady."

> Mommy and Daddy are coming into my room. Mommy's saying, "For God's sake, Em, not now, not while your mother's here. Leave her alone."
>
> "Get out and close the door, you whore. She'll cooperate. She's knows what's good for her. She'll be quiet. Won't you, Jeanie? You don't want to disturb your grandma, do you? *You don't want it to be your fault she dies, do you?* You're going to be nice this time, aren't you, you little bitch...and very, very quiet." [Attack] [Screaming]
>
> [Crying] When she dies, it's going to be my fault. I yelled. I wasn't quiet enough and it's going to kill my grandma. He hurt me. I have to learn that he's the master. I have to do everything I'm told, but I haven't learned that yet. I'm so bad that nobody could love me.

My grandmother died five months later. Family members argued that she had been mistreated while staying at our home. Just how much she told them about her visit there, no one is saying. Siblings did not speak to each other for years. I have no idea how I felt upon learning about her death. Those memories have not returned.

At some time during that same year, my father began taking me to cult meetings. Twenty to thirty people attended. Most of the meetings were held in a building that resembled an old warehouse. There was a metal handrail and several steps down to the front door. The inside walls were dark and doors at one side led to other rooms. From inside the main room, I could look out the rectangular windows and see the headlights of the cars as they drove up and parked. The windows were long and narrow and had vertical bars. I was older than some of the other children. Younger children were preferred as they were more easily indoctrinated. Through Lil' Jeanie, I have been able to identify some of the participating adults.

The cult members I have recognized were the people I also knew in the daytime. One couple were close family friends who spent many social hours with my parents. One man held a high government position. All were respectable people, at least in the daytime. In *Safe Passage to Healing*, the author concurs:

> There are many misconceptions about people who practice ritual abuse. The most frequent misconception is that "respectable" people are not involved. I put "respectable" in

quotes, because respectability is judged almost exclusively by external things in our society - employment, education, family, a pleasing personality, appropriate behavior, and good grooming. The last two in particular are easily mimicked. Few people examine internal characteristics such as emotional, mental, and spiritual health. Therefore, perpetrators may appear quite normal in all respects, and so exist undetected in our society.

My mother did not attend the cult meetings. The few times group rituals were performed at our home, she remained in her bedroom. Her participation was passive. One instructor told my father that he had the perfect set up - kids to use at night, and a nurse to clean up after him in the morning.

It's nighttime. We're at the place where the bad people come. It's like a church, but it isn't. Maybe there are five rows of chairs. People are sitting in the chairs. Daddy and I have to go up to the front. I don't want to go, but Daddy doesn't care if I don't want to.

I am wearing a white robe. It is like a sheet. It is around my shoulders and I am holding it close to me. It is too big. We have to walk around the chairs to the front for a ceremony. I don't want the ceremony.

There is a man at the front. He is standing behind a table. The table isn't very big, but it's very important. It has a dark cover on it. The cover has two stripes around the bottom of it. In the front, there is a big star in the middle. There are candles on the table, maybe three. The knife is next to the man. There is a silver bowl. Well, it's kind of a bowl. It goes up high in the middle.

It's an ini-tia-tion ceremony. Daddy is con-se-crating me to the Evil One. I'm not sure what that means. It takes a blood sacrifice. Daddy and me are standing at the table. The man wants my fingers to get the blood. First, he wants one finger, but then he needs more blood. He pokes my fingers with the knife. He presses real hard and rubs my fingers on the top of the funny bowl.

There is oil in the bottom of the bowl. It is clear, like water, but it isn't. He says some words and sets the oil on fire. The fires reach to Hell. Fires to Hell. Fires to Hell. Now he says I belong to the Evil One.

The philosophy of the cult suited my father well. It served as a secret society enabling him to maintain his Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde existence, while indulging him in his addiction to sexualized violence. The rituals in the cult provided an outlet for his rage. Abuse was used to achieve power. Through its meticulous programming and mind control techniques, he could continue, even increase, his dominance over his wife and children. It was his intention to earn a position of greater power within the cult structure. Whether or not he succeeded in that endeavor, I don't know.

During my teenage years, Dad's health began to decline. He gave up smoking cigarettes after he developed the beginnings of emphysema. He needed a hernia operation. Later he was confined with a heart virus. After I left home, he suffered a stroke. When I saw him again four years later, he had aged noticeably. Chronic alcoholism had taken its toll on both my parents. My mother died when I was twenty-three. She had been drinking and smoking cigarettes in bed when the mattress caught on fire. Dad remarried a short time later.

It was obvious that Dad had mellowed. I made attempts to get to know him adult to adult. We were never close. Even with the memory disassociation, many things about him made me uncomfortable. Our times together were social, with the buffer of other people including small, active grandchildren. I knew that I could never be the daughter he wanted me to be, but it didn't matter so much any more. I had a new identity as wife and mother, a new home and family. From a safe distance, I wanted to know what it felt like to have a father.

It was a rule of Dad's only to buy the very best, but for those of us with more meager budgets, he did enjoy homemade gifts when they came with an interesting story. For his birthday, Father's Day and Christmas, I came up with some enterprising ideas. I could make him things. It pleased us both. Perhaps it was the only way left to us to reach out as daughter and father.

During blackberry season one year, a friend and I ventured down to the river bottom and picked the wild berries off the vines. We were prepared for purple berry stains, but not for big white spiders. They were all over those vines and they were just as anxious to protect their webs as we were to get to the blackberries. We

jumped around and moved quickly through those leaves. Fortunately, my friend had some idea how to make the jam. We mashed the berries, riced out the seeds and boiled the mixture. Neither of us knew how to seal the jars, so we poured melted paraffin on the top. When I gave Dad a jar for his birthday, he was delighted with the story. I don't know if he ever got to actually taste the jam. I found out for myself, a little while later, that it was quite a trick getting through a one-inch top layer of paraffin.

One Christmas, I crafted a crocheted lap quilt for Dad. I was never coordinated enough to knit. I couldn't manage to hold two big needles, a roll of yarn and count stitches at the same time. Being left-handed made it all the more confusing. Jerry's mom suggested I try crochet. I would only have to hold on to one needle, and it even had a hook on the end to keep track of the yarn. Since she was left-handed like me, she was willing to teach me. We could both do it backwards.

I laboriously worked on that quilt every day for a month, right up to Christmas Eve. I even timed it, each row took thirty minutes to complete. I only knew one kind of stitch so to give it variety, every few rows I changed the color. Dad came to our house Christmas night. As I told him about my adventure in quilt making, he opened the box. He gently picked up the coverlet, and let his fingers play across its surface. Tears began streaming down his face. Everyone became quiet. Embarrassed, he brushed away the tears and the party resumed. It is the most touching memory I have of my father. A few months later, he died.

As my traumatic memories have returned, I have wrestled with that image. I see the face of a broken old man, sitting near a Christmas tree, celebrating in my home. It is a stark contrast to the man Lil' Jeanie remembers. For her, he is younger, bigger and full of rage. She sees him coming into her room, creating nights full of shadows and terror. He is a man standing tall behind the altar, dressed in black robes with red trim, holding a dagger poised high above his head. How can those images be the same person? There must a third piece added to the puzzle before it will all fit together. A puzzle piece is still missing, the person he was before I ever knew him. This piece is a young boy, small for his age. He is being dragged out back behind the woodshed. His father is enraged. The

way to teach a boy is to humiliate him. He will not be defied. This time, he's going to teach him his lesson.

Chapter Four: Silent like the Dead

Rock a bye,
Rock a bye,
If you tell,
You're gonna die.
- cult chant

My youngest son would like to put a sign next to my parents' gravestone that reads, "People You're Glad You Never Met." Justin has heard my screams as I have dealt with the traumatic memories over the past few years. He is aware of some of the abusive experiences I survived as a child. His anger is just below the surface as he tells me that he would have dialed 9-1-1 and gotten the police to stop the abuse. He would have made arrangements at school to locate a gun and shoot my father. "Mom," he asks in exasperation, "Why didn't you tell?" I think that's a fair question.

Incest is a crime that is borne in shame and secrecy. Before my father ever began taking me to cult meetings, some of the do-not-tell conditioning was already in place. I have remembered telling only once. We had a kindly neighbor who lived across the street. She had two little girls of her own. Both of them were several years younger than I. She welcomed me when I came over to play with them. I kept them busy, like a babysitter-in-training. One day I shared an abusive incident with her. She replied, "Oh, Jeanie, your parents would never do that to you. They love you." Later she told my mother what I had said. That night and for several days, I paid the consequences.

> I'm in my bed and I have to stay here. I can't move my arms, they're tied together. There's a rubber sheet underneath me. I've been here for a day and a night, and a day and a night, and a day and a night, and a day. They're never going to let me out. They think I'm crazy. It's for my own good. I couldn't figure out how to be good, 'cause I'm stupid.
>
> I want a drink of water. I'm not whining, Mommy, I'm thirsty. It's Daddy's fault, not mine. He touched me. Why would

I want him to hurt me? I want him to stay away from me. Mommy says it's my fault. Daddy says I'm pretending and making up bad stories. They gotta stop it or they can't ever let me out. Mommy says just stay in my room and die.

She leaves me here all the time and I want a drink. That's not asking very much. I wouldn't potty in my bed if she'd let me out. I'm not a baby. Why do they treat me like this? She tells everyone I'm sick and I can't come out of my room 'cause I'm con-ta-gious. Just a little drink, Mommy?

Scotty's home but he won't come in. He's a big scaredy cat. Nobody would know if he was nice to me. Scotty knows they're doing it and he don't do nothing. He's glad it's not him. [Crying] I want Mommy put covers on me so when Scotty comes by my room he can't see me. Mommy won't give me covers 'cause they might get wet.

I just hate this. Please, Mommy, a drink of water? She laughed at me and slammed the door, so she doesn't have to hear me.

When I was finally allowed out of my bedroom, my mother devised a way to check up on me and make sure I was no longer spreading "ridiculous tales." Her friend, Dorothy, lived just a few blocks away from us. She worked with my mother as a nurse at the county clinic. Mom arranged for me to visit with Dorothy on a regular basis. The whole thing seemed a bit strange to me. Why did this lady want me to come see her? Mom explained that Dorothy was older and missed having a daughter at home. I'd arrive home from school and change my clothes. Whenever Dorothy felt like having another visit, I would get on my bicycle and off I would go.

Like our neighbor across the street, Dorothy was always polite to me. She would welcome me inside her home. Her living room was quiet and very elegant compared to ours. She would offer me a glass of ice water. There was candy in the crystal dish that sat on her coffee table. I marveled at all those tiny candies in bright foil wrappers. She told me that I could have as much as I wanted, so I would take one of each color. I felt quite grown up as I sat on her couch, munched on those sweets and told her about my day. I had already learned to separate my daytime world from what went on at night, so our conversations were safe ones. It never occurred to me that I was being questioned to see if I would start *fabricating stories*.

Of-course, she would want to spend her day off of work, chatting with an eight year-old kid! Boy, was I naive.

By the time my father began including me in his cult activities, the cloak of secrecy was already in place. If I told, there would be consequences. If I told, I wouldn't be believed. I was a little girl who made up stories to get attention. I hurt myself in my bad dreams. I didn't know why I did those things. It made a lot more sense to me to make up *good* stories, and choose to have *good* dreams. Why didn't I do that instead? My mother said it was because I was crazy. After a while, I figured she must be right.

The cult put a great deal of effort into ensuring its secrecy. Sophisticated mind control techniques were used to induce pain, terror, guilt and shame. These techniques are sometimes compared to tortures used on prisoners of war, as explained in *Safe Passage to Healing*:

> There are many similarities between victims of ritual abuse and prisoners of war (POWs) subjected to rigorous thought reform. As with some of these prisoners, ritual abuse survivors are primarily indoctrinated through the three T's: torture, terror, and threats. The difference is that these victims are not trained soldiers but usually young children. The war zone is not a foreign country but the child's home, school, or other "safe" environment. The tormentors are not a recognized "enemy." They are the child's primary caregivers. There is no escape and no end to the war.

The instructors in my father's group called many of these techniques "games." We all had to play them. They had been planned for our benefit, aimed at a child's developmental level. Each game taught a lesson. There were no winners, I never won a single game. They were designed to create mental confusion and to convince us we were evil. We could not escape from them. Whatever we said or did, they would find out. If I told, the consequences would be horrible beyond my imagination. If I told, no one would believe me.

> Jerry, I don't want to do this anymore. I don't like it. I don't want to remember, but I have to remember so me and Big Jeanne can get well. I hafta. I'm lying down on my back. My arms are spread out. I can't move them.

People are here, the bad people. They are standing around me. They have the knife. They say they're going to cut out my tongue so I can't tell. Two of them are reaching down to my mouth. They have to reach inside my mouth so they can pull on my tongue and cut it. [Choking]

[Crying] I heard screaming from one of the other kids. They decided to cut out somebody else's tongue instead of mine. One of the ladies is dancing in a circle around me. She has the tongue in her hand. In the other hand, she has the knife. They ask me if I'm glad they didn't cut out my tongue. I nodded my head. Then I must be glad they cut out somebody else's tongue instead. They did it so they wouldn't have to cut mine out, so it's my fault. They did it for me.

Now I have to eat part of the cut-out tongue, so I won't forget not to tell. [Gagging]

The knife they used was a small dagger. The same one was used in ceremony after ceremony. It became a symbol of the violence they inflicted. The very sight of it was terrifying. In one memory, I found myself in a trance-like state, holding the dagger point to my own chest. I was promising to shove it into my heart, if I decided to tell. Another time, it was used to cut up bones. We were force-fed raw spareribs and told that they were the "bones of children who tell." It's no wonder that vegetarianism appealed to me later in life.

I feel the heavy sleepy. It means I'm going to have bad dreams. I'm scared they're going to make me bad like them. They want me to *like* being bad. I'm not going to hurt nobody. Oh, please, don't make me. I want the bad dream to go away.

It's the bad place. I don't want to look. I don't want to be here. Something bad is happening. I hear screaming. An animal. It stopped. Why does my Daddy do this to me?

Don't come over to me! No! No! I won't! [Screaming] You can't make me! Please don't. It's blood. They're making me drink the blood. [Vomiting]

They know I'm one of them now, but I'm not. It's terrible in my mouth. Wish I could get it out. I won't play like them. They can't make me like it. I'll keep my eyes closed. I won't have nothing to do with nobody. No! I don't want any more. I won't cooperate. I won't play. No more. [Choking]

[Coughing] I couldn't breathe in my throat. It feels really tight. I want to find a corner and be alone. Wait...They have my dolly. The one I had when I was little. She was my

favorite. *Where did they get my dolly?* I don't like her anymore. She's bad like them. They put bad stuff in her. I want to rip her up in little pieces!

The dolly's bad. Got to let me tear it up. It's going to watch everything I do. Sometime in the night, it's going to come alive and get me. That dolly wants to hurt me. She hates me. She's going to watch me and if I do something, she's going to make me hurt myself.

They gave it special powers from the animal they killed. They killed it and they made me drink the blood. The dolly has the mind of the animal they killed. It was a pig. They put it in my dolly. She hates me 'cause I drank the blood. I don't want to touch it. It's not mine anymore. Get it away from me.

Jerry, she's in my house right now. She's one of the dollies they kept for me in the suitcase. Big Jeanne still has that dolly. All these years to spy on me. Got to get rid of her. Got to rip her up. They made my dolly bad. She used to be my favorite. I named her Susie, but now she's bad.

After this traumatic memory, Jerry and I ventured down to the basement and pulled the old suitcase down from the shelf. He opened it, while I paced the floor. My mother had given me that suitcase, full of my childhood dolls. Sure enough, Susie was there, thanks to my mother. The look on its face gave me the creeps. I told Jerry that I wanted to get rid of it, but first I wanted to see if there was anything hidden inside. I asked him to examine it. I didn't want to touch it. He found an old voice box, the kind that makes a crying sound when the doll is turned upside down. He found cotton stuffing. She was, after all, just a doll.

Each game was a horrifying experience, certainly not an amusement. They were exercises in cruelty, carefully calculated to bring home a specific message, while at the same time, allowing the adults to indulge in their perverse pleasures. Often that message was *do-not-tell*. The shear volume of do-not-tell games was staggering. My father told me that I should feel grateful for the efforts these people put into teaching me. Obviously, I didn't see it the same way.

I'm very sleepy. Something bad is waking me up. I don't want to wake up 'til daytime, not in the night. I won't want to do that. That's bad. It's wrong. They want me to do bad things. My tummy hurts. I want to be left alone.

I don't want them to touch me. I can't turn over. I can't move my arms to get away. I don't want to be in this bad dream. I hate it. Please Daddy, don't let them hurt me. There's a person on each side of me. I can't get away. They're touching me and I hate it.

[Screaming] I hate it. It's icky. I want to make them stop. I want them to keep their clothes on. They're poking at me and I feel their skin. One's a man and one's a lady. *I hate it!*

They put something inside me. They left it there. Gotta get it out. They won't let me get it out. It's going deeper and deeper inside me. It's going to live there. A snake.

The snake wants to live inside me down there, 'cause it likes it there. It's going to come in and out when it wants to. If I try to get it out, it will bite my fingers off. I don't want it in there. Some day when I grow up and have babies, it will come out a big snake. It's too deep now. I can't ever get it out.

It has powers. It's a magic snake, a bad magic snake. Bad snakes don't like it if you tell. You can't tell about them either. He'll get mad and he'll bite, bite, bite, so you can't tell anybody. He'll move around a lot and hurt you. He'll eat you up from the inside. Bite, bite, bite.

It feels awful, all yucky down there. It's a magic snake and it's too late to get it out. By now he's at home way up side of me and he won't come out.

He has a name. It's a stupid name. *Randolph.*

Occasionally we were taken to other locations. Waking up next to a cemetery gravestone, I was taught to be "silent like the dead." At the river bottom on a foggy, wet night, my father tied me to a tree and explained that I was "night crazy." People who are night crazy appear perfectly normal during the day, but at night they see and hear things that don't exist. It sure felt like I was tied to a tree.

We were also taught that policemen were not really our friends. Two very large men came in dressed as police officers. They wore beige shirts and green pants with guns strapped to their sides. If we told, they explained, they would rip our heads off. If we told any police officer in their department, they would find out. Then they would rip our heads off. As part of their demonstration, they brought in what appeared to be the body of a young child. Standing in front of us, making sure everyone could see, one officer reached around the child's body with both arms. The other officer took hold of the child's head, and slowly twisted it off.

With the dissociation, these experiences were lost to me for thirty-five years. There was no worry that I would tell what I couldn't remember. Yet some of the lessons I learned from those experiences stayed with me. As the *Report of the Ritual Abuse Task Force* from Los Angeles County states:

> The fact that certain events are not easily remembered does not mean that they do not have a significant impact on the life of the individual. Until the memories are surfaced and worked through in a safe environment, the survivor of such abuse is still controlled to some extent by these past experiences.

Ask me to play a game, any game, and I'm out the door. Don't eat meat. Stay away from white kittens. Don't get near a ventriloquist's doll. Jeremy wanted one for Christmas, when he was twelve years old. I could only agree when we found one with a black face. A black doll seemed safe. Of course, these weren't the lessons that the cult was trying to teach. Some lessons became distorted, but some of them didn't. Some of them have affected me my entire life.

> It feels different this time, Jerry. I don't want to face the bememory alone. Got to remember I have you here. I feel all alone.
>
> It's a bad place, dark. [Panic] I gotta make sure before I tell you. It can't be. You won't believe me. I can't say it. I must have been bad. It's a box for dead people. I swear it is. I can't stand it. I can't move.
>
> It must have been my Daddy. He was mad at me. I hate it. I want out. I'm sorry I be bad. There are things in here for dead people. I can't hear nothing. I don't think I can stay in here much longer. I can hardly breathe. It hurts right here when I try to breathe. [Gasping]
>
> I tried to run away. Daddy's punishing me. He's trying to teach me I can't run. But I had to try. I knew I couldn't tell anybody. I had to find a place to be by myself. Sometimes the kids go down to play there. The grown-ups don't know about it. It's a water ditch. But they found me.
>
> Daddy took me to my room when they brought me home. Other people knew that I left, but I didn't say anything. He just yelled at me, 'cause the other people were there. Now I have to learn I can't run from my daddy. I just wanted to be by

myself. He does awful things. I didn't want him to do them anymore.

I'm trying to think of being somewhere else, but it isn't helping very much. If I think about it and touch it, I'll get sick. There's a pillow and a sheet. It feels slippery. I can't move the top. I can't face it. I'm afraid of seeing things in the dark.

It'll be all gone in the morning. I gotta think about the sun coming up. Then I won't be here anymore. It'll just be bad dreams. Daddy will be gone to work. I can go outside and be away from my house and my daddy. I will have learned my lesson.

I'm not dead. Gotta let me out. I'm not dead. Please let me out. I'm not dead! Please don't hurt me. I learned my lesson. I want to come out.

It's my daddy. He opened the box. He's standing above me. He looks awful. He looks like he's going to kill me. But if he does, people might find out. I embarrassed him. He has to punish me. He's getting in the box on top of me. He's going to hurt me. He has to teach me. [Screaming]

When I was ten years old, I learned I couldn't run. The water ditch was an irrigation canal located a mile or so from our house. I had caught frogs and tadpoles there with the neighborhood children. I must have figured that I could live there by myself, just Jeanie and the frogs. My brother Scott remembers the search for his little sister who had tried to run away.

As a teenager, I was the consummate non-athlete. *Uncoordinated* was my middle name. I couldn't pitch or catch a ball. Competitions made me a nervous wreck. I was the last kid picked for the team, but that was okay with me. Let me be the scorekeeper. As an adult, I found I was comfortable walking. It was a quiet, most often singular activity. When the jogging groups passed me by, I waved. From time to time, friends slowed down and walked with me. Actually, I could walk pretty fast, but I always knew I couldn't run.

When I began facing the traumatic memories, I realized I needed exercise to help me cope with the mounting anxiety. I started going to the inside running track at the YMCA several days a week. It was January and Pennsylvania winters are not very conducive to outdoor exercise. I braved the ladies' locker room and distanced myself from the male athletes. It was a difficult time to be around

strangers. My reward for going there was an hour spent walking in circles on the three-lane running track.

As a little girl, I had spent hours in a coffin. I had learned my lesson. Now for the first time in my life, I began to question my athletic *in*ability. Exactly when had I realized I couldn't run? It was simply something that I had always known. Watching the clock on the far wall, I began picking up my pace as I walked. The inside lane was for walking, the middle lane for jogging. My goal was the running lane.

After a few weeks, I was speeding around the other walkers, passing them by edging over into the jogging lane. Then I started walking one lap and jogging the next. I thought for sure I was ready to run, but when I tried my legs froze stiff. The pain was excruciating. Jerry had been a track and field man in high school and college. The sweetheart that he is, he offered to dig out his old running shoes and coach me.

I didn't know how to breathe right. I wasn't lifting my legs high enough. Did I mention *uncoordinated*? It's a wonder I knew how to put one foot in front of the other. Jerry was a patient, although frustrated coach. We realized after a while that it was not a physical barrier we were facing, but an emotional one. We didn't give up. We kept going in circles. "Lift up your knees, Jeanne," Jerry would call out. "Watch your breathing, slow it down." We concentrated, we prayed. One day, I just took off. I started running. It was the most exhilarating feeling. I felt free. I had to slow down only because I had started to cry. *I could run!*

Last year I got a treadmill. We rendezvous daily down in the basement. As my recovery continues and the weather permits, I intend to run outdoors in the warm sunshine. I am growing stronger all the time. I am no longer the little girl who couldn't run. I need not shove a dagger into my heart if I decide to tell. The programming techniques are breaking down. Soon I will be free. I am facing my fear. I can tell if I choose to do so and I have made that choice. Look out world, I hope to speak for the children. Our voices are crying to be heard.

Chapter Five: Values Upside Down

Bend their bones
And they'll bend to your will.
- cult instruction

Jeremy was a kid who could melt a mother's heart. As a toddler, he was so skinny that his pants kept slipping off. Looking straight down, all that an adult could see was this huge head of straw-yellow hair. He resembled a mop with legs. He had big blue eyes and a goofy smile that showed up whenever someone paid attention to him. Bring out a camera, and there was that smile, silly enough to start everyone laughing. He was exceptionally quiet, except for his giggling, and hardly spoke until he started kindergarten.

Jack and the Beanstalk was Jeremy's favorite story. Everyday at nap time, he would pick out a book for our reading time together. Everyday, Jeremy chose the *Jack and the Beanstalk*. It was a pop-up book with pictures of the story characters at the top. As I read, he would point to the characters and I would say their names. After a few months, it became a pop-over book as the pages began to slump. I began to slump a little myself, the story was getting mighty old. I knew each sentence by heart, unfortunately, so did Jeremy. If I tried skipping a few words, he wouldn't turn the page.

It wasn't just the story repetition that bothered me. Jack was a thief and a successful one. Not only did he steal the golden goose, but he managed to kill off the rightful owner and become a rich man. These weren't the values I wanted to instill in my son. Was Jeremy going to grow up thinking Jack was a hero? Was he going to search out and steal his own golden goose? When a kid doesn't talk, it's hard to know what he's thinking.

Throughout his growing years, Jeremy had many opportunities to learn and accept other values. As his parents, we guided him as best we could. I need not have worried quite so much. Today, he is an honest man. He is still good-natured and from time to time, I see a glimpse of that goofy smile. He is tall and slender, but

he no longer looks like a mop. His hair is receding. Sorry, Jeremy. To me, he will always be that precious child who snuggled close in my arms and lightened my days.

Most parents do the best they can to love and nurture their children. It was the nature of the cult to turn this value, the worth of children, and many other societal values, upside down. Children in the cult were not precious, nor were we loved. We were not distinct individuals, each with our own personality and peculiar talents. We were a cheap commodity. We were there to be indoctrinated and programmed, ensuring the continuation of the cult. With proper training, we would be model children, doing exactly as we were told. We would display no will of our own, none whatsoever.

> The structor [instructor] is teaching the mommies and daddies tonight. The lesson is called, "Bend their bones and they'll bend to your will." He says that children's bones bend better than grown-up bones. You're supposed to bend them and then stop just before the bones break.
>
> You get a box. Then you fit the child in the box at certain angles, so the bones will bend, but not break. You leave the child in the box until she passes out from the pain. Then you take her out. If you bend her bones, she'll bend to your will. Now he's going to help everybody do it.
>
> Please, don't let them take me. [Screaming]
>
> [Later] They want me to watch. They want me to learn how to bend the bones. They're putting a little boy in the box. He's screaming. I don't want to watch. I don't want to learn. I don't want to hear him scream.
>
> After a while, the little ones don't cry any more.

Lessons in the cult were designed to reduce our self-worth to zero. The trauma induced in the teaching brought the message home. We were dirty, vile and unlovable. We deserved what we got, and somehow it was our fault that we got it. Self-esteem was not it the cult vocabulary.

> I'm very sleepy and I don't know why I'm waking up. I'm laying on my tummy. My arms and legs are stretched out as far as they'll go, in a big X. There are straps around my arms and ankles. I can move my head back and forth, but not very much else.

It's the bad place. There are bad smells on my face. Sometimes they put me so I can't get my face out of the dirty stuff. I'm stuck and I can't get away from the smell. They're mad at me. Sometimes I don't even know why. They don't tell me.

My legs are starting to hurt. I shouldn't try to move them. They won't go. [Choking] They're putting something nasty in my mouth. No, don't put it on my face. Don't put it in my mouth. [Gagging] They put my face down in it. When I turn my face to try to get away from it, it just gets in it more. Please, let me up. Please, get it out of my face.

They're putting something in my hair, some kind of bugs. [Hysterical] Get them off! Get them off! It's really hot. I can hear the bugs. I can feel them moving on my head. What are these stupid people trying to teach me from this? I can hear the bugs! The more I turn my head to get rid of the bugs, the more the stuff gets on my face. It's nasty, yucky stuff. The bugs like it, but I don't. I want to be clean.

They're telling me that's what it feels like when they bury your head in the dirt. The bugs eat you and they eat the nasty stuff in your mouth. They get up your mouth and you can't breathe. That's what happens to people when they die. I'm not dead. Maybe I won't feel it when I'm dead, so they're doing it now, so I can hurt.

My arms hurt from laying like this. I can't feel my hands any more. I don't want any more lessons. I hear a man's voice. He says I'm not a good student. I'm not very smart. They have to teach me for my own good. I don't want to learn anything from him. He says I smell like shit. They're the ones that did it. He says there's a part of me that's still clean. Oh, I don't want him to touch me. I can't get away.

[Crying] He says the kind of dirty I am doesn't wash off.

As another societal value turned upside-down, we were told that pain was our friend. It would make us strong and help us to forget. We were expected to submit and endure various tortures for our own benefit. If we cried out, we were weak and needed more training in pain to become stronger. If we endured silently, then we were ready to be tested on a higher level of pain. Either way, the anguish continued. Pulling away from reality - forgetting - was a means of survival.

The long scarf is tied around my neck and the ends are tied to my wrists. If someone pulls my hands apart, I'll choke. Now they're wrapping my arms to my chest. My fists are close to my neck.

We are going to play a game. It's called, "Body Folding." They're folding me up into a tight ball. Now they pull back the other way, HARD. Which way do I want? The one that hurts a little or a lot? I choose the little, so they push me into the tight ball. It is so tight that my fists go into my neck. I can't breathe. [Choking]

Which one do I want now? Pain is my friend. It is better than the other one. It will make me strong. It will help me forget about it. I want to forget about it. I guess I want the pain. Now they're going to pull back the other way, HARD.

In the following lesson, drugs had been used to induce a trance-like state. As I dealt with the traumatic memory, I once again felt what Lil' Jeanie calls, "the heavy sleepy."

The game is Roger Dodger. I have to stay awake to win the game. Roger Dodger, Roger Dodger, Roger Dodger. Pain helps me stay awake. It is my friend. It helps me win.

Somebody asks me, "Do you want the pain?" I don't think I want it.

"Do you want the other person to have the pain, so they can win? You can lose. Do you want to lose?" I'm confused. I'm not sure if I want the pain, so they give it to somebody else. I hear a child screaming. Because I couldn't decide, we both lose.

They have two sets of metal wires, like prongs. One set is placed at my feet, the other is at the back of my neck. [Short Scream] My body is rigid, stiff. They're doing it again. Now the game is called, "Drool Like a Fool on the Floor."

I can't move my head, my body is still stiff. I'm drooling out of my mouth. They are grabbing my legs and rolling me on the ground. They are laughing and saying, "Drool like a fool on the floor."

The methods of torture varied, but the conviction, "pain makes you strong, it helps you forget," remained the same.

[Highly Agitated] Got to let go of the pain! I feel it in my head and my tummy. Got to get it out! My hands are tied

above my head, they can't help me get it out. My tummy wants to throw up. Oh, it hurts.

Needles. They're sticking needles into me. My tummy, my belly button, my arm pits. [Screaming] No, don't touch me there. They're putting them in my titties. Get them out! The needles aren't very big, but they hurt. They want me to learn something, but I forget what it is.

They're talking to each other. One of them says, "Where do I put the next one?" Please don't, I'll be quiet. Now I remember, I'm suppose' ta learn to be quiet. Be quiet, don't say nothing.

The man says, "Shut up, shut up, you niggerlover. You're stupid and you're weak. You better learn to take it." He says if I'm quiet and I don't move, then it won't hurt. I'm trying to be quiet. Even if I am quiet, I can't make them stop.

