

The tiny piece of rock hovered before the vast expanse of brighter than bright. Particles of molten solar debris became visible and they began to cool, these dark notes drifted away from the bright. They slowly approached and solidified onto the rock.

"So, here we are." He mused, contemplating the brightness that was beyond belief. Rexx then turned to Sendi and asked. "Did you remember to bring your sunglasses?"

"Ha, ha." She replied, sarcastically.

"Well, I thought it was funny." Matu added.

"Did you like the twist of remembering history here at this pivotal moment?" Asked the Time Police.

"Huh?" Rexx questioned.

"Twelve thousand year polar shift, solar micro-nova, another ice age...all these things and more, that's why we sent you to Matu's time."

"Oh, yeah. I seem to remember something about that. Wasn't that somewhere around the French biological war?"

"No, that war was much later in the twenty six hundreds."

"How do you keep track of all these dates?"

"Well, we don't really, we remember the events and the associations with human reactions. They add the numbers when they wish. Humans seem to like to keep track of temporal distance."

"So, why are we here?"

"We thought you might want to see the beginning."

"We were there? I mean, sort of...I guess I left before that...did I?" Matu asked.

"Yes, you did and you didn't. But, that's OK, it's not a problem, you'll catch up."

"So, what's up?" Rexx asked.

"Well, this would apply more to Rexx and Sendi, as they were from a future of this time."

"So, around three thousand years ago, I mean before us, our time, something happened?" Rexx asked.

"Yes. A rather very big event, but how you see it is up to you."

"Well, we remember that there was some kind of a population die off, but there wasn't a lot of documentation about it."

"Yeah..." Sendi began. "There was a couple of hundred years of almost no history, and then stuff started slowly reappearing. And I don't get how, now...well, then, we know so much about the history before it."

"I think you're losing me." Matu said. "Remember, I don't share your history."

"Oh...yeah...well, there were all kinds of ruined cities." Rexx explained. "And, from what we understand, the planet was mostly back in the stone age for a long time, but then with this time travel tour company, we suddenly had all this new information about the history that had gotten forgotten."

"Well..." The Time Police mused and left the thought hanging there.

Rexx stared at him. "You had a hand in this, didn't you?"

"We may have helped a bit."

"What did you do?"

"Earth, that is, humanity was just starting to recover from a disastrous period of self-destruction. There were forces that intentionally sought to limit, or rather, eliminate, the advancement of society, while professing their desire to prolong and encourage it. They brought disease, while saying they were preventing it. They brought hate, while talking about promoting love. They brought war, with weapons supposedly for peace. They brought death, calling it a better way of living." The Time Police paused. "Basically, they lied."

"So, how did you change this?"

"Actually, we didn't. A small handful of humans saw that these forces were gaining strength among the masses and spoke out against them. They gathered together and grew in numbers. It took time, and a lot of effort, but they prevailed."

"And, then...?"

"Unfortunately, the occurrence of the upcoming events were rapidly approaching and there was little time for preparation."

"But, humanity survived, didn't it?" Sendi interjected. "I mean, we're here, right?"

"Well, yes. But you might not have been."

"Huh? What do you mean?"

"With every occurrence of the repeating events, advanced civilizations disappeared leaving few humans to rebuild. And that process, unfortunately, takes time and effort. In a relatively few number of generations, knowledge is lost, as basic survival skills have taken precedence."

"That's when you intervened?" Rexx asked.

"It seemed such a waste of effort, having finally defeated the destructive force, that it should be so quickly demolished. So, we made subtle suggestions, urging individuals to plan for their survival, finding ways to preserve skills and knowledge for the future, and to maintain a positive attitude, with the hope that the reconstruction of civilization would proceed at a faster rate."

"How did you do this?"

"By presenting ideas, with the hope that the subject matter would be found to be attractive and therefore pursuit of it would be taken."

"Isn't that kind of a 'hit and miss' approach?"

"Yes. But, what else could we do? Direct intervention would be counterproductive to the whole point of human existence."

"Which is...?" Sendi asked.

"Ah...the age old question."

"You're not going to tell us, are you?"

"No." He smiled. "But, keep asking. The answer will come along some day."

"What about my tribe?" Matu interrupted. "And, the Alcaad? Do they survive? You said they did."

"Oh, yes, they did very well and suffered little. They well knew survival skills and the mountain protected them from the elements. They thought, early on, to convert underground areas for cultivation and animal husbandry. So, they maintained their civilization. They also had the TimePod data. So, you see you had a hand in their preservation."

"What about the rest?" Sendi asked. "Surely others survived to rebuild. We had a global civilization in our time, I mean, the fifty three hundreds."

"Yes, you did. But, it was nowhere near as populated as the world was before the events. There were pockets of humanity that heeded our suggestions. They banded together

and found habitats that could be fortified, prepared survival supplies, kept knowledge in forms that could survive the loss of technology, and generally kept the concept of society alive."

"But, how did they know what was coming?"

"There were records of previous events, some carved in stone and others carved in stories and legends. Those that survived previous events were not necessarily aware of what actually happened, but, they knew the effects that they they experienced and they kept that knowledge alive in their descendants."

"What gave them the desire to prepare for this last event?"

"Oh, a slight suggestion, here and there, now and then...call it a feeling of apprehension, followed by a sense of urgency, observing how animals can sense a storm approaching...that kind of thing."

"You gave them that suggestion?" Rexx accused.

"Of course. That's part of our job."

"Your job!?" Sendi echoed.

"Yes. We act loosely as humanities' guides...maybe not that so much, more as occasional advisors. When times get tough, we shine a light on the path."

