

*Excerpt: Romancing the Awakening Soul*

## *Chapter 1*

It all caught up with me one night when I came home from work. On the kitchen table glared a note: "It is over. Do not even think about talking to me. I want a divorce. You can see your daughter after the divorce. Karen"

Rage and pain collapsed my mind. I could not think, or move. I raced, panicked, through the house frantically trying to find something of Karen's and my two-and-a-half-year-old daughter Christina's. Christina's room was as bare as a chemical scrub.

The stark and undeniable truth ripped through my body. No one was there. Oh my God, I thought. Is this it? Is this the end of my seven-year marriage? Shame elicited uncontrollable tears, as I flung myself onto the couch sobbing. Memories, beautiful memories, of my family rushed through my mind. Karen and I had a wonderful relationship, never an argument. What had I done?

My life with Karen ran through my mind. I had been the hotshot salesman who had worked my way up to acting general manager of a mid-sized car dealership. I was the guy who took a small homebuilding company and doubled the sales in six months. Now, I was in partnership with three men who invested in my idea to launch a company that sold restaurant-quality meats to families. I considered myself successful, a good provider.

Why was this happening to me? I cried myself to sleep on the couch. The next morning, I went to work doing my best to stay focused. A month passed with no contact from Karen. Her parents wouldn't tell me where she was. I began to lose my self-confidence. I was a mess. The meat business was losing money, and my business partners asked me to step down.

Over the next month, I liquidated the house, the cars, and

some of the furniture, to pay off debts. The rest of the furniture went into storage. Now facing homelessness, I had just enough money to buy a \$400 Dodge Dart. Out of desperation, I called Steve, one of my salesmen from my meat business and asked if he would put me up for a while. Steve agreed, and I got the couch. It wasn't much fun. Steve lived in a one-bedroom cracker box in a seedy part of Portland, Oregon. The constant parties next door involved drugs and really loud music. The chaos motivated me to buy a self-hypnosis tape. Each night I fell asleep listening to the tape that said, "Everything is as it should be."

Drifting off to sleep one night while listening to my tape, I contemplated when I had shut down my psychic abilities. The first memory was when I was about two-and-a-half years old. Mother had brought out a tricycle and said, "Look what Santa has brought you for Christmas."

"Santa didn't give it to me."

"Yes he did! I saw him bring it to the front door last night."

"No, he didn't," I insisted. "You bought it and put 'From Santa' on it."

"How do you know that?"

"I dunno."

"You don't know? I am telling you that Santa brought it here and that is exactly what happened," she exclaimed! "Furthermore, I don't want you to talk like that again. You hear me?"

I cried every time I felt my mother's anger. Her disapproval was unbearable. She reprimanded me each time I tried to talk about things I somehow "knew." I learned that I couldn't say that I had invisible friends, that I could talk to the wind and it heard me. So I shut it all down, at home, at school, church, everywhere. I had to be quiet about my knowing, to keep out of trouble.

As I lay there on the couch recalling my childhood, I realized that being in trouble was something I had learned to live with. I was raised Catholic, strict Catholic. Even my first day in the first grade was trouble. Sister Angelus placed a catechism book on my desk. I opened it as if possessed by some unknown force. I ripped out a page, shoved it into my mouth, chewing it up, making a spitball. I threw it smack onto

the blackboard.

Sister Angelus immediately picked me up by my ear, pulling me out of my chair, and smacked me across the back with a ruler. She didn't say a word and returned to the front of the class.

My time in fourth grade was a pivotal point in grade school. I had my first parochial teacher; she was a young woman, not a nun. I couldn't keep my eyes off her. She had legs that came from heaven and a serene graciousness about her. I became obsessed. She had to be the most beautiful creature in the world. I could not focus on anything except her beauty.