Oh, they're putting needles down there. I'm trying not to move, but it still hurts. [Vomiting] He says I'm weak 'cause I threw up. "We've got to keep doing it until she gets strong. Pain makes you strong. If you're quiet and you don't move, it won't hurt." They're sticking needles in the inside parts of my legs.

It's my fault. They had to do it 'cause I'm not strong.

While school and neighborhood taught us about love and kindness, the cult taught us about hate. As another upside-down value, hate was respected and highly esteemed. The principle was simple: love is weak, hate makes you strong. The person who hates gains power over others. The cult members did not mind that I had labeled them the *bad people*. While I wasn't permitted to express my rage, they sought my hatred. They encouraged it. Hate would make me strong. I would feel the power. I would belong with them.

I'm in a dark place and I can't move. There's a heavy weight against my back. It hurts to lay like this. I hear screams. A big person's screams. They're making noise, but I can't see anything.

It's a game. I'm hiding. Then they'll come in and let me out to see what happened. It's a surprise for me, in the big room. I don't want to see the surprise. I know it's something yucky. If I fight about it, Daddy will get mad at me. He thinks I'm weak and a coward. He wants me to be mean and tough. I am weak. I don't want to be brave and look what's in there.

Somebody says, "Come see the surprise, Jeanie. Come and see the surprise, it's *just for you*." [Screaming] It's my

daddy. He's laying in the box for dead people. He's got the knife in him. They did it for me, a surprise for me. They knew I wanted him dead 'cause I hated him, so they did it for me. Now they can keep me forever 'cause I belong to them. I'll never get to come out of the bad dream. They killed him for me.

I don't want to touch him. I don't want to say good-bye to my daddy. I don't want to kiss him good-bye. Please, don't make me. [Screaming] I touched him and he sat up. He's laughing at me.

I belong to them 'cause I hated him and I wanted him dead.

Their deceptions were cruel and malicious. I was hesitant to give in to the hate, only because I knew it was exactly what they wanted. Younger children were easier to indoctrinate, a bit of my will was still my own. I reacted to most of their lessons with fear and confusion, my loathing held tightly inside. One lesson included repeated assaults, aimed at teaching me to hate. Its conclusion explains some of their methods.

The man says that I'm no good, I'm nothing, just for hurting. I hate them. I hate the way they hurt me. They shouldn't ought to touch me. Hate all of them. Kick 'em.

I don't like grown-ups. They think it's fun to hurt kids. They don't even care. They just tell me I'm a big liar. "Oh, we don't hurt kids, that's just your imagination." Doesn't feel like my imagination.

They want me to hate them. Hating is good, it makes you strong. You're not a wimp if you hate. It makes you angry and it makes you strong, if you hate somebody. You ought to hate somebody, it's good for you.

They want to know if I need more reasons to hate them. They want to give me more reasons to hate them, so I'll be stronger. They like hate. I don't understand any of this stuff. I just don't want them to hurt me anymore. I don't think it's good to hate, not if *they* want me to, then it's bad like them.

Please, don't hurt me anymore. I'll try to learn. I don't need more reasons to hate. It's good to hate. Hate makes you strong. Hurting makes you strong. Pain makes you strong. Don't be a wimp or a coward. I gotta be strong to get away from these stupid people. I'd like to be smart and get away.

They want to know if I hate. Do I hate? They say I'm weak because I don't hate enough. They're hurting me again. I

do hate them. They're putting something inside me, a broom handle. If I hate, it makes me like them, but I want to hate them.

The accumulated teachings of the cult brought us easily to yet another inverted value: it feels good to hurt others. After holding in so much degradation, pain and fury, the next step was to teach us how to let it out on others. Now we could become the abusers. Under the topic of Rage, the Los Angeles County *Report of the Ritual Abuse Task Force* explains,

> A child who has been repeatedly violated by the cult over time, and not permitted to express any emotion about his/her abuse, may be eager to vent his/her rage by striking out and victimizing others. The assaultive behavior which ensues is encouraged and rewarded by adult cult members, and is used to make the child feel he/she already is just like the abusive adults who have provoked the rage.

Keep in mind, these lessons were carefully constructed to teach us that it felt good to hurt others. Letting go of the rage was an added benefit, a catalyst, and for some, a pleasure.

> I am laying on my tummy, on a board. The board is in the air, I can't tell how it stays there. My head is over the end of the board and I can only look straight ahead. They tell me, "Bend your head back. Only look straight ahead." It is a lesson for me to learn.
>
> They say, "Keep your back straight and bend up as much as it will go. Hold your legs and your arms straight out, stiff." They are putting something on my back. It is heavy and bad.
>
> Now they are calling the little children to come and stand under the board. If I don't balance the stuff on my back, it will fall on them and hurt them. It will be my fault, 'cause I let go. They keep telling me, "Bend your head. Bend, straight back. Bend, straight back." It's hurting. It's really hard to keep holding it there.
>
> They keep saying, "You want to let go. It will feel good to let go. It will hurt the babies. You will hurt the babies and it will feel good to you." I can't hold it any longer. I let go. My head comes down and chokes against the edge of the board. I don't want to open my eyes.

"Look at what you did. You hurt the babies and now you feel good, because you let go. It's your fault the babies are hurt and you feel good, don't you?"

I don't want to look at what I did. The lesson is "It feels good to hurt the babies."

In the following memory, the cult offered to let me take out my rage on my father. I was old enough to discern the trick, but what a temptation it must have been.

The bad people say they are going to take my daddy away. I say, "Fine, take him. I don't like having him as my daddy anyway." They say this is my chance to hurt him back. If I hurt my daddy, they'll take him away and he won't ever be able to hurt me or my mommy or my brother again. It's my opportunity to hurt him back.

They are holding Daddy down, so I can be the big one and he can be the little one. They say, "You want to get back at him, don't you? You want to hurt him bad, don't you?" I get to hurt him and then they'll take him away so he can't hurt me back.

Part of me really wants to hurt him. They hand me a board, like a big stick. I want to hate him and hurt him back. Maybe it's a trick. If I hurt him, I'll be like them. More than anything, I don't want to be like the bad people. I put the board down.

Daddy's mad at me. He says I'm weak. He's sick of me. I'll never be good enough for him. Now when he hurts Mommy and Scott, it will be my fault. The bad people would have taken him away, if I had cooperated. Since I didn't, it's all my fault that he's still here.

I'm not sure it's my fault, so I hafta put my head to the floor. When they say, "Whose fault is it?" I hafta say, "Mine."

Combined together, the cult values represented a philosophy of opposites. The world outside the cult encouraged individual dignity, tolerance and benevolence. We learned those ideals in the daytime. At night, degradation, hate and pain dominated our lives. As the traumatic memories continued to surface, I realized these inverted values were not only contrary to our societal values, the philosophy they exemplified was fervently anti-Christ. In the *Bible* New Testament, Jesus Christ taught his disciples:

> A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.
>
> - John 13:34

In his Sermon on the Mount, He declared:

> Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.
>
> - Matt. 5:43-44

Love one another, even your enemies? To the cult, such behavior would have been considered the height of weakness. Not only did the cult refute Christ's teachings, they spent considerable time desecrating holy ordinances and corrupting Christian holidays. They did not want their children to be contaminated by Christianity.

In 1956, the south Sacramento area consisted of an airport, a golf course and a scattering of new home subdivisions. The closest place of worship was a Presbyterian Church a few miles back towards the center of town. Once in awhile, I would go there with friends. One of the first summers we lived near there, I attended their two-week vacation Bible school. A short time later, on a Sunday afternoon, the church's two ministers came by to inquire about my family. My parents were surprised to find them at our front door, but cordially invited them into the living room. I hid by my bedroom door and listened.

> It's the ministers from the pretty white church. I went to Bible school there. They want me to come to their church again, so they came to our house. They are sitting on the couch and talking to my mommy and daddy. They say they're glad to meet my mommy and daddy. They would like to see Mommy and Daddy come to church too.
>
> Daddy tells me to come into the living room. The ministers are talking about a big picnic. They want to know if I would like to come. I could bring a bag lunch and go to the lake. Daddy says that if I decide to go on the picnic, then to I have to

commit to going to church sometimes too. I say, "Okay." Now they have to leave.

Daddy's mad. He's getting madder and madder. He hates those sissy men. He doesn't ever want them in his house again. It was my fault, 'cause they came about me. I'm going to have to go on the picnic, but I'm not to talk to anybody. I'm not to tell any stories. I'll have to keep my mouth shut. He's going to hurt me in my room, 'cause it's all my fault.

[Later] Daddy and me are in my room. He ties the long scarf around my neck, so I'll pay attention. This is the first and only time he's going to say it. If I'm not paying attention, he'll pull the scarf so I choke. Daddy says, "There will be no Christian church garbage in my house. Christ led a bunch of losers, weaklings and sissies. The strong and important have the power in life. They use the weak by trampling on them to get to the top."

Daddy doesn't think I'm paying attention, so he's pulling the scarf tight around my neck. [Choking] He wants me to listen up. *"Christ was the ultimate sissy. He forgave his people because he was a weak leader. The Evil One has all the Power. The Evil One doesn't forgive, he's strong. He has all the choices."* Daddy gave me to the Evil One.

He's taking me out to the garage. He's going to hang me from the wall on the [west] side where the little car parks. He says, "Do you want to hang like the sissy men? Do you want to live like that? Do you like that? Do you like what the sissy men like? They think it's okay to be weak. Do you like being weak?"

As ministers, these two men had spent a Sunday afternoon extending their faith and friendship to my family. They could not possibly have known the price I would pay for their visit. I did go on the church outing. As I worked through the memory, Lil' Jeanie wrote:

I went to the picnic.
I remember the water and the sand, but I didn't talk to nobody.
I was afraid I might say something I shouldn't say.
I ran with some of the kids, but I didn't say anything.
It was lonely.
Big Jeanne remembers the lonely.

She's right. I have always remembered that day. It was a summer excursion at Folsom Lake. The blue sky and white, fluffy clouds

shimmered across the water. Holding my bag lunch in one hand, I climbed up a grassy knoll to watch the other children playing at the water's edge. I stood there a long time taking in the warmth of the summer's rays. Their voices echoed back to me with laughter. I sat down to eat my lunch, apart from everyone else. Waves of loneliness swept over me, but I had learned my lessons well. I was a dirty little girl, worthless and unlovable. I remained alone and profoundly sad.

When I was 18 years old, a doctor diagnosed my sadness as depression. I no longer remembered where those feelings had come from. I lived in a home with two alcoholic parents, who wouldn't be depressed under those circumstances? When bouts of depression followed me into adulthood, I simply accepted them as a part of my life. Keeping busy, very busy, seemed to help ease the severity. I threw myself into being a good wife and mother. I protected my own young children like a fierce mama bear. They would be loved. They would know of their great worth. They would be able to make mistakes and be forgiven. Standing in opposition to the cult beliefs, those attitudes took me right back to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is a children's song that has been around for a very long time. The words go something like this:

Jesus loves the little children,
All the children in the world.
Brown or yellow, black or white,
They are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves the little children of the world.

It is a sweet little song that comforts me. The gospel of Jesus Christ has comforted me for a long time. Now, through the traumatic memories, I have gained a greater understanding of his love for those who are "precious in his sight." I was not left alone to deal with the torment all on my own. There was someone there who loved even me.

Chapter Six: Christians are Blind

Come to the temple, little girl.
Come into the holy temple.
- cult haunted house

My daughter Joy is an artist. Cartoon characters are her specialty. She began her career at age three when she removed a checkbook from my purse and proceeded to decorate each check with tiny circles resembling fish. Her reputation grew as these diminutive marks started showing up in diverse places. We called them Joy's "little fishies." Her innocent looks of denial were of no avail. We knew she was the culprit, we recognized her artistic flare. Some artists stick with paper, but not Joy. She kept exploring new mediums. When fishy marks showed up on the laundry room wall, it was a dead giveaway. She'd found the pens once again. She might as well have left her signature. Seventeen years later, I still laugh whenever I see pictures of tiny fish. They remind me of my doodling artist.

Our lives are full of "fishy" pictures. They are called symbols. They are pictures that remind us of something else. A red light means STOP. Traffic signs are pictures and objects that remind us to follow specific rules of the road. Advertisers spend lots of money developing logos to remind us of their products and services. Sometimes symbols give us a visible way to express our feelings. A wedding ring is a gold band that universally represents love and commitment. We send flowers to express our affection and sympathy. The United States flag is made up of red, white and blue strips of fabric that hang on a pole and blow in the breeze. It is a symbol of the love most Americans feel for their country. Patriotism is not an easy concept to explain. It is the topic of school essays and lengthy political speeches. Old Glory puts patriotism in a picture.

Children comprehend symbols too. The Golden Arches mean a hamburger and french fries for lunch. A valentine heart means somebody likes somebody else a whole lot. Certain pictures have

even greater significance. Mr. Yuck is a happy face sticker. He is an educator with a mission and an attitude. His tongue is always hanging out the corner of his mouth. He looks like his mother just made him eat *all* of his vegetables. He gets stuck on medicine bottles and containers full of household cleaners. His grimacing expression warns kids to stay away. He is the latest symbol for poison.

Symbolism abounds in religion, especially Christianity. The cult focused on Christian symbols in their efforts to promote their anti-Christian philosophy. Objects and beliefs central to the Christian faith were ridiculed. Ceremonies and holidays were perverted in horrible ways. Christmas and Easter were no longer celebrations. Scenes were cast with characters right out of a child's nightmare. These new visual images became Christmas and Easter and the meaning of these cherished symbols were changed forever. All things held sacred by Christians were targeted as the cult methodically indoctrinated the children into their system of upside down values. The greater the symbol's significance, the more it was subverted.

Christians of many denominations adorn themselves and their church buildings with crosses. The cross represents the cross at Cavalry where Jesus of Nazareth died. Christians believe Jesus Christ died on the cross accepting the sins of the world, ensuring immortality to mankind. It is a revered symbol of Christ's love and sacrifice for his children. The cross was "inverted" in the cult both figuratively and physically. Crosses made of boards were turned upside down. Subjected to various tortures, we hung with our feet tied above us and our heads and arms towards the floor. People who hung on crosses were small, weak and worthless.

The lamb is known for its soft, woolly coat and its sweet innocence. Numerous scriptural references refer to Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God. In the New Testament of the *Bible*, the Lamb of God was a name used for Jesus Christ by John the Baptist:

> The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.
>
> - John 1:29

Lambs were used in cult lessons and ceremonies. As a child, I did not identify the symbolism implied by the cult's use of the lambs. They were merely small animals who were being killed. As I dealt with the traumatic memories, the adult part of me recognized the symbolism immediately.

> I am on the floor, but I can't get away. There is a little white lamb lying near me. He is on his side. His legs are facing away from me.
>
> His heart and his guts have been taken out. He only has blood. The top of him is soft, but the blood is on the floor around him. I'm trying to brush it away from me, but as I brush it away, more is getting on my hand. I don't want to be near the blood and the lamb.
>
> The lamb has no heart and no guts. All it has is blood. Somebody says, "Do you like the lamb? Do you want to be near the lamb? Do you want to worship the lamb?"
>
> I say, "No." I just want to get away from it and keep its blood from getting on me.

Sometimes cult instruction was given by elaborate means. In the following memory, I found myself in a large oven. It was an enclosed space that continued to grow hotter. I was told that the heated edges would burn me. If it was actually a large oven or some kind of contrivance used to create that illusion, I do not know. For Lil' Jeanie it was incredibly real.

> Fires to Hell. Fires to Hell. Fires to Hell. They want me to know what it feels like. It's an oven, a great big one. It's hot and it hurts. I want out!
>
> I hear them talking. "Burn her up? Do you think we should do it? Nobody would ever know." Now some of them are saying the same words together.
>
> "Burn her up. Fires to Hell, all the way she goes.
> Burn her up, let her go, no one will ever know."
>
> They call it a mother's nursery rhyme. Now they're saying,
>
> "Nobody wants you. They'll be glad you're gone.
> You're just a lot of trouble. We'll all be glad you're gone.
> It's what you deserve! Fires to Hell! Burn her up!"
>
> It's really hot. [Fast Breathing] Don't touch the walls. Don't touch anything. Please let me out!

I didn't cooperate. They took me out. It's my fault they're going to have to burn something else. They want me to look and see what else they're going to burn. I don't want to look. I'm just trying to breathe.

I'm glad I'm not in there. So they keep telling me that I must be glad something else is going in the oven. Something else is in there. I must be glad I'm out here and he's in there for me. That means I'm *happy* something else is in there. [Hysterical] No! I'm not happy! I'm not! I don't want anybody to be in there.

[Crying] I don't want to be in the oven. I don't want to burn up, so I must be glad. They put something in the oven to burn it up. Nobody wants it. They'll be glad when it's gone. It's a burnt offering to the Evil One. Fires to Hell. It's a little animal. Somebody says, "Emerson would rather just eat it." They're laughing. It's a baby lamb.

Now somebody says (with sarcasm), "It's the Lamb of God." They sent it to Hell. Fires to Hell. They sent the Lamb of God to Hell.

As He sat with his disciples at the Last Supper, Jesus Christ instructed all who sat at his table to eat the broken bread and drink from the shared cup of wine. Using these tangible items as symbols, he instituted the communion service.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

- Matthew 26: 26-28

In remembrance of Christ's atoning sacrifice, Christians have followed these instructions for centuries. Some Christian churches hold their communion services on monthly or quarterly Communion Sundays. In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, this ordinance is called the Sacrament. It is considered so important that members partake of the sacrament on a weekly basis during a meeting called, not surprisingly, the Sacrament meeting.

In the cult, this service was mocked by the drinking of real blood. A pig and its blood were used instead of bread and wine. The pig was deemed offensive to God. Jesus of Nazareth had been a Jew.

> I'm sitting on the floor. I'm rocking back and forth because I'm upset. I wish my daddy wouldn't bring me here. My tummy hurts and I'm shaking inside me.
>
> They're taking my hand. They want me to do something over there. I'm trying to pull my hand away. I don't want to do it. I don't even want to see it.
>
> Daddy's disappointed in me. He wants me to do it. He wants me to like doing it. Daddy thinks it will be good for me. If I do it, then they'll let me stop and they won't make me do anything else. That's all they'll make me do. Oh, but I don't want to!
>
> [Screaming] It's a pig. They cut it open. They want me to feel inside and find the heart. They put my hand inside. I can't pull it away from them. I feel the guts and the mess. It's slippery and warm.
>
> [Crying] You said that was all I had to do. No Stop it! You said I don't have to do no more! [Muffled scream] They put my face down in the pig. A man says, "What's the matter with you, kid, don't you like bacon?" I just want them to leave me alone.
>
> My daddy says, "Nobody wants you. Nobody loves you. You're just an ugly ol' pig. Maybe we ought to cut you up."
>
> The pig and the blood are important, but not to me. The blood is the life force, but I don't know what that means.
>
> I see their teeth. Blood is on their mouths. They're drinking it. They're going to make me drink it too. [Choking, spitting, vomiting]
>
> They made me keep drinking it until I could swallow it and keep it down. They kept giving it to me. They were bigger than me. They made a circle around me. It was like they were dancing.
>
> My stupid mommy says I had another bad dream. My tummy hurts bad from throwing up and there's a bad taste in my mouth. I tried to tell her about the pig, but she didn't believe me. She says I have to stay in my room for making up stories. I couldn't come out of my room all day, but I sneaked out to go potty.

As an adult, I have participated in legitimate sacrament services since I joined the LDS Church about twenty years ago.

Because of the dissociation, I was aware of only a vague uneasiness. I knew I didn't like symbols or ceremonies, but I also understood the importance of such ordinances. I wished to grow in my faith, so week after week, I complied. After the traumatic memories returned that changed. I fled from the meetings in revulsion. My images of a loving Lord sharing bread and drink with his followers was replaced with laughing adult faces with blood on their teeth. For months I struggled with those images, but I persevered. It had been their aim to push me away from God and I would not let them succeed. In time, I returned.

Many Christian ceremonies were distorted by the cult. Under the heading of "Spiritual Abuse," the authors in *Confronting Abuse* explain:

> Some deviant cult groups make a point of distorting every religious ceremony. If the cult operates in a strongly Catholic community, they do 'black masses' and other distortions of the Roman Catholic service. In Mormon communities, scriptures and other religious wordings may be perverted. Latter-Day Saint ordinances, such as baptism, marriage, or temple ceremonies, may be mocked or distorted. When victims are later involved in the authentic services, their programmed terror is triggered, and the ordinance becomes a nightmare.

In the cult, baptism became a struggle to survive drowning. We were instructed to feign death while being plunged in and out of a series of small backyard swimming pools. We were also taught corrected burial rites. These were ways to bury people so that God would be offended and stay away. In one terrifying ceremony, young girls were forced into "marriage" with the Evil One.

> Poles are tied to my arms. There is a grown-up on each side of me holding a pole. I have to walk between them, 'cause I have to go where they say. I am wearing a white sheet like a dress. Oh, I don't want to be here.
>
> We walk around a dark room up to a doorway. It has a curtain instead of a door. The man is unwrapping my arm from one of the poles. It is this one, my left one. He says I'm suppose' ta knock at the veil. The veil is the gate to hell. I don't want to knock, so he is twisting my arm. He keeps twisting! Now he's

pushing my arm to knock. He says, "A daughter of Eve enters into the presence of the Evil One."

They're taking me through the gate, something about a portal, into the service of the Evil One. There is a man. Oh, please don't let him touch me. I don't have a choice. Only the Evil One has choices. No matter what I do in my life, I have to remember he was inside me first. Nothing else can reside in me. I belong to him first and when he wants me back, I must come. No matter how good I am on the outside, I am evil on the inside of me.

In response to this memory, I decided to have my own ceremony. In heavy gothic script, Jeremy, my computer whiz son, helped me format the following *Certificate of Divorce.*

With Swords Drawn, Cloaked in the Armor of God, I make this choice, to separate, annul, and divorce any association forced upon me by my father with Mr. Evil One.

I will not:

Belong to Mr. Evil One.
Answer his call.
Allow him to dwell within me.

As my final decree, I have chosen:

To be like Mr. Light.
To follow the gospel to the best of my abilities.
To work for progress, not perfection.
To be a child of God.
To like myself.
To get well.
To find happiness in my life.
To help the children.

Signed & Sealed on this day, the fourth of July in the year of our Lord, Jesus Christ, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Five.

It was near Independence Day, so we decided to send a copy of the certificate to Mr. Evil One himself in our fireworks display. It seemed an appropriate time as the fourth of July had been my father's favorite holiday. My children were eager helpers. I could not blame them. We have all dealt with trying emotions throughout this ordeal. They carefully placed sparklers in the grass so the vertical pieces of metal outlined the certificate and kept it about a foot off the ground. Then they lit the tops of the sparklers. We stood in a circle

and watched as it burst into flames. Whiffs of smoke edged into the darkened sky. Our message had been sent. Fires to Hell.

As the flooding of traumatic memories continued into its second year, a definite pattern emerged. Calendar anniversary dates began triggering memories of the original trauma. My own birthday brought back memories of the cult's "birthnight" ceremony. Halloween memories detailed ghoulish cult events. By early December, I was dreading what the Christmas season would bring. I had every right to be apprehensive, the cult had used Christmas to desecrate another cherished Christian symbol. This time, memories returned of the manger scene.

> It's dark and Daddy is taking me to some place outside. It was set up for me so I can learn. There is a barn. In front of the barn, there is straw and some people standing around. There is a baby laying in the straw. He is wrapped in a blanket. They want me to come closer and look at him.
>
> A lady says, "Come closer so you can see what the Christmas baby really is, what it really looks like, what it really represents." I see the baby. His eyes are closed. He looks like he's asleep, except there is a knife through his chest where his heart would be.
>
> The lady tells me to pick up the baby and hold it. I don't want to touch it, but she doesn't care. She wants me to feel inside the blanket. From the back, bugs are falling out. Maggots. They are on my hands. She rubs the skin on the baby's forehead. It peels away to the bone, like a carcass. Let me go! I don't want anything to do with the Christmas baby.
>
> Another grown up says, "Whenever you see the manger scene, remember it is nothing to worship. You know what it's really like. Stay away." I'll stay away. I'll stay away. Please don't make me look at it anymore. I'll stay away from the Christmas baby.

Spring brought Easter and more traumatic memories with crosses. Similar to the Christmas manager scene, the cult once again instructed the children to stay away from Christianity by presenting a horrifying visual aid. As we viewed the scene before us, the following instruction was given.

Tonight we have to learn about crosses. Christians love crosses. They put them on their buildings and they wear them. They put their leader on one and they gave him vinegar until he died. They were happy about it. That's why they have crosses, because they're happy he died. If you're a good Christian, they'll put you on a cross too. They have them and they use them too.

The bad people say Christians are blind. They don't know the truth. They can't see it. The bad people want us to remember that Christians are blind, so they set up a table in the front of the room. Oh, I don't want to remember this part. There is a little boy on the table. He's little, but he's not a baby. He is dead. There are metal crosses stuck through his eyes. The crosses are there to help us remember. Christians are blind.

I had assumed that Easter would be easier to deal with than Christmas. Unlike other Christian sects, Mormons don't display crosses. Our church leaders encourage us to reflect on Christ's resurrection rather than his crucifixion. There would be no symbols to frighten me away from church on Easter Sunday. Unfortunately, I was wrong. Mormons may not display crosses, but they do sing about them. As I walked into Sacrament meeting, the choir began their prelude, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord..." and I cringed as they set the scene with their music. Emotions overwhelmed me. Once again I was Lil' Jeanie staring in shock at a little boy with crosses protruding from his eyes. I left the building and returned home. Overcome with grief, I curled up in my blankets and cried.

For most people, Halloween is an excuse to dress up in scary costumes and act silly. It is also considered an occult holiday. For the members of my father's cult, it was an opportunity to teach the children in another inventive way. They put together a haunted house, each room with a different focus. Most were fervently anti-Christ. This was not a makeshift arrangement. The haunted house was located inside a Masonic Temple. It isn't fair to condemn an entire organization when only a few people may have been involved. Perhaps the building was simply rented out for the evening. I can identify my father's friend who met us there as a Mason. I can describe the building, but I have not ascertained its location. The memory is as follows, minus a few of the rooms.

Daddy says the group has put together a treat for selected children. It's for Halloween. It's like a haunted house, but it's there to teach us. I'm suppose to learn from it and appreciate everything they did for me.

I am laying on the floorboard of the car. I'm scared to go inside. There is a man walking up to the car. He is my daddy's friend. He's been waiting for my daddy to come. He's going to walk us inside. The building is big, it looks like white stone. Near the top it says, "Masonic Temple." There are lights on the porch and steps going up.

The inside isn't light like the outside. There is a long hallway with doors to other rooms. Daddy says, "Stand still. Don't go into the other rooms. Demons are waiting there."

There are other grown-ups here too. They keep saying, "Come to the temple, little girl. Come into the ho-oo-oly temple." They are trying to sound scary like ghosts.

There is a man sitting at a table. He is wearing a black robe. He is holding a hatchet. It looks like an ax, but it's littler. He says that I have to pay to get into the haunted house. He is going to cut off one of my hands for the payment. He grabs my hand and holds it down on the table. Before he cuts it off, he looks under the table. He says he has an extra one, so he doesn't have to cut mine off.

We walk into the first room. Daddy is with me. They tell me to feel something with my hands. I don't want to. I don't think I remember anything else about the first room.

The second room is a curtain with holes in it. They call it the second room, but it's just part of a great big room that's been divided up. The curtain means the second room. I have to stand in front of the curtain. Big black arms grab at me through the holes. It's suppose' ta be a spider grabbing its prey. I'm caught in its web and can't get out. Like a spider, it's going to suck my blood. He yells at me, "Stay away from curtains with holes in them!" He doesn't think my blood will taste right, so he's not going to use it. He tells me to go on.

This room is the Blood of the Lamb room. A grown-up says, "Keep your head down. Blood drips from the ceiling. Don't let it get on you, especially your face. It will burn holes through your skin. You will be hideous! Stay away from the blood of the lamb."

The next room has a little table. One man is standing behind the table. Two other men are standing to the side talking to each other. There are two items on the table. The man wants to show them to me. They look like pieces of rubber. One is soft and weak and limp. The other is strong and straight and hard. The

powerful one is like his master, the Evil One. Which one would I like? The men are laughing. I don't want either of them. I just want them to leave me alone. They say they have a special treat for me. [Crying]

I am in a different room. It's hot in here. There is one chair. A man says, "Sit down. The chair is cool." I don't believe him. I don't want to sit down, but he makes me. Nothing happens, so it must be true. He asks me, "What did you learn in the rooms?" I learned to stay away from curtains with holes in them or my blood will get sucked out. I learned to stay away from the blood of the lamb.

He wants to know what else I learned. I don't remember. He says I must remember or they'll have to repeat it all over again. I'll lose my hands, fingers, feet and toes. I must remember or I can never get out. They will suck me dry. Use me up. To get out, I have to remember.

Somebody says, "Pain will help. Pain makes you strong. It will help you remember what you must remember and forget what you must forget." They are going to hang me upside down from a pole. They are tying my feet and wrists. They keep repeating,

"Hands, fingers, feet and toes,
Blood goes to your head
Then it bubbles out your nose"

A man asks me, "Do you feel it in your head? Soon it will come out your nose."

As I have come to terms with the traumatic memories, I have felt very grateful for the dissociation in my life. It was only by sending Lil' Jeanie away that I survived and became a functioning adult. I'm also grateful for a gentle and compassionate husband. While I've functioned all right, I don't suspect for a minute that I've been very easy to live with. Perhaps there will come a day when Jerry's ready to write a book about his own ordeal. I am exceedingly grateful that through all the perverted teachings and atrocities committed by the cult, I have also had the opportunity to learn the gospel of Jesus Christ. As an adult, I have seen Christianity through very different eyes.

My father detested Christianity. Although he appeared as an agnostic to the outside world, I don't believe his abhorrence of a loving God ever softened. I doubt he revered the Evil One either. If he worshipped anything, it was power. Religion was a joke, a way to

subjugate ignorant people. Ministers remained sissy boys. "Jesus Christ" was his favorite swear word. There is a scripture that says,

> But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
>
> - Corinthians 2:14

Somewhere in his life, my father had chosen to walk away from the Spirit of God. He was the epitome of the natural man.

Dad was going on a trip one time and asked Jerry and I to take him to the airport. He was older then and it was a long drive with three grandchildren in the car. In the middle of a conversation, Dad voiced his favorite expletive. We had recently joined the LDS Church. Jason, who was seven years old at the time, recognized the words "Jesus Christ" from a very different context. He immediately scrambled up out of the back seat and excitedly declared, "*Grandpa, we learned about him in Sunday school! Do you know him too?*" It was obvious Grandpa didn't. A shocked look came across his face. The conversation ceased. The master litigator had been silenced by an innocent child.

Chapter Seven: Mr. Light

Jerry: "Jeanie, what does Mr. Light's house look like?"
Lil' Jeanie (giggling): "It's bright, yellow LIGHT!"
-taped memory #25

Back in the 1950's, doctors still made house calls. Carrying their stethoscopes in black medicine bags, they saw patients who needed consultation after office hours or who were considered too ill to travel outdoors. At my house, they came to visit me. I was a croupy kid. As if my nights weren't bad enough already, I had a nasty cough that frequently turned into strep throat and bronchitis. Several doctors made visits to our home. It was rarely the same doctor twice in a row. My mother would dress me in my robe and slippers and pretty up my hair. Then she'd direct me to the family room couch where she surrounded me with blankets and pillows. When the doctor arrived, both of my parents would sit down on chairs they had set immediately across from me. My father would carry the conversation in his affable way, explaining my symptoms and expressing his attentive concern. It was always well orchestrated. There was nothing left for me to say and I knew better than to try.