"Isn't that meddling?" She asked.

"Not exactly. We illuminate, but your choice, as always, is to notice and then choose to follow or not."

"Oh."

"And every now and then a seer will make a prediction and some people will heed his words."

"Why only some?"

"Well, when you speak out against what most people believe or accept as the norm, you are usually viewed with skepticism."

"Oh, yeah. Well, that's true."

"So, it is only those who are open enough to entertain new concepts that will pay attention long enough to arrive at their own decision. All others will simply dismiss the information and continue along their pre-judged path."

"And, that's bad?"

"Not necessarily. Everyone has their unique path and if it behooves them to reject information that is contrary to their beliefs, then it is in their best interests to continue in their prescribed direction."

"So, some people are destined to be sheep?"

"Yes."

"And, some people are sheepdogs." Rexx added.

"Huh?"

"Some have to control the sheep, so they don't lose sight of their official path."

"Exactly!" Commented the Time Police.

"I don't want to be either." Sendi stated.

"And you are acting as an independent thinker. Well, that's part of the reason you, all of you, are here."

"Here, here? Or here in general?"

"Well, both. But, we'll go with the here, here. We are sitting here viewing the central star of this local system. Catastrophic events are, so to speak, on the horizon. Humanity has just, barely, overcome a particularly destructive period, but most of them have not yet fully

realized either the recent period nor the upcoming event. We, all of us, are needed to help with both the survival and the recovery."

"How do we do that?"

"Stretch out your mind. Reach out and see if you connect with anyone. Send a positive thought. See if it's received. Then, reinforce that thought. They will need all the help we can provide."

"Is this prayer?" Matu asked.

"Yes, in a way. Normally, people think of prayer being sent upward. This is the downward version. Not really an answer to their prayer, but more of an acknowledgment that their prayer was heard and that someone cares."

"How do we know prayers are heard?" Asked Matu.

"How do we know they are not?"

"OK...fair."

"Is this journeying?" Sendi asked.

"No, you're well beyond that. You're outside of time and all of its physical limitations, so you're not restricted by that definition. Just think and you're there."

"You said a positive thought...anything in particular?"

"Not at this point...just love, confidence, hope, joy...thoughts like that. Once a connection is made, a more substantial communication can be established."

"Is this back to establishing the common ground?"

"Yes, of course. The common ground is essential for any sort of communication."

"So, then what do we do?"

"The answer to that is huge. You have to understand where the person's abilities, needs, desires, etc. lie. Basically, touch as lightly as possible and see the response. Build the conversation slowly. Let the person take the lead. Your task is to support."

"Wow! That is huge!"

"Yes. But, not impossible. Remember, just do a little at a time."

"You talked about illuminating the path. How do we do that?"

"Within each person is their path. But, most are not aware of it. There are many deviations along that path. Some are new learning experiences. Some are mistakes that need to be corrected. Some are old memories that need to be revived, some are habits that need to be forgotten, or some are questions that need to be resolved. There are many side steps to the path to be followed and they need to be followed in the order that they are presented to the individual."

"How complicated!"

"Yes. It is. And it is our job to keep on top of all of that. We just need to keep our light on the current segment of the path."

"You mean we don't know how it ends?"

"No. That's up to the individual...their path. We don't and can't know that. We're advisors, we're not God...and only a tiny part of that. We have no knowledge of how any individual's life will play out."

"OK, two questions here...we're a part of God? And we thought you knew the future?"

"Universe...all that is...isn't that God? In so many doctrines people were taught that God is everywhere...so? Well, we're here. That's somewhere, isn't it? And isn't somewhere a part of everywhere?"

"Well, yes, but doesn't that contradict the various doctrines that state their prophet is the divine one?"

"We are all part of the divine. It exists in all of us. Otherwise, how would we recognize what is good? Remember, the words 'good' and 'God' have the same basic meaning. Most people live in a type of darkness. They are separated from other people by it. Even though you think you truly know and understand another person, unless you walk using their feet and see through their eyes, and don't stop there, cry with their anguish and shed their tears, elate with with the bursting of their joy, unless you can do this, you will never know them. Why? Because you will never respect their deepest darkest secrets."

"What do you mean?" Sendi objected. "I respect the people I care about."

"Not to that extent, you don't, and you won't. Ever."

"But..."

"No. Because for you, you are the most important person." He paused. "Somewhere in you is a secret that you would never want to tell. It's something that happened...doesn't matter if it was your fault or not...but, it was so disastrous, so humiliating, so abhorrent that it can never come to light. You don't want to remember it and you can't live with it. Do you think that someone else would respect that secret? No they won't, they can't, they never will. Because they haven't lived 'you'. Think about this. And, when you can face remembering that secret, be kind to yourself. Acknowledge the event and try to let go of its pain. You certainly don't need it anymore."

"I...I'm not sure I understand."

"This separation is the curse of an earthly existence. Some call it the original sin...the casting out from Paradise into the Darkness. To lift that darkness we must recognize the divine spark. But, it is our choice whether we act on that sacred nature or choose to deny it. Only a very few have fully attained a truly holy existence, and more often than not, because of it, they were ridiculed, tortured, and murdered."

"But, why is that, if they were good people?"

"In a way, it partly comes down to 'nobody likes a know-it-all'. It's also partly because your belief system is in danger. People who were close to the holy person, those who understood him, aligned with him. Those more distant saw challenge and responded with defense. Those who held power saw the potential erosion of that status and sought the elimination of the threat."

"Yes, I guess that's true." She paused. "But, we know of these holy people long after their deaths. How was that preserved if what you say was true?"