One morning, I lingered in bed fantasizing about my teacher and masturbating with the soft, furry little dog doll that I loved to sleep with. My mother came into my bedroom and ripped the covers off me, exposing my erection. She screamed hysterically for my father, who ran into the room with his belt in hand. He beat me severely. I later counted over forty welts.

My mother tried covering the welts on my face and neck with Band-Aids before my father took me to school. He marched me up to the front of the class and whispered something to the teacher. He turned me to face my schoolmates and he explained the horrible things that happen to boys who masturbate. I was devastated and furious. I ended the fourth grade with an astounding record of all Fs.

In the 5th grade I fought back. One incident shook the school for quite a while. I had climbed to a nice sitting perch in an oak tree in the school's parking lot. I noticed two nuns approaching, and I had an idea: I am going to piss on these two black and whites. Oh what fun, I thought, as I unzipped my pants and pissed on Mother Mary John and Sister Angela. It sounded like raindrops hitting canvas, as they looked up and got a face full of my golden drops of revenge.

One time, I asked to go the bathroom for a number two. Sister Angela said "No." I had a very hard time holding back and began rocking back and forth to keep from crapping in my chair. I repeatedly asked permission to go to the restroom. Each request was denied. For over an hour I rocked in my chair, in agony. When the recess bell rang, I rushed to the bathroom and found my butt was all bloody. I did my business and packed my underwear with toilet paper. After

school, I showed my mother two four-inch-long, one-inch-wide open wounds on each side of my anus. She told me that I should have sat still instead of rocking. Such were the days of Catholic School and hard-core Catholic parents.

My parents were cut out of the old school. They beat the shit out of me to make me behave and locked me in the bathroom for long periods of time. When the door opened, thinking I was getting out, they came in and beat me again. I was to be seen, but not heard. I simply didn't count.

Needless to say, I hated my family. I made several attempts to run away from home, beginning at the age of twelve. I didn't know where I was going, I just wanted out. I hid in a trashcan, or in the bushes near the neighbor's house. When found, I was whipped for running away, always hearing, "What in the hell is wrong with you?"

My reminiscing faded. I vaguely became aware of the self-hypnosis tape running in the background. I was suddenly filled with the feeling of not being wanted, never wanted. Karen didn't want me and nobody really ever did.

I woke in the morning to the smells of musty furniture and dust mixed in with hints of cat piss. This couch sucks, I thought. I am getting out of here!

I walked the streets of downtown Portland and struck up a conversation with a person selling flowers on a street corner. I was about as down as you could get, and asked about a job. Next thing I knew, I was selling flowers. I didn't want a real job anymore, and to me, selling flowers was not really "working."

Portland has the kind of sodden December cold that chills your bones. In years past, I often drove by this very location, throwing out a \$20 and grabbing a bouquet, wondering why anyone would stand there and freeze all day long. Now I knew.

Selling flowers gave me plenty of down time, time that I needed to consider how I was going to get a grip on my life. It was rough. Not being able to contact Karen was excruciating; over and over I'd tell myself that if I could just talk to her, everything would work out.

Standing on the corner in the cold, it hit me, like a bolt of lightning. I had hit bottom. Everything that I thought was so important to me had slipped away. Years of hard work on the

“American Dream” had vanished in what seemed like a moment. A rousing, deep-seated knowing of some distant promise came on inside me like a storm. In that instant, I made a promise to myself: I would never participate in that “Dream” again. The only purpose left to my life was to find God.

Downtown Portland had its rewards. Sometimes I'd take a warm break from the freezing rain in The Galleria Mall. The first floor was mostly restaurants and gift shops. To my surprise, on the second floor a psychic had set up a booth near the escalator. A sign on her booth said “READINGS BY BILLE.” I watched her from a distance and eavesdropped whenever I could. She was a hawkish-looking woman, with an indefinable air. But, she always smiled and laughed while giving readings.