While these illnesses were accepted as real, my mother insisted that my injuries and infections from the abuse were my imagination. When I was sick from the abuse injuries, she conveniently kept me in my room all day as a punishment. Once again I was in trouble for making up stories or for hurting myself in my bad dreams. To cure these odd imaginations, she brought home medicines from the county clinic on a regular basis. She called some of the pills "vitamins." If I was in pain, I took them with gratitude whatever they were. There was one liquid I called the "throw up medicine." I didn't like that one at all. Invariably I threw up within an hour or two after she forced it down my throat. I couldn't follow her reasoning. Why would she give me medicine that she knew was going to make me sick? In this regard, the traumatic memories have left me with more questions than answers. There were also shots.

She gave me injections with the explanation that they were new and better polio vaccines. My attendance at school was sporadic. According to my school records, I missed a third of my sixth grade year.

As a teenager, I continued the role of the sickly child. Even after the disassociation and the end of the ritual abuse, the pattern remained in place. Now my illnesses played a different role. A bout of bronchitis could bring a temporary halt to the fighting and drinking that consumed my parents. Instead of arguing, they took time out to care for me. I could be the family peacemaker, albeit temporarily. It was reward enough. My parents were chain cigarette smokers and I had a history of croup akin to asthma. I discovered that if I coughed a little, I could actually make myself sick. I was convinced I was bringing it on myself and the pay off was worth it. By the time I was in college, I had lost the ability to tell when I was sick. I could no longer read my own internal signals, fever nor fatigue. I figured it was all my imagination.

My first year of high school, I spent five days in a local hospital recuperating from minor surgery. It was a continuation of the same pattern. A doctor had suggested a surgical procedure to ease the stretched tendons in my feet. My mother left the decision up to me. The procedure would necessitate a hospital stay, two rather unsightly scars and two weeks of Christmas vacation in a wheelchair. The holidays were the worst of times at our house. The drinking parties brought on binges and terrifying brawls. I could change the focus of that season towards myself. Mom might even stay home from the parties. Compared to the pay off, the surgery was no big deal.

It was a Catholic hospital. One morning a nun walked into my room, complete with her floor-length habit and cheerful countenance. I sat in my bed with my mouth hanging open. I had never seen a Catholic nun up close before. I couldn't take my eyes off her. She told my mother that she was making her rounds. Then she turned towards me and asked how I was doing. My mind went blank. A real nun was talking to me? My mother responded for me and told her that I was recuperating well. She walked over to the bed, took my hand in hers and whispered, "Well, thank God for that." She spoke those words like a prayer. Her sincerity startled me.

I couldn't even emit a simple "thank you." In that moment, I wished to be like her. I imagined myself full of faith and living a life serving others. Sadly, I acknowledged I wasn't meant to be a nun. I wasn't Catholic and more than that, I could never have her faith in God.

The cult teachings may have been hidden far in the back of my mind, but my father's religious intolerance was still very clear. Religion was *hocus pocus*, a superstition that bound ignorant people to the past. The idea that a God existed was an absurdity. To ensure a successful future, mankind must evolve away from such primitive thinking. Educated people found their answers in the sciences. I wanted to be educated and progressive. In college, I began with scientific courses of study. Books fascinated me. Not only did they answer my questions and appease my curiosity, but they were a lot easier to understand than people. In theology, I took a humanistic approach. I poured over books on world religions and picked out the parts that appealed to me. I wanted to be a pacifist like the Quakers, a vegetarian like the Seventh Day Adventists and a peacemaker like Mahatma Gandhi.

My scientific study of life worked for a while. I spent hours reading and less and less time involved with people. I became more of a spectator than a participant in life. It felt safer. I lived a quiet, almost solitary existence until I met Jerry. He suggested I ease up on my book learning and discover the real world. Jerry is a man who enjoys life. We got along because he could do all the talking and all I had to do was listen. His innate kindness was a well-spring for me. When he asked me to join him in his life's adventures, I hesitantly agreed. His first enterprise took us to Germany for two years. He sped off like a transatlantic explorer, dragging his bewildered apprentice behind him.

By the time we had children, my scientific studies held little relevance to my everyday life. I had lots of questions about living, but those books sure didn't have the answers. In my few quiet moments, I read books on infant care and child psychology. By toddlerhood, I felt lucky just to make it through an entire magazine article. I couldn't answer my kids' questions either. "Why do my socks have to match, Mommy?" Who can ask more confounding questions than a three year-old! "So why can't I eat the potato bug?" Their questions were like arrows sailing right over my head. After

some very long days, I felt like a colonial fort besieged by midget Indians. Jerry would come home from work, play with the children and wonder why I still wanted to escape from life through my books. Just what was I looking for? I was looking for a road map, a compass that would give my life direction. It just hadn't occurred to me that I was looking in the wrong place.

I was married and a mother and I still didn't know who I was. I did, however, know who I wasn't. I wasn't like my parents. I would not let alcohol ruin my life. I wanted to enjoy my family. I had studied life for a long time, but I didn't know how to live it. I admired my father's intelligence, but for me, there had to be something more. I remembered the soothing touch of a stranger as I recuperated in a hospital bed. I remembered escaping from my parent's home during a horrid weekend and finding myself sitting alone in the back of a church. In the midst of chaos, I had felt comforted. I wasn't sure why. Perhaps it had something to do with faith, or Jesus Christ or spirituality. I didn't know, but I wanted to find out.

My quest took me quite a while. I had learned to study things out in my mind very carefully. I examined churches and cautiously asked questions. It wasn't wise to appear over eager, if you did, people wanted a commitment. I would gather information about a church and its services. Jerry and I would talk about it. We would attend once or twice, then I would look for another. Jerry had grown up as a Southern Baptist. Unlike me, he had always had a faith in God. He loved to sing the old hymns. He could quote *Bible* verses. He also liked to sleep in on Sunday mornings.

In 1974, Jerry accepted a promotion and was transferred to Phoenix, Arizona. We moved into a new area of homes north of the city. The house we found was located in a cul-de-sac, a street shaped like a horseshoe. There were ten houses all facing each other and it was a whole new neighborhood experience. It's hard to ignore your neighbors when you live in a horseshoe. There were ten young families. Every couple had children except one. They had the quiet house. In the middle of the horseshoe, we had the neighbor who didn't like anybody else, the fashion plate and the self-professed psychic. On the curves, the families included the born-again Christians, the neighborhood gossip and a few ladies who actually

worked in offices rather than at home all day. I learned from every one of them. Sometimes it was hard to get along. If it didn't get too hostile, I enjoyed playing my favorite role. I got to be the peacemaker.

The desert sunshine was glorious. I loved the relaxed, outdoor atmosphere. I did learn to stay inside on hot summer afternoons. When it's too hot to go swimming, don't try bringing ice cream home from the grocery store. I realized I'd made that mistake the moment I sat a cold carton on a sizzling hot car seat. I cried with my two year-old after I told him not to touch an intriguing looking, needle-spiked cactus and he ran over to it and did exactly that. Most of those long walks amidst warm desert sunsets and cool evening breezes were splendid occasions.

My neighbors were helpful with all kinds of advice as we adjusted to desert living. My born-again Christian friend questioned me about my religion during our very first conversation. I had seen a sign on a nearby church that said, "Visit Us or Another Good Church This Sunday." I told her that I was like that sign. There were many good churches and I was sampling them. She gave me her advice with a warning. This was Mormon territory. I'd better watch out, they were everywhere. Another Mormon chapel was being built next door to her church and her pastor had cautioned his congregation, "Whatever you do, don't associate with the Mormons."

Having grown up in the West, I knew a little about the Mormons. I knew they built temples and only let Mormons go inside them. There was a huge temple in Utah, the state where most of them lived, and another temple was being rebuilt in Mesa, Arizona. I knew they had very large families. Zero population growth was a popular concept, so if someone had a big family, they were probably Catholic or Mormon. I knew they had a doctrine even more complex than other Christian churches and that they were very serious about it. My neighbor's animosity towards them disturbed me. The Mormons I had met were nice people. They were Christians. If all these folks were Christians, it seemed to me, they should all be on the same side.

Prudence was one of the first neighbors to greet us. She became a good friend. Prudence and her husband had moved to Phoenix from New York. I enjoyed just listening to her accent. She knew the East and I knew the West, so we had a multitude of stories

to share. We often met stroller to stroller and walked the neighborhood with our children in tow. It was a time of trial for Prudence, she felt her marriage was unraveling. I had no idea what to do for her, except listen. One day she surprised me with an announcement. She and her husband were joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormons. I was shocked. I hadn't thought about anyone actually *joining* the church. I figured there were lots of Mormons because they had such big families. She reminded me that they had missionaries, young men who volunteered two years of their lives to share the gospel, sometimes door to door. During college, I'd had an acquaintance who'd joined the church that way. I simply hadn't thought about it.

We lived in Phoenix another year, and during that time, I watched those Mormons. I discovered a group of people who loved their families to distraction. I found people who could have a rollicking good time without indulging in drugs or alcohol. They were committed to education, self-reliance and self-less service. As Prudence shared her growing knowledge of the LDS church, I admired both the soundness and simplicity of its organization. What I didn't understand was the religion part of it. The church Jerry and I visited during that time was a liberal one. They didn't have books of doctrine, they hardly had any beliefs at all. I figured I could fit in there just fine. Jerry said he'd never been to a church where the minister worked so hard to keep from using the word "God" in his services. We only attended a few times.

In 1976, we had to move again. It wasn't easy for me to leave Phoenix. There were some tearful good byes as I made my last visits. My born-again Christian neighbor was plenty riled by then. A second Mormon family had moved into the cul-de-sac. Since I was considered a neutral observer and occasional mediator in the neighborhood squabbles, she used our last minutes to complain about the Mormons. Her pastor had given her more information. She knew why the Mormons didn't drink Coca-Cola. It was because their church owned the Pepsi-Cola Company. I almost laughed. The Mormons had some kind of rule about what they should and shouldn't drink, but it was for health reasons, not monetary gain. I told her I had found the Mormons to be people of integrity. It was

my heartfelt opinion that they did *not* own the Pepsi-Cola Company. So much for my neutrality.

As we boxed up our belongings and carted them out to a U-Haul truck, our newest Mormon neighbor offered his help. We hardly knew this man, but he and his friends were there to lift boxes, furniture and tricycles. His wife had put together an enormous bag of sandwiches, fruit and cookies to sustain us on our long drive back to California. He grinned as he told us that he had put his old military copy of the *Book of Mormon* in the bottom of the bag, in case we ever wished to read it. Then he handed us a piece of paper with his phone number. If we had trouble anywhere along our journey, he wanted us to call him. Wherever we were, he could call a church member who would help us. Jerry and I were dumbfounded. I don't honestly think we would have ever called him, but we marveled at his kindness. We were not even members of his church. During that year, only one thing about the Mormons impressed me more. I had felt helpless as I listened to Prudence talk about her faltering marriage. With the church's guidance, they seemed happier than I had ever seen them.

Jerry and I had decided to move back to Sacramento. It was a career change for Jerry. My jovial, people-loving husband found his true vocation there, sales. The job change meant field training and many hours away from home. His new work may have been challenging, but it wasn't nearly as strenuous as mine. I got to set up house with a five year-old who thought he was a General, a three year-old who didn't want to be a Private, and an adorable baby girl who clamped her chubby little arms around my leg and hardly ever let go. I missed my husband. I missed my friends and I missed getting more than four hours sleep at one time. This neighborhood was older and settled. No one came running to our door with greetings. Except for the screeching halts of the General's Big Wheels, our walks were quiet strolls down empty sidewalks. Gradually I met people through a parent's cooperative preschool. It was connected to a church, so I attended their services. I looked up a girlfriend I had known in high school, but I longed for the camaraderie I had felt in Phoenix. I missed my association with the Mormons.

We had been there several months when a woman knocked on our door. She explained that she lived down the corner from us. She had seen us move in, but just hadn't taken the time to introduce herself until now. She brought us a homemade loaf of wheat bread. It was a trait typical to the Mormons. I could have hugged her. She had teenagers, a job, a husband and a busier life than anyone I had ever met. Somehow she found the time for one more friend - me. She introduced me to her family and swept me right along in her busy schedule. On one of our afternoons together, she teasingly told me that I was a *dry* Mormon. I liked the Mormon lifestyle and I lived within their cultural norms, but I wasn't ready to be baptized (an ordinance that required getting *wet*). She explained that being a Mormon meant a great deal more than doing service projects and gathering a year's supply of wheat. Did I ever wonder why Mormons chose to live that way? I knew it had something to do with their faith in God, I just didn't think it could ever include me. How could somebody like me ever get to know God?

I was ready to meet with their missionaries, but I wasn't very optimistic about it. They were polite young men. Each time they came, they taught a short lesson. They didn't seem to mind interruptions from bouncy children, no doubt from growing up in large families themselves. Thank goodness they taught basic principles, I even felt awkward with prayer. I had bowed my head for prayers at church, but I had never prayed at home before, not a real official prayer. If you pray, it means you think God is there to listen. It seemed hypocritical for me to pray, because I didn't really know if he was there. Jerry did just fine. It was easy for him to pray. He already believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. I figured it was a possibility, but there were other religions that didn't think so. Jerry understood why people were baptized. I knew people were baptized, but lots of Christian churches seemed to disagree on the why and how. I kept those young men busy answering my questions and I studied everything they asked me to read. I always got stuck in the same spot. I could read and study and find answers to questions. I had been doing that all of my life. But how could I *know* what was true? I didn't even know if there was a God.

Our lessons included scripture reading. I was familiar with the *Bible*. I had attended enough Sunday school classes to know the

stories. Through the years, I had read about Christ's ministry in the New Testament and picked out the parts I liked. Our study with the missionaries was a bit more intense. When they started discussing scripture and verse with Jerry, they left me far behind. I felt like a kindergartner lost in a high school study hall. When they referred to the *Book of Mormon*, Jerry wasn't so smart. They had to slow down and I was glad. One evening we read the following verses:

> Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.
>
> And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and *if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.*
>
> - Moroni 10:4-5

If I understood it right, these young men weren't asking me to believe that God was real just because they said so. If I wanted to know the truth, I could ask God directly. I had done considerable pondering like the verse said. Now I took to prayer with real intent. I asked with great hope and a very sincere heart. If God was there, I wanted to know.

For several days, I carried a prayer in my heart. The kids and I said prayers as we sat down to peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. They giggled and squirmed and took to it like troopers. I washed dishes, folded laundry and thought about God. On Sunday we attended the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the very first time. Jerry and I went to a class solely for people who had questions about the church. The topic was prayer and the teacher had drawn the picture of a telephone on the chalkboard. I was pleased, we were talking basics again. He said if we had faith, we would receive answers to our prayers. An edge of doubt crept into my mind.

That evening we went back for their Sacrament Meeting. During this meeting, families sit together while the ordinance of the sacrament, or communion, is passed to the congregation and

members give mini-sermons on spiritual topics. It was a disaster. Our children hadn't been taught to sit still for ten minutes. The meeting lasted an hour and a half. I hadn't thought to bring them something quiet to play with or treats to keep their mouths full. To keep our children from interrupting the speakers, Jerry and I took turns walking them back and forth down the halls. Each time our eyes met we asked ourselves, "What are we doing here?" As soon as the meeting was over, we left.

Many thoughts went through my mind as I lay in bed that night. The teacher had said if I had faith, I would receive an answer to my prayers, but I didn't have faith. I was praying because I wanted faith, because I wanted to believe in God. The missionaries had shared the story of a young boy who wanted to know what church to join. Over a hundred years ago, he asked God what to do. In a vision of light, two angelic beings appeared and told him he would be instrumental in bringing the restored church of Jesus Christ back to the earth. It was a lovely story. I hoped it was true, but for all I knew it could have been a fairy tale. I was the doubting Thomas, like the disciple who had to put his fingers through the holes in Jesus' hands before he would accept him as the resurrected Christ. I needed an answer before I could believe, but I needed to believe before I could receive an answer. My journey could go no further.

That night would change the course of my life. I had begun keeping a journal to record events for my children. Of that night, I wrote:

> I must share with you, my darlings, an experience of which you may be skeptical. As your mother, I can say to you, it's true...It was late at night, approximately 1:30am. I was lying in my bed half-awake and half-asleep. I could hear Jamie [Jeremy] stirring in his bed and I was wondering if I should get up and go to him. I heard a noise growing louder, a roaring in my ears, like a jet airplane flying overhead. I waited for it to fade away, but it kept getting louder. The room, already dark, seemed to grow darker. I was lying on my back and realized I could not move. Although I was still on the bed, my body felt drawn upwards, like being at the edge of a vacuum before being drawn up into it. I was overwhelmed by the sensation of my heart beating faster and faster.

> Above me on the ceiling, there was a circle of light that grew brighter and brighter in intensity. I was frightened. It seemed like moments - was it? The thundering softened, the light dimmed, my heart began to slow its pacing. Then everything began to heighten all over again. This time the light was more of a yellow color. From its depths, I heard my name spoken, "Jeanne," in a way I can not find words to describe. Then once again, everything faded.
>
> This time it took longer for my heart to slow down. The room that seemed to disappear was there again. When I realized I could move, I nudged your father. He had slept through it all. My doubts about the Lord's existence are gone. What a burden has been lifted from me! He gave me the knowledge I needed in order to move on in my journey. I feel his love.

When I told the Ward Mission Leader about my experience, a large smile broadened his face. He had heard of such spiritual experiences. He didn't think they were rare, only rarely spoken of, for their nature was sacred. He suggested that I share my experience solely when I felt the Lord would wish me to do so. Over the years, I have kept it very close to my heart. We continued our lessons with the missionaries. We prayed and discussed and they brought in others to help answer my multitude of questions. Jerry and I were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in April of 1977. It is a decision I have never regretted.

In 1992, our son, Jeremy, became one of those polite young men when he was called to serve a mission in Seoul, South Korea. He came home two years later with a great wealth of spiritual knowledge, a love for the Korean people, and a curious craving for kimchi. In those intervening years, as our family grew, we worked hard to incorporate the gospel of Jesus Christ into our lives. We set high standards even for Christian values. They weren't always the popular values, just ask our teenagers. There were no more bright circles of light on the ceiling. My faith grew in more conventional ways as I accepted church assignments, studied scripture and prayed. I grew strong enough to take my skills outside of the church and into the community. I went back to school and excelled in public administration. As I grew stronger spiritually and mentally, my physical health grew worse. I was plagued with stress-related illnesses with no apparent physiological cause. Instead of slowing

down and taking better care of myself, I became a workaholic. I didn't do drugs, take alcohol or drink coffee. I did chocolate. Migraine attacks loomed larger and out of control. The pain was debilitating. The time had come to face my past.

It was a relatively small incident that triggered the return of the traumatic memories. Being stalwart Mormon parents, we had never permitted cigarettes in our home, yet I found my twelve year-old in possession of two packs of them. As a properly irate mother, I was voicing my opinion when suddenly I felt terrified. I edged over to the wall and crouched down near the floor, rocking back and forth like a child. Where were these feelings coming from? I needed to hide in my closet. Cigarettes weren't safe. People weren't safe. I wanted to escape to my dark, quiet corner. Jerry came over to comfort me, his gentle voice grounding me in the present. I had hidden in my closet as a child. I wondered about my sanity. Something was very, very wrong

Our bishop came to the rescue. He had recently read a book about abuse. It chronicled the life of a woman who had somehow repressed the memories of her own abusive childhood. It was the first time I had heard of traumatic memories. I didn't know if any repressed abuse existed in my past, but something had happened to me that defied explanation. It was a theory worth checking out. With prayer and considerable trepidation, I recreated my childhood closet in the corner of my present bedroom. I wrapped myself up in an old blanket, sat down on the floor and closed my eyes. Jerry placed his arm on my shoulder. I tried to remember the outline of my old closet, the cold wooden floor against my skin, the clothes hanging down in my face.

In a moment, terror began welling up inside of me. I could hear my mother's footsteps resounding into the room. She was coming after me! My fingers clawed at the door's edge in my desperate and ill-fated attempts to keep it closed. As she lunged at me, I could see her face wild-eyed and contorted with anger. I started screaming, blood curdling screams. Jerry put his arms around me in a big bear hold. His insistent voice brought me out of the memory. The poor man was as terrified as I was. As I rested in a heap on the floor, he checked the windows to see if my screams had brought out the neighbors.

The next day I thanked the bishop. There had indeed been abuse in my childhood. I always knew that I didn't like my mother. Now that I knew why, I could work through the emotions and let go of my animosity towards her. I had faced a memory that I didn't even know existed. It had been a bizarre experience and I was sure glad the whole thing was over. We had no idea that the retrieval process had only begun. Days later as I dealt with the onset symptoms of a migraine attack, Jerry made a suggestion. He wanted to see if there were any more memories that needed to be brought forward. In the voice of a small child, I screamed and cried as another abusive incident involving my mother returned. Thirty minutes afterwards I lay in my bed emotionally exhausted. Jerry was smiling like the Cheshire cat. He had found the key that had eluded doctors and neurologists for four years. My migraine symptoms had disappeared as I dealt with the memory.

The traumatic memories hit a flooding stage within the first month. At its peak, I faced five separate memories within a twenty-four hour period. Nausea was the most common physical symptom indicating the need to deal with another memory. Agitation and stuttering were the emotional indicators. The longer I waited to bring the memory forward, the worse the symptoms became. Jerry and I visited the local Sexual Assault Counseling and Resource Center after the incest memories returned. They offered us encouragement and gave us a referral list of therapists who worked with sexually abused clients. I placed my name on three waiting lists. For a while, Jerry and I were on our own. We were getting to know a separate and distinct part of me in Lil' Jeanie. Although we would not face the ritual abuse memories for another two months, the traumatic memories were growing more horrendous in nature. Therefore, we were totally surprised by memory #25.

> My chest hurts. [Coughing] I'm holding my hands across my chest so it doesn't hurt so much when I cough. It hurts down deep really bad. I want to hold my breath so I don't cough, but it don't work. I don't want my Mommy and Daddy to hear. My throat feels tight like it wants to close up. [Wheezing] I can't catch my breath. [Short Gasps] [Choking] [Quiet]
>
> [Arms Reaching Upwards] Please take me home, please. I don't want to stay here anymore. They don't want me.

Please let me go with you. Please don't make me stay. I would like to come.

It's warm and it's pretty in the light. It feels so nice. [Beginning to Laugh] Wee! It's happy here. It's nice and warm and it's fun to fly in the light. I feel like somebody loves me and isn't going to hurt me. I'm safe from them. They can't hurt me anymore. I like it here. Where is everybody? My chest doesn't hurt anymore.

...But I don't want to go back! Please don't make me...Why? Do I hafta go back? But it's happy here...

JERRY: Who are you talking to?

I'm talking to him...They'll hurt me again...They will...I don't understand. I don't want to go back there. It's dark and it's ugly and it hurts me. It's nice here. Let me stay just a little longer? I can come back? Oh, but just for a little while. [Laughing] Okay...All right...I'll be good, I will. I want to come back. It feels so nice here. You have a very nice house.

JERRY: What does it look like?

It's bright yellow light! I talk to the light. He loves me. I hafta go back, I'm not done yet. But he won't leave me alone. He'll be with me. That's nice, I didn't know that. Maybe it won't hurt so much now. It won't be a long time, not very long. All right, I'll go...but I'd like to stay. But I'll go if you want me to...and you'll love me, huh? Okay, I'll go. [Laughing]

JERRY: What's so funny?

[Giggling] I don't know. The light makes me happy. He loves me. He doesn't think I'm awful like my Mommy and Daddy do. He thinks I'm good and he likes me and he loves me, so I want to be good and come back. He says that's okay.

I love you, Mr. Light. I'll come back, okay? I want to. I won't forget...I'll try not to forget...I don't want to forget, I want to remember...But I hafta forget? But then I'll remember. [Laughing] I don't understand, but if that's what you want, okay!

Good-bye, Mr. Light. I'll miss you. I like the way you love me and you think I'm a good girl. Good-bye. I don't really want to go, but I'll come back. I hope it's not for very long.

He said they won't hurt me, not too long more. I wish the light could stay with me, it feels so nice. Oh, but I have to go back where it's dark and they don't like me there. But I'll be good and I'll be very, very brave. I'll be good, but even if I'm not, Mr. Light will love me. He'll love me even if my Mommy and Daddy don't.

[Yawning] I'm not really alone. Good-bye, Mr. Light. I love you. I'm glad you love me. I feel good. My throat don't hurt

and my chest don't hurt now. My legs feel tingly. I'll miss you. I don't want to forget, I want to remember. I think that's silly. But I'll do what you want, I will. [Asleep]

As the memory receded, I felt remarkably calm and sleepy. The experience amazed us both. We hesitated to explain it even to ourselves. Was it as spiritual as it seemed, a gift given to a troubled child? Could it be dissociation in its most extreme form? Or did it finally prove that I was just plain crazy? With great relief, we read that other people abused as children had also reported *white light experiences*. In the book *Reach for the Rainbow*, the author defines them as such:

> Victims have described being visited by beings of white light during severe abuse, often at the worst moment of prolonged episodes. The victim is often unaware of having had such experiences until they emerge while the victim is under hypnosis, usually while the victim is disclosing details of the abusive act at a later time.
>
> Revelations of communications with a white light being are often a complete surprise to the victim and to those therapists who may not have encountered such revelations before...The reports generally have similar features; the victim sees a white light which begins to grow larger and brighter. The victim knows instantly that the white light is a power for good and love and understands what the white light is saying even though it does not actually speak.
>
> The light informs the victims that the victim is loved, that there is a reason for what is happening and that the victim will survive the abuse. Some victims are given elaborate information about the universe and their lives and futures. Victims report feeling intense love and peace in the presence of the light unlike anything they have known before.

Over three hundred traumatic memories of my childhood have returned during the past two years, twenty of those memories have been "Mr. Light" experiences. Seventeen of the white light experiences were tape-recorded. Unlike the abuse memories, they are a delight to hear. In many of them, I talk, play and giggle in a happy child's voice. I am often puzzled trying to understand why I'm not allowed to stay at Mr. Light's house. The tapes attest that I had a great ability to whine when I didn't get my way. Other tapes account

abusive incidents as Mr. Light and I watched them together. Sometimes I asked him to come to take away the unbearable pain. In others, he simply appeared.

The following memory may have been the first episode with Mr. Light that I experienced as a child. Like some others, it begins with coughing, wheezing and difficult breathing. After a period of quiet, I felt a lifting sensation some might describe as an out-of-body experience. In my conversation with Mr. Light, I was given information about the circumstances I would face in the future. I was eight years old.

It's hard to breathe. [Coughing] My head hurts, it feels hot to me. I don't want Mommy and Daddy come in, I just want them to leave me alone. They won't be nice anyway, they just be mad. Mommy (would say) "Don't whine, don't whine, just shut up. I don't want to hear it. Shut up, you little baby." They won't come in to help me, they just come in 'cause they be mad. Everybody can just leave me alone.

It's getting harder to breathe! I can't breathe! [Choking] [Quiet] It's getting lighter. It's a good light. It's getting whiter. I don't feel as sick now, my headache is getting lots better.

JERRY: Can you describe the light?

It's getting bigger and it's nice and warm and it likes me. The light cares if I'm okay. The light says it's not that I didn't want anybody to come in my room, I wasn't telling the truth, I really did want somebody to come in. He's coming to see me 'cause he wants me to know that he loves me. I feel a whole lot better now, I do.

JERRY: Are you floating?

I'm reaching for the light, touching it. I want to be close to it, 'cause it feels good. I wish I could reach all the way in and be with the light and not here. It makes me smile. I feel good inside me. Oh, it feels nice. [Giggling] We're playing a game, rocking back and forth. I'm being silly, playing with Mr. Light, back and forth like I'm dancing in the air. That's pretty silly!

JERRY: Do you see anyone else?

Only the light and little sparklies in the light. The light is happy and he loves me.

JERRY: How do you know that?

I just do. I just know. It doesn't matter if my Mommy and Daddy don't love me, 'cause the light loves me. He knows

I'm sad and he wants to give me a chance to feel good, 'cause I'm going to have to be really strong.

JERRY: Why is that?

He wants to help me and give me a chance to play and laugh, 'cause it's gonna get really bad. It's going to be really hard at my house. I don't know why, but he wants me to be strong. He wants me to know that he loves me no matter what, even if my Mommy and Daddy don't act like they do, he does. Even when I'm in my room and I'm all alone, I'm not all alone 'cause he's with me. Even when he isn't sparkly, he can be inside me and he loves me always, forever and ever. *I'm going to be alone except for him and it's going to be really hard and really sad.* But I'll remember that I have him and he loves me no matter what I do and what happens.

He wants me to be good, but even if I'm not, he's gonna love me. He loves me very much, so it doesn't matter if my Mommy and Daddy don't and maybe my Mommy and Daddy do, but it doesn't seem like it 'cause maybe they don't know how. Maybe they forgot, but he won't ever forget. He'll love me and even when I don't know it, he'll be with me and he'll always, always, always love me. I'm really glad he's my friend. He loves me and I have somebody.

My Mommy and Daddy don't have to know about him if I don't want to tell 'em. But I can tell 'em if I want to, it doesn't matter 'cause he's going to be with me whether I tell 'em or not. He loves me forever and ever. He wants to be my special friend, 'cause I'm going to really need him.

I wish it could just stay sparkly and we could play some more, but I'm doing better now so he's going to go away. I got to remember he's inside me and he's with me even when I don't know it. No matter what, he's going to stay with me, but I just have to know it 'cause sometimes I won't remember.

He's sad for me, 'cause it's gonna be hard, but he's gonna be with me. He's with everybody, if they want him to be, 'cause he loves everybody. They just don't know it. Lots of people don't know it. He's right there [touching chest] and he doesn't hurt anybody. He loves people. He loves the children, he really loves the children. He really likes them a lot.

I'm feeling sleepy, but I don't want him to go. He's busy, he's got lots of people to watch after, not just me. He loves everybody, even my Mommy and Daddy. He's always there, but people forget. They don't know. If they knew, they'd want to be with him, 'cause it's nice. He wants me to sleep now and rest 'cause I got to be strong.

The ritual abuse began when I was nine years old. In the next memory, I discussed those experiences with Mr. Light referring to them as bad dreams. I felt his comforting presence. His message gave me hope and additional information about my future. My confusion was only slightly resolved.

I feel different. I don't feel bad. I think it's Mr. Light coming to see me. I always like it when he comes. He's nice to me. [Hands Reaching into the Air] Oh, it feels good. I'm starting to feel peaceful and happy. I wish I could stay like this all the time. I would be safe. The light is getting lighter now. It's been a long time. I have felt very sad. I have the bad dreams, but not Mr. Light.

He doesn't hurt me. He's the only one I like, the only one who's nice to me. I feel so good when I'm with him. I love the light. It is warm and peaceful. He loves me. I can feel how much he loves me. He's good. He wants me to be happy, but then I don't understand why he leaves me here. Maybe he'll tell me. Mostly I'd like him to stay.

He's coming. Oh, hello Mr. Light. I'm so glad to see you...I did, I did call but you didn't come...I know, I know it is a bad place to be. I don't want to go. I would try not to. I don't know why I don't try...There are bad things, I know. I have very bad dreams, I don't know why I have them...I know there's lots I don't understand. I just want to be with you.