"Those close to the holy person kept the memories and passed them down. And, once the powers who were threatened had passed, the knowledge was no longer a danger. Of course, this varied from instance to instance depending on the situations. And, often times, the persecution returned."

"I see."

"And as to your other question, the future changes with each decision. Remember, all that was created exists, but not all may be able to see it. You saw that."

"But, what about the time tours? Isn't it sort of there and then back again? Safe time zone, and all of that?"

"It was all mostly a hoax, a lot of smoke and mirrors. Remember, you never got close to experiencing any of the history you visited. You just saw an overview from a distance, except what we engineered for your test...well, let's call that 'your experience'. But, thanks to the perseverance of those surviving reconstructionists there was a lot of historical knowledge that was recovered from before the time of rebuilding, which made it, the time tours, and so much more, all possible."

"By you?"

"Yes. We kept notes of how time unfolded."

"Are we here actively or passively?"

"A little of both. We are watching, now. But, if you connect with someone, then it's active."

"But, that changes the future."

"Yes. Though, perhaps it's better to say, it enables the future, one of many. And we have to keep track of all those changes."

"But, how does that affect the future that we were living in?"

"Maybe it does, and maybe not. Remember, all exists, but you may not be able to see all of it."

"Wait a minute...what about us? What about Matu? What do the people we left behind know about us? Our friends...our family?"

"Yeah, what about us?" Echoed Rexx.

"I hadn't thought about that." Matu agreed. "I just vanished. What did my tribe think?"

"Yeah, and what happened to my TimePod?" Rexx asked. "We haven't seen it since we decided to stay here."

"Your TimePod has been returned to the tour company...without you, of course. This caused a major incident with their customer relations. But, they buried the information and appeased your friends and relatives with information that you two fell in love and decided to elope and relocate to another country immediately upon your return. That kind of ruse seems to be a common human response in this sort of circumstance...it's most interesting."

"And, me?" Matu encouraged.

"They had no knowledge of what happened to you...disappeared in the night while on guard duty. We secretly informed Autok and Lovra of the reality to ease their minds, especially with regard to the presence of the entity and its desire for negative emotions, but with the admonition that the knowledge was to be used with extreme wisdom at their discretion. They had major works to accomplish and we didn't want them to be distracted by unwarranted fears."

"But, doesn't that...?" Responded Sendi.

"Another story, at another time."

She quietly absorbed that information, and then asked. "Yeah, I guess they had a lot to do to prepare for the future war." She paused. "So, what are we supposed to do here?"

"As we said, connect if you can, support as you will."

"That seems so vague."

"Well, all of life seems vague as well. We continue from moment to moment."

"To do what?"

"Whatever seems necessary."

She stared at him.

"Just relax and reach out. See who senses you. Then go from there. When you reached up, others reached down. Now you can reach down to those reaching up."

"Are we better?"

"No. We are just in a position of being supportive instead of endlessly worrying about surviving everyday life. It's the other side of a delicate balance."

"I'm not sure how to begin." She moaned.

"Don't worry, we'll proceed slowly while you're learning. If it's a help, remember the little rock you befriended...remember the process...how you listened and how you responded to its questions. Apply that principle here."

"Wow!" Rexx whispered. "At the time, I was almost going to write off her rock as foolish imagination, but you agree with her. Sorry, I guess I have to broaden my point of view."

"Yes. That attitude is going to be demanded of all of you as we proceed."

"Demanded?" Matu asked.

"Yes, I'm afraid so. You must be open to any point of view, no matter how it deviates from how you are used to thinking...or believing. Every person is unique. Don't be tempted to condemn what you don't understand. The more you see of the other views, the more you will understand the immense complexity of reality. You, we, are here to support."

"But, you led us on a long complicated adventure. How was that support?" Sendi asked.

"You learned, didn't you? Yes, we tested you and that was unusual behavior for us. We admit and apologize. But, we illuminated a path that you were willing to follow and it was to see if you could advance enough to be willing to join our efforts. You did. And, now you are here."

"So, is that what you do, test?"

"Sometimes, but mostly not. We wait for potential candidates before testing. As we said, you showed potential by your curiosity and your desire to believe your own judgment as opposed to accepting the belief of the norm."

"So, on the concept of support...you said, even if we don't agree...how do we do that?"

"We understand. It's going to be hard and you're going to want to impose your concepts, this is human nature...best intentions, and all of that, but you have to restrain those urges. The individual that you connect with is not you and is not subject to your will. But, they are on their path. Remember, the individual may be, in your opinion, a morally horrible person, but, they can be redeemed, or I should say, redeem themselves, if you shine your light, offer your support, open their possibilities, to a path that they may eventually chose to follow. Remember 'may'. Just don't insist...that's not why you're here. If they persist on an 'evil path', well then, so be it. That outcome may be needed in the future for an unknown purpose. We can't and do not know. The 'walk around humans' have to deal with that, and let them do it. But remember, you can support them too. We support everyone. There is a huge learning experience in operation here and we don't know how it will eventually play out."

"Wow...and I think I've said that before." Rexx said.

"What?" Matu asked.

Rexx stared at him.

"What did you say before?"

"Oh. I said, 'wow'."

"Oh, yeah...wow." Matu shook his head. "You know, I somehow feel like I've been here before. It's like when we thought the Alcaad were the murderers, then they weren't, then it was the entity, then it was the future war...does it end there?"

"No. There is no end. All is still ongoing."

"Why isn't there an end?" Sendi asked. "Don't things come to some completion?"

"Do you want things to end?"

"Oh, I hadn't thought of that. What would an 'end' mean?"