Watching this psychic inspired more memories of my own abilities. It was 1966, as I stepped off the plane at Da Nang air base in Viet Nam. I knew everything—where I was going to sleep that night, who I would be bunking with and innumerable details about the whole experience. Where did this come from, I wondered? At Camp Tenshaw near Da Nang, I would get some guys together. I'd have them sit in a circle, and tell them about their lives and where they came from. It was in me to do it, the guys loved it, and I did it well.

One day, I walked up, glanced at Bille, mustered my courage and asked for a reading. Bille looked up at me, with her head bobbing and a clownish grin asked, “What is your name?”

Slightly nervous, I answered, “My name is Cary.” I sat down. As she handed me the Tarot cards, she gazed knowingly at me with such friendly, strong blue eyes, that it took me aback. Bille asked me to shuffle the cards. When I was through, she laid the cards out in a circle and began to read, “Oh my, there are many changes going on in your life. Looks like a divorce and it is very difficult for you because you are unable to talk or communicate with her. A child is involved, is it a daughter?”

“Yes, she is two-and-a-half and I miss her.”

“From what I see here, you love her very much. What is your wife's name?”

“Karen.”

“Was this a big surprise for you?”

“Yeah, she left me a note that said, ‘It’s over, and I won’t talk to you until after the divorce.’”

“Looks like you were ignoring her. Were you?”

“I didn’t think so. Maybe I did. I worked long hours at my business, and Karen was a nurse working the night shift. We didn’t have a lot of time together, but everything appeared fine. We had a good relationship—I thought, anyway.”

“Well, we will get back to that. It looks like you have lost everything, and you yourself are lost. You need a direction in your life. You’re out of work. Are you homeless, on the street?”

“Sort of, I lost my business and am selling flowers on the street corner,” I answered, laughing nervously.

“I want to tell you that this is all very good for you, a life-changing experience that will lead you in a direction that you have always wanted.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that something is coming to you that you have wanted before this lifetime, or many lifetimes ago. Do you know of any special lifetime?”

“Well, let’s see, a lifetime of service of some kind?”

“No, not really,”

“Are you sure?”

“I think so. Well, wait a minute, I have this sense that I need to do something big, or important and have no clue what it’s about.”

“I think I know,” Bille responded. “It’s something to do with ancient wisdom of some kind. You’re what I call a carrier of knowledge or a messenger, a prophet maybe.”

That’s really funny, I thought to myself, me a prophet? What a joke! I started to feel she was being a little weird.

She continued, “I want to tell you that you create your world by the way you think. Here is a little trick for you to get started. Whenever you think of Karen, or your daughter surround them in love. See them in your mind with love all around them each time they come to mind.”

“There is something else I want to tell you,” Bille continued. “I may be wrong, but it sure looks like you have turned your attention, or changed your focus to some sort of a lofty goal. It’s a search for a connection of some kind that has to do with spirituality.”

“Maybe you’re seeing a promise I just made to myself,” I answered.

“What was it?”

“I made a promise to spend the rest of my life in the pursuit to find God.”

She laughed out loud, smiling with a sparkle in her eyes. She looked me square in the face, pointing her finger at me and said, “You are God. No need to do any searching.” She laughed again with a smirk that made me feel sort of stupid, like I should have known that or something.

She started picking up the cards, saying, “That’s it for now.”

“Bye, Bille, I said. See ya soon.”

“Okay, see ya.”

“Oh, and thanks. That was a great help to me.” I said.

She smiled and I left. Going down the escalator I felt hope –lots of hope. She made me feel like I had something in my life. She was amazing: she knew I had a divorce coming and enormous changes occurring in my life.

I kept returning to talk to her, and in our many conversations she gently began to lead me out of my world of emotional self-pity and negativity by reinforcing my belief in my own power. She reminded me that I was in charge of my own world, and coached me to think in optimistic and self-realizing ways. I never doubted her message.