I'm trying to understand. Mostly I understand that he loves me and he wants what is best for me, but I don't see how this can be best for me. It's really bad...He wants me to be strong...[Softly Crying] Oh, I feel him holding me. It feels wonderful, his arms around me. I would like to just stay here and not ever leave him and go with him, but I have to stay.

JERRY: Why?

So I can be strong, so I can learn, but I don't know what...What can I do about the bad dreams? I have to call him. He'll be with me in my heart and *they won't destroy me.* He will save me...But I don't want to do it anymore! ...He says I can't stop them. I just have to remember he's with me and I can survive and it will make me strong. I will forget and then I'll remember. *I'll be strong then, when I remember, and he'll be with me 'cause by then I'll know who he is.* He won't ever leave me then 'cause I'll know he's in my heart and we got important things to do. So I gotta go through the bad dreams and remember that he's loves me and that I'm a good girl.

I'll always love the light and when I'm really sad I can talk to him and he'll help me feel better. I can't give up 'cause I'll remember and I'm going to be with him, but it's going to take a while. There's stuff I gotta do, even if I don't know what it is. He says I'm going to be okay and he loves me very much and I know he does. [Crying] I don't want him to leave. I know I'll have him in my heart, but it's not the same.

Someday we'll be together again and even when we aren't, he loves me. *He's going to see that I have people to love me someday, people that are good to me and I gotta learn to love me myself.* I don't think I do, but he wants me to. Someday he's going to see that I'm safe and somebody loves me and when I'm really strong, I'll remember and *I'll remember that he always loved me.* I gotta be strong. The things they are doing to me are really bad and I know they're really bad. I don't want to cooperate with them. I don't want to hurt anybody.

I want to be good. He tells me okay, that I am good. I'm a good girl and he's going to be with me and we're going to get through it. [Crying] He forgives me and he wants me to be strong and really brave. I wish I understood why I had to do this, why I have to have the bad dreams. He says I don't understand, but I will, someday I will. Whatever happens, he's with me and try to do good 'cause I am good.

He says someday they won't hurt me anymore. I'll be with people who love me and they won't leave me, not for a time they won't, but he will be with me always. I wish I could just stay like this and it not be night anymore, always be the daytime. I like the light, I do. I like the day...He says when I see the sunshine, I can think of him. Okay, and it be bright like him...I'll try to be bright. [Crying] He's calling me his little child.

It's okay if I cry when he's with me. He won't get mad if I cry. It's good for me to cry, Mr. Light says so. It takes away some of the sad. He says it will help me feel better. Thank you, Mr. Light. I'll remember you're here even if I can't see you, 'cause you won't leave me alone with them. You'll be with me. I don't even have to call you, you're there in my heart, huh? But I'll call you, I will. I get really scared. He wants me to remember I'm never alone. I'm his little child, his little girl.

In four of the Mr. Light experiences, I was given instruction in novel ways. A few of these tapes have been difficult to decipher. My voice becomes very soft in the Mr. Light experiences, almost a whisper. Eventually, I would love to take them to a studio where the sound could be enhanced and better understood. Meanwhile, we

were able to transcribe the greater part of them. They are most intriguing. In tape #31, I was taken to meet my grandmother. I suspect I was being shown that I did indeed have family that loved me. What came through loud and clear was my ability to whine. I wanted to stay in the light. It began with another bout of coughing and wheezing. After a period of quiet, the following discussion began.

> Can I go now? I don't want to stay. They don't want me. I feel so heavy that I can't move. Can I come now? Please? Mr. Light, let me go. It's dark here. I feel so heavy I can't move. I want to come. Let me come, okay? Uh, huh, okay...But I feel heavy, I have to move if I can come.
>
> You love me, huh? I'm so glad you love me, Mr. Light. I want to come with you. They don't want me here, they'd be glad if I go. They'd say, "Oh, good, she's gone. We don't have to have her around anymore. She can't ruin our lives anymore. She's gone, oh, good!" Please let me come with you. You make me happy...I can come with you? For a little bit? I want to come and stay...I can come with you? I like to be with you in the light. The light is warm and yellow. Wee! It's so nice here.
>
> What should I do? I don't know...I don't understand...I'm kind of stupid...I'm not? My Mommy says I am...Oh, I didn't know that...It's so pretty here and you love me, huh? There are people here I'm suppose' ta meet? They are? They do? I'm important to them? Okay...[Words Unclear Here]
>
> And you're my Grandma? You wanna hold me? And love me? Oh, I would like that, it would be wonderful...Oh, you love me, huh? Oh, I love you too. I wish my Mommy loved me like you do. I like it when you hold me. I feel strong and warm inside. [Giggling] Oh, I like to hold you tight. I like to hold you and hug you. Can you come back with me? Oh...I wish you would come with me. I wish I could stay...You do? Oh, all right...I really like you. I like to hug you and touch you. I wish I could stay...Oh, all right...I'll go.
>
> Oh, but I don't want to go *now*. Oh, please don't make me. They hate me. They think I'm stupid. My Mommy chokes my throat and wants to hurt me and my Daddy hurts me. [Crying] I gotta? Why? I don't wanna go back...It won't be long? I can come back sometime? And you love me? And I'm brave and strong? And I want to find the truth? Uh, huh...I wanna and I don't wanna. I don't like it when they hurt me. It's not nice to hurt and they can't hurt me here.

Oh, I'm starting to feel heavy again. I don't like it here in my body. [Coughing] Oh, Mommy, please don't come in my room. Go away. Mr. Light says you shouldn't hurt me. No, I don't tell stories. No, Mommy, no! [Choking]

The woman I met was not the grandmother I recognized. I did not know her. She was dressed in white. She had dark hair and a lovely smile. When we hugged, I realized we were the same height. In another Mr. Light experience, I was introduced to one of my grandfathers. The setting was very different, as if transposed in time. After a period of difficult breathing, there was silence, then the encounter began.

It's so nice here. Where I was, it was dark. Here it's really, really bright. Oh, I would like to stay here forever and ever. Hello, Mr. Light...Oh, I love you too...It feels nice that you love me. It's warm here and very light in your house...Oh...More stuff I don't understand...There's somebody I should see? Okay, but I don't see anybody...Oh, okay, I'm glad to wait. I'd be glad to stay here forever and ever. It's safe here. I feel warm and happy inside me...Okay...Somebody?

There's something I'm suppose' ta see, somebody to talk to. I'm not sure I understand. It's foggy, like the fog, only it's not. Now I see. Oh, that's very pretty, a big mountain and pretty trees. There are some people. They're walking on the ground in the trees. There are people and wagons and long dresses. They're smiling and happy. Why do I see this? I don't understand.

You are? Which one? Well, he's one of my grandpa's, but he won't tell me which one. He's being silly. He's very nice...Can I? He won't hurt me. I'm safe in Mr. Light's house. Okay, I would like that...He's giving me a hug. It feels wonderful...I'm important. He's wants my help. I'll help you...Me? Oh, you'll go...I'll know, huh? I'd like to help you. I'd like you to be my grandpa. I wish you would tell me which one...Okay...All right...It's very nice here...I would like that but I don't really understand...All right...Are you sure? Just try to be happy, huh? Do what makes me happy and if it's good and it's right and it's kind...Okay...Bye-bye...He's leaving now.

It's a very big place, Mr. Light's house, but I don't see any walls.

JERRY: What's his real name?

[Irritated] His name is Mr. Light!

I know, I know, I got to go back...All right. I'll try to be good. Someday I'll remember, but I can't now, that still sounds silly to me. I'll understand someday...Okay...I would like to remember that you love me...You'll come and see me someday when I'm there? Oh, I would like that very much, to feel that you love me down there where it's dark and they hurt me...I'll find you? I will? Okay...Wish I could take the light and keep it with me...Okay, I got a little bit of it in here...Bye-bye, but I would like to stay...I know.

Bye-bye, Grandpa, wherever you are [Giggling] in Mr. Light's house! Oh, I don't like going back to Mommy and Daddy. It's cold and it's heavy there.

Visually I can recall the tall mountain dark with its forest of trees. The man who said he was my grandfather wore a beard, but he did not appear old. In the distance, I noted the smiles of the travelers near the wagons. They were happy and chatting with each other as they walked along the trail. It was not the image I had always carried of a harsh and hardened pioneer people. The next memory gave me instruction in another unusual way.

I don't know what's waking me up. I'm not sure what's happening. I think I should be scared, but I'm not. I hear a noise, a funny sound. It is very strange. [Giggling] There are dancing lights in front of me. Oh, they're pretty. It's like they're dancing for me. I'd like to dance with them. Pretty, pretty, pretty. Now they're getting brighter over my head. I can touch it. It feels wonderful. I feel warm and quiet if I reach and touch it. Oh, it's coming closer now. I only feel the light. It feels very nice to me. Hello, hello, hello!

JERRY: Who is it?

It's Mr. Light. Hello, it always makes me happy to see you and your bright light. It is beautiful...Have I been good? I've been trying to be good, but there's a lot I don't understand. I get confused. My mommy tells me you're not real, but I think you are. You're much nicer than my mommy and your house is beautiful.

Thank you, Mr. Light, for letting me come again. I like it when I visit with you. Even if I only see the light, it is beautiful, prettier than anything. It makes me feel good inside me...Uh, huh...It does, it makes me feel happy...Uh, huh... Am I going somewhere? Oh, goody!

JERRY: Where?

I don't know, I'm just going. Oh, I see lots and lots of stars...Look at that! I don't understand what could that be? Is that what I'm suppose' ta see? Oh, I don't think I want to see that. [Disappointed]

JERRY: What is it?

My house. I'm looking down on my house...I don't want to look down on it...Why? There are many, many houses, not just mine and not just Mr. Light's, many houses with lots of little girls and boys. They go on and on and on. They have mommies and daddies. Some of them are like mine. That's not good. Some of them are happy, but lots of them aren't...So what am I supposed to know about it? There are lots and lots of houses all over, all over the world...Oh, oh, oh...Wow! Oh...Wow!

JERRY: What are you seeing?

Lots of houses! Wee! This is fun...Lots of little houses and we're going faster and faster. [Giggling] Wow! Oh, wow! There are lots of houses...And other people that live in them? Not just me, but lots and lots of children...Some look different and some look the same...Oh, lots of children...But the light is still prettier. This is still a better place to be. I like the light even better.

What am I suppose' ta understand? There are lots of families and problems...I have my family now and another house and a different family later...Oh...I'll feel lots of love, but maybe it will take a while. I need to be patient. I have to try and be good and take 'struction...Okay...*I have to be good even to my mommy? [Whining] I don't want to be good to my Mommy!* But I got to be kind so I don't be sorry later. But I got to be strong too. I will try...*And I should love Scotty? Hmmm, I don't think Scotty likes me...He does?* Okay, I will.

Thank you for letting me come. I like it when I can come and visit you. It won't be so bad, 'cause you're in my heart, huh? I just gotta remember that. I forget. I forget and my mommy tells me it's pretend and then I get confused 'cause I think maybe I'm pretending. I want to remember you love me...Uh, huh...It's the best feeling ever and ever. I would like to come and stay, please...But not for a while...'Cause I got things to do. [Sarcastic] I know, I will...Thank you for letting me see the houses and the light and the dancing lights too. They make me happy. I don't know how, but they do.

The memories return with more emotion than visual imaging, but in this particular episode the night was dark and clear and full of stars. With an aerial view, I could see houses and their lights spread

out in a great distance. One curved area to my left remained dark. A map of Sacramento County shows the placement of the river along that curve. There was more for me to learn about the children. During another visit, I was shown many others who were "sad like me." It began as others, with intense pain, wheezing and then silence.

I can move my arms now. They feel light to me, they're not heavy anymore...Can I come? Can I come? For a little while? To take away some of the pain? For a little while, for a visit...It is beautiful and it is wonderful and I do not hurt here. Thank you for letting me come for a visit to your house. I wish my house were like your house...*But if this is my house, why can't I stay here?* I have to go home again. I don't like being there. They hate me...They do! And here it is a loving house...

Oh, where will I go? Will you take me somewhere? To see something? I would like that, but I like just being here too. It's peaceful here. It has been awful...You wish you could take it away but you can't? I have to go through it...I have to remember something...[Words Unclear Here]

JERRY: Are you okay?

I'm seeing a picture. They are children and they are very sad. They are crying. Somebody has hurt them and they're all crying. There are so many, oh, so many of them. They've been hurt. Oh, the poor children. I would like to hug them and make them feel better, but just it's a picture for me to see. I would like to help them get better, but I can't if they're just a picture...They are where I was 'cause they're not here right now. They are where I was and if I go back I can help them and hug them and make them feel better.

I don't like to see them cry. They're very sad children. Some of them are big, bigger than me...*Oh, is that what I'm suppose' ta do, help the children? Is that why I have to keep going back?* That's part of it...I gotta go back to help the children. I want to make them happy...Oh, to help them be happy. I can't make 'em, but I can help 'em...Okay...How do I do it? I know, I'll know...Hmmm. But I can if I go back? That's lots to do...But I'll have lots of help? Always do the good things? All right, but how do I keep my Mommy and Daddy from hurting me? ***I'm supposed to try not to hate and be brave and carry Mr. Light in my heart.***

My Mommy says I'm just pretending, that I'm crazy. I feel crazy...I'm not? I'm smart and I can do it? I can? And it'll be good for me, but it won't feel good...It will make me strong and I can help the children. Oh, I want to help the children very, very

much. I want to hug them and help them feel better. They are very sad...I will...I will...Oh...Do I have to go back already? It's awful down there...All right... [Giggling] My hands feel so light! All right...I want to help the children. I don't want them to be sad. I can help them 'cause I'm sad too. It won't be forever, just a little while...It won't hurt forever... [Coughing]

Although I would carry Mr. Light in my heart, he also told me to call to him when I needed help. Several of the memories are my requests for him to come and ease the physical pain that I endured at night. I have wondered why I didn't call to him more often, both at home and during the rituals. Perhaps it was a mixture of my confusion and terror. I wasn't always polite in my entreaties for him to come either. My desperation comes through in the following memory. I was an impatient and argumentative solicitor.

I want to sleep, but I can't. My tummy hurts and it's keeping me up. I can't tell anybody. They'll just tell me to be quiet and go to sleep or they'll hurt me more. I just have to put up with it. Why would I pretend something bad? Why don't I pretend something good? I feel sick. I don't feel like I'm crazy, I feel like I'm hurt. I don't know what to do.

Lots of times I don't know what to do. Nobody cares, nobody here. I hate the night. I want it to stay the daytime. I want the sun to come up. I can't come out of my room. Sometimes I go potty at night in my closet. It hurts bad when I don't and it hurts when I do. Mommy says I like to be sick so I pretend. She's ashamed of me 'cause I'm stupid, and I'm ugly and I'm a problem. Mr. Light's supposed to help me. Mommy says he's pretend, but I don't think he is. He's the one that likes me. He's my friend.

Okay, Mr. Light, I'm not pretending. You better come and help me! Nobody else will help me. I really wouldn't bother you if it was pretend. Even if you are pretend, I want you to come help me, Okay? My back hurts more than my tummy now. You better come help me, please?

Come and help me, Mr. Light. You said you would! I know you're in my heart and I know you will, *but I need you to hurry up!*

My Mommy doesn't believe me, but you do, huh? [Crying] You said you love me and you're nice to me and you believe me, huh? I try to be brave, but it just keeps going on and

on and on! It seems like forever...It does! It doesn't seem like a little bit and it hurts really bad!

I don't know why I gotta do this! I don't understand nothing...I'll be brave...I'll be strong, I will. I just want to go to sleep, but it wouldn't stop hurting so I can't. Please help me, okay? I would like that very much...I don't care if my Mommy thinks you're pretend. You're my friend, huh? You love me, huh?

[Whimpering] Thank you, Mr. Light.

[To Jerry] I been talking to him. He says he's always with me, but I have to ask. Now it doesn't hurt as much so I can go to sleep.

We live in a world full of complexities. Psychological researchers will debate the reality of white light experiences for years to come. I have my own explanation.

Most of us experience life somewhere between young and old, short and tall, good and bad, and unfortunately, fat and thin. We use opposites to define ourselves and everything around us. Daily we choose between right or wrong, work or play, clean or dirty, fast or slow, and all the degrees in between them. Like a circus trapeze artist, we balance the extremes, juggle the pros and cons and hope we land on our feet. Sometimes we fall and pay the consequences. Occasionally we hurt others on our way down. Other decisions hold immediate or long-term rewards. Either way, whether we succeed or fail, we learn from our choices. They define our lives and help us grow.

I was never an exceptional child. Because of my father's activities, I was a young girl who faced an extraordinary evil. To provide an opposite from which to choose, Mr. Light was there to balance the scale with his extraordinary goodness. While I could not choose whether or not to participate in the rituals, those actions were forced upon me, I was old enough to choose whether I would serve the Evil One or God. Given the extremes of that particular choice, I don't believe it was my body or mind that hung in the balance, but my very soul. Early in the fray, I edged over to Mr. Light's side. The contest would endure for three long years. Obviously, I could not prevail on my own. Battle lines were drawn, reinforcements were called in. The campaign was launched. The worst of it was yet to come.

Chapter Eight: Malevolent Ceremonies

They're going to take him from me and hurt him, 'cause he's like one of my babies that I'm going to have someday. Someday I'm going to want to tell and they're going to make me pay.
- Lil' Jeanie

In my present day household, we embrace a family activity that I call "television tag." It's not really a game, since I am not particularly fond of games. It's more of a lifestyle. Our television set is the focal point in the family room. Every chair, couch and bean bag is pointed right towards it, even the pets have a bird's-eye view. Everybody thinks it's great entertainment, everybody except Mom. Ten minutes of the weather channel is enough for me. Although it can be violent at times, the weather channel does not include sex, profanity or immoral values. Being a responsible mother, I tolerate television in small doses and encourage my family to engage in other, more noble, pursuits. Needless to say, I haven't been very successful. My opinions lose out to Looney Toons on a daily basis. The video store is a favorite shopping place. But with five children and a husband to watch over, I haven't given up either. Through the years, I've developed some clever strategies to get my way. Unfortunately, the opposition has gotten smarter too. Television tag has been the result.

Television tag is played with fairly consistent rules. At the beginning of each day, the first person to the family room gets to turn on the TV. As soon as person #1 walks out of the room, a second person comes in, lies down on the couch and watches TV. If person #3 is Mom, then the TV set is turned off until all chores are done. If person #3 is anybody else, then there is a discussion over which program to watch. If an argument ensues, Mom hears what's going on, comes in and turns off the TV. Mom gets to turn off the TV whenever she notices the room is vacant or catches anybody

watching MTV. Sometimes she surprises them by turning on *Touched By An Angel* and they all evacuate the area. If the television has been on for more than two hours, Mom gets to stand in front of the set and lecture using words like boob-tube, trash TV and coach potato. If I were more conniving, I'd hide the remote control.

Last summer, Jeremy and Joy came home for their college breaks. With two more people and their varying work schedules back in the household, television tag intensified. One afternoon as I walked by the family room on my way to the kitchen, I noted Jeremy watching the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. It wasn't my move. Since he was older and Oprah had cleaned up her act, I let it go and didn't subvert his TV watching by asking him to run another errand for me. The next time I walked by, there were four of my children watching the same program. Instead of the usual dull looks on their faces, caused by the mind numbing effects of watching too much television, their expressions were intense as they concentrated on the screen before them. I stopped short. My curiosity was piqued. I listened to the interview that had drawn their rapt attention.

The setting was a playground on a sunny afternoon. Children were playing on swings and slides. They darted through trees and playhouses. Nearby a scattering of adults sat on benches, watching their children and talking with each other. In the foreground, a man with a microphone questioned a set of parents. Had they taught their children to be cautious around strangers? Both parents assured him that their two children had been carefully instructed. Their children would never follow an unknown adult out of the park. As the interview concluded, another man, a child psychologist posing as a benign stranger, attempted to lure the children to an adjacent street. After some discussion, to the parents' horror and astonishment, both children followed the man out of the park.

As the others continued to watch the program, I left the room. The subject matter distressed me greatly. In their innocence, those two small children had accompanied the man without question. My agitation growing, I feverishly commenced straightening up the kitchen. While I couldn't see the television from there, I could hear another interview begin. It was the same scenario. The psychologist approached another child. Had the child seen a little dog? Displaying a leash, the man explained he had been looking for his puppy

everywhere. She was lost and probably scared. He needed help. Then he asked the unsuspecting child to come help him search for his puppy. Once again, the child dutifully followed.

As I endeavored to wash the dishes, my hands began trembling. I realized the subject matter was triggering a memory. I needed to tell Jeremy something about the children. I paced the floor. No, it was Lil' Jeanie that needed to tell Jeremy. Not wanting to involve Jeremy or upset him with a memory, I hesitated going to him. I tried distracting myself with soapy pots and pans, hoping the urge would lessen. Finally I stepped into the family room and sat down next to him on the couch. Reaching my arms around him to steady myself, I attempted to whisper in his ear but could not do so without stuttering. Aware that I was in trouble, he turned down the volume control so he could hear me, then he alerted one of his siblings to find their Dad. In a child's voice, I stumbled over my words, "Jeremy, it's not just grown-ups that t-take kids, sometimes it's other k-kids, bigger ones." With my children around me, I tried to control my growing sense of panic. How did I know that? As Jerry led me up the stairs to deal with the memory, I cried, "How do I know that, Jerry? What did I do? W-What have I done?"

> I'm at the place with the bad people. There are chairs set up for a meeting. The table is in front of the chairs. Oh, they do awful things on the table! They want to have a ceremony. I am standing near the wall.
>
> Somebody tells me I get to choose who goes to the table. Near the back of the room there is a row of little kids. There are maybe 4 or 5 of them, sitting in the chairs. A grown-up takes me to see them. He wants me to pick one of the children and take him to the table. He says it will be easier for the kid if I do it. Little kids trust big kids more than grown-ups. If I take the little kid to the front, he won't get as scared.
>
> I don't know what to do! [Crying] I don't want him to be scared, but I don't want to take anybody to the table! I tell the grown-up to take me instead. I'll go. Put me on the table, I don't care. But he says little kids fit the table better. Little kids are better for the ceremonies. They are more innocent.
>
> I choose a little boy. I take his hand and he walks with me up to the front. I can't. I can't take him to the table! I grab him away. No! No! You can't have him. I won't let you! I changed my mind! They take him away from me.

> I am weak. I am worthless. I made a scene. It was worse for the child 'cause I frightened him. I ruined the ceremony.

In the cult, heinous crimes were committed against children. Infant and child sacrifices were a part of the cult ceremonies. No one wants to believe it. Nobody even wants to think about it. Unfortunately, I am not the only survivor who has reported witnessing and being forced to participate in such crimes. As the Los Angeles County Commission for Women relates in its *Report of the Ritual Abuse Task Force*:

> Adults and children who have been ritually abused report being forced to participate in the killing of babies, children, and adults in ritual settings with the understanding that the purpose is to obtain certain magical powers. Ritual abuse survivors explain that the drinking of blood and the practice of cannibalism are ways to invest the worshipper/perpetrator with the spiritual powers of the victim.

How could such horrible crimes go on undetected? Wouldn't ritual murders leave physical evidence, missing persons and scores of witnesses? The *Task Force Report* goes on to explain:

> The practice of human sacrifice as it has been reported by victims of ritual abuse always raises extreme problems of credibility. Where have the victims come from? Where are the remains of these victims? Survivors have explained that victims come from within the cult membership (including babies 'bred' for sacrifice), from the ranks of homeless people, and even represent some unknown portion of the large numbers of missing adults and children. Explanations for the absence of found remains include cannibalism, cult access to mortuaries and crematoria, frozen storage of body parts, and the retention by cult members of bones and body parts for further magical practices.

In my case, the purposes of the sacrifices appear varied and I have no idea what became of the victims. Several of the rooms described by Lil' Jeanie do indeed resemble those of a mortuary or crematorium. In all, six memories with human sacrifices have returned. Two of the victims were adults. One sacrifice was staged as a training exercise

and its "victim" turned out to be a doll. The rest were children. Lil' Jeanie reacted to these experiences with hysteria and in one instance, with self-injury. The grief and trauma returned with the memories. When I was ready to listen to the recorded tapes a year later, I was surprised at the quantity of information they contained. Going through the memories, I had struggled just to deal with the emotions. By tape-recording them, we managed to preserve the crime scene. Each experience tells its own story.

> I can't do it, Daddy! [Crying] I can't. Please don't make me, Daddy, please. I don't want to hurt nobody. I don't want to be one of the bad people. No! I won't be like them. I don't like it. It's bad. I want to be nice. I don't want to hurt anybody, not ever. No, Daddy, you don't understand, I *can't*. I don't want to belong. I don't want nothing to do with the bad dreams.
>
> I don't care what you do to me! I don't care. You're like them. You're bad. [Screaming] My daddy's one of the bad people! He wants me to be one too, but I can't. I can't be like them. I don't want to hurt nobody, not ever and I won't. I hate you, Daddy. You want everybody to think you're good, but you're not. You're bad like them.
>
> I won't ever do it. Please don't make me. It will make me one of them, I don't want to be one of them...No, it will *not* be fun! You shouldn't hurt people. I gotta get out of the bad dreams. I wanna have good dreams. Oh, I can't make it go away!
>
> Mr. Light will help me. Mr. Light help me! Please help me! I don't want to do this. I can't do this! I won't be like them. Mr. Light come and help me!
>
> No, Daddy, I don't want to see it. I don't want to be there. I don't want you to do it. It's bad. I don't care if I'm a baby. My daddy's disappointed in me. He thought he had a better daughter than that, not one that was a coward and a sissy and a baby. *Daddy, you wish you had another daughter. I wish you had another daughter too!* It's not right to hurt anybody. They don't know that. They think it's fun.
>
> Oh, please, Mr. Light, take me away from the bad people! They're going to hurt somebody bad. Mr. Light, please make 'em stop, make 'em go away. They don't know it hurts. Everybody has feelings, even little babies. No! No! No! [Hysterical] Please don't let my daddy be that bad. My daddy couldn't be that bad. No! I don't want my daddy to hurt babies. It's just a bad dream. My daddy couldn't do that. It's me, I'm

just a bad girl. I see 'em, but they're not real. My mommy hates me 'cause I make up stories that couldn't be true. I make up stories and see things that aren't real. My daddy couldn't do that. My daddy couldn't do that...

I don't recall how many people attended this meeting. My focus was at the altar and on the man who stood behind it. He wore a black robe trimmed in red. The top of his head was covered with a hood made of the same colors. It draped in the back and at his sides, ending below his shoulders. In the front, it left his face exposed. I was only a few feet away when an infant boy was placed on the table. Two adults, one on each side of me, gripped my arms holding me in place. The man at the altar held the dagger high in the air in his right hand, then grasping it in both hands, he plunged it downwards. I screamed.

It was a terrible crime. Astonishingly, it was not the killing that had the greatest impact on me. Seeing the sacrifice once again in the memory, I was forced to acknowledge that the man at the altar was my own father. It was not the graying old man I had known from my adulthood, but a lean, younger man, taller with dark-rimmed glasses - the father I had known as a child. I had desperately wanted a good daddy who loved me. Even after all of his cruelty that dream died a hard death. At the meeting, I had been brought forward to participate in the ceremony with him. When I was too *weak* to assist him, he made it very clear that I had shamed him. Shortly before I fell asleep that night, I spoke with Mr. Light.

I don't want to remember...I just want to go and stay with you, okay? Why do I gotta remember that? I don't know how to help the children...You better tell me how! How am I suppose' ta help 'em if my daddy does things like that? Why does he do that? Not my daddy, not my daddy, my daddy was supposed to be good...*Oh, I won't hurt 'em. I won't ever hurt anybody. I couldn't. Oh, I hope I don't. Do I? Do I hurt anybody? Please don't let me hurt anybody!* How can it be all right? I told you I don't understand! I don't understand lots of things. Everything's what I don't understand! [Crying]

Mr. Light says he loves me and he's with me and it's gonna get better. It won't always be like this. He loves me and someday I'll understand. I'm not suppose' ta think about it for a

long time, but then I'm suppose' ta. I'm suppose' ta think about it when I'm a grown-up and then I can help the little kids.

I won't know it for a long time, but he's gonna be with me and he's gonna help me again and again and again. He's gonna have people help me and he loves me and he's sad. It made him sad too. It made him really sad. He loves everybody. He doesn't like it when they hurt. He doesn't hurt nobody.

Huh? Huh? Just for a minute? Okay...Can I have a hug? I really need a hug.

Oh, I'm better now. I do feel better now, thank you, Mr. Light. I'm glad you love me. I love you too. I wanna stay with you. I feel better when I'm with you...Oh, everything I don't understand...You want me to go to sleep? For now...it's okay.

In the next memory, I had been drugged and was struggling with the *heavy sleepy*. I watched from the sidelines as they prepared the altar for another ceremony. As my fear grew, it was easier to stay awake. I recognized my brother Scott near the front of the room.

I feel dizzy and sleepy. I'm trying to hold my head up. I don't want it to be the table. Don't put up the table. Don't find the table, Daddy. I hate the table. I don't hafta look at the table. You can't make me.

I feel terrible scared inside, but I gotta remember so me and Big Jeanne can get well. Oh, my tummy wants to throw up. It's Scotty. His eyes are all glassy. No! Get away from the table! It's Scotty, but it's not Scotty. He looks like Scotty. Scotty get away! Scotty wake up! Scotty, don't do it. Don't do what Daddy says. Don't listen to Daddy!

Daddy's at the table with Scotty. Daddy wants him to pick up the knife. Scotty, don't do it, please. Don't hurt anybody. There's a baby on the table, wrapped in a blanket. Scotty, please don't be like Daddy. [Pleading] Don't listen to Daddy, please. Don't do it!

He's terrible scared. I want him to get away from Daddy and run out the door. Scotty's bigger than me, but not as big as Daddy. He's gotta get away. He's gotta put down the knife. Scotty, put it down. Don't hurt the baby! Oh, I'm pretending. Scotty wouldn't hurt a baby, not even for Daddy. He wouldn't hurt anybody. He's like me, he doesn't want to be here. He doesn't want to be at the table. Scotty, don't listen to Daddy. It's okay if Daddy be mad. Daddy gets mad at me. Scotty, Daddy's bad. You're not suppose' ta hurt little people, we're

suppose' ta take care of 'em. It don't make you strong if you hurt 'em, it makes you bad. Don't be bad like Daddy, please don't!

No more bad dreams! I make up stories. Mommy says it be better if I never been born. No more bad stories.

Jerry: If you're pretending, why does your tummy hurt so bad?

'Cause if you're crazy, you think it's real...The baby comes out of the mommy's tummy and when nobody wants her, they give her to the Evil One, 'cause he wants her. It has to be done just right, just the way the Evil One wants it. My daddy knows how and he wants to teach Scotty, but Scotty can't get it right. Daddy says Scotty's dumb and he's too scared. He's a coward. He's no good, weak. He better shape up and do it right. He better be strong, but no, he's a wimp. Dad's mad at Scotty. He don't do anything right. Daddy says he'll never measure up to nothing. He's gonna help Scotty 'cause Scotty can't do it by himself. [Screaming] Scotty's trying to get away from Daddy. Get away! Here, Scotty, get away! Scotty got away from Daddy.

Now one of the grown-ups is looking at me. He says I'm the one that has to be the strong one, 'cause Scotty's not strong. I'm the one that has to be brave for Daddy and show how strong we are, 'cause Scotty embarrassed Daddy. He was a wimp and a coward. I have to be the brave one, the one to help Daddy. I want to help Daddy, I want him to be proud of me. I wanna be stronger than Scotty...but I don't want to hurt the baby.