"Yes, exactly, what would an 'end' mean? No more stuff...no more doing...no more 'no more'...stagnation?"

"Wow, that's deep."

"Yes."

"OK. So, where is this all going?"

"Learning, and growing. Where we end up, hopefully, will be in a somehow better, or, at least, perhaps more advanced place...bad choice of words when there are no words to describe something that isn't...but, what that is, or even how to understand that, we don't know. Hopefully, it is a place of non-ending, where we continue to grow, to become. We can only hope."

"I can't even imagine that."

The Time Police smiled. "If it's any consolation, neither can we. But, something else that's worth mentioning is your, all of you, willingness to show compassion to complete strangers, some of whom could have been potential enemies. We hope that this quality will help you on your path of supporting others."

"You said 'path' the same way as when you were referring to the 'walking around humans'."

"Yes. You are still on your path. And so are we. All of being is on a path. Ancient and some contemporary philosophers called it a path to enlightenment."

"Do you mean like the Buddha?" Rexx asked.

"Exactly. There have been many visionaries that seek a better future. But, alas none of them, nor us, can see that far ahead."

"I wonder why it's called 'enlightenment'?" Matu asked. "Does it have to do with what you mentioned about shining a light on the path?"

"Absolutely. It's much better to see where you are going than to injure your foot by stumbling in the dark."

"Yes...that's true. I've done that too often when the lantern sputtered out."

"When someone we're trying to support stumbles, what do we do?" Sendi asked.

"We're afraid that's going to be painful, very painful, for both you and them. It will be best for you to try to recover as quickly as you can...let go of the pain, so you can help the person you are supporting to suffer less, as too much emotion on your part can make you lose sight of your destination."

"Why will it be so painful?"

"Because in supporting someone you will be intimately connected with them, more closer than you have ever been connected with anyone in your human life."

"Ouch!" Rexx commented.

"Yes. 'Ouch' indeed. You will be in their mind and experiencing their life, and as such, you must tread lightly and keep distant as much as you can."

"Did you do that with us?"

"Yes, and it was very interesting and satisfying sharing your lives."

"You know our innermost thoughts?!" Sendi asked.

"Well, yes, of course. But, don't panic. We respect your privacy and have no desire to exploit you...this will take some explaining."

"Yes, please, because you're freaking me out."

"What were you thinking about me?" Asked Rexx with a grin.

She glared at him.

"You've obviously heard the term, 'all is one'. Well, that's what this is all about."



They all just stared at him.

"Universe...everything is interconnected...some closer than others, and these usually have common interests...others are more distant, more contrary...but, there is always some kind of common ground, or there would be no communication at all." He paused a moment. "We do understand that you are still deeply locked into the mindset of your human existence and have not really adjusted to being, or we should say becoming, inter-dimensional beings. It will take time." He paused and laughed. "We like throwing in the concept of time every now and then, just for fun."

"So what is time?" Rexx asked.

"Putting one foot in front of the other...breathing in and breathing out...anything that follows another. But, in our case, it is often jumping back and reliving, and sometimes living anew, a memory. You already did that with the Alcaad."

"This is all so serious. How can you take it so lightly?" Send asked.

"Life is so serious. How did you take it so lightly?"

She sighed. "I guess we did, didn't we. Well, where we go from here?"

"We begin anew. It happens every day, every hour, every minute...now. It's now that we have to pay attention to and act upon."

"Matu, you've been awfully quiet. As you, your culture, is more in touch spiritually, do you have any thoughts." Rexx asked.

"I think you give me more credit than it's worth. Yes, I think we do have a closer connection to the rest of creation than most technological civilizations, but, we don't have all that many answers. I'm just sitting here absorbing all of this conversation."

"Yes. Continue to absorb, and question. There will be many things that humanity will need answered...the upcoming events coming from our friend, here." He indicated the star. "And, it's relationship to all of that." He indicated the expanse of universe that lay beyond. "All is related and certain interactions have results. For, now, as you are learning, we will concentrate on Earth's humanity. It is close to you, familiar, and you have affection for these people."

"Yes, I guess trying to understand an alien race would be harder...finding the common ground, I mean." Sendi commented.

"Yes, exactly. But, when you have learned more and have become more confident in your skills, no one will be beyond your reach."

"Wow." Repeated Rexx.

"But, for now, we have a huge number of people that are experiencing an unrest that is almost beyond comprehension."

"What's happening?" Asked Sendi.

"We are currently at the point where much of humanity, those who consider themselves to be 'normal', are about to realize that they have been lied to. They are still denying that they have been controlled by a subversive empire that has much of the 'civilized' world under its sway. But, a few individuals, here and there, who have been speaking out against these practices for a considerable amount of time, are starting to be listened to, instead of being dismissed as fools, or worse, as criminals."

"How did this begin?"

"Many, many, years, and, more so, centuries, ago, a handful of individuals felt that they were a lot better and more important than everybody else. And, they thought they knew the answers to how the world should be managed. They felt that nobody else deserved to live other than to be as servants to their hierarchy. They grew in numbers, recruiting like-minded

individuals, and set out to conquer the rest of the world. Over time the larger numbers of their ranks were defeated in various ways. But, the core drew back into the shadows to await the time when they and their descendants could again rebuild. This theme of tyranny has repeated itself over and over again beyond count."

"So what is the current situation, and what are we learning from this?"

"The current situation could probably be described as a combination of arrogance mixed with anger, despair, sorrow, confusion, and probably every other similar emotion you can imagine. What are we learning...well, perhaps, it's how to best survive the moment...beyond that, is only speculation."