Bille was as much a mystic as a psychic. She shared wisdom that was formerly unimaginable to me, helping me to set sail in a direction of focused love. I took her advice to envision Karen and Christina surrounded with love. At first, I could only do it for brief moments. Occasionally, I would revert to the feelings of betrayal and anger. When I finally saw the attachment to my own drama, I released my self-pity. The simple practice of seeing my wife and daughter with love began transforming me.

On one visit to Bille, I sat down and she smiled at me, grabbed the deck of Tarot cards, and began flipping them up. She asked me what each card meant. Surprising myself, I knew the meaning of every one.

“How do I know the meaning of the cards when I have never studied them?” I asked.

Bille simply nodded, replying, “I thought you might already know.” She handed me the deck and asked me to do a reading for her. I did, and she encouraged me to start giving readings.

As time went on, I was learning that love is the only true power. I had changed so much in such a short time. I could feel love pouring out of me to such an extent that every flower, tree, person, bird, animal—everything alive—was moving in me; I could feel the very essence of each being, and it was wonderful. When I touched a plant, I understood it and we shared love. I could see the energy that connected us, and the dance of life ran through my veins. I had a deep connection to the elements. The wind heard me and would come to me when I asked. I was happy, open to new beginnings.

New beginnings were what I was about. One afternoon, I told my friend Mark about Steve and the couch I was sleeping on, and how much I didn't care for it. Mark immediately said, “Come stay with us for a while. Let me check with Julie, and I will let you know tomorrow.”

Mark called me at Steve's the next morning, and gave me the good news. Mark was like a brother to me. He had worked for me a couple of times as a salesman. He was a very loving soul who never really got on his feet financially and was often moody, somewhat depressed. I had been his sales mentor in the past, and he admired my multiple sales and management awards.

His wife, Julie, was optimistic and really kept things together, paying most of the bills. Scott, their 10-year-old son, was an average student who didn't like much of anything except sports. One day, I told him that I could manifest the wind. His eyes got really big and with a huge grin, he proclaimed, “No way!”

“Come on outside with me, Scott, and I will manifest the wind for you.”

We stood near a lilac bush in the front yard and I asked if

he noticed any wind, or a breeze. There was none. I connected to the elements, feeling a deep communion with the lilac bush and its surrounding essence. I felt the presence of the air within and around me, as I raised my hands to invite the wind. The lilac bush began to move, gently at first, and then it thrashed wildly in a heavy wind. Scott screeched and giggled as he ran into the house.

I walked back into the house to find him suddenly glued to the television. "Scott, you okay?" He looked at me with such fear, I felt bad about what I'd done. I never thought he would become fearful. I thought for sure he would like it.

He said, "I ain't saying nothin' about this to nobody."

"Okay, Scott. It will be our secret."

My friendship with Bille grew. I often visited her at her booth and we talked about unlimited concepts and the power of the mind. When she had a reading, I would go eat or visit people in their shops, and hand out my new business cards. They said: "Psychic Readings by Cary." I started doing readings, usually at the client's home. This new trickle of income allowed me to stop selling flowers in the rain, and I felt a sense of accomplishment. So, I was starting to feel better about myself.

It rains all winter in Portland; consistently overcast skies seem to drip water endlessly. On one such day, I decided to go for a walk and ended up seeking shelter at a bookstore. There I browsed through several books on hypnosis. One drew me in and I read with ever-increasing fervor. It profiled a genius named Milton Erickson, who could talk to a client in metaphors and elicit behavioral changes with ease. Not your standard hypnosis.

I devoured this book, the material diving so directly into my mind that I could easily recall every tidbit. I was mesmerized by the concept of influencing the subconscious mind to bring about radical change and felt a connection between the deeper mind and God, or Spirit. The possibility of learning to access this created pure excitement in me. Maybe this was my doorway to infinite knowledge. If the mind could be so easily reprogrammed, perhaps that which separates us from God could be uncovered. It really turned me on to learn all I could about hypnosis.

Mark told me Karen had called, looking for me. I was ecstatic that she wanted to talk and called her immediately.