Somebody says the Evil One wants the baby, so we're going to give the baby to the Evil One. He's the strong one. He has more powers than anybody and he'll take care of the baby. Daddy knows just how to do it and Daddy wants somebody to do it with him and make him proud. He be proud of me and I be stronger than Scotty and Daddy not have to be embarrassed and I can be with Daddy. He'll do it with me and show me how.

Daddy says, "Come on, come on. You can be the strong one. You can be the brave one. You can be my girl. This is what we need to do. It makes everything better." I want to be a good girl for my daddy. He says, "Just don't look at the baby. It won't hurt the baby, it's good for the baby. It's what the baby wants." I don't want Daddy be ashamed of me, like Scotty.

But Daddy, I don't want to hurt the baby. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I don't wanna be a good girl. I can't hurt the baby. It *does* hurt the baby, I know it does. I wanna be braver than Scotty, but I can't hurt the baby. Daddy says, "Take the knife to the baby. It's the right thing to do. The baby wants it." He's mad. He's putting the knife in my hand and holding it tight. No, Daddy, please don't make me! No! [Screaming]

I felt the knife go through the baby's chest. I writhed in horror at what I had done. My stomach wrenched. My father moved away to pull the blanket off the child. I heard their laughter before I discerned the trick. It had been a doll. Suddenly I was flooded with emotions, the subsiding terror and remorse fell into relief and indignation. I lay on the floor and vomited.

Both of us had shamed our father. I don't know what kind of punishment awaited my brother, but another ceremony was put together for me. In the memory, I awoke inside a long, narrow compartment. From Lil' Jeanie's description, I suspect it was a sliding drawer such as those found in a morgue. Trapped inside, I could not escape.

> I'm inside something. I know I can't get out, but I was trying to anyway. It's starting to feel creepy. It's awful when you wake up and you don't know where you're going to be. It's like a really bad dream and you want to close your eyes and wake up in your bed and it be the daytime. Sometimes it takes a long time for the daytime to come.
>
> It's like a long drawer. It's a little longer than I am and the top is real heavy. I don't want to turn over 'cause I don't want to feel it on top of me. I can't push up or out. They put me in lots of places. I never know, but sometimes I know, but most of the time I don't. I can't roll into a little ball. I have to lay like this and wait for them to come and let me out. They will, I think they will.
>
> My throat's getting tight, like it's getting hard to breathe. I wish they would let me out pretty soon, only if they let me out it might be worse than staying in here. I don't never know what they're going to do. I know it won't be nice, I know that. [Wheezing]
>
> I'm starting to feel better, to smile. I don't know why yet. [Giggling] I feel better 'cause I'm not alone.

Jerry: Who's with you?

> Mr. Light's coming. He's gonna stay with me until they let me out. I don't have to be scared if Mr. Light's with me. He never hurts me. He's nice to me. He loves me. He doesn't hurt me like the grown-ups do. I'd like to go with him, but I hafta stay. Someday he wants me to remember so I can help the children, the sad ones like me.

Jerry: How does he want you to help them?

He won't tell me. He says I'll know. *He doesn't give me all the answers. Sometimes he doesn't know that I'm a little kid and I don't know very much.*

Jerry: Why do you say that?

'Cause he doesn't tell me what to do, not all the time. He wants me to figure it out for myself. Sometimes he holds me and it feels like he loves me bunches and bunches. It feels really nice 'cause he doesn't hurt me. It's not right to hurt people, not any people. We should be nice like Mr. Light, but some people don't know that. They want to be mean and hurt people and everybody. Mr. Light knows better.

Jerry: Does Mr. Light talk about the future?

Sometimes he does, but sometimes he just stays with me so I don't be so scared and sometimes he lets me do it myself, 'cause I got to remember someday even if I don't wanna. I have to remember and I can't if I'm with Mr. Light up where he lives. I don't wanna remember the bad things, but Mr. Light says it's important. I'm 'portant too and I got to be brave. If I be brave, I can do it. I can and he'll be with me and he'll help me. I got lots to do, so I can't go live with Mr. Light right now. I got to stay in this yucky place.

Jerry: Why are you crying? Is Mr. Light Leaving?

No, he wants me to calm down. He wants me to just feel how much he loves me. I'm trying. I would like to go to his house, I don't wanna stay here, but I gotta remember for Mr. Light. I gotta and I wanna, I just don't wanna, that's all. I would rather be at his house. He says someday I can go to his house, but this time I gotta stay here 'cause they're gonna come and take me out. He says I gotta be brave, really brave. Oh, I don't wanna be with the grown-ups in the dark. I wanna be in the light. I'm trying to calm down and feel him in my heart. They're coming. Mr. Light says I gotta be brave and I can do it 'cause he'll be with me.

The drawer is sliding out. I can't stop 'em and I can't get away. I gotta go along with it. They can't make me like them. I got Mr. Light with me. It's the dark place. They have me by my arms. They're taking me somewhere. I wouldn't help my daddy, so now it's my turn to lay on the table. If I won't help my daddy, there's no need to have me around. If I'm not going to be one of them, then I'm ex-pend-able and they want to get rid of me. I don't care. I'll go be with Mr. Light.

[Hysterical] They're touching me. They're touching me in my private parts and they won't stop! Leave me alone! My daddy doesn't have a daughter anymore. I don't understand what

he's saying, but he doesn't want me anymore. I'm ex-pend-able. Jerry, he has the knife! [Screaming...Unconsciousness]

He was putting the knife inside me, down there. I thought he was going to put it in my heart. I'm not his daughter anymore. He wants the blood. I'm not worth nothing now, lower than the dirt. I'm ruined, destroyed, nothing to nobody, no good for nothing, trash. I'm nothing to him now. He's ashamed of me. He can kick me on the floor and I'm nothing. I can bleed and I'm nothing to him now. I might be in the same house, but I'm nothing to my daddy now. I'm worse than a germ or a worm. Nobody will ever want me again. [Crying] ...Mr. Light thinks I'm somebody.

It's 'cause I wouldn't help him. He hates me, but even more, I'm just nothing, not even worth his hate. It was like I never was. I had my chance, but I wasn't good enough for my daddy. He's very disappointed. He was, but not any more, 'cause I'm not nothing now. He can't be disappointed in nothing, 'cause nothing is nothing.

I'm trying to crawl away into a corner. I feel ashamed and my tummy hurts where he took the knife.

I was still living at home with my parents during my first year of college. The ritual experiences were forgotten memories by then, so I was not aware of their effect on me. It was my role to watch over my mother and her drunken tendencies. My father was a well-respected professional. His reputation was all important and she could not be allowed to embarrass him. The bigger secret was *his* alcoholism. The household was full of craziness. When he was there, he dealt with her and I did my best to be gone.

As finals approached during my second semester, Dad's demeanor shifted. Previously he had been my ally in my dealings with Mom, then unexpectedly he became hostile. All of a sudden, he refused to talk to me. When I approached him, he would walk away from me, calling me names under his breath. This behavior continued for several weeks. One time I actually found the courage to ask him what was wrong, but he would not reply. Between finals, my mother's binges and my father's malice, I was near a breaking point.

Coming home late one evening, my mother met me at the door and told me that my father wanted to speak to me. It seemed odd that she was nearly sober that time of night, but I was relieved that Dad finally wanted to talk to me. He was resting in his bedroom.

The door was open and I walked in there smiling. He had been drinking and I could not read his face, but I certainly heard his words, "*You are nothing to me. From this time forward, you are out of my life. I want nothing to do with you.*" Those words struck me to the core of my being. I reeled back as if I had been hit. Sitting up in his bed, he nonchalantly picked up his *Time* magazine and pretended I was no longer there.

The next day my parents acted as if the entire event had never occurred. Dad wanted me to skip my summer classes and go with them on a gambling trip to Reno. I had stayed up all night packing my suitcase and making plans to leave home. In my mind, I had painstakingly gone over the events of the previous month. I honestly had no idea why I had been asked to leave. The absurdity of the situation was too much for me. I continued my preparations and left home a week later. My father told his extended family he had made me return a newly purchased sweater and with the tantrum of a spoiled child, I had left home. It was a blatant lie.

I met with my parents a few times the following year. Nothing of importance was ever discussed. Dad offered to pay some of my college expenses. It was an uneasy truce. When I told him I wanted to marry Jerry, he disowned me again. "*After you finish college, you can marry any damn bum you want to," he dictated. "If you marry before, I'll have nothing to do with you.*" Poor Jerry, I told him my father's reaction before I realized the term "damn bum" had been made in reference to him. I chose to marry in spite of my father's objections. This time he disowned me for four years. The process was becoming familiar. There was pain in his alienation, but the choice had been mine. I reacted with hurt, but never anger. Who was I to react with anger? I had never been good enough for my father and I had disappointed him once again. I was nothing, lower than the dirt. I was expendable. Until the memories returned, I never realized just how deeply ingrained those feelings were.

The ruination ceremony had lowered my standing in the cult, but it did not free me from participation. My attempts to place the traumatic memories back in chronological order have been formidable. This ceremony has been a significant marker. The cult experiences that came after this ceremony no longer included any references to me being "Daddy's girl." My craving for my father's

affection was no longer used to manipulate me. Other forms of deception were employed to direct my behavior. The following memory is an example of that conditioning.

> I'm in a place for dead people. It's like a box only bigger. It's cold. It's rock, shiny, marble. The walls are tall and when it's closed it's all dark. It's tall, but it's little. Sometimes they burn people up and they burn 'em up in places like this, until there are only ashes left. I don't want to feel the floor. It's cold. I already know I can't get out, I gotta stay here. Sometimes they tell me they're going to leave me forever, but they don't.
>
> I remember a light when they put me in here, but I don't remember getting here. Oh, I was kind of waking up in here and I thought I was alone, but I'm not. I'm picking him up and holding him. He's quiet. He has hair on his head and I'm rubbing it, but he's being still. He's asleep. He's scared like me. He's my little friend. He's cold. It's cold in here. They're coming to take us out.
>
> No, you can't have him. He's mine. I want to take care of him. You'll hurt him if you take him. No, he wants to stay with me. I'm not going to let them take him. I'm holding him and I won't let go. No You'll hurt him! Yes, you will. I know you will. You're setting up the table. [Moaning] They're going to hurt him terrible bad. They're going to put him on the table and cut him up. I want to hold him and help him get away. I want to pat him on the back and say it's gonna be okay, you don't hafta be scared, but it's not gonna be okay!
>
> They're going to take him from me and hurt him, 'cause he's like one of my babies that I'm going to have someday. Someday I'm going to want to tell and they're going to make me pay. *It's like I already did.* Oh, I don't want them to take him. Please leave him alone. He's my little friend and he's sleeping. Somebody says, "I hope you see this is your fault. You're the one that did it. See what happens when children tell?" But I didn't tell! I didn't tell!
>
> They're setting up the table. He's just little. No, don't touch him! No, you don't got to get him ready! You gotta leave him alone! They're telling me if I hold him too tight, I'll hurt him. *I'll hurt him?* Somebody says, "He's probably already dead. She's squeezing him. Look at that! He's probably already dead, the way she's holding him. She already did it for us. We don't have to do nothing. Bring it over here. *She took care of him for us. How about that!*" No! [Hysterical] No! I didn't! No! [Screaming]

Jerry: Jeanie, they set you up. The little boy was already dead.

Jerry, tell me I didn't kill 'em. [Sobbing]

Jerry: You didn't kill him, Jeanie. If you held him too tight, he would have cried. Did he cry? Did he move in your arms? He was cold, Jeanie, he was already dead.

The child was taken from me and placed upon the altar. His arms were dismembered from his shoulders. There was no blood. I was told that if I could put his arms back in position within ten minutes he would come back to life. Like my babies in the future, it was my last chance to "make it not have happened." My efforts were frantic and of-course, futile. I was drugged to calm my frenzy. With slurring words, I finished the memory.

> Somebody's yelling at me, "You're responsible. You did it. You can't tell. We'll find 'em if you tell and put 'em on the table." Someday they're going to do it to my babies. I can't let them hurt 'em. I want to go to sleep so I can forget. They're going to help me go to sleep so I can be over my bad dream.
>
> I can't move. I feel real heavy. I want to forget. I want to sleep. In the morning everything be fine. Little girls that are crazy have bad dreams. They make up stories and that's what I do, 'cause I'm not a very good girl. I can't move from the heavy sleepy.
>
> Jerry, please hold me.

Shortly before I turned twelve years old, I sent Lil' Jeanie away. By dissociating myself from these experiences, I was able to grow up, marry and have my own family. Jerry and I had three children and then adopted two more. My physical health began a rapid decline when I reached my early forties. I endured debilitating migraines and was bedridden for nearly four years. Still I held on. The memories surfaced when my youngest child turned twelve years old, the age I had been when the abuse ended. I had protected my babies. For thirty-five years, the programming had remained in place.

Some of the worst traumatic memories have returned in a backwards fashion. I find myself dealing with the physical consequences of the abuse and the extreme emotions brought on by the ordeal before I am ready to face the actual event. The following memory is an excellent example of this reversed sequencing. I recognized the need to deal with a traumatic memory when I

developed some curious physical symptoms. Along with the nausea, my head hurt above my left eye. The pain continued to increase as if it formed a straight line over my eye up to the top of my forehead.

I got to face the pain. I got to remember so it will go away. It's on this side of my head, above my eye. I don't know why. I have to get through the pain, then I can remember. Oh, golly. I have to get past the pain. [Moaning] I got to bang my head against the wall. A window, a hundred pieces against my head. Got to make it stop. Can't stand the pain. I need Mr. Light to help me. Please, Mr. Light, there's not anybody else, please help me. I can't cry, it will even hurt worser. I want to throw my head in the window. I only feel the pain. Please help me.

Jerry: What can I do?

I don't think I'm talking to you. It's my mommy and daddy. They're glad I'm hurt. I deserve it. They don't care, just make me stay in my room. I want to hurt myself again. They say, "We don't care a bit if you hurt yourself. Go ahead. We won't have to bother about you or worry what you're going to do next. We don't care if you put your head through a window. We think you should do that. Why don't you go in and do it right now?"

"You're absolutely nothing. You're not worth shit. We'll be glad when you're gone. You're not worth stomping on like a bug. You're not even worth the dirt. Go ahead and do it. We won't have to worry that you'll embarrass us or what you're going to say to the neighbors. We won't have to worry about having a crazy daughter if you do it, so you just go right ahead. You go throw yourself against the window. You whore, you pig, *you're so damned ugly we'll celebrate when you're gone.* We'll have a party when *you're* gone. We'll just be thrilled to death!"

Please, Mr. Light, please want me. I want to be important to somebody. Please make the pain go away. It just stays there. I deserve it. They're glad, they want it to hurt. Oh, I got to remember so it will go away. I hope I remember real quick.

Jerry: What caused the headache, Jeanie?

I only feel the pain. I only know I want to go through the window real hard with my head, *run* through, get away, crash real hard. Got to get away, but I can't, but I can if I go through the window...It's a table. I can't stand the table. They put up the table. They do awful things. They're putting up the table. I gotta get away! [Hysterical] Bars on the window, gotta run, try to get through the bars. Let me go! Let me go! Get to the window. Run! Put my head through the window. I gotta get away! [Screaming]

Oh, my head, it hurts real bad. Bars on the windows. I deserve it 'cause I tried to get away. Got to learn I can't get away. Somebody says, "What a brat! Now she's done it. Drag her over here, stupid fool. She'll pay for this. Get some ice, put it on her. *She just doesn't quit. A lot of trouble, this one is a lot of trouble.*" I hit my head on the bar. I deserve it, but I had to try to get away from the table. I had to try not to be here. They hurt people and animals bad with the knife. I don't like to listen. They can't make me look. I don't want them to do it. I can't make 'em stop. I can't stand it.

I wanna pretend everything's okay and they put the table away. Please don't do nothing on the table. Please don't hurt the babies. [Crying] Oh, they let me hold her, then they took her away! There's something wrong with the baby. She's ugly like me. She shouldn't be in the world, she's too ugly. Shouldn't have ugly babies in the world, they should all be pretty. They're not worth nothing if they're ugly. If there's something wrong with them, you got to get rid of them so you only have the pretty ones, the perfect ones, the ones that look just the way you want them to look. The rest of them, you got to get rid of them. They're not pure.

The ones that look just right, you can keep, but the ugly ones aren't worth nothing. You got to fix 'em up or get rid of them. Probably best to get rid of them so they don't con-tam-in-ate the others. They've got to be pure. This baby's ugly.

I don't want them to do it. I don't care if they're ugly. I know what it's like to be ugly. You can't help it. Somebody could love 'em. Somebody could want 'em even if they're ugly. *I could love 'em 'cause I'm ugly too and I could understand.* Don't hurt the baby, please don't. *Look! The baby has pretty little hands and funny little feet.*

Please don't hurt the baby. I'll take the baby. I'll hold the baby. I'll take her away with me. [Sobbing] I wish I could take her and get away. I can't get her away. I can't. I can't. I don't know how.

The child's "impurity" was a red-purple birthmark on the left side of her face. She was perhaps five to six months old. I was told her mother no longer wanted her, so she was being sent to the Evil One. The ritual included the words "out of the mother's womb." The birthmark was stripped off her face and then she was killed.

After this memory concluded, the physical pain over my eye eased and disappeared. In its place, I dealt with the emotional agony I had held inside so many years. My reactions to the sacrifice

experiences were comparable to those from the other retrieved memories. After the initial trauma of the memories subsided, I walked around numb with denial for a day or two. Then my emotions began surfacing. I could actually feel the grief welling up from somewhere deep inside. My succeeding days were filled with bouts of sobbing contrasted with my feeble attempts to recuperate from them. Within a week or two, my emotions would stabilize enough for me to move forward and take on yet another series of memories.

One aspect of the ritual sacrifices never bothered me. I cringed at the acts of violence and agonized over my inability to stop them. I felt the terror, but I always knew those innocent victims would never belong to the Evil One. Mr. Light was waiting to take them home. They would be safe in his arms and feel his glorious love. Unlike me, they would get to stay. As an adult, I have been privileged to read from the *Book of Mormon* where the Lord speaks through one of his prophets,

> And I am filled with charity, which is everlasting love; wherefore, all children are alike unto me; wherefore, I love little children with a perfect love; and they are all alike and partakers of salvation.
>
> - Moroni 8:17.

They are safe in his arms and recipients of his perfect love.

Chapter Nine: Teaching Hate

It's hard to hate a rabbit,
but it's easy to hate a nigger.
- ritual instruction

I never liked Bob Dylan. His lyrics were sorrowful and they made me uncomfortable. The Beatles were better. Their words were cockney and they looked rather peculiar, but their tunes were lively and upbeat. I watched dispassionately as other girls screamed and swooned over the four of them. Not every teenager of the 60's was a flower child. I certainly wasn't. Even in California, some of us chose to watch rather than participate in the Age of Aquarius. The hippies congregated in Haight Ashbury. Anti-war protesters gathered at the state capitol. I didn't know how I felt about the Vietnam War, but I was glad when Scott didn't have to go.

The Civil Right's movement was not confined to the southern states. In the early 1960's, the first Negroes began moving into suburban south Sacramento. Realtors could no longer decline to show them homes, owners could not refuse to sell on the basis of color. My father hated blacks. He railed at their inferiority and their audacity to ruin his neighborhood. I was not allowed to walk on the sidewalks in front of their homes. By the time I was a senior in high school, a black family had purchased a house directly behind ours. The two homes were separated by their back yards and the singular wooden fence that ran between them. Dad was convinced they had moved there to spy on him. I could not find the logic in his hatred.

One afternoon our black neighbor came to our door. I was at home alone when he stopped by. He asked if he could look at the rose bushes that grew along our side of the wooden fence. The six-foot high fence had been built with open squares and criss-cross designs near the top. Branches from the rose bushes were growing through these slots and into his yard. They needed to be pruned, but he did not wish to do so until he was certain he would not damage the original plants. When I offered to let him come through the

house, he declined and asked if I would meet him at the outside gate to the backyard. We talked affably as we walked to the back of the yard and he examined the rose bushes. As we returned to the backyard gate, he thanked me and left.

The man was not a stranger to me. He was a Special Education teacher at my high school. I had seen him at school numerous times and watched him as he talked and joked with the Special Ed kids. He was a man to be admired, not ridiculed. My father didn't like handicapped people either, he felt they were losers. At home, I was not allowed to have opinions, but I knew I would never agree with my father. When I told my mother of our neighbor's visit, she made me swear not to tell. A few months later, Dad bought a wooden trellis from Capitol Nursery. Delivered on a truck, it looked twelve feet tall and had olive vines growing through it. Dad placed it next to the fence, blocking the neighbor's view through our family room window. The following year, my parents moved away.

Another decade passed as Jerry and I married and settled into our own family life. We talked a lot about working with underprivileged kids. It was a dream, a goal we shared. We just didn't know how to turn the dream into reality. We considered various occupations, foster care and adoption. We both ran recreation programs. Jerry was a youth program director for the YMCA. We had the opportunity to work with the influx of Vietnamese refugees at Camp Pendelton after Saigon fell in 1975. Children were being adopted from Korea, but the cost of a foreign adoption was far beyond our means. After we joined the LDS church, we learned about a program offered through the church Social Services. Even though we had three children already, we could apply to adopt a special needs child. These were children who were difficult to place due to racial mixture, physical or mental handicap. It was exactly what we had been looking for.

Filling out the adoption application was the easy part. Extensive interviews and home studies followed. After considerable thought, we determined our abilities and circumstances would best suit a racially mixed child. We also hoped for a girl. Each time the caseworker came for a home visit, he spoke with all of us and then each of us individually. The kids loved the interviews. Being the

oldest, Jason liked being first. Jeremy, long past his silent stage, just kept on talking and talking. Joy bounced and giggled. Jerry and I needed fingerprints. All five of us needed physical exams. We made payments on a quarterly plan. Then came the hardest part, we waited for the phone call that would bring a new little person into our lives.

I was the one that got the call. "Congratulations," our caseworker said. "You have a beautiful new daughter." She was seven weeks old. In my excitement, I grabbed the back of an envelope to write down all the information he had for me. She had dark skin, brown eyes and black hair. She was a mulatto child, the mixture of a white mother and a black father. They wanted to make the placement as soon as possible from their office in Burbank. Before dawn the next morning, we gathered the children into the car and began the three-hour drive. As the sun came up over the Tehachapi Mountains, we were all wide-awake. The conversation was lively as everyone had suggestions to add to our list of baby names.

Our idea of giving all the children "J" names had gotten out of hand. It wasn't cute anymore, it was down right confusing. We lived in a perpetual tongue twister. But how could we leave out our new daughter and sister? More than the rest of us, this child would need to feel she belonged. We came to a family consensus as we traveled in the car that very morning. She had to have a "J" name too. It also needed to sound as different as possible from everybody else's. We took turns calling out all the possibilities. Although Jill hasn't always been thrilled with her name, I think she can be grateful we didn't agree to some of the more creative suggestions that came from the back seat of the car.

We arrived at the agency at our appointed time. Everybody was nervous. The caseworker spoke to us for a few minutes, but I don't think any of us heard a word he said. We were too anxious to meet Jill. He finally showed us to a small, quiet room where she rested in a bassinet. We stood in awe as we looked at her. Her foster mother had nicknamed her "Angel." It was a name that suited her too. Each of us took turns holding her. She looked a bit bewildered as she was passed from one set of arms to the next, but she didn't fuss. Then we put her back in the bassinet. We didn't have much space, but the five of us got down on our knees. Jerry prayed as we

thanked the Lord for this precious moment and asked for His confirmation of our decision to include Jill in our family. With joyful smiles and full hearts, we took her home.

Jill had been in two foster homes in her short life. She had contracted several infections that required medication and her nervous withdrawal was almost immediately apparent. It was a hard process for her to adjust to yet another family. After a time, she enjoyed the happy sibling faces that were so often eager to entertain her. She felt secure at home long before she could handle outside excursions. Now that we had her with us, her brothers and sister started popping up with questions. Jeremy wanted to know if she would speak the same language, "Will she talk like us, Mommy?" Jerry and I decided to put together a demonstration that would answer some of their questions and promote a family discussion. It was our pudding experiment.

With the kids in front of him, Jerry set out three bowls. One bowl contained vanilla pudding. Another bowl was filled with dark chocolate fudge pudding. The middle bowl was empty. With all the finesse of a master chef, Jerry took spatula in hand and began mixing the favors together in the once empty bowl. As he slowly stirred the mixture, the children watched and listened. He told them we were spirit children of our Heavenly Father before we came to earth. Up in heaven, we were all brothers and sisters. On earth we received physical bodies. Our physical bodies come in varied colors and generally resemble those of our parents. Since Jill had a white mother and a black father, her skin color was a mix of those two. The pudding had turned into a blended milk chocolate. As the children asked him questions, he handed them spoons and they ate the experiment, results and all.

Not everyone accepted our adoption with such a simple explanation. Some people thought it was a great idea, some were hostile. Most people were just curious. Jerry's folks had been hesitant about the adoption, but any apprehension they felt melted the minute they saw Jill. Jerry's mom adored babies. It was love at first sight. My parents had both died. It was 1981, and racially mixed families were uncommon. I found out I couldn't read people as well as I thought. I was surprised by those who readily accepted our daughter and by those who expressed their animosity. Some people

became more accepting over time. At its worst, I learned to identify hate stares, but they did not happen often. As I carried my baby daughter to the grocery store or any number of mother's errands, I stood out. Most stares were just inquisitiveness, in others I could feel the antagonism. The stares came from both whites and blacks. I was no longer an anonymous face in the crowd.

When she was seven years old, I expressed some of my concern for her in the following poem that I titled with her name.

We brought her home still a babe.
Already frightened of life,
With clenched fists
And eyes that would not meet ours.
We surrounded her in caring arms
And struggled together through her first year.

Our bond grew, hers and mine,
Mother and daughter.
I experienced my first lessons in prejudice,
White mother, black child.
I learned to stand tall.

She has stayed a sensitive child.
She mothers everything
And loves to clean the house,
So different from me.
For me, she hurries up a bit.
For her, I discipline with a soft voice.

Older now, she notices she's different.
"Black is beautiful," I tell her.
"Oh no, it's not," she declares, "I'm brown."
"...I want to be white like my family."
My heart aches.
Truly, she is beautiful.

Pudding answers are no longer enough,
We talk about adoption and natural parents.
She prefers princes and magic kingdoms.
She is a graceful ballerina,
A princess with long, straight hair.

What will happen to this child
As she approaches her womanhood?
As she wonders, "Who am I?"
"Where do I belong?"
She carries a double heritage,
Must she choose between them?

Stand tall, my darling.
You are proof to the world
That color is no boundary to love.
Whatever path you take in life
Be brave, and remember
I will love you always, Mom.

Today Jill is a self-confident young woman who seems to be navigating through the trials of her youth with great *agility*. When she was two years old, we adopted our fifth child. Justin is also mulatto, but he tips the pudding scale on the vanilla side. Although he has faced many challenges in his youth, including the identity struggles of being an adopted child, Justin has not had to deal with the racism that Jill sees on an almost daily basis. We tease Jill that she is *tall, black and beautiful*. Humor takes the edge off of the worldly attitudes we can not control. At home she is surrounded by our love. To the world, she is black. To her family, she is mulatto. To her daddy, she is forever chocolate.

In May of 1954, the United States Supreme Court handed down the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision prohibiting segregation in public schools. Separate schools for blacks and whites were no longer legal under the Constitution. The thrust towards school integration had begun. It was a major step for the civil rights movement in this century. It sent shock waves through the southern states. In Montgomery, Alabama, Martin Luther King Jr. stepped forward to lead black Americans in a non-violent bus boycott giving them equal rights to public transportation. Confrontations erupted into violence. The Klu Klux Klan gained power in the white backlash. The conflict reverberated all the way to California.

The traumatic memories have brought back incidents of hate crimes that are a reflection of that era. The word "niggerlover" was frequently used in the cult. I wasn't called a niggerlover because I

liked blacks. I was nine years old, I didn't know any of them. It was a derogatory term denoting my weakness of character. It was also used in the programming. During one cult meeting, a dismembered arm was placed against my chest and strapped there with cloth bandages, mummy-style. I could feel the outline of it next to my skin. The hand and fingers were just below my shoulders. Because I was a niggerlover, I had been given a nigger arm. They told me the fingers were going to crawl up to my neck and strangle me. For days after the memory returned, I could once again feel the imprint of that arm across my chest.

The cult my father participated in was well connected politically, professionally and socially. The Masons were linked to some indeterminable degree. I suspect there was also cult interaction with the Klu Klux Klan. As the author states in *Safe Passage to Healing*:

> Ritual abuse groups reportedly network much the same as business organizations loosely associated for mutual benefit and exchange of ideas. For example, one survivor recalls an incident where her cult group engaged the KKK to provide them with a victim. The KKK abducted a black person. The black person was then used as a human sacrifice by the cult group.

It is an example hauntingly similar to my own experience. The robes and hoods used at the meetings varied in color and style. I don't know which ones may have belonged to the klan rather than the cult. I can not plot the locations of the meeting rooms or the outdoor bonfires, but I do have memories of some of the crimes committed at those locations.

Racial slurs against blacks have always elicited an immediate emotional response from me. The word "nigger" is particularly vile. I don't care for racial slurs used against any ethnic group, but frankly, most of the time I have trouble remembering which word applies to which people. When comments are made against blacks, however, I feel before I think. I quickly take offense and react in anger. For someone who is as terrified of anger as I am, it is highly uncharacteristic.

Jill was a toddler when I first overheard the word "nigger" used in reference to my daughter. The offender hadn't quite started

kindergarten. His mother had asked me to baby-sit for the morning. Jill had toddled her way over to the front of the TV set and was blocking his view to the cartoons. He yelled out, "Get out of the way, you nigger." It was a big mistake. In an amazing adrenaline surge, I marched over to that scamp and picked him up into the air until we were looking at each other eye to eye. "How *dare* you speak to my daughter like that!" I bellowed, "How *dare* you use that word in my house!" As I carried him out of the room and away from Jill, I continued to fume, "My daughter will be treated with *respect*! That word is *never* spoken in my house!"

The rest of the morning I kept the young boy separated from Jill. He played in one room and she in another. I realized later that I had overreacted, but I never offered to watch him again either. I have continued to overreact to those situations all of my adult life. People can stare, but they better not say anything. When I hear the word "nigger," my blood pressure rises to monumental heights. The only thing that stifles my anger is my even greater fear of conflict. Jill has learned to deal with prejudice in a calm and mature fashion. She has been a wonderful example for her mother who comes unraveled every time. The return of the traumatic memories has helped me understand these stormy emotional responses. The word "nigger" implies more than disrespect. It means danger, so watch out, hatred and violence are sure to follow.

Many of the cult lessons taught us about hate. It was a valuable attribute that would make us strong. One lesson was even more basic, it helped us identify the power of evil from which the hate could grow. My father drove my brother and I to an outdoor location somewhere in the woods. A large bonfire had been prepared.

> It is a ceremony. People are standing in a circle around a big wood fire. My face is hot. Daddy is standing on one side of me and Scotty is standing on the other side. I don't want to hear and I don't want to see. I don't want to be here either.
>
> Animals are dumb. This is their chance to be important. They want to be important. Fires to Hell. Send them to the Evil One. If you throw them in alive, there is power to the Evil One. Daddy says use strong arms to throw them in the middle of the fire, so they are con-sumed and they don't get out. If they get

out, then you have to hit them on the head and throw them back in.