"That's awfully vague."

"Yes. But, we're afraid that is how it is. Think back on your 'human' life. How did you get through daily life? Yes, you may have had goals, but the moment to moment routine consisted of action...reaction...decision...and repeat, endlessly."

"Aagh! You're right. I just never thought about it that way. I guess it was something like relying on instinct, or premonition, or something...I don't know...that made sense out of our actions." She turned to Rexx. "Why are you so darned quiet?"

"I think I'm just overwhelmed. I'm still not quite sure where I...we...are...OK, put that back to 'where'? You seem to be so much more in control. Why, or how, is that?"

"I think I might agree with that." Added Matu. "Yes. How are you so good at making these decisions?"

"OK...I guess, it's back to the need to know...had to learn to think on my feet...well, make that, on the run."

"Wow...and I thought I was good." Rexx commented.

"But...there is something else." Interjected the Time Police. "There is the will to improve...not just the immediate situation, but all upcoming situations."

"How do we do that?"

"How do you do it in 'normal' life? You fix a 'will' in your desire. You know, the 'tomorrow, I will do this better', that kind of thought."

"You talk so much of equating now to our former 'normal' life. Are we still associated with that, I guess, for want of a better word, 'life'? You know, the physical 'walking around' life?"

"If you wish."

"Huh?"

"Being inter-dimensional, you can come and go and be as you wish. It's just wise to not get too established in a particular place."

"Why?"

"Well, if nothing else, you would be establishing yourself as too much a part of that episode in history...not really a problem, but you might want to avoid some future complication."

"Huh?"

"Think about it."

"I think he means that if you get too involved in a particular episode, you might forget that you have other places to be...and things to do there." Matu ventured.

"Yes, exactly. Whereas, that's not really a problem, but it would fix you in that episode and prevent you from entering others. Your emotional involvement would make you lose sight of your other possibilities." He sighed. "That would be your choice. But, it would take you away from your other potential destiny here. Again, that's not really a problem. It would just

change your 'destiny'. Well, maybe that's not the best way to say it, but it would alter your path." Again he sighed. "And, we come back to the issue of not really knowing, not being far-sighted enough to know where our path is leading us. It may be foolhardy or it may be an important and necessary diversion along the way. Again, who can say?"

"But...?" Sendi blinked.

"Well, you would drop back to being physical and lose your inter-dimensional abilities. You would concentrate on the one as opposed to the many other possibilities."

"I see. I think."

"Again...it's your choice. Either one is equally good. It just comes down to your internal timeline."

"Meaning...?"

"Well, time is relative. You could do the same thing now or later...or earlier, as well. It's all up to what location, or time frame, you prefer. You're going to get to the end point eventually anyhow."

"What is the end point?"

"We guess it's where we know everything and all the problems have been solved. Maybe." He laughed. "Oh, yes, and we're all living 'happily ever after'."

"So, you really don't know, do you?"

"No, of course not. We aren't there yet, so we can only hope. There are a lot more learning experiences for all of us ahead."

"You mentioned praying up and down." Matu interjected. "Can you expand on that concept?"

"Well, when people...and we use that term loosely, it could be any kind of entity, in their own unique way of thinking...pray up, they are looking or seeking some sort of support. That comforts us as we realize that we are needed. When we pray down, giving some support to those in need, we comfort them by letting them know that someone cares. And, both support each other with the same sort of comfort. Comfort is really the most important factor. That is what actually does the most good. It soothes the soul and quiets the troubled mind. It doesn't exactly address the troubling question, but it allows some relaxation, and then it allows enough time for the mind to stop and have the opportunity to think about the problems without excessive stress."

"This seems like an awful lot of responsibility to take on." Sendi commented.

"Well, yes, it is, and, no...when you were 'walking around normal', did you ever see someone accidentally drop something that they were unaware of, and so, you called their attention to the fact, and returned the item? Is it any different?"

"No, I guess not."

"It's just little deeds done without thinking that make the difference."

"You mean it's the 'what if that happened to me, how would I feel?'...someone I didn't know did a 'good deed' for me, for no reason."

"Yes."

"So, where's the responsibility...is it in prayer up, or prayer down? Is it one or the other, or both?" Matu asked.

"We can take comfort from others and our surroundings, but we should not rely on them for our salvation. It's said that God helps those who help themselves. He points the way, but you have to open the door. It's your decision, your responsibility, you can't just say so-and-so made me do it."

"From what you're saying, it sounds like a two way street."

"Of course it is. One doesn't work without the other. Remember, we are all connected. How can you possibly help someone that doesn't need or express a need for help? Assuming, of course, that you had any idea of what their needs were. In any circumstance what you actually observed of the situation of their need, is your interpretation. Unless they tell you or somehow communicate their need, how can you know? You can guess, but what do you base that knowledge on? Your own experience? That, at best, is a risky assumption, but you don't have any idea of what their personal experiences really are."

"So, we...?"

"Listen, watch, experience, pay attention to all of the signals that are coming your way. Then, decide on your response. It's really no different than in the 'walking around world'."

"What if we accidentally lead someone astray...give them faulty advice?"

"Well, those things happen, don't they? You offer an opportunity. They make a choice...to follow, or not. The important thing is that you act in good faith and not intend harm."

"I see."

"But, there is something else...and you were already on the receiving end of this. If you have a good understanding...a good connection with someone and want to help them forward a bit, give them small challenges. Test their willingness to expand their horizons. But, don't push too hard or too far. Be aware of how they respond. This is not something you should do right now. It is a future lesson for you. But, now is a good time to start thinking about how you would do it."