“Karen, how are you?”

“I’m just fine,” she said, “I don’t have a lot of time to talk, but I have the final divorce papers ready and you need to sign them. Meet me at Washington Park tomorrow at one o’clock, at the rose garden.”

“I don’t want a divorce, Karen. Can we talk about this?”

“I will talk to you at the park.”

“This isn’t fair, what did I do?”

She hung up.

Damn! What was going on? Why wouldn’t she talk to me? I was puzzled, but confident that seeing her would change everything. I could hardly sleep that night. All I could think about was seeing her. While driving to the park, I spotted her sitting on a park bench. God, she looked good, more beautiful than I remembered.

When I approached her, sudden pangs of sadness overwhelmed me. A sense of doom made each step forward heavy with resistance.

I was nervous, yet still excited, as I sat down next to her. She acted cold and businesslike, as she searched her purse and pulled out some papers.

“Good to see you, Karen,” I said, reaching for her hand.

She pulled her hand away with a wry smile. “How are you doing, Cary?”

“I’m great. Karen, I love you. What’s going on? Can’t we talk about this?”

“No, I have nothing to talk about.”

“Why? Can’t you give me a reason why you’re doing this?”

“I couldn’t tell you a reason. I don’t know. All I know is it’s over and I am not interested in talking about it.” She thrust the papers at me. “Here, sign these and you can start seeing your daughter every other weekend. I’m staying at my parent’s house and you can pick her up this weekend.”

“Well, that’s a bright spot in all this,” I said.

“Cary, you better get over this because I have been seeing another man and I love him. It’s over for you and me.”

My stomach sank and tears streamed down my face. I signed the divorce papers, said goodbye and walked away like a dog with his tail between his legs. I recovered in a day or two, finally letting go of her completely.

I had saved enough money doing psychic readings to move into a simple one-bedroom apartment. A few pieces of furniture allowed me to create a pleasing environment that could be configured into an office at a moment's notice. I studied hypnosis and practiced on all my friends. I was getting great results and was fast becoming proficient at it. I began building a practice, and many of my clients were having radical changes in their lives.

I began to really understand that the subconscious mind could do anything. Getting the "personality" mind out of the way was what the mystics referred to as quieting the mind. I began working with other hypnotherapists, to program myself for higher levels of consciousness.

The combination of talking to Billy and practicing hypnosis was opening my mind and expanding my abilities in amazing ways. For instance, one particular woman came to me often for weight loss. She had several spiritual and cleansing experiences, but was not losing any weight. I was troubled by this and felt bad about it. It kept eating at me.

During this time, I sat down for a reading with Bille, she looked up over the cards, and her head bobbed like it was on a spring as she said, "Guilt is self-imposed."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"You can only feel what you choose to feel. If you want to be guilty, be guilty."

She laughed out loud. "Wait a minute, Bille," I said. "I just realized I forgot to put money in the meter. I'll be right back!" I sprinted out the door. When I returned, I told her sadly that I had found a parking ticket on the windshield. Bille laughed again, saying matter-of-factly, "Just change it."

"What?"

"Just change it."

"Okay, it's changed," I responded, and we laughed and giggled about it.

We talked for another hour or so. To my surprise, when I arrived at my car the ticket was gone. At first, I thought maybe

someone had taken it. I soon realized I had truly meant what I said and never really doubted it.

This was amazing to me, and I felt deep gratitude that Bille was in my life. She always taught me to think without limits. I loved her for this. She was that someone in my life who gave me a sense of direction and challenged me mentally and emotionally. There's no telling where I may have ended up without her help.

One of my appointments was with a woman named Judy, at her home in a suburb across the river from Portland. Her husband, Ted, greeted me at the door, and invited me in. After Judy's reading, Ted joined us at the table and we spoke about hypnosis and psychic phenomena. They were very open and excited. Ted asked me to stay for dinner. We really hit it off, growing very close in a short time.