Everybody must throw one animal in the fire or the ceremony is ruined. Somebody says, "Kids are like dumb animals. Their brains are empty. Fill them up, control them, program them, teach them to feel the power."

Daddy is taking me over to the animal cage. There are little, white bunnies in the cage. Daddy says, "Don't be a baby. Stand straight. Don't cover your ears. Pick out a bunny and throw it in the center. If you don't throw it hard, it will be worse for the bunny. Make it easy." He says the bunny will get to be important to the Evil One and I will get to feel the power. The bunny will go up in flames. The in-vis-ible smoke swaying at the top, that is what takes them up to hell, to the darkness that is in the night.

I'm coughing 'cause I'm upset. I don't want to throw a bunny in the fire. [Wheezing] The man tells Daddy to leave me alone for a minute. I am laying down by the bunny cage. Daddy comes back. He grabs me and he grabs a bunny out of the cage. He puts it in my hand and his hand. We toss the bunny in the fire. [Crying]

I'm sorry little bunny.

A day after this memory returned, I wrote in my journal, "I can't explain it with words, but during the memory I could understand the power." Even though I hadn't accepted the power, I could feel it. The power of the Evil One was real. The following memory took that lesson a step further. Hate was added to the power of evil. The memory returned in pieces over a period of days. It was the worst of memories and one I will carry on my conscience for the rest of my life. The approximate date of the event is 1959, the summer I turned eleven years old.

Daddy took us to a field in the woods. The sun is going down. There is a man on a stake. He's standing in the middle of the woodpile. He is tied up. There is something around his mouth, but I can see his eyes. He's scared like me. Daddy says, "He's a nigger bum. It's hard to hate a rabbit, but it's easy to hate a nigger. If you hate, you can feel the power even more than when you burned the rabbit."

Please take me home! I don't want to learn to hate. I don't want to hurt anybody. Please don't make me. Daddy has a robe for me. He wants me to put it on. He has something else for

me. It is a scepter. It is a long stick with something on the end. It has a piece of metal on it like an animal face. It is a magic stick. He wants me to walk around the pile of wood and hold the scepter up high. He wants me to go round and round. Somebody says I look pretty like Daddy's little princess...or maybe, priestess.

Daddy says, "He's only an old skid row nigger bum. Everybody hates them, nobody wants them. Everybody be glad they're gone. Trash. That's what niggers are for, to teach us to hate. It's all they're good for. They're easy to hate."

For several days I could go no further into the memory. I knew there was more that had to be dealt with, but even though I had begun stuttering I could not proceed. A poignant conversation with Lil' Jeanie revealed a warning my father had given me. I needed to forget, because if I ever remembered this experience I would not be able to live with myself. I would die and go straight to hell and the domain of the Evil One.

Lil' Jeanie carries the greater part of my emotions. While the adult me considered the possibility of instant death as highly remote, Lil' Jeanie was terrified. As a compromise between factions, I asked our bishop for his help. When he came to our home, I implored, "Greg, if I die going through this memory, will you intercede for me with the Evil One?" I doubt he gets that request very often! His affirming presence gave me the courage to return to the memory.

There is a bonfire around the stake. It is burning around the outside of it. The people are saying together, "Set the fire. Feel the power. Fires to Hell. Feel the power." I am holding the magic stick. The end is on fire. They say, "Throw it in. Put it there. Place it. Set the nigger on fire. Fires to Hell. Fires to Hell. Fires to Hell."

The man is looking at me. I see his brown eyes. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please don't make me, Daddy! Daddy is yelling at me, "Why won't you learn you stupid bitch! How many niggers will we have to burn before you'll learn? We're going to line up one after another until you get it right!"

I don't want to hurt even one person. [Sobbing] Please Daddy, don't make me. Daddy's madder. He's grabbing Scotty. He says Scotty's weak and not worth a pile of crap. He says I have 'til the count of three and then he's going to throw Scotty in the fire too!

I don't want to hurt anybody, but I don't know how not to. Daddy's counting. No! No! No! [Hysteria] I did it! I did it! No! No!

This time the lesson took. I learned to hate. I didn't hate blacks, I didn't even feel hatred towards my father. In my child's mind, I had accepted the blame for this heinous crime. I didn't want to hurt anybody, but I hadn't known how "not to." I had placed the scepter in the fire. The lesson had taught me to hate myself.

Mr. Light had told me to cry when I needed to let the sad out. The cult had given me different instructions. When faced with unbearable pain, cult instructors had taught us to slam our heads against something "harder and harder" until the pain came out. This time I chose to follow the cult instruction.

I want to hit my head on something hard and make the pain go out. It's in my head and my tummy and it won't go out. It hurts real bad in my heart. *There's no hope, nothing now, nothing but the hurt.* I want to just hide in my corner and beat my head harder and harder. Then I can't think about it no more. I can't get it out of my head. I got to get it out of my head.

The urge to injure myself returned with the traumatic memory. Jerry placed pillows around the bed and I repeatedly slammed my head against them avoiding any self-injury in the present. I stopped when I felt fatigued, what for Lil' Jeanie must have been a semi-conscious state.

There is a man. He wants me to go with him. He wants to show me things. He's a man like Mr. Light, but he isn't like Mr. Light. He's wearing white, but it's dingy, not bright and he doesn't love me. He's standing at a distance from me. He's just here to show me things. He says his name is Lucifer.

He says the world belongs to him and he can give me anything I want. If I'm on his side, I can have everything in his world. He's showing me popular, famous, riches and pretty. It's like seeing pictures, big ones. I'm there in the picture, but I'm not quite there. Hmmm, maybe I would like to be pretty. He says I can have anything, all he asks for back is my soul.

I tell him I don't want to hurt his feelings, but I don't like his side as much as Mr. Light's side. He says he's getting rid

of Mr. Light in his world. He has the power and there's no room for Mr. Light or his followers in *his* world. They are going to loose. He's going to show me what happens to people who don't choose his side. I see children and grown-ups who are starving, sick and dead. They look awful.

I tell him the best-est thing is to be with Mr. Light. He says it's *his* world and *his* power. His side is gonna win, the other side is going to lose. The world belongs to him. He's stronger and he won't allow Mr. Light to stay. Can't I see *he's* the strongest?

He's showing me another picture. [Shock] Ohhhh, it's my Mr. Light! No! I don't know how, but it's him! Stop it! Stop it! He's dying! He's on that awful cross. Oh, please, stop! People are there with him. Why don't they stop it? Why won't they get him down? Let me take his place. I'll do it. Oh please, don't make him die.

The man says he killed Mr. Light. He's the king of this world and he rules it. His side is going to win. I don't care who wins. Even if Mr. Light loses, I want to be with him. Everything is starting to get dark 'cause the Evil One wants it that way. That's who the man is. The bad people said he was a demon, but he's just a man. The world turned dark when Mr. Light died. Mr. Lucifer said he turned the world dark, but I think it was 'cause my Mr. Light left.

It was Lil' Jeanie who recognized her Mr. Light, but both the child and adult parts of me shared in the grief. It took me weeks to work through the enormity of my bereavement. Who could I talk to? If not for the intensity of my emotions, I wouldn't have believed it myself. I chose writing as a way to express my feelings, decipher the meanings of the experience and examine the details as I remembered them. These were some of my journal entries.

Part of the cult training included self-destruct programming. Banging my head repeatedly against something hard appears to have been a method I used on several occasions. The idea of suicide had not yet occurred to me. I was simply hitting my head to release the pain. In this instance, I continued hitting my head against the floor until I began to lose consciousness.

A man came to me and asked me to go with him. He was an angelic presence. Although he was wearing white, he was dingy compared to the brightness of Mr. Light. There was nothing to draw me to him, no love radiating from him. I felt no

emotion whatsoever. If he had expressed any emotions at all, especially anger, I would have reacted to them. He stayed at a distance, with this strange void of emotion between us. Lil' Jeanie did not recognize the name 'Lucifer,' but the adult me certainly did.

He stood in front of me and to my left. I could see things as he said them. Famous, popular and pretty were scenes of people. People who were pretty got my attention for a second. How often I have wished to be pretty! Rich was a beautiful verandah overlooking the ocean at sunset. The people who chose Mr. Light's side looked like pictures I have seen of the Holocaust victims. They were dirty and starving, with big sunken eyes.

As he mentioned his power, Lil' Jeanie began to realize who he was and said, 'He doesn't look like a demon. He looks like a man.' I still felt no fear, no emotion. The scene of the crucifixion was like an overlay. I was standing in the middle of it, but yet not a part of it. I saw the event as if were taking place right in front of me. Other people were there, standing or sitting in various places. Another cross stood in the distance. I realized later that although I had seen the event, I did not hear it.

My emotions returned the moment Lil' Jeanie recognized the man on the cross as her Mr. Light. I felt her frantic need to help him and her overwhelming grief. I had thought for quite a while that Mr. Light and Jesus Christ were the same person, this was my confirmation. What was it Lil' Jeanie said earlier? *I'll be strong then, when I remember, and he'll be with me 'cause by then I'll know who he is.*

Up to this point, I had underestimated her love for Mr. Light. It seemed as if it was always Mr. Light sharing *his* love. With the memory, I could feel her love for him surging through me. I felt pleased, being that she and I are the same person, to know that my feelings for him are more than gratitude. Perhaps now we can share our combined knowledge of him and blend back together even more.

I began writing a series of letters again, back and forth between Lil' Jeanie and I. Although the distance between us had continued to grow smaller, writing remained a key in our communication process. Along with the letters, I started reading children's' books with religious stories. Lil' Jeanie had been taught never to say the words "Jesus Christ." Because she had been consecrated to the Evil One, she was told those words would call

forth demons. The adult me had always found the words "Jesus Christ" uncomfortable. I had assumed it was because my father used them so often as an expletive. The first evening I spoke Christ's name as Lil' Jeanie, I waited for demons to come through my window. They never arrived.

In two of her letters, Lil' Jeanie made some very profound statements even with her limited vocabulary. In one, she made the connection between Jesus Christ and Mr. Light.

> Saying 'Jesus Christ' was a lie. I can say it and the demons don't come for me. It doesn't call up the Evil One. The *Bible* says if you say 'Jesus Christ,' then Satan has to flee. Maybe that's why they didn't want me to say it. My daddy used to say it, but he didn't ever say it nice.
>
> *My Mr. Light is Jesus Christ. He's everybody's Jesus Christ, but Mr. Light belongs to kids like me. He loves us when nobody else does, even when we do terrible bad things and nobody else could love us ever, he still loves us.* Love is a lot better than hate. If nobody can love you 'cause you're so bad, all that's left is Mr. Evil One's hate. First you hate yourself and then everybody else.
>
> A lot of times I hate myself, but Mr. Light still loves me. I have to remember that. No matter what I did, he still loves me and he forgives me 'cause he knows I didn't want to hurt anybody. The bad people wanted to break my heart, my will and my spirit. I think they did, but I only learned to hate myself.

Neither the child nor the adult me have totally come to grips with the terrible crime that was committed at the bonfire. Lil' Jeanie chose to write a letter to the man who was killed, asking his forgiveness.

> Dear Sir,
>
> I am so sorry. Please forgive me. I wish we could have traded places. I was terrible scared. I didn't feel the power, not when they told me what I had to do. I felt scared and sad like you. I never hated you.
>
> Daddy said I would die if I remembered. I didn't die and I didn't go to hell, but I think my heart did. Never in my whole life have I wanted to hurt anybody. I don't hate. I especially don't hate people 'cause they're black or even if

they're bums. Good people are suppose to help bums, not hurt them.

A lady friend of mine says to let Mr. Light carry the pain for me, 'cause he forgives me. I hope you can forgive me too. I hope I can forgive me. I'm trying 'cause I want to get well and help other children like me. The pain is terrible bad. It would help a lot if I knew you forgave me.

I'm glad you got to go to Mr. Light, but I wish it had been a different way. It's wonderful getting to be with Mr. Light. He loves even really bad people, so he can love me too. It's wonderful when he holds you and you feel good and happy and all warm inside.

I'm terrible sorry. I'll never forget again what I did. I'll never hate like my daddy, I promise. I wish I could hug you and say I'm sorry. Please, please forgive me.

Jeanie

Forgiveness plays an important role in the scriptures. We're told to forgive others who injure us. We are offered the Lord's forgiveness for our own sins. I understand those principles fairly well. The confusing part is figuring out how to forgive myself. The adult me can be very analytical. As a grown-up, I understand that cult members set up the meeting, procured the victim and lit the fire. At that time, I was still being trained for a high cult position. I was given no choice but to participate. They hoped I would glory in the power of evil. If I failed to accept the power, they knew the blame and self-condemnation would destroy my will.

Unfortunately, the little girl part of me doesn't see the experience that clearly. No matter what the circumstances may have been, I placed the scepter in the fire. It doesn't matter that I was given no choice, I participated in murder. As Lil' Jeanie says, "The pain is terrible bad." How do I rise above the self-condemnation and like myself once again? What kind of restitution is there for murder? I must choose my way carefully and somehow rise above the mire. If I can not forgive myself, the cult members will have succeeded in their mission.

Mr. Light told me how to overcome the shame. In fact, he told me several times just to make sure I got the message. I need not sit and ponder over the degree of my guilt and bask in remorse. I can turn the evil into something good. I have the words and the memories

and a clearness of mind. Well, a fairly clear mind. It's time to help the children, the "sad ones like me." It's time to break the silence, acknowledge the crimes that occurred and expose the cult. Not everyone will to choose to believe my story, especially since I have included some unique spiritual experiences. That's okay. Having choices is a wonderful thing.

While I can handle the reactions of other folks, I worry about the response of one person who is very dear to me. As I acknowledge my involvement in cult hate crimes, I place Jill in a terribly awkward position. I know it will bring her pain. I apologize to her for the legacy of hate that I was involved in before she was born. I believe she will understand the necessity I feel to expose these crimes as a step towards ending them. She is a lovely young woman with strength and fortitude. I believe she will respond with compassion and tears, anger and determination. The power of love is greater than the power of hate. As mother and daughter, we proved that long ago.

Chapter Ten: Devilry and Demons

When you get mad, demons get inside you
and they never come out.
- cult teaching

The memory retrieval process can take several years. For severely abused adult survivors, five to seven years is a good estimate. It takes time to process the information and deal with all the returning emotions. I have always been a super-achiever type of person. I don't know how to take my time doing anything. By the end of the first year into my recovery, we had tape-recorded over two hundred traumatic memories. We got tired of taping them by #222, so I began writing them down. We figured we had to be near the end, but we weren't entirely accurate. The memories would continue another eight months. Then they slowed down to about once a week and abruptly stopped. We tallied the total at approximately three hundred and fifty traumatic memories in a little less than two years.

Midway into the process, anniversary dates of the original events began bringing back the memories of specific rituals. I also noticed a blending starting to occur between Lil' Jeanie and the adult me. My physical health had steadily improved. The constant migraine headaches were history. I was exercising and growing physically stronger. At the same time, however, my days were clouded by a form of nausea that was not tied to a returning memory. My mornings were becoming more difficult as I found myself eating crackers at my bedside and fighting through a malaise just to get out of bed before noon. In the afternoons, the nausea would often subside and I would feel decent once again.

Writing has been an important part of my recovery process. I have written letters to open communication between my child and adult parts. I have pages of traumatic memories and sporadic journal entries. My greatest writing attempt has been putting this manuscript together as my own case study. When my mornings continued to grow worse, my therapist suggested another writing exercise. Like

other abuse survivors, my physical symptoms have often masked my emotions. Perhaps there were feelings hiding behind the nausea, feelings that needed to be brought forward and resolved. When faced with my next morning of queasiness, she wanted me to reach for a pen and paper instead of crackers. I was to begin with the sentence "I am feeling..." and just start writing. The results were not at all what I expected.

> July 29, 1995
>
> I am feeling ugly. Like vomit, like garbage that is molding and hideous. I hate myself. Why do I have to go on like this? I am nothing, less than nothing. Like a serpent, slime, slithering where a person should be. I hate myself.
>
> Part of me wants to go on, to reach for Mr. Light. The rest of me knows where I belong - in the darkness, the crevices with the abominations, with the hideous creatures, where there is no light and no hope. That is where I really belong - in the depths of hell.
>
> Don't keep trying to do good. You can't succeed. You are full of failure, full of it. You will mar those around you. From birth you were destined to hell. Claw and climb your way up. Ha! You will never make it. Come enter the depths of hell. The gates are open for you.

I put down the pen and looked back on the words I had written. The level of despair startled me. I questioned where those phrases had come from. Did I really feel that way? No wonder I was having a bad day.

Children in society at large are taught that they are intrinsically good. Children indoctrinated into satanic cults are taught that they are bad. Once that teaching is ingrained, further steps are taken to convince them that they are evil. Not only do they belong *to* the Evil One, but they also belong *with* him. In my father's cult, we children went from bad to evil in simple degrees. Then we graduated to demonic possession.

At one cult meeting, I was given a lovely satin pillow. It was entirely white, small in size with delicately crocheted lace and tiny pearl beads attached to the top side. I was fascinated with the gift and surprised that they would give me something nice. Admiring its beauty, I felt it's smooth softness and hugged it close to my chest.

Holding it next to me was a mistake. Shortly before it had been given to me, I had also been drugged.

> The bad people say the pillow drew the good parts out of my soul when I hugged it next to me. If I let go of the pillow, all the good parts will be gone. I want to keep holding it. They are making me stretch my arms out wide, stretch and stretch. If I want to keep the good parts of me, I have to keep hold of the pillow. If I let my arms go down, I'll drop the pillow. I want to keep the pillow. I want to keep the good parts of me.
>
> My arms hurt and they feel real heavy. I can't keep holding it! I dropped the pillow. Somebody says if I wanted to hold on to the good parts enough I would have, but I didn't. The Evil One doesn't like the good parts, so they're burning the pillow. [Crying] Now all that's left of me is the bad. That's what the Evil One wants. I could have held on to the good if I really wanted to, but I didn't.

I actually felt I had lost a part of myself with that pillow. Convinced that the good parts of my soul were gone, I was ready for the next step in the indoctrination process. Now I could be persuaded that I was evil. I belonged to the Evil One and was possessed by his demons. In another lesson, I accepted the following philosophy.

> Demons are bad spirits. They get inside you when you get mad and fight back. The Evil One wants you to fight back so lots of them can get inside. They stay there forever and you are bad forever. You do exactly what the Evil One says 'cause they make you do it. Demons make you bad deep inside where no one can reach to get it out. No matter what you do, you belong to the Evil One. You can't get away. They'll find you. They are stronger and smarter than anybody.
>
> Don't get mad. Don't fight back. They'll slide inside of you and you can't get them out, not ever. I am already bad inside. Even if I only do good things, I am already bad. It's too late for me to be good inside. All the good things I do can't make me good, 'cause I'm already filled with bad.

The cult instructors told us that the Evil One was a master demon who led a legion of lesser demons. I knew they were creatures of darkness and great evil. They held the power.

As a mother, I have tried to bolster my children's self-esteem. As a Christian, I have taught them that they are inherently good, precious children of God. I could teach it to my children, but I always wondered why I could not accept that goodness as a part of myself. As I examined the cult teachings, I recognized one statement in particular: *All the good things I do can't make me good, 'cause I'm already filled with bad.* I had worked fervently all my adult life to do enough good deeds that I could ultimately like myself, but I had never quite succeeded. Now that I was aware of the cult teachings and the existence of Lil' Jeanie, I could finally reach back to that child level and re-educate myself. I began writing letters to Lil' Jeanie and the child in me responded:

> Dear Big Jeanne,
>
> I can be good deep inside me. Jerry says so. He made a prayer just for me, to make them go. He says they can't stay 'cause Mr. Light is there and they can't be where Mr. Light is. Jerry says demons don't get inside 'cause you fight back. I want to be good, then if I make mistakes, Mr. Light can forgive me and I can be good again. I don't want to be bad. I choose good and I can have it 'cause Jerry says I can. I want to feel good deep inside me. L.J.

Obviously, Jerry's prayer had made a better impression than my letters. Nevertheless, the messages were getting through. No demons were hiding inside the deep recesses of my body. I could be good deep inside me.

Demonic possession is not the subject matter of light conversation. When I decided to research the subject and requested a book at the library, even the resource attendant looked at me with trepidation. I learned that many non-Western civilizations have accepted the existence of possessing spirits, both benevolent and evil. The *Bible* relates incidents where evil spirits were cast out of those possessed. Here in the United States, we generally look upon demonic possession as medieval superstition. It makes for a scary tale and comes up in ghost stories and horror movies. Most folks remember the movie, *The Exorcist*, where Catholic priests attempted to relieve a young girl of an evil spirit through the rites of exorcism. It was a movie I didn't care to see. In our sophisticated age, we tend

to look at even the most bizarre behaviors and frame them under the scope of mental illness. After all, we are progressive thinkers. Demonic possession doesn't fit into our frame of reference. It didn't fit in mine either, until the traumatic memories returned.

Birthdays were important in the cult and a reason for celebration. On one of my birthdays, the following *birthnight* ceremony was performed. The year was 1958.

> Today I am 10 years old. It was my birthday. Tonight is my birthnight. They are different. Tonight we celebrate for the Evil One by giving birth to one of his demons.
>
> I am at the place with the bad people. I am laying down and they are all around me. Oh, I don't want to be here. They are putting something inside me, down there. It hurts really bad. I'm suppose' ta keep it inside until it's ready to come out in its true form. Not in a body like us.
>
> Somebody says this is how the Evil One brings his demons to earth. He does it through his followers who have been consecrated to him. They give birth to his demons on their birthnights.
>
> I don't want to give birth to a demon. It hurts my tummy. I can't stop moving, twisting. I want it out of me. Get it out! Make it stop! Make it stop! They are saying words, "Bread and water, bread and water, hate the one, but love the other. Love the one, but hate the other."

I don't know what was placed inside of me, but it was agonizingly painful. I did not recall the rest of the words or how the ceremony concluded. As I dealt with the emotions from this particular memory and thought it out in my mind, the adult me still assumed that demons were mythical creatures used to terrify children and ensure their obedience. After the next traumatic memory, my opinion began to change.

> We are going to another meeting with the bad people. I don't want to go. I don't want to be there. They want me to put on a robe, but I tell them, "No." I'm standing in the back corner. I just want to leave.
>
> They are making me go up front. I'm suppose' ta watch and learn. They are standing around a table, the altar table. There is a little animal on the table. Not real little like a hamster, like a lamb. It is upside down. Its tummy is showing.

The man is drawing a picture on the tummy with a knife, near the heart. I think it is a star. The lines are red 'cause he cuts a little through the skin. Then he lifts the knife up high. I don't remember the words. He pushes the knife down through the middle of the star and the heart. He's starting to take it apart. He needs the parts. I see him twist off a front leg. Then he twists off the head at its neck. There are inside parts too.

The people carry the parts over to the circle on the floor. There is another star. They put the parts a certain way to make a picture. It doesn't mean anything to me. I don't want to sit in the circle, but I have to. They start saying words.

They are calling the Evil One to come and see what they did for him. They want him to come. My tummy is feeling sick. Oh, I feel sick. Everything feels dark and heavy, like something is inside the circle. Then it goes away.

They are all happy and smiling. They are saying it worked. Please let me go home now.

There was a heaviness inside the circle that is hard to describe, a thickness in the air that made it difficult to breathe. It was cold and at the same time, sticky and oppressive. While I felt sick to my stomach, others in the group appeared quite joyful. They had also felt a dark presence, but they were pleased.

I can not explain the nature of evil spirits. I can only relate the events I experienced as a child. The presence in that room was not a parlor trick. It was real. Do such spirits take possession of people? I believe they can. At yet another cult meeting, I was taken to the table and offered to the Evil One. I was familiar enough with the ceremony to have some idea of what was going to happen to me. As I dealt with the traumatic memory, the terror surfaced quickly.

Gotta stay away from the table! Don't go near it! No! No! No! I gotta tell, huh Jerry? It's time to tell and I'm scared. I don't want to face it again. It's okay to tell now. Oh, maybe it's not. I'm scared to tell. [Crying]

JERRY: It's okay, Jeanie, you can tell now.

I'm terrible scared. It's at the table. Don't make me go to the table! Please, I don't wanna go! Mr. Light will help me. He won't make me go. He won't make me do that. Please, don't make me go to the table!

With an adult on each arm, I was led to the altar. My attempts to get away became more and more frantic. In a frenzied state, I began vomiting and choking. Before we reached the altar, I lost consciousness. In those moments, Mr. Light appeared to me.

I don't want to go to the table. I told them, but they don't care. They want me to go, so they make me. Please don't make me go with them. I want to go with you, okay? I'm not gonna go with them...Huh? I don't ever want to go with them...I want to go with you. I go with you, okay? Oh please, don't make me go with them. [Whimpering]

I don't understand. I would like to understand, but I don't. I want to go where it's warm and it's safe and people don't hurt people no more. I just want to go and be with you...I would be very good...I don't want to stay here with them. I don't like them. I don't like what they do. Please let me come...I don't know what they're gonna do. I don't want to know...I know it's bad...I don't want to be there...Please let me come. I'll be good. I won't be no problem.

JERRY: What is he saying, Jeanie?

I gotta stay. I gotta stay, but the Evil One can't take me, even if he tries he can't take me, 'cause I belong to Mr. Light. I wanna belong to Mr. Light forever and ever. I wanna go, but I gotta stay. I belong to Mr. Light and he'll take care of me, but he won't take me with him. [Crying] He wants me to remember someday, so I hafta go through it. But he'll be with me, all the time he'll be with me.

JERRY: What does he want you to remember?

He wants me to remember what they're going to do. He wants me to remember someday so I can tell people it really happens. He wants me to help the children. Oh, but I want to go with him. I don't want to go through it. I don't want to go to the table.

I can't move. I can't go. Oh, I hafta go back, but he'll be with me. He won't let them take me. I belong to him, I can do anything. I can be strong. I can be brave. I won't be by myself. Someday I gotta remember and I gotta tell. [With sarcasm] People won't believe me, but I gotta tell. [Intake of breath, deep breathing, coughing}

They're saying she's back, she just passed out. Mr. Light is with me, so I can do this. I can't see him, but he's in my heart. I can go to the table, but I don't want to. Daddy, please don't make me go to the table. They're putting me on the table.

[Moaning] They can't make me one of them. I belong to Mr. Light.

As I lay on the altar, the moaning increased. I faintly repeated the words, "He who lays on this altar is given to him who is..." and the rest of the phrase trailed off into quiet. Slowly I started moving on the table, twisting and contorting, my arms flailing around me. As my movements increased in intensity, low guttural hissing noises came from my throat. The sounds grew into rasping tones, almost a growl. In a voice that was not mine, I began laughing,

HA! HA! HA! THE POWER IS MINE! IT'S MINE! I RULE!

Then everything became quiet once again. As Jerry and I worked through the traumatic memory, the next voice was that of the adult me.

My arms won't move. Move them for me, Jerry, so I can talk more easily. Lil' Jeanie is still asleep, I think, a trance or whatever. They put her on the table. The one on the table is, I'm trying to remember the word, *offering* to the Evil One, to the all powerful, to be possessed. It's hard to breathe, my chest feels very heavy. My arms don't move.

I was terrified to be given to him, offered to him. I'm all right, I belong to Mr. Light. [Crying in relief] Oh, Jerry, I was so scared. They didn't take my soul. I thought they could, but they can't. They couldn't make me like them. Mr. Light wouldn't let them. Lil' Jeanie's starting to wake up.

In the next few moments, I began moaning softly and trying to move. The transition back to the Lil' Jeanie came quickly.

JERRY: Where is she waking up at?

I'm not sure yet...

[Transition] They are lifting me off of the table, going someplace else, on the floor somewhere. Oh, my tummy's starting to hurt again. You won't leave me alone to remember will you, Jerry?

JERRY: No, Jeanie, I'm right here.

I'm trying to sit up, but it's real hard. I feel terrible sick. I keep trying to get up, but I can't do it. They're leaving me

alone. They're doing something else right now. I'm too sick to get away. I'm terrible hot, can't move very good. My body won't cooperate. I feel awful, Jerry.

I guess I agree with Lil' Jeanie. Okay, Mr. Light, I'll tell people about this experience, but they're sure not going to believe me. I do recognize that if we can invite the Holy Spirit of God to guide us and dwell within us, then there may well be other less holy spirits who are waiting to be invited or forced upon us. I'm grateful we tape-recorded this traumatic memory. Perhaps the best way to believe this episode is to listen to it directly. The memory was recorded approximately thirty-five years after the actual event, yet it is obvious that the rasping voice was not mine.

It has been one of the hardest times of my life as I have worked through the repressed memories these past two years. While the Mr. Light memories have been a joy, the other memories have incredibly despairing. I rarely touch a little child without breaking into tears. Yet through it all, I have had the love and support of my present day family. At the worst of times, I have also received notes and gifts from friends offering me hope. They have reminded me that there are indeed kind and loving people in this world. Some people have no idea what to say to me. I hope they know I have appreciated every smile.

My daughter, Joy, left home to go to college two years ago. A month after her departure, we dealt with the first traumatic memories. Joy has returned each summer and found herself living with a very different mother than she remembers as a child. She has helped me deal with dreadful memories, given me a shoulder to cry on and even coaxed me out of my safe bedroom corner. At those times, she has become the nurturing mother as I have withdrawn back into a terrified eleven year-old. It's a wonder she keeps coming home.

At the beginning of her sophomore year, Joy mailed me a package. It contained the baby blanket I had sewn for her many years before. It had been her cherished companion throughout childhood, so much so that she had even carted it off to college. It came with a note.

Mom,

Now the time has come that I must turn my most precious blanket over to you. It is not sent home to be put in my treasure box though, that is not how blankey is to be cared for. Why? Because this blankey is extra special. It lasted through the most difficult part of my childhood and is still in top rate condition to continue its job. This blankey, made by loving, caring hands, can withstand the greatest foe. It has protected me from crocodiles under my bed. It has kept out the lights when they were painful and it has come back to the crying child I became every single time it was lost. Now I place this sacred treasure in your hands.

The instructions to this wonder blanket are simple: Take care of it and protect it and it will always protect and take care of you. You are invincible in its protection. If you are lonely or blue, wrap it around you and you can feel its love caress you. At these times, hold it and let it hold you. It's a part of me and only wants to comfort you and let you know everything is all right. I love you, Mom, and hope that you understand how much. I wish I could take all of the pain away, but I know I cannot. Hold it in your arms and know that I love you,

JoJo

I have taken good care of that blanket and followed Joy's instructions attentively. When I snuggle with her blankey, I am not thinking about demonic possession or satanic ritual abuse. Instead of anguish, I am feeling her love. Mr. Light has instructed me to tell people about these crimes. With that kind of support, how could I possibly fail?

Chapter Eleven: A Foiled Kidnapping

She's a pretty one. Look at her,
blonde hair and blue eyes....Aryan.
- Grand Ultima

H. W. Harkness Elementary School was a short walk from my parents' home. The first year I attended there, the third and fourth grade classes were small enough to be held in one room with a shared teacher. The southern part of Sacramento was a preferred area at that time, brand new and growing with select home developments. Our subdivision was called *Golf Course Terrace*. A golf course named after Bing Maloney separated a growing tract of houses from the runways at the Sacramento Municipal Airport. As the vacant lots filled in with new homes and families, our school classes grew in size. By 1959, there were two sixth grade classes.