"Isn't that controlling?"

"Not if it's only a suggestion. Remember, we placed things and ideas where you could find them. But, we didn't demand that you actually use or even notice them."

"Why would we do this?"

"To get people to think...thinking is painful, that's why most people don't do it." He laughed. "Most people just do what they're told to and wait for the pat on the head for being 'a good boy'."

"Why do you say that thinking is painful?" Rexx asked. "I thought that was how we learned."

"That's absolutely true. But, it comes with the demand that you accept the responsibility for making decisions based upon your thinking."

"Huh?"

"Well, you can't just point to the next guy and say 'it's his fault, he made me do it', because, 'you' did do it."

"Hey!" Rexx interjected. "I just thought of something. We're outside of time...right?"

"Yes."

"Then, how is it that you don't know the future?"

"Ah! Good question."

"Well...?"

"You see...partially, among other reasons, it's because we are connected, or linked to you at our origin point...where we came together...became acquainted. So, we know your past...your unfolded events. But, they are not completed and your choosing determines your progression. We don't know what you will decide."

"You keep referring to yourself as 'we'...why?" Matu interjected.

"Because we are plural...the sum total of all of our incarnations. We did mention this before."

"Oh, yes...you did, sorry."

"You, at the moment, are only cognizant of your current incarnation. In 'time', pardon the pun, you will begin to remember other times. You probably already know of some of these, but, often, they are dismissed as dream fragments."

"Wait a minute...you said we're outside of time." Rexx reminded.

"Yes."

"Then, how is it that we feel like we are still inside of time? I mean, we're talking, putting one word after another...having conversations...isn't that, sort of, within time?"

"Ah, yes. Well, you've got us there on a technicality. Unfortunately, people 'in time' haven't come up with a word for the concept of continuing without counting the minutes of unfoldment."

"Unfoldment?"

"Yes, here we have no clocks to keep track of time. Think of it as being in the twenty fifth or N-th time zone of your planet...always overlapping the previous and next time zones. We're sort of in a pocket outside of the time of all of this universe." He indicated the planets with a swipe of his hand. "All of this is within time, constantly moving forward. Here, where we are, we are free to move in any direction, limited to when you left Earth in the future as we are unfolding."

"Why that future limit?"

"Because, we, referring to 'me' in this instance as being the Time Police, are linked to that physical aspect of you. You have not yet become inter-dimensional."

"I'd say, 'huh?' But, OK, I think I understand the concept."

"Now, explain about this 'connection' or 'link'." Sendi interjected.

"Yes. Well, one of us chose you early on when you were just planning your vacation. As well as another part of us chose Matu. So, we linked into these temporal origin points and that allowed us to connect with your...well, I will use the word 'thoughts' for want a better concept. What we could know was the possible futures of each of you based on your individual plans, but these futures would only materialize depending on your choices, or decisions, of which path fragment to follow. When you chose to join us, your earthly futures were put on hold. Were you, at some point, to return to an earthly pursuit, then, at that time, your potential futures would reappear." He paused. "Or not...depending on your interim experiences, questions, and decisions."

"Wow...that's complex!"

"Yes. It is. But, it is mostly following the path of least resistance. But, even then, one cannot predict which path segment will be followed."

"Could you clarify?" Rexx asked.

"Think of this...on a beach, you make a pile of damp sand, then you take a small container of water and slowly pour it over the sand. What route will most of the water take to dispel the mound of sand?"

"I see. It's not predictable. There are too many unknown factors...the direction and force of the water flow plus splash factor, differing density of sand and grit particles, wind direction, and much more."

"Exactly! And, don't discount your will...you may have a desire for a given outcome."

"That's a factor?"

"Yes, of course. In a lot of circumstances, it is the major factor."

"You mean what we want is important?"

"I think that there is a song about what you want and what you need. Will is not always about want, often it's about need. Sometimes your 'need' is stronger than your 'want', you just don't realize that it is the 'need' that is in control."

"Aagh! That's so much to think about." Sendi complained.

"Well, don't get too upset about it." He smiled. "Everything is always in flux. Worry, as well as similar emotions, such as fear, hate, anger, revenge...really, what do they accomplish, other than wasting your energies?"

"How do you take it so calmly?"

"Try to look at the totality...the 'big picture'...is a small emotion really more important when a larger issue is at hand?"

"Like what?"

"Well, if your and another country are at war, is your dispute with your neighbor over his dog barking in the middle of the night of the most importance, or do you pay more attention to the bombs being dropped over your heads?"

"I see." She agreed. "But, what do we do with these emotions that come, I guess we could say, without bidding? Most of these emotions are rather spontaneous...we don't really think them out in advance."

"Yes, that's true. It's an exercise in patience. It's one of those 'practice makes perfect' kind of things. When you get one of these emotions prompting you to action, learn to pause and look over the situation, then make your decision for your next move. And then, put that action toward the future...we hate to say, make it a habit, because that's a problem in itself. Habit removes you from presence...knowing what's going on around you."

"I can see how that can happen." Rexx commented.

"I agree." Matu said. "As a guard, making rounds, I've found myself distracted from observing details because I knew the way too well."

"So, how do we keep from falling into that trap?" Sendi asked.

"Presence...paying attention. When you find yourself distracted, question the circumstance. Find out why. Is there a need to pay attention to something else, and, if so, what or why...those kind of questions."

"Or, are we just bored and easily distracted." She added.

"Exactly. But, pay attention to why you are bored. There may be other factors at play there."

"What do you mean?"

"Is the distraction a call to a diversion in your path?"

"Oh, I hadn't thought of that. How do we know which is which?"

"Well, you really don't. It may be a test. It may be a chance to not repeat a past mistake. It may be something entirely else. You need to heed the call and weigh your options."

"Huh?"

"Choose. Make a decision. You have been presented with a crossroads."

"How do we decide?"

"Well, therein you have to rely on your past experiences and your best judgment. Everything is a learning experience. Oh, and don't forget that we are here always supplying you with bits of information along the way for you to pick and choose as you may."

"Oh, joy." Sendi sighed.

"Where do all these distractions come from?" Rexx asked. "Why can't we just stay on a train of thought without interruption?"

"Ah, that's because you, like we, are also plural."

"Huh?"

"You are the sum total of all of your incarnations, but you just haven't remembered them yet. So, when you encounter an experience that is similar to a 'past' experience, that 'person', who is still 'you', reminds you of the fact."

"OK, 'huh?', again."

"Oh, and don't forget that all of that changes every moment with each new experience." He smiled. "And would you really want to stay on one train of thought for the rest of eternity?"

"OK, yes, complicated, and, no, to eternity." Rexx shook his head. "I guess this is the only way we get new ideas."

"Exactly! And when you encounter an experience that is brand new, well, all of your lives get interested and band together to address the encounter. They will fight each other to be the first one to say what you should do. It's all really very entertaining!"

"Oh, God." Sendi murmured. "What kind of experiences have we had in previous lives?"

"Oh, all kinds, you name it. Everything you could possibly imagine is probably in your past experience, along with some you can't imagine."

"A lot of doctrines discount the concept of reincarnation. What do you say about that?"

"Well, there are an awful lot of ideas out there. Do you think that they could have all been acquired in, oh say, sixty, or eighty some odd years with only your local environment? Some handful of intellectuals in a very cosmopolitan city, or very well traveled..well, maybe." He laughed. "But more likely, not. Plus, what do you say about ancient concepts? There are dragons in every ancient culture. Where are they now?"

"Uh, I don't know. I always assumed that they were fantasies."

"So, where did the idea come from?"

"Oh, I hadn't thought of that."

"Well?"

"So, are there new ideas?"

"Well, of course, but many are evolutions of previous ideas. Things often build on each other."

"How do you mean?"

"When you signed up for the time tour, did you intend to transgress the time barrier?"

"Well, no. We didn't even know anything about it at the time, much less that it even existed."

"But, your curiosity allowed you to evolve the idea. It allowed for creativity...the ability to connect tangential thoughts into new concepts."

"Yeah, I guess it did."

"Curiosity is an interesting cat. You have to keep it on a leash or it will lead you off a cliff."

"Yes!" Sendi laughed. "That's very true. It's somewhat amazing that cats actually do survive."

"Well, it is said that they have nine lives...I guess they have some sort of reset. Having said that...where does curiosity come from?" Rexx asked.

"It's natural. Look at it this way...when you're just a baby, you start exploring the world...that's how you learn. There's a bunch of noise, color, smell, taste, touch, and movement out there, and you want to know what it's all about. And you have a lot of emotional response to this."

"Oh...I guess that's true."

"Yes. And you continue as you grow. You progress from physical sensations to mental concepts. And, the process continues. You, three, have gone ahead into the psychic level. Eventually, you will remember your lives, your history."

"Why do we have to start over each time?" Sendi asked. "Why can't we just pause and pick up from where we left off?"

"You mean like taking a brief vacation and then back to work? Well, that's what you're doing. But, with a new body, a new mind, and a new 'personality'. Well, really, you do that when you return from a vacation, don't you...a new you, ready to take on the challenges of the world. But, physical things do degrade. Do you really want a hundred thousand year old decrepit body to hobble around in?"

"That long? No, I guess not."

"Yes. It would make it a lot more difficult to experience new things if your physical senses are fading."

"Yes, I think you're right about that."

"One other thing. A new perspective presents a new point of view...fresh perspectives, fresh ideas, fresh vistas, fresh tastes, fresh...well, fresh everything. How could that not be a brand new learning experience?"

"Why do we have to forget?"

"How else to learn anew? If you come to a new experience without any prejudgment, you have a much more open approach to what knowledge you can come away with." He smiled. "There's a story about the small dimple above the center of your lips. It's said that before you were born an angel pressed her finger there to silence your lips. "Shh, you must not tell, she said."

"That's sweet. But, so, why do our bodies have to degrade?"

"Well, you've experienced how your bodies grow. Things change. Some things are discarded so that others can grow. Change is needed. As your mind gets filled with opinions over time, it suffers from being clogged with too much of the same thoughts and reactions. It needs to be emptied and refreshed. So it is the same with your bodies. But, each have their limits. Then it is time for a fresh approach."

"Wow, that's a lot to have to change."

Yes, but, when you begin anew, you're an open book...and don't forget you're getting a new language to learn, note that it may be the same language, but language is a living thing, words change meaning and new slang terms evolve. Then there is the accompanying culture, and sometimes that brings a completely different way of thinking."

"But, doesn't all of this get in the way of learning?"

"No. Actually, it enhances it. Because you are starting over from the beginning, you have temporarily released yourself from your previous prejudices. And, don't think or pretend you don't have them. Everyone does, it's an artifact of culture, of community. Also remember, you may not even be the same species in your new life. Remember your little rock."

"Yes, I wonder how he, or she...it? is getting on."

"Well, you have history with it...you could contact it in it's new life."

"I can? Wow. How?"

"Remember, then focus on your memories, and reach out."