The elementary school children were a composite of the new families who had moved into the area. Most of us kids had bicycles. We would meet together at the vacant lots to play. We'd jump on boards at the construction sites and pretend they were balance beams. Pogo sticks and hoola hoops were the rage. In the summers, we would ride our bikes through the outdoor school corridors and have races around the playground. On the first day of each school year, my friend Claire would throw up on her desk. It was tradition. The popular girls wore poodle skirts with overflowing slips. We played jacks and marbles before school and during recess. Everyone wanted to win purees and boulders.

In the spring of 1960, the PTA put together a float and the sixth graders marched in the Camellia Day Parade. Sixth grade was the highest elementary level, so we were the big kids that year. We took turns helping out as cafeteria monitors and crossing guards. Some of us assisted in the school office, others got to be class

monitors. Except for my school attendance records, there is nothing to pinpoint my childhood as anything other than ordinary. No hospital records remain that can attest to my injuries or abuse. I was just another student with a poor attendance record. My participation grew worse each passing year. The last quarter of my sixth grade term, I missed six out of nine weeks of school. My friend Claire would drop off my weekly homework assignments at my parents' front door. When she inquired about me, Claire was told that I was too ill to see any visitors. I completed my assignments and somehow graduated with A's and B's on my report card.

My health was genuinely poor, but it was not a mere case of croup or the flu. Not only was I suffering from the abuses of the ritual activities, the miscarriage also occurred about this time. I had not succeeded in pleasing my father with my indoctrination into the cult. I had failed my training in one cult-imposed role after another, so my father made other plans for me. Events unfolded that kept me at home and confined to my bedroom.

My father wished to advance to a higher position of power within the cult organization. In some cults, couples are asked to sacrifice the life of their first born infant as proof of their commitment. When my father began dabbling in the cult activities, his children were older so that option was not available to him. I believe my father planned to show his dedication to the organization and improve his status by sacrificing me in another way. If my mother had not intervened, my father would have succeeded in his plans.

In the early months of 1960, my father took me before a council of high priests. He called them, "The Twelve." They served as a governing body at some level within the cult organization. I sensed my father's exhilaration. I knew the visit was important, but I had no idea why. I later learned that he wished to have me accepted as a "candidate." I suspect he needed their approval as a first step in the admittance process. The room was large and at a different location than our usual meetings.

> Daddy is taking me to see the Twelve. We are going into a big room. The tie is around my neck and my wrists. Men are sitting in chairs at a long table. I am told to kneel before

them. I can not look at their faces 'cause the power of the Evil One shows through their eyes. They are his Twelve, his High Priests. I am on the floor. As my hands are pulled apart, I choke and cough.

They come together for evil purposes. For their sacrament, they drink the blood and for the body, they eat little girls that tell. I won't tell and I won't look at their faces. The three with the most power are going to hurt me. They are the ones with the most evil.

They are gathering in a circle around me. I see the bottoms of their robes and their hairy legs and feet. Somebody says, "Remember to stay away from the Twelve." They come together to serve evil purposes. They will hurt you. Don't look at their faces. Don't talk.

They say over and over, "Keep your face to the floor. You are trash." I feel like trash all the way through me. The three are chosen to hurt me. I can't look. I can't make them stop.

Within the next month, we returned to the same location and met with the Grand One, the Ultima. My father was almost agitated in his excitement. Whatever it took, he wanted to impress this man. My father was certain this visit would eventually bring him the rank he wanted and deserved. He would work his way up the levels of order until he became the Keeper, the one who held the secrets. We arrived at the block building and walked down a dark hallway. There a man instructed us to put on robes before entering the room where we would meet the Grand One.

Daddy is bringing me to meet the Grand One, the Ultima. He has the power. He is sitting at a table when we walk in. There is a dark curtain behind the table. He is wearing a mask with a hood over his face so we can't tell who he is. Daddy and I are wearing robes, but not any masks.

Daddy is telling him about me. He wants to impress him with me so I can be accepted, admitted. He wants me to be a candidate. Daddy is talking about my training. He is telling the man I am 12 years old, but I'm not, not yet.

The man is standing up. He says, "She is a pretty one. Look at her, blonde hair and blue eyes. *Aryan*. She could be a good breeder." He is walking over to me. Please don't let him touch me. I don't want to be pretty. He's touching my hair.

He tells Daddy to leave the room so he can test my training. He wants to make sure I know my place. I don't want

him to touch me and hurt me. Daddy is leaving. Oh, he's going to hurt me. He's hurting me. I feel the pain, but I can't say anything 'cause I know my place. I know I hafta do it.

As I dealt with the memory, the sequence concluded with the trauma of his attack. I was finally able to let go of the tears and screams that I had held inside long ago.

The term "Aryan" originally applied to a tribe of blonde-haired, blue-eyed people that existed in Europe in ancient times. It was used by Adolph Hitler to denote his proposed master race of blonde-haired Caucasians who were destined to rule the world. Today the word "Aryan" is most often associated with white supremacist groups such as the Aryan Brotherhood. The term "breeder" has other implications. Researching cult-imposed roles, its definition became clear. I also recognized other cult roles given to children as I read from *Safe Passage to Healing*:

> Even those groomed for power (high priest/priestess) remain powerless...Children groomed for teachers/trainers/ programmers may receive special training in psychology or education; children groomed for security roles may receive special training in forensic sciences and knowledge of criminal investigations. Other roles may include that of caregiver to newly inducted cult children; custodians to store and transport cult paraphernalia. These people have the critical role of cleanup without leaving evidence of a ritual...
>
> Some difficult roles for survivors to resolve may include breeder, recruiter, slave, and slayer. Breeders are routinely impregnated to bear infants or fetuses for cult ceremonies. Recruiters are taught to entice new recruits for the group or victims for cult ceremonies. (Recruiters may also be young children who are used to entice other young children for abduction.) Slaves are used for continued torture, degradation, and humiliation. The slayer's job is to perform cult killings.

My high priestess role had ended the night the black man was burned at the stake. On another occasion, I had been instructed to observe and learn how to put the smaller children in boxes, but I could not bear to watch or participate. Cult members had used me as a recruiter to bring a cult child to the front of the room. Faced with that prospect, I had ruined the ceremony. I had been given an infant girl

to care for as the altar was prepared for her sacrifice and I had begged them to spare her. After all of my failures, there was still a cult role for me. I was Aryan and could bear infants to be used for cult purposes. I would make a good breeder.

We continued to recover pieces of this memory for yet another week. I suspected there was more to tell, my symptoms of nausea and jitteriness were increasing. For some reason, I could only deal with small parts of it at a time.

> I am still there, in the room with the man. I don't want to remember this anymore. My daddy is coming back in the room. The man has instructions for my daddy. Daddy is suppose' ta keep me in my room, like I'm sick. He says, "Isolated." In three nights, they will come for me. Daddy needs to give them twelve hundred dollars when they come. They are going to take me to Toronto as a breeder, Aryan.
>
> He says my daddy isn't supposed to tell anybody that I'm gone. After a while, my mommy and daddy can make up any story they want. They can say I was a bad girl and I ran away. There has been a rash of child kidnappings, so they can say I was kidnapped. When they tell the story, I will already be long gone and far away. Nobody will ever know what happened to me.

The child me had no notion where Toronto might be located. I only knew it was somewhere far away and that I would never be coming back home. Home was not a terrific place, but it represented security. Toronto was a space of utter emptiness. When my father and I came back to our house, I listened to my parents' discussion.

> Daddy is telling Mommy that the men are going to come for me and take me to Toronto. She has to keep me in my room. Daddy can come up with some of the money. He is going to borrow the rest from John.
>
> My mommy says she'll be glad when I'm gone. Once and for all, it will be over with. She never wanted me anyway. No one will care.

When my father went to work the next day, I remained at home and isolated in my bedroom. Away from my father's presence, my mother changed her point of view and told me what she intended

to do. It came as a total to surprise to me. My mother wanted to keep me.

> Mommy says Scott is weak since he had polio, so they wouldn't want him. But I didn't have polio. Maybe if I was really sick, they wouldn't want me. Don't tell Daddy. If I'm really sick, maybe they won't take me.
>
> My mommy wants me! At least she says she does right now. I'm not sure she'll keep wanting me. *But my mommy wants me!* [Crying] I didn't know my mommy wants me.
>
> Mommy's going to give me a shot to make me really sick. She says I may die, but if I do I'll be better off. It will give me fits. She'll keep giving me shots until the men come. They won't want a child with fits.
>
> *Mommy says, "Don't tell Daddy. Don't tell Daddy. He'll kill us both and it won't be pretty." I won't tell, Mommy. I won't tell.*

My elation overshadowed the seriousness of the situation. The shots were a secondary concern. I felt like rejoicing. My mommy wanted to keep me.

As I dealt with the next portion of the memory, strange physical symptoms surfaced quickly and with an acute intensity. My body shook all over. My hands contorted and my head jerked about wildly. When the movements subsided, I was left feeling miserable, stiff and sore. As both parts of me battled with a throbbing headache, Lil' Jeanie continued with the story.

> The men came, but they wouldn't take me. They need healthy ones for breeders. They wanted the money anyway, 'cause they came. Daddy is awful mad. He says even if he can convince them to come back again, that I'm healthy, how can he raise another twelve hundred dollars?

The odd movements went away, but my headache remained. This repressed memory was surfacing in very small pieces as if parts were being blocked and not allowed to come forward. Obviously, I was the one doing the blocking and I wondered why. I had another problem. Jerry was leaving for an out-of-town business meeting and would be gone for a week. I didn't have the desire or the fortitude to face a repressed memory alone.

The same morning Jerry left for the airport, I knew I was in trouble. My headache was increasing and I recognized the signs of a forthcoming migraine attack. A few months before, I had celebrated my one-year-without-a-migraine anniversary and I had commemorated the occasion by throwing out all my prescription medicines. I should have waited for my two-year anniversary. I suspected that the traumatic memory was responsible for my present condition and I debated whether or not to phone a friend for help. It was one thing to ask my husband to assist with the memories, it was quite another to impose such a harrowing ordeal on a friend. After I began vomiting, I made the call.

My friend Marcia arrived within the hour. I was lying on the bed, trying to remain motionless and stay the vomiting. The pain in my head was excruciating. All Marcia had to do was take my hand and I was ready to continue the memory.

> Daddy's coming into my room. He wants to know how I got sick. Did Mommy give me something? I say, "No, Daddy. Mommy didn't." He's mad at me. He lifts me up. He's going to put me in the box. He's twisting my arm really hard. I don't want to go in the box. He's terrible mad. I'm scared. I don't want to tell Daddy.
>
> Don't tell Daddy. Don't tell Daddy. Don't tell Daddy...

I mumbled those words for twenty minutes over and over again, "Don't tell Daddy. Don't tell Daddy." My body shook. I agonized with the pain in my head, but I couldn't go on. Once again I was blocking the memory. Gradually I began crying and then broke into sobs. Finally I was able to face what I had done.

> I didn't tell. I didn't tell. No! No! I didn't. Oh please, no. [Screaming] I did! I told on my mommy. No! I was terrible scared. I told Daddy, "Mommy gave me medicine in a shot."
>
> Daddy is going after Mommy. I hear noises. I go out of my room. Daddy is in the kitchen by the table. He is standing over Mommy with a board. She lies down. Blood is coming out on the floor, like it did for the lamb. I think Daddy killed her like she said he would. Daddy killed her and it's my fault! I told on my mommy!

Marcia: Jeanie, your Daddy didn't kill your mother. Go on.

Daddy says, "Mommy's a drunk. She fell down and hurt herself."

I say, "No, Daddy. I saw. I saw you hit her with the board." He's coming after me. He's dragging me to my room, into the closet. He kicks me hard in my tummy.

He yells at me, "You didn't see anything! You didn't hear anything! You stinking bitch! Your mommy fell down and hurt herself and you're staying in this closet and never coming out."

He slams the door shut. I stay in a ball on the floor.

The episode was over at last. The tension in my body began to ease, but I was too far into the migraine attack to stop the vomiting on my own. After so many hours, dehydration was also a valid concern. We made a doctor's appointment. With Marcia on one side and my good friend Pat on the other, we made our way into the doctor's office. This migraine was a bit more peculiar than previous episodes I had experienced. Now that Lil' Jeanie had returned, it wasn't only the adult me who was visiting the doctor. Lil' Jeanie believed it was her job to take on the pain. Triggered by the headache, I began switching back and forth. One moment I was whispering like an adult with an aching head and the next, I was shaking like a frightened child terrified at the very thought of being touched by a strange man.

My two dear friends kept their guard positions all the way into the examination room. Once the doctor arrived, they took turns describing my physical symptoms to him. He listened attentively and inspected my eyes. When he decided I needed an injection to ease the attack, Pat requested that a woman give me the shot. A nurse would be fine. The doctor looked a bit befuddled, but then he complied. I breathed a sigh of relief. By that evening, I was able to drink liquids and keep them down. I was much improved, thanks to the help of my remarkable friends.

My father's scheme had failed. The men had taken his money, but they had not taken me. Little else changed. My mother and I recuperated from our injuries, but there was no mother-daughter bonding between us. The abuse at home continued. My father dominated everyone and in his absence, I received the brunt of my mother's brutal tirades. I had somehow managed to get myself born and by doing so, I had ruined her life. My brother ignored

everything, including my pleas for help. The cult meetings resumed. The only discernible change was in me. I had witnessed a miracle. Someone as lowly as my mother had thwarted my father's plans. She had saved me from Toronto. My suspicions were aroused. Perhaps my father's power was not as omnipotent as I had previously believed. The seed of rebellion had been planted.

> Mommy slapped me. I told her people come in the night and hurt me and Daddy hurts me. She said never to repeat such a terrible thing and I'm a liar. I'm not. And I don't think there are bad dreams anymore either.
>
> They're the liars. They're the bad ones. Everybody bigger than me is bad. Mommy, Daddy, Scotty and everybody. None of them are nice to me, none of them. I hope it's okay to hate them sometimes. None of them care about me, never did.
>
> Big people think kids don't matter 'cause they're little and you can treat them like trash. They think they can do whatever they want to little kids and those little kids will forget. They can tell the little kids that it's bad dreams and they did it to themselves. *They are all liars!*
>
> It's not okay to hurt little kids. I gotta make 'em stop, gotta figure out how. It's not just me, they hurt other little kids too. I don't know how to stop grown-ups. They don't believe me. They tell Daddy on me 'cause they're all grown-ups, that's why. They get big and then they get bad. They don't listen to kids. They think you're stupid and you make up stories. I gotta do something, just don't know what. I hate 'em. I hope that's okay.

It didn't take long before my defiance became vocal. It was a dangerous practice to display my disobedience at the cult meetings, but I was quickly growing out of control. In one cult lesson, I not only refused to participate, but I argued with the instructor. Although punished for my actions, I remained defiant to the end. It felt wonderful! This traumatic memory was not tape-recorded. It was journaled shortly after the memory concluded, written by Lil' Jeanie. With close inspection, it is possible to see how the blending of the two of us had progressed from the previous year.

> It was a hurting game. It was the same lesson as before with the little ones. I didn't cooperate, so they took me out of the game. They wanted me to say, "Hurt somebody else." It would

feel good 'cause I wasn't hurting, but it would be my fault that somebody else got hurt. That way it would feel good to hurt other people.

It was my turn for the hurting. I'm not sure how. My tummy was hurting really bad and I was terrible scared. They were going to bring something in and "do it to me."

The lady asked me if I wanted them to hurt me or somebody else. I told her I didn't want to hurt anybody. She said, "Then you want the hurting? It's your choice." *I told her I thought I didn't have any choices, only the Evil One has choices.* She tried to say it was my decision. I told her that I didn't want anybody to get hurt.

The lady said it was a lesson and it was necessary. So what was my decision? Did I want it or did I want someone else to get the hurting? *I said again that I didn't want anybody to get hurt and they were a bunch of STUPIDS 'cause they like to hurt kids. I called them STUPIDS 'cause they liked it when I said I hated them, but I didn't think they would like being called STUPIDS.*

Somebody said, "It's not working." They took me out of the game. They tied my hands and feet. They hung me upside down. They said that after I hung upside down for a little bit, blood would come out my ears and my nose and my mouth and I wouldn't be able to breathe. *That didn't happen either.*

I felt the power. I hope they weren't tricking me. It felt like good power 'cause I didn't want to hurt anybody. It felt good to call them STUPIDS and say, "Don't hurt anybody."

Big Jeanne never likes to hurt anybody. She doesn't even like to hurt their feelings. She is real careful not to hurt anybody. I think that's 'cause she didn't, I didn't, want to be like them. They are bad and stupid and they shouldn't hurt anybody, especially kids.

I had stood up to the bad people and succeeded. The experience had an intoxicating affect on me. I had felt my own measure of power. They had been unaware of my newly acquired arrogance and my disobedience had caught them unprepared. My victory was short-lived, however, as I was exceedingly out-matched. Another lesson was arranged for me. We all knew that I would refuse to participate. The set-up was carefully planned and executed. It left me crushed in ways the adult me does not choose to explain. I have left the scenario as it was journaled by Lil' Jeanie.

We had to play the contortion game. There were ropes and pulleys and something that could lift you off the ground. That's what the game is. You get hurt, then you hurt the next person smaller than you.

My arm was twisted under me. It hurt really bad, all my arms and legs did. Then they took me down and it was my turn to hurt somebody else. I was on the floor. I couldn't move my arms or legs for awhile. I knew I wasn't going to play the stupid game and hurt the next person. They knew I wasn't going to play their stupid game too. I just wasn't going to hurt somebody littler than me.

So they did a really awful thing to me. It's even hard to say it or write it down. They called me a dog, a bitch. They put a collar on my neck and a leash on that. I was on the floor like a dog. They brought in a big black male dog behind me. They put his front paws on top of my back. They did other things to him so he would act like a boy dog on top of a girl dog.

I don't want to talk about the rest. I want to scream, "I am not a dog!" I would tell them how much it hurt my heart and all of me, but they would be glad. They want to hurt me every way they can. Other things hurt in different ways. I don't know how to say about this. I just want to scream and cry, "I am not a dog!"

I suspect this was the last cult meeting I ever attended. It was a measure of my strength that I had survived that long. Degradation after degradation had been heaped upon me. I felt betrayed by everyone close to me, even my Mr. Light refused to take me home to his warm, safe place. I had managed to tap into the *good* power and had used it against the bad people, then in one fell swoop it was lost. I had endured all that I could.

Rage surged inside me. Like a storm, violent and brewing, it churned into hate. If they hurt me again, I would kill them and I didn't care if they killed me. I wasn't going to take it anymore. I was a child out of control.

Chapter Twelve: The Seed of Rebellion

...Would rather die. Must get out.
Is the only way I can be free.
- Lil' Jeanie

Sirens have always made me cry. Fire, ambulance or police, the kind of siren doesn't seem to matter. My reaction is instantaneous. A deep sadness overcomes me and I fight back the tears. Long ago I decided my reaction must be due to my compassionate nature. A siren means that somewhere, someone is hurting or in trouble. It never occurred to me that other compassionate people don't react as I do. As a young adult, I caused an automobile accident in my panic to veer out of the way of an upcoming siren. After the crash, an ambulance came up along side the cars and then sped off into the night.

On a bright sunny day after Lil' Jeanie had returned, Jerry and I stood near the crosswalk of a busy intersection. As we waited at the corner for the street light to change, we heard the noise of a siren coming from several blocks away. Looking down the road, we saw a huge red fire engine heading our direction. The traffic stopped as cars moved out of its way. Pedestrians watched from the sidewalks. As the truck came closer, its blaring volume grew deafening. I slid behind Jerry and hid as fear enveloped me. Tears streamed down my face. After the fire engine went by, everything returned to normal, everything except me. When it was our turn to cross the street, Jerry needed to take me by the arm in order to get me to budge. I was paralyzed with fear. In those few moments, I had remembered.

> My daddy says once you've been in a jacket, they know you are crazy and they watch you. If you do anything bad, they

will turn on their sirens and come looking for you. When they find you, they will take you away.

A straitjacket is used to restrict the movements of people who may be dangerous to themselves or others. It is an overgarment made of sturdy cloth, fitted to restrain the arms and upper body. Its use is most often associated with people who are patients or prisoners. Sometimes those patients are children who are out of control.

The repressed memories of my suicide attempt at age eleven returned early in the process of my recovery. The emotional trauma was great, but not nearly as brutal as the ritual abuse experiences. For several months, Jerry and I had worked through memories that chronicled the physical and sexual abuse of my early childhood. We had tape- recorded almost one hundred memories and those seemed reason enough for my rage. At the end of the recording of the suicide episode, Jerry's voice can be heard with his words of encouragement, "Jeanne, this has got to be the end. We're finally done!" At least two hundred and fifty more traumatic memories awaited us. The satanic ritual abuse began with tape #107.

By the time of my suicide attempt, my rage had become all consuming. I no longer cared what happened to me. I was fighting back to the bitter end. I targeted my mother as the first victim of my counterattack. She wasn't quite as frightening as the rest of my enemies and it made sense to take on my weakest opponent first. As I considered my plans for revenge, my thoughts were laced with venom. When *mother dear* came into my bedroom that night, I would be waiting for her.

I'm not going to let them hurt me anymore. I'm going to stop them. I can stop my mommy. I don't know if I can stop my daddy. I'm not going to be a baby anymore. I'll hit her back. I'll yell back at her and throw her out of my room. Whatever she does to me, I'll do it back. I won't feel what they do to me, so I can do it back. I was little and I didn't know how to fight back, but I don't care now so they can't hurt me.

I hate the way she stands in my doorway with her cigarette. When she burns me, I'll burn her back. I won't be scared anymore. I hear them. They're not very loud yet. I'm gonna kill her. I'll fight 'em both. They're going to have to pay for what they did to me. Just let her open that door. Come on in

here, mother dear. You're not going to be pulling me around and sticking me in the closet. I'm not going to try hiding from you anymore. I'm going to be coming after *you*!

Hello, Mother...You just try. I dare you. You're the slut, the trash, not me. Come and show me how you beat up on little kids. Show me what a tramp you are. You're the witch, the trash, the brat. You're the one who wants attention from people, poor you. You lie, you're the liar. You can't hurt me anymore. I won't let you. You just try. Just bring that cigarette over. Come on, I dare you. You know you want to. You like burning little kids. Come on in, you coward. You're not much of a mother, you just take care of yourself. I dare you to come over here.

My mother took the bait and came into my bedroom. My fear of being burned no longer kept me at bay. When she poised her cigarette as a threat against me, a skirmish ensued. I grabbed both of her arms and we struggled to a stand off, then she backed off to go tell my father.

Get out of my room or I'll kick you out! Out! I hate you. I really hate you. Get out or I'll take your cigarette and burn *you*. Get out!

She went to get Daddy. She says I need to be punished. I would rather die. I will fight him. They're not going to do this to me anymore. I'm going to face it, not hide. I'm not going to be a baby. I'll stand up when they come. I'll face them both if I have to. I won't let them hold me down and hurt me. I don't care what happens, I won't let them do this to me anymore.

I hear their footsteps. Oh, my stomach hurts. I hear their voices. She's telling him I burned her. I wanted to, but I didn't. She tried to burn me. She's lying to him. She's saying she wants him to come in and hurt me! Oh, how I hate her. I will not let them hurt me anymore. I don't care if they kill me. I'll fight them back. I have to be brave. I've got to stand up to him.

He stood in the hall, a darkened figure filling the doorway. I started wheezing, then caught my breath. My rage overrode my fear, giving me the courage to stand my ground. It was the first and only time in my life that I would ever confront my father. As my words grew louder, so did my convictions. I wasn't going to let him hurt me anymore. Not him or his friends or my mother, none of them were going to hurt me again. He was the liar, not me. He was the bad one,

not me. As I experienced this outburst through the traumatic memory, the adult me felt a sense of fury that I had never encountered before. It was unquestionably rage enough to kill.

In the middle of my railing, my father slammed his fist into my jaw and I crumpled to the floor. My mother came in and seized me by the arms. She held me down while my father raped me. It was a simple matter of control. It was the way he punished me when I needed to learn my lesson. With strips of cloth, they bound my wrists and legs. A gag was placed around my mouth. Then they put me in my bed and walked out of the room.

I had been bound like this several times before. First it had been part of the consequences I had paid for telling a neighbor about an abusive incident. Another time I had developed an excruciating infection. I understood that I had to wait for help until my mother could go to the clinic and get medicine, so I started biting my arms to displace the pain. The symptoms I experienced in that particular memory suggested a urinary infection or some kind of venereal disease. It was classic self-injury and when it returned with the memory, the adult me also felt the incredible urge to bite myself. For the child me, the discomfort had been so intense that I tore through the first set of bandages with my teeth. When I couldn't bite my arms, I bent over and bit my legs. Then I had been tied up mummy-style.

When my confusion lifted after this incident and punishment, I found myself on my bed once again bound and unable to move. Something had been stuffed in my mouth and I couldn't remove it which made talking impossible. Through the process of retrieving the repressed memory, Lil' Jeanie was able to share the thoughts she had at that time. My mouth felt odd as I attempted to speak, but as my adult and child parts worked together, it was possible to do so.

> I can't move very well, I tried but I can't. There's something in my mouth. My feet seem to be tied somehow. I can't stop them. I'm tied up again and I would rather die than let them do this to me again. Oh, how I hate them. I have to remember I don't care so they can't hurt me anymore, but this is the worst, not being able to hurt them back, not being able to do anything.

I got to figure it out. There has to be a way to do something so that I don't go through this again. Got to move, try to get loose, out of my room. Maybe I can roll to the floor and be off the bed. I have to try to get up no matter how much it hurts. If I pull up on my feet, I'll land on my head, but that's better than staying in my bed and waiting for them to hurt me again. I have to try.

[Moaning] Oh, my head hurts from falling off the bed. No, it doesn't really hurt 'cause I won't let them hurt me anymore. One of them is coming in. I hope it's her. I'm going to tell her how I hate her. I'm going to kill her. She can't leave me like this forever. When I get out, I'm going to do all those things she's done to me. I'm going to make her pay. This time I'm going to burn her so it won't be a lie anymore.

It was my mother coming in to check on me. She found me on the floor and for some reason, she released the gag and took the wad of cloth out of my mouth. As I spouted angry words, she started kicking me in retaliation.

I'm not going to be a baby and let you hurt me anymore. Do you hear me? I'm not! [Kick to stomach] You can just kick me or whatever you want 'cause when I get out of this I'm going to do it back to you, every bit of it and more. I'm going to hurt you and burn you and cut off *your* hair. I'm going to throw you in a woodpile and kick you and give you bruises where people can't see. I'm going make you spend the night in a trash can and hurt you in all kinds of places. [Kicked]

I'm going to make you pay. You better watch out in the night, 'cause I'm going after *you!* You'll be half-asleep and you won't know it. So you go right ahead a kick me. It's not going to hurt me whatever you do, 'cause I'm different inside and I'm angry. [Kick to stomach] It's all right. It doesn't hurt. Ha! Go ahead, you can't hurt me, you tramp, you slut. You're a terrible mommy and I hate you.

You can't hurt me and you're not suppose' ta hurt me. You go ahead and cut off my hair and people will know. Someone will ask and this time I'll tell 'em, "My mother cut off all my hair and I'm not lying." You're the liar. You're good at lying, aren't you? You're just worthless. You're not worth nothing. You're dirt, mud and scum. All you care about is yourself and you don't watch after your children. You put me in the trash can, but you're the trash. [Kicked]

She lunged for my head, grasped my mouth and with a struggle, replaced the gag. Taking the blanket off the bed, she threw it over me and left the room.

> She grabbed my mouth and put something in even tighter so I couldn't loosen it and yell at her again. She put a blanket over me and over my head and left me on the floor. I'm starting to panic 'cause I can't breathe. I can only get a little bit of air through my nose. It's getting hot under the blanket around my head. I'm trying to get it off, but it's not working. But I can't just lay here, I won't, I won't let them do this to me anymore.
>
> I have to do something, but I don't know what. If I can't stop them, I really don't care if I can't breathe. Lately it's good if I can't breathe and then they can't hurt me either. If I'm not here, it will stop. I really don't care as long as I can stop them. I'm scared, but I can't stay like this and I don't care if I die. Nothing hurts me now, must remember that. I won't let myself feel the pain.

Lying on the floor, bound and gagged, few options remained for me. I began hitting the back of my head against the floor. When I was younger, I had hit my head as the cult teachers had instructed in order to ease the pain. This time I refused to feel the pain and my intent was suicide. Methodically again and again, I crashed my head into the floor. As we dealt with the memory, Jerry placed soft pillows around me.

> Got to keep doing it. Would rather die. Must get out. Is the only way I can be free. [Moaning] I don't feel the pain. I don't feel the pain. They don't care. They would rather have me gone. Can't stay...
>
> I'm sorry, really sorry. I just can't, I'm sorry. I wanted to be good, to do it right, but I couldn't. I want to die. Oh, please let me die. Please let me go. I can't stand it anymore. I want to go home. If you love me, let me go home.
>
> I'm sorry, I'm not brave and I'm not strong. I'm sorry, I don't want to disappoint you. Oh, please let me die. Please let me come. I'm sorry, I'm not brave and I'm not strong enough to stay ...But I don't feel it. [To Jerry] It's Mr. Light. I don't feel him in my heart. I want him, but I don't feel it. He says I have to open my heart to him and let him stay in there, but I don't know how. I'm sorry. I wanted to do it, but I can't. They're not going to stop. They're never going to stop.

He says, "*Yes, they will, my child, and you can make it because I'll be with you. Open your heart to me, little one. Let me in and I will love you always.*" What am I suppose' ta do, just let them hurt me? Oh, he doesn't understand!

JERRY: What is he saying?

That I'm suppose' ta stay so that I can get strong and then I'll remember a long time away when I have somebody to love me and I'm strong. Then I can be here with the people that need me and the people who love me and I can do good. I wanna, but I can't!

[Crying] He's holding me. He says it's okay to cry and I should cry. Oh, please make 'em stop...He says it hurts him too. Please don't leave me here with them...He says I have to open my heart and he'll be with me. Will it stop soon? He says soon as I forget, it will stop. I wanna forget. I wanna be like the other kids.

It doesn't hurt so much inside my mouth now. I feel calm, peaceful, more tired as if I could sleep even like this. My hands are numb, but I think I can sleep even tied up. A heavy sleep, everything is swirling around me. I am going down into a very deep sleep.

When we returned to the memory with the next sequence, I was starting to wake up. My position on the floor was unchanged. I remained bound and gagged. The back of my head hurt from my neck all the way up to the top of my scalp. Initially, I felt no anger. My ire had been replaced with confusion.

I'm not sure why I'm tied up like this and on the floor. I feel dizzy, confused, not sure about things. I'm sick to my stomach and that's bad 'cause I have something in my mouth. What will happen if I throw up? I feel so sleepy. If I don't move, it doesn't hurt so much.

The gag in my mouth is all wet. I wish I could get it out, but I can't. I must have slobbered or something. I'm very sleepy. The only thing keeping me awake is my tummy. I feel awake, then asleep, then awake. I wonder if someone's going to come in and help me and tell me what I'm doing on the floor.

I can't move or do nothing. I would like to get out of this stuff. My hands are really, really cold. I think somebody's coming. I thought it was my mommy, maybe not. I just can't stay awake. I feel very sleepy, confused.

The gag in my mouth, it's not from slobbering. It's icky. It's blood in my mouth. Somebody's here, but I don't

know who it is. I can't think, talk or even move my eyes. Somebody's here to help me, he's smiling at me. He says, "Talk to me," but I can't. There's a light in my eyes. I'm not sure what he's saying, but he's talking softly. He's not mad at me.