"That easy? I think I will try." She closed her eyes and went into a place of deep thought. A moment later, she opened her eyes. "That was amazing! My rock is now a small turtle living in a semi-tropical pool. She is happily experiencing the warmth of sunlight and the



experience of eating small bugs. When I touched her, she remembered me and conveyed a thought of warmth. Gosh! How did I do that so easily?"

"Well, it's because at the moment you are mostly inter-dimensional, and because of that, it's easier to touch dimensional beings. This experience will help to give you confidence when you want to connect with other beings."

"How are we able to do that?"

"It's sort of a direct path...from your path to their path...kind of like a lightning strike...nothing in between to interfere. Does this make sense?"

"I kind of see it as heart to heart. Is that right?" Matu added.

"Love?"

"Yes. A positive intent from one being to another."

"Exactly. A light but positive touch. Would you like to try again a little deeper with your rock turtle. It will be a good exercise in building your confidence for such explorations."

"Rock turtle?" Sendi asked.

"Yes. This entity now has a second life incarnation. She has ceased being an "I", and is now a "we". Though much of her previous memories will be closeted away as she fills her mind with new adventures."

"So, what should I do?"

"Proceed as before. Establish a gentle connection, greet her, reminding her who you are, and wait for her response. Be mindful that her attention may be directed to something more immediate in her life. Don't interfere with those activities. Simply wait for a time when she is more open to internal dialog. When she responds to your touch, you may slowly begin a conversation. Understand, that she may not be aware of your existence as being separate from her own. You may appear as just random thoughts in her head."

"What should I say?"

"That's up to you. You can ask about her life, her preferences, her dislikes. Once you have established a comfortable rapport, if you like, you can move onto deeper subjects."

"Deeper subjects...like what?"

"Such as pointing out new horizons, rediscovering old ones...somewhere you will probably encounter a closed door. This is not for you to open, so don't be tempted. This door is the portal to her previous lifetime's memories and the key to that is hers alone. But, you may prompt her memories with questions. You must go gently though. If you frighten her, she will close off to you and you will lose the ability to communicate with her. If that happens, it will take a very long time to reestablish a connection."

"Now, I'm afraid. I'm not sure I know how to tread such a fine line."

"Just go slow and pay attention to any and every response. When your skills are more developed and you have enough confidence in them, you may look through those closed doors without opening them. It can give you clues how to better proceed in your dialog, because what we are trying to do here is help the entities in the space-time-continuum to develop, to advance, to achieve their full potential. It won't happen soon, nor will it be easy, and often it won't happen at all. But, in very few circumstances will it happen in a single lifetime. So, we take tiny steps whenever the opportunities present themselves. And in turn, our actions help us to develop, to advance toward fulfilling our own potentials."

"What kinds of things are behind these closed doors?"

"Oh, all kinds of things...our previous life experiences from older lifetimes and from the current lifetime. There are some experiences that may have been so traumatic that they have to be locked away until the entity has the strength to again face them. There are experiences

from the in-between lifetimes that also would be too traumatic for an in-lifetime entity to tolerate...too overwhelming to comprehend."

"Such as?"

"Well, take your rock...remember when it slowly dissolved and left your hand on its journey to a new life. What do you think might have prompted it to chose a life as a turtle...that seems like a pretty large step, doesn't it? I mean as a rock in a cave, it was unlikely to even have encountered the concept of a semi-aquatic turtle."

"I hadn't considered that. Yes, that is a pretty large step."

"So, stretch your mind, exercise your imagination, what are the possible connections, what could be the common ground between being a rock and becoming a turtle?"

"Turtles hatch from eggs, don't they?" Rexx interjected.

"So?" Sendi turned to him. "Where are you going with that?"

"Well, eggs are sort of rock shaped and they're hard. Maybe your rock thought a turtle egg would be a different kind of rock."

"OK, I'll buy that." She turned to the Time Police. "When choosing a next life, how much information is available to the entity about the possibilities or should I say circumstances around that life?"

"What to expect?"

"Yes."

"Well, it all depends on how developed the entity is. The more past life experience, the greater the knowledge. When between lives the entity has access to all of their accumulated experiences from a less emotionally involved point of view. Unfortunately, your little rock has had very little experience to rely on, being a very young soul. Though, she did have the advantage of being a chip off of the mountain, which may mean she might have some shared knowledge."

"What would that be?"

"Well, since we're talking about eggs, the eagles nested in the upper parts of the mountain, which coincidentally, is where your rock is from."

"Oh, true. I forgot about the eagles."

"Also, your rock was part of a window sill in the seer's apartment. We're sure she learned a lot through absorbing the psychic energies for eons."

"Eons? That long?"

"Maybe, just a figure of speech. For who knows how long or what kind of energies she may have been exposed to since the mountain was formed."

"That's a lot to think about. Though experiencing the psychic energies could have prepared her for countless futures...touching on human thoughts like that. But we're just speculating, is there any way to know any of this?"

"Only through your dialog with her."

"Grump! I was afraid you'd say something like that. I just don't feel ready for that kind of interaction."

"So." Rexx interrupted. "Getting back to thinking an egg might be a different kind of rock, wouldn't it be a rude awakening to suddenly be alive and able to have complex bodily functions...eating, sleeping, walking around, stuff like that?"

"Oh definitely!"

"So, some of that type of experience could be locked in her closet?"

"Yes, absolutely! So now you understand the need to proceed with extreme caution."

"Yes, I do."

"Think back on your own life. When traumatic experiences revealed themselves out of your own locked closet, observe how you handled them. You can apply that knowledge here."

"Sigh, that's a lot to absorb."

"Well, we'll leave it there for now."