I can't hear him real good. He's putting a blanket over me. I can't move my hands, they're under the blanket, but I don't think he's going to hurt me. I think he's my friend. I'm trying to talk to him, but I can't. Everything's blurry and cold, very cold. He's putting another blanket on me.

There are lights. We're going somewhere. It's really cold. He keeps looking in my eyes. I want to go to sleep, but they don't want me to. He keeps smiling at me, talking. I can't understand him, but he keeps smiling and he tries to pat my hand. He's feeling my arm.

I'm starting to get scared. I don't know where I am or what's going on or even who I am! I don't know nothing. He keeps looking in my eyes. Now he's looking in my mouth. He wants to put something on the side of my mouth, on the inside. He wants to take the blankets off me. I'm scared he's going to hurt me. I won't let him.

Things look funny. We're moving. I don't know where I am. They're putting straps around me. [Crying] I can't see very good. It's all blurry. He wants the blankets again. Oh, please don't take the blankets off me. Please don't hurt me. He's going to let me keep 'em. We're already out of there.There's lots of light. He's smiling at me again, the man with the black belt. I want him to stay with me. He's not going to hurt me. [Sobbing] Please stay, don't let them hurt me.

They don't know what to do with me. They don't know what's wrong with me, why I'm crying so much. They don't understand. [Screaming] There's my daddy! Standing over there. Please, don't let him hurt me! I'm telling my friend, "Oh, please don't let him hurt me." [Hysterical] No, my daddy's here.

He's telling them how I hurt myself. They had to wrap me up so I wouldn't hurt myself more. He's telling them I'm crazy. I did hurt myself. I am crazy. I'm telling my friend, "Please don't leave me with him, okay? He wants to hurt me. He always wants to hurt me." They're going to give me a shot so I don't cry so much and they can see what's wrong with me.

[Later] I don't want to turn around. I don't want to see my daddy. I won't turn over, please don't make me. I did it. I put my head against the floor. I wanted to do it. I can't look at my daddy, I'm ashamed of myself. I really am crazy. I tried to kill myself. I'm crazy.

I have not been able to determine how long I was in the hospital. In the interests of my father's reputation, I doubt that it was very long. My mother used her same old line, she was a nurse and would take care of me at home. I argued that I wanted to stay in the hospital, but I argued as a child. I sincerely hope that with the passing of thirty-five years, today's health professionals are more alert to child abuse indicators and that similar mistakes are no longer made.

I'm cold and shaky. I'm afraid to open my eyes and look where I am. Please don't let me be with them. I want the man to help me, the one with the black belt. I want him to help me be safe and away from my mommy and daddy. I don't care where it is, I don't care if it's with crazy people. I just want to be away from them and safe.

I'm tired and cold, my stomach hurts and I don't want to lay on the back of my head. A doctor is talking to me, he says it will get better when I go home. I tell him it won't get any better, it will be the same. I don't want to go back with them. I'll hurt myself again, I will. I know I will 'cause I can't stand it anymore. *It won't get better and he can't make me open my eyes!*

He thinks my mommy and daddy are nice. They're not nice. Somebody has to believe me, they're not nice! They're only pretending. Maybe they're nice to you, but they're not nice to me! They want to kill me, I know they do. I'm not crazy. Maybe I thought I was, but I'm not. Yes, I did hurt my own head. No, I'm not confused. I couldn't take it anymore. Don't you see they hate me?

Please let me stay here. No, I don't want to see my mommy and daddy. No, they don't want me. No, they don't! Why won't you believe me? She just says that. She doesn't want to take care of me, she just wants to hurt me. I don't want any medicine, I want you to believe me! [Screaming out words] It won't get better!

My mommy and daddy are coming in. I don't want to speak to them and I don't want to look at them. No, don't talk to me. I'm not listening to you. I'm not. You don't love me and you don't want me. You'll only hurt me and you know it! I'm not crazy. I don't just hurt myself. I don't want to go with you.

Oh, please, don't let them take me! [Hysterical] Oh, they don't believe me. I'll do it again. I swear I will! They're saying I'm just putting on a show 'cause I did something bad and

that's why I won't look at my mommy and daddy. They don't understand. *They're not trying to hear me.* The doctor wants me to hug my mommy and daddy and make up. Don't touch me! They don't want to know. I'm not ashamed, I'm only ashamed I didn't die.

Just leave me alone, all of you just leave me alone. My mommy and daddy hate me. They want to kill me and get rid of me. Nobody believes me. Nobody cares. I'll show them, I'll kill myself before they can do it to me. I'll take away all their fun.

With my threats of further self-injury, a straitjacket was fitted to me. After my arms were strapped down, a nurse came in to feed me. I refused all of her requests to eat or drink. When I told her to leave me alone, she called me cranky. She said that she had met my parents and she thought they were wonderful people. She told me that I should be grateful to have them. I wish she could have heard the conversation in the car as my parents and I drove home from the hospital. This part of the traumatic memory was written down, rather than tape-recorded.

I'm wrapped up in a blanket so no one can see the straps, in a wheelchair out to the car. I don't want to be alone with my parents. They're laying me down in the back seat.

My father is driving. He is embarrassed, disappointed, ashamed of me. I will never be Daddy's girl again, not after what I did to him. He has done everything for me. He's given me a home, food, clothes and look what I've done to him in return. I embarrassed him.

Don't I realize how important he is? His position? How did he ever get stuck with a crazy girl for a daughter? No matter how good I am in the future, I will never be good enough. I can never make this up to him.

I should have drowned in the flood [of 1955], my head under the water, gasping for air and stuck, buried in the mud. He would have held my head under until I drown, if he'd known about this.

He should pull the car over and toss me out, high enough so I fall down and land on my head, dead. He'll find just the place. He knows where to stop, where to throw me out. No one will say anything because he's important. He built the freeways, so he can do it if he wants.

He pulls over the car and stops. This is the place. He's going to throw me out. I'm screaming. He grabs me. If I will be

> good, he will hold off for now. I can never be good enough. I am trash, I should have been drown. I can never make it up to him. He will always be disappointed in me, ashamed of me, but he will take me home anyway, if I will straighten up.
>
> We arrive at the house, into the garage. He opens the car door and pulls me out by the hair. He is dragging me into the house. I feel his rage. My body is slamming into things as I'm dragged down the hallway back into my bedroom. I am hysterical.
>
> Jerry grabs my arm to bring me back from the memory.

Once again I was a prisoner in my own bedroom. I had no idea how long my punishment would continue. To a young child, it must have seemed like forever.

When the flooding of repressed memories began, one of the first people I contacted was Claire. She was the kid that threw up on her school desk the first day of fifth and sixth grades. She was the one who got the choir solo I wanted and beat me at hopscotch. She also had many more friends than I did, but most of the time she liked me too. Claire and I became closer friends as we went through junior high and high school together. Our lives took divergent paths as we graduated into adulthood, but through the years we have managed to keep track of each other. Claire loves photography and I have seen her children grow up through the multitude of photos she has stuffed in her Christmas card envelopes each year. I am watching her grandchildren grow up the same way.

When she learned of my difficulties, Claire arranged her schedule and found a few days to fly out to Pennsylvania to be with me. Although we had never discussed it as children, I knew that she and her family had been aware of my parents' alcoholism. It was my hope that she might remember some situation or oddity that would validate the reality of these grim experiences from my past. After Claire arrived for her short visit, it was hard for us both as I recounted the abusive incidents I had faced in my childhood home. When I told her about the suicide attempt, her face grew sullen. "Jeanne," she said, "I remember the straitjacket."

Claire and I used to meet at a neighborhood corner and walk together to and from C. M. Goethe Junior High School. I remember some quick dashes to use the gas station restroom half of the way

home, but Claire remembers some other adventures as well. It seems that I used to bring her home from school with me one day a week when I knew no one else would be there. She would stay and play and then I would insist that she leave before anyone returned. One of those afternoons, I modeled the straitjacket for her. I explained how the straps and buckles fit together, then I put it over my shoulders and slid my arms into the sleeves. "I had never seen one before, and I haven't seen one since," Claire affirmed, " but I saw you wearing a straitjacket."

I had wondered how Lil' Jeanie would react to a grown-up Claire and how a grown-up Claire would react to Lil' Jeanie. It was early in my recovery process and although I wasn't comfortable enough to converse with her as Lil' Jeanie, Claire's presence did appear to trigger a greater flooding of memories. The first morning of her visit, we dealt with three full traumatic memories. It was exhausting for everyone. My migraine headaches had been dwindling quickly, but after being around me for twenty-four hours, Claire had one of her own. We decided to take a break and took her for a drive through the rolling hills of Pennsylvania's Amish country. I was ecstatic. Claire had seen the straitjacket.

My aversion to sirens did not automatically disappear after the straitjacket memories were resolved. At Christmas time that year, an enormous red fire engine lumbered into our neighborhood. Its sirens blasted every few minutes as it crawled along at a snail's pace with Santa Claus perched on its top. It caught the eyes and ears of every kid in the vicinity. In their excitement, ecstatic children ran down to the street's edge to wave at Santa and receive candy canes from his firemen helpers. One child wasn't excited at all. Hearing those sirens, I reacted immediately as Lil' Jeanie and slid my back up to the wall. I was frightened for the children and watched protectively through the edge of my window to make sure that they were making it back up to their houses. Jerry laughed at their gleeful faces and thought it was great fun. I fought back the tears and wondered if I'd ever get well. One of these days, I will.

Chapter Thirteen: Escape Through the Mind

They can't hurt me now. Their little girl is gone.
She is far away and safe from them. She doesn't cry for them now
and she doesn't laugh anymore. She is all alone. She is free.
-taped memory #67

Victims' Rights was the grass roots movement of the 1980's. People were tired of the soaring crime rates and the coddling of criminal offenders. The criminal justice system was evolving into a bureaucracy that protected the rights of criminal defendants while it negated the role of the victim. The Victims' Rights movement gave the injured victims a voice and promised to restore the balance of justice. In response to the public outcry, lawmakers created the Victims' Bill of Rights. Defense attorneys were outraged. Judges scorned the intrusion of the victims' new status in their courtrooms. Disgruntled crime victims used the media as their sounding board. As the battle gained momentum, I jumped smack into the middle of fray. It was a cause with my name written all over it.

At the end of 1983, I assisted in the formation of a local chapter of MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. I had never been hit by a drunken driver, but I instinctively aligned myself with the victims of these crimes. Most of them were totally innocent, yet they had suffered great physical and emotional injury. The people who hurt them had been under the influence of alcohol or other mind-altering drugs. As these victims went through the court process, they faced overwhelming odds. Most of the time, they were utterly ignored. Through MADD, I could help to give them a voice. I took to victim advocacy with a passion. I surprised a lot of people, including myself. The crime was bad enough. Whenever the system messed up and victimized them a second time, I could be one mean mama.

Some judges were more resistant to the idea of victims' rights than others. Victim involvement brought emotion into the courtroom.

The courts functioned in an atmosphere of reason, fact and physical evidence. Anger, tears and heart wrenching declarations made objectivity uncomfortable. When victims asked to make oral statements at the time of the offender's sentencing, some judges gave them exacting restrictions or interrupted them with demeaning remarks. When we complained to one judge, he let us know that it was *his* courtroom. We countered that the courts belonged to the people. We took our opinions to the public, via the newspapers. So did he. Although I managed to shake his hand before I left for Pennsylvania, I suspect he was very glad to see me go. I followed Jerry east when a job transfer necessitated our move in 1990, but I left part of my heart and soul right there in Tulare County, California.

The child part of me knew what it was like to be a victim and subjected to the whims of people more powerful than I. After my parents and I drove home from the hospital, I was dragged to my room where I remained in isolation. All clothing except the straitjacket was removed from me. My feet were tied up and a rubber sheet was placed underneath me. I was not even allowed to leave my bedroom in order to use the bathroom. My school attendance record shows that I missed twenty-nine days that quarter. Adding weekends, my total stay at home was approximately forty-one days. I don't know how many of those days were spent alone in my room, only one traumatic memory has returned from that time period. It was another Mr. Light experience.

> I'm not in my bed. I'm not sure where I am. I can't move very well, straps are on me, I can't move my arms. It hurts when I cough. My stomach and head hurt and I feel cold, really cold. My tummy hurts 'cause it thinks somebody's coming. I hear footsteps. I don't want nobody to come.
>
> I'm on the floor in a closet. Mommy put me in. It's my mommy's closet. She can't take the jacket off me or I might hurt myself. Maybe I will. I don't want to stay here anymore. Somebody was coming and my mommy didn't want them to see me. Can't let anyone see the straps, nobody's suppose' ta know.
>
> [Coughing] I can't catch my breath. Oh, help me. [Wheezing] Wish someone would come in and help me. Got to be quiet or Mommy be mad, she don't want anybody to know. There's nobody, nobody to help me. [Quiet]

[To Mr. Light] *I don't want to talk to you. You won't let me come. You won't let me go home. I don't want to stay here.*

JERRY: Does he tell you why you can't come?

'Cause I gotta stay, that's why.

JERRY: Does he tell you why you have to stay?

If you be quiet, he might...

[To Mr. Light] You don't understand! But you don't want me, you won't let me come...I tried to be good. I tried to do what you want me to do. I don't want to stay here...*It's not ever, it really isn't!* Oh, I will, I'll try.

He wants to help me, but I gotta let him in my heart. *I gotta let him in and not be mad at everybody.* He wants to come in, if I want him to.

But they hurt me! I don't understand...Why? I know, sometimes I forget.

I'm suppose' ta do stuff. He already told me. I forget I gotta stay and do it, stuff to help people, *'cause I don't want to.* I want to go home, not this home, but there. Got to let him in. I would like to, but I don't know what to do. I don't know how to make 'em stop, I really don't.

[Crying] He's holding me. He loves me, I can feel it. Please stay with me. I don't want to move. I don't want the feeling to go away. He loves me, but I hafta stay. Gotta help people, he already showed me, I just forget sometimes. He's my friend and I shouldn't get angry at him 'cause he's there. I just gotta let him in, but sometimes I don't 'cause I forget to ask.

When I'm sad, he can make me feel better, but I hafta stay and sometimes I get mad 'cause I hafta stay and I don't wanna. I think it's stupid I hafta stay in my mommy's closet. Soon Scotty be home and she don't hurt me as bad when somebody's here like Scotty.

I remained imprisoned in the straitjacket until I sent Lil' Jeanie away and the dissociation process was completed. Fighting back had not helped me escape from my tormentors. I was outmatched in a grown-up world. My rage had been a natural reaction to their cruelty, but it had availed me nothing. There was no place to run. I had tried that too. As the days wore on, I stopped caring. I found a way to escape in my mind. The author in *Safe Passage to Healing* describes the onset of dissociation:

> Our instinctive reactions to an assault are fight or flight. However, neither works when children are abused by sadistic adults. The only option left is to freeze, and take flight through the mind...It is the beginning of clinical (amnestic) dissociation, which allows a shutting out of an unbearable reality. It is held unassimilated - in effect, frozen in time...In dissociating an experience, children split off part of their self to hold the trauma.

Through the tape recordings of the repressed memories, I have been able to recapture the very moments the final dissociation took place. Various stages in the process are apparent and their differences are dramatic. The episode began with my wish to be left alone. Laying on my bed and looking up at the ceiling, I had reached a point where I was very tired of everything and no longer cared about anything.

> I can't move and my sides hurt from laying so long. I wish I could move. I wish I could sleep and forget all about it, but I feel pains in my chest and they hurt. I don't know how long they're gonna make me stay like this. I'm tired of it, very tired of it all. I don't want nobody to bother me. I don't want 'em to touch me. I hate 'em to touch me. If they're not going to let me out, just leave me alone. I still hate 'em but I don't care no more, don't care about nothing ever. I hear somebody coming. I don't want 'em to come. I just want to be in a little ball, alone in the dark, by myself.
>
> You can't do nothing to me, Mommy. I don't care what you do, so you can't hurt me no more. I won't yell or nothing, 'cause I don't care. I would like to be alone, but you can hurt me and I don't care. It's not important anymore. You see, Mommy, I don't care.

JERRY: What did she do?

> She pulled my hair. It don't even hurt, Mommy. I don't want to look at you. I just want to be left alone. I don't care if you take the blanket off or not. It don't matter, Mommy, what you do. You can't hurt me no more, 'cause I can't feel it. I don't want to feel it. I don't care if my bed is wet or if I get cold. Maybe when I move again I'll care, but not now. Just leave me alone.

My voice had been soft and monotone, displaying no emotion. After my mother left the room, I took the next step in the dissociative process and my emotions returned for the last time in their entirety. Insisting that she leave, I sobbed as I told Lil' Jeanie good-bye. It

was a sad and mournful parting, tinged with a dreadful sense of emptiness.

As the separation begins, my thinking patterns appear jumbled, then distinct parts slowly emerge with greater and greater clarity.

> I don't care about nothing. Everything is black to me. Nothing matters anymore. I'm not bad, I'm not good, I'm not nothing. My mommy and daddy can't hurt me 'cause I'm nothing. Jeanie died and I'm not here no more. I don't feel nothing 'cause I'm dead. I am dead and I'm glad they can't hurt me 'cause I don't care that Jeanie died. That little girl is dead. She died and went away.
>
> Good-bye little girl, you're dead. Nobody loves you. Nobody wants you, so you can go far away and they can't hurt you no more and you don't got to be bad, you can do what you want. Run away. Where you go, they can't hurt you. You'll be safe, 'cause you're dead and they can't find you. They'll be glad you're gone, but you'll be even more glad than them 'cause you're safe from them. Be happy, okay? I'm not here no more. They can't hurt me 'cause I don't care.
>
> That little girl ran away, she's very far away. She's safe where they can't hurt her and call her bad and call her crazy and call her trash. Her daddy can't hurt her no more. He can't do those awful things and let his friends do those awful things. Her mommy can't hate her anymore and cut off her hair and put her in a trash can and put things inside her. She can't slap her and throw her on the floor and wipe her face in throw up. She's gone from them.
>
> Good-bye little girl, you're gonna be safe now. Have a good time and take good care of yourself. Have fun and play on the swings and laugh with the children. Don't ever come back, 'cause they'll hurt you and make you crazy. I don't want them to do that to you, so you have to leave and go a long ways away so they can't find you ever.
>
> Good-bye little girl, I like you. You weren't always good, but you tried to be good. You wanted a mommy and daddy to love you. Run now. Go very far away so I can't call you to come back. You be dead now, be dead so you can't come back and don't think they're hurting you, they're not. They're not hurting you, 'cause you're nowhere.
>
> Oh, good-bye, I'll miss you, but you gotta go. You gotta go and they won't know they can't hurt you anymore. It'll be our secret, between you and me. They'll think they're hurting you,

but they're not. You'll be safe so it doesn't matter what they do to me.

Good-bye little girl, I liked you even if nobody else did. Play on the swings for me, okay? Have fun in the sunshine and don't get scared in the night, 'cause you don't hafta, they can't hurt you. You be really happy, okay? Now you go far, far away so you can't ever come back 'cause they plan to hurt you and I won't let them anymore. I got to protect you, so start runnin' little girl and don't you ever come back.

By the next memory sequence, the little girl is gone and so are my emotions. In a calm voice, I refer to my parents as "mother and father." My demeanor has changed and I no longer sound like a child. The division is complete.

My neck hurts from laying on it. My mother has put a rubber sheet under part of me 'cause they won't let me go out to use the bathroom. I don't like the feel of it, but I don't care anymore. She's gone, the little girl that they hurt, so it can't hurt. I can just lay here and not think about the pain in my neck or the feel of the rubber sheet because they can't hurt me anymore. I don't feel nothing. I want them to come in and see they can't hurt me no matter what they do. They can try, but they can't hurt me. She's gone.

Here they come and I'm not afraid. I'm very serious, I do not intend to talk to them.

JERRY: Are they talking to you?

They are shaking me, trying to get my attention...What do you want? I don't care...They don't know what I will do if they take off the straps. I don't care. They can do what they want. I tell them, "Leave them on or off. Do whatever you please."

JERRY: What did they do?

My father slapped me, but I don't cry anymore and I don't shake anymore. They're talking. My dad says he thinks they can take them off now. I wish they would just leave, but I don't care. They're taking the straps off my feet. They want me to move around, but I don't have to. There is nothing they can do to hurt me.

JERRY: Who's slapping you?

My mother. She thinks I'm being a spoiled brat. She may be upset that I don't cry, but I feel nothing at all. I tell her, "I don't care what you do. Do what you want, you can't hurt me anymore. No, you can't. You can try, go ahead." She wants to

burn me with her cigarette, but my father says, "No." They're arguing. *It's nice not to care. It doesn't hurt me now. I don't feel anything.*

My father is sitting on my bed and looking at me. I did not move and jump away from him. His touch sickens me, but he will not know that. I will not show it. I am looking straight up at the ceiling. He wants to make sure I behave myself. He's moving the straps, taking off the jacket. I feel nothing. I will not allow myself to feel.

They want me to move. They want to see if my arms work okay. They think they can make me yell, but they can't. They want to know if I want something. I tell them, "No, I do not want anything. I need to be alone." My father is angry at my mother. He wants to know what she did to me. She says she only did what he said.

They are arguing, but they don't frighten me anymore. They can't hurt me now. Their little girl is gone. She's far away and safe from them. She doesn't cry for them now and she doesn't laugh anymore. She is all alone. She is free. I don't care what they do.

JERRY: Can you hear what they're saying?

I don't remember, only that they are angry. They seem to have forgotten about me. They don't know what to do. Now that they can't hurt me, they will have to hurt each other. When they leave, I'll turn over on my side, but I don't want them to know how hard it is for me.

My dad is very angry. He's yelling, then he stops yelling and he grabs my mother and takes her out of the room. He doesn't know why they can't hurt me anymore and why I look up at the ceiling. He's the one who wanted me to stay in my room. Did he think I would keep fighting forever? [Coughing]

JERRY: Are they gone now?

Yes, that's why I'm trying to move. My chest hurts, but they can't know that. It doesn't hurt very much. It doesn't matter anyway 'cause the little girl is gone, so what happens to me doesn't matter. I did what I needed to do and I saved her from them and that's all that matters.

She is the one that must be safe. I have to protect her and keep her away from them so nobody can hurt her. She can laugh, but I can't. She doesn't need to cry, but she can if she wants to. She's going to be okay.

JERRY: Are you going to be okay?

It doesn't matter what happens to me. My job was to protect her and I did that. I saved her from them and now she's gone and I'm glad. She's safe and I don't have to feel the pain. I

don't have to cry anymore. They can't hurt me now. It doesn't matter what they do, I won't let it hurt me. I won't be sick, even if I am, it won't matter 'cause I don't matter.

JERRY: You matter to me.

Claire has told me that I attended the sixth grade graduation party that year, but I have no recollection of it. Later that summer, I attended a Girl Scout Camp located somewhere near Fort Bragg. I recall sitting in the back seat of the car as my parents drove towards San Francisco to catch the camp bus. It is my earliest recollection of myself as Big Jeanne. My parents had agreed to take another girl along with us. She had been living at the Sacramento Children's Home. She was a few years older than I, so we didn't converse much in the car. Our first night at camp, she tried to slit her wrists and was taken away.

The counselors were very sympathetic. They broke the news to me as gently as they could. I figured they must have thought the two of us were friends. It seemed very sad, but I hardly knew the girl. They probably used the tragedy to explain my unusual behavior. Instead of participating in the multitude of activities, I moped around my cabin for two weeks. I didn't want to play. I had a hard time fitting in with the other girls and preferred being alone. I sat on my bunk and wrote more than twenty letters home, addressing a good number of them to my cat.

I gradually learned to live within a narrower field of emotions. Lil' Jeanie was gone. She had taken my anguish, but in doing so, she had also taken away my joy. Anger was foreign to me, it was much too dangerous. Other emotions remained with limited intensity. I adored my cat, Peppy, and lavished much attention on him. When Claire and I quarreled in junior high school, I would feel miserable, but I sure didn't tell her. I giggled at Bugs Bunny and Popeye, but I also lived in an analytical world. I wondered how other people could get so carried away with their feelings, my emotions never got *me* in trouble. I had found a creative way to keep my parents from hurting me and it worked. It was a relief not to feel. The abuse ended and I had survived. After a while, I thought I was as normal as everybody else.

A few repressed memories have returned from my early teenage years. At ages thirteen and fourteen, I was prone to nightmares. It appears that some of the forgotten abuses were coming from my subconscious and into my dreams. In one nightmare, my mother stood in my doorway with a kitchen knife in her hand. She played with it menacingly and threatened to slit my throat. At the end of the episode, Lil' Jeanie expressed to Jerry, "I don't need a boogey man, I got a mommy boogey man." As an adolescent, I also awakened numerous nights with physical pains reminiscent of the abuse. At night the pain was quite severe, then it oddly faded and disappeared with the sunrise. My mother told me they were growing pains.

Along with the abuse memories, most children who dissociate also repress their white light experiences. Finding out about Mr. Light was a startling surprise to the adult me. As I listened to the tape recordings of these experiences, one stood out from the rest. When I spoke to Mr. Light in this memory, my voice sounded older and I used words too advanced for a young child. I didn't refer to him as my Mr. Light either, I no longer knew who he was. I believe this was his final childhood message to me. I would have been thirteen or fourteen years old.

> I'm in my bedroom and it's nighttime. I'm not sure why I woke up and I don't know why I can't go back to sleep, I would like to. I ache all over. There's a tightness in my throat. I hear something. I'm not sure what it is - a fuzzy sound and it's getting louder.
>
> Be quiet. It's a dream. Strange, I don't ache anymore. I feel lighter.
>
> **JERRY: What are you reaching for?**
>
> My hands feel like they want to lift up. I feel calm, peaceful. I wonder what that is? Oh, it's so peaceful. It's not a cloud. I would like to know...[Voice drifts off] *Do I know you?*
>
> He's beautiful. I want to get on my knees and touch him with my hands. He's not speaking, but I can hear him. He loves me.
>
> **JERRY: Why are you crying?**
>
> Because I'm happy. Because I feel wonderful and I feel ashamed. He says I don't need to. He forgives me and loves me. Why? Why? He says there's work for me to do and he'll be with

me. I need to be good and follow my conscience and serve his children.

I won't remember for a while, but then I will. I have to remember what's important and trust in him and I'll find the way. I'll have a companion and I'll be happy. I am to remember the Father.

He touched my hands again. Ohhhh. [Crying] Thank you. I'll try my best. Thank you for letting me remember someday. It's wonderful. I'll remember, someday I will. Thank you.

My later adolescent years were spent in a home dominated by alcoholism. The drinking became the scapegoat for all our perceived family problems. It was also our huge family secret. I have always assumed that my emotional condition was a reflection of the deranged household that I lived through as a teenager. I was nervous a good part of the time. I no longer recognized my fear, I thought I was merely shy. I concluded that it was my nature to withdraw from people and shyness was one of my character flaws. I also felt responsible for everything. The guilt and shame I carried generated an over-driven sense of conscience. Everything was my fault, I just knew it. Depression emerged early on. It is sometimes defined as "anger turned inwards." I could identify anger in my parents, but not in myself. I carried these emotional traits on into adulthood, never recognizing the severity of my limitations. They were a part of me and easily explained away as I examined my alcoholic upbringing.

Thirty-something years later, Lil' Jeanie returned like a sailor who'd been lost at sea. Not only did she bring her dirty baggage, but she moved right in. At first meeting, neither of us were aware of the loving sacrifices we had made on each other's behalf. After some years of awkward and sometimes grueling moments, we are ready to celebrate her homecoming. Life is full of discoveries. I have learned that a stomachache means I have emotions that need to come to the surface. Often it is fear, other times it is grief. My entire family has discovered that I have a temper. I can stomp my feet, throw things, slam doors and yell to the ceiling. You should see their faces when I display my new found ire! Every once in a while, I quite unexpectedly get a glimpse of the joy that has been so illusive in my life. I know it is coming.

I lived through my childhood experiencing the extremes in good and evil. My Mr. Light told me that someday I would have a family that loved me and needed me. I have had them with me for many years now and they are very dear to me. He said I would forget and then I would remember. I would be strong when I remembered and I would know that he had always loved me. He wanted me to help his children, the sad ones like me. When I asked him how I was supposed to help them, he told me I would know. As a necessity, I began by helping myself through my own recovery. This manuscript was written as I gathered the severed parts of my childhood and placed them back together. With some consternation, I realized early in the writing process that my story would need to be shared. I have questioned my ability to handle the controversy that may well surround its disclosure. I pray that my strength is sufficient and then I remind myself that I am not alone. Let my life and my experiences stand as a witness against those who continue to perpetrate these crimes against the innocent.

Other victims are also finding the courage to come forward. As I have begun studying ritual crime and networking in the field, I have found there are survivors whose abuse experiences have been much more intense than mine. Some of them struggle with the aftereffects of abuse so severe that each day is a test of their fortitude. I marvel at their endurance. I have learned of others who have worked through their recoveries and then gone into the recovery professions themselves, offering hope and encouragement to many. I have found other survivors already speaking out in their attempts to educate the public. To this point, it has been a faltering effort. Their stories are grotesque and simply too incredible to be believed by most people. I can understand the public's reaction. Denial is a protective mechanism - but only for a while. Additional victims are finding the strength to step forward. Investigators are discovering evidence and lawmakers are defining ritual crime. As more people take notice, more of them will believe.

We are silent no longer. Let the public outcry begin.

EPILOGUE

Sitting down for a recent fast food lunch, Jerry and I shared a newspaper and spied a curious looking map on the front page. The article written with it discussed various hate groups and their locations in the United States. The more prominent groups were listed on the map and included the Klu Klux Klan, the Neo-Nazi's and several para-military organizations. Jerry and I shook our heads. We checked the map again, but the most virulent hate group wasn't there. The Satanists weren't even mentioned in the news article.

As an underground labyrinth, satanic cults have continued to exist in secret to this day. No one knows the full extent of their networking. Law enforcement officials are reporting an increased number of complaints, but evidence is rarely conclusive. These groups appear to invert the values and religious faiths that are most representative of the communities where they are located. Their methods vary, but their use of children seems to be universal and horrifying. During the day, people involved in satanic cults look like everyone else. We don't know who they are or how many people are involved. We do know that they are people addicted to power. That's not a comforting thought.

From a spiritual point of view, satanic ritual abuse can be looked at in another way. The apostle Paul once wrote to the followers of Jesus Christ in Ephesus:

> Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
>
> *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*
>
> Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
>
> - Ephesians 6:11-13

It was a message written to the faithful in ancient times, but it sounds like good advice for today. We must each decide for ourselves whether or not the Evil One exists. Then we can choose to counter his hatred with great goodness. With our spiritual swords drawn in righteousness, we can declare peace and love. We can treat our neighbors with kindness, even when a few of them are barely tolerable. We can strengthen our families by giving them our devotion and respect. We can reach out to the children who share stories that we would rather not hear. We can embrace our little ones and encircle them in our multitude of love. Mr. Light would like that. Now that's a comforting thought...

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After years of depression and severe migraine attacks, Jeanne Adams discovers her multiple personalities. Determined to heal and learn the truth, she begins putting the pieces of her childhood back together. To do so, she must acknowledge her own involvement in child prostitution and ritualistic abuse. As an alter personality shares her childhood trauma, Jeanne makes an astonishing discovery: at the worst of times, she had not been alone. A being of white light had watched over her. She had called him *Mr. Light.*

"*Drawn Swords* is a source of strength, guidance, and inspiration for ritual abuse survivors, their loved ones, and therapists…A brilliant work of kindness and exquisite writing. An encouragement to others to face their own truth."
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