While we were talking, I mentioned the probability of moving, because of financial difficulty. By the end of the evening, they said that they felt I was part of their family, and would I like to use the entire second story of their home for free? I'd have a private bedroom and a good-sized living area to turn into my hypnosis and readings center.

Of course I jumped at the chance. Judy and Ted were simple people who longed for the country. Ted moved very slowly and deliberately. He had thick glasses that tended to slip slightly below the bridge of his nose. Buckteeth caused him to slightly slur his words. Ted didn't work because he was ill. He didn't know what he had, but he had to take breaks all the time because of seriously low energy.

My first night there was spooky. It felt like someone was watching me. I'd jump out of bed and look in the mirror—I could have sworn someone, or something on the other side of my reflection was looking back at me.

One evening, I pulled out their Ouija board. I had never played with one before. First you ask a question, you wait for the pointer to move on its own to an answer.

I asked, "What is my purpose in life?"

The pointer moved with a steady force to the letter G, then to O, and it stopped on D.

How did that happen, I wondered? So I asked, "What is in my future?"

The exact same thing occurred. It pointed to G-O-D.

There were always odd happenings at this house. One morning, I woke very early hearing a buzzing from the downstairs bathroom. I went down and gingerly peered around the door to get a look. The electric toothbrush was running in its holder.

Ted and Judy joined me at the doorway. None of us had turned on the toothbrush. Another time, I was in the kitchen and unscrewed the lid to the vitamin bottle. As soon as I put it on the counter, it floated by itself back to the top of the bottle. I grabbed the lid and placed it back on the counter, and it rose into the air and plunked back on the bottle. This continued several times. It was very outlandish, but didn't seem threatening, just weird.

One night, I woke to Ted banging on my door. I opened the door and Ted said, "You are not going to believe what I am going to show you. Come down to the living room as soon as you can!" I rushed downstairs to a sight that sent chills up my spine. The rocking chair had been moved to the middle of the living room. Stuck on its headrest was the head of a Cabbage Patch doll, ripped from the body, eerily facing us. The headless body lay on the floor, in clear sight. It was Judy's favorite of the many dolls she collected.

We were all suddenly nervous about our ghost that we had previously concluded was friendly. We were now very concerned.

That evening Ted asked, "Can you get rid of this thing?"

I immediately replied, "Of course I can." The words just flew out of me. I had never contemplated doing any such thing, but somehow I knew I could do it. That night we lit a candle in the living room, and formed a circle around it. I called the spirit to me. The candle flickered and started to go out, and then suddenly flashed brightly. This spirit began talking in my head, communicating she was a twelve-year-old girl who had fallen down the stairs and broken her neck, right near the bathroom. I told her I understood that she didn't want to leave her home because she was unaware she was dead. She said she was lost and this house was all she knew. I said I would help her go to the light.

I couldn't really see her, but sensed where she was. I formed an energy field of light all around her and sent her into it. The candle began glowing normally and a sense of peace

pervaded the atmosphere. "She has gone to the light," I said, and we all took deep sighs of relief. The home was free of her presence.

I was growing more confident with the powers I apparently had. Every day was more thrilling. One afternoon Ted was startled by a loud crash of breaking glass. He ran into the living room to find the window was broken, a baseball-size rock on the floor. Ted ran outside, but didn't see anybody. We later tried to figure out what had happened and reasoned that some kids must have done it. It was the only thing that made any sense.

He fixed the window the next morning. I was home with him that afternoon when he spotted a group of boys on the sidewalk. He asked, "Can you protect the window for me?"

"Consider it done," I answered.

A few minutes later there was a loud thud on the window. Ted ran outside and yelled at the kids. The window had a chalky, star-shaped concussion mark on it. Ted screamed at me, "The window didn't break. Oh my God, the rock broke instead." On the ground was a rock, shattered.

I suddenly felt like I was becoming an avatar, a high spiritual being. I had no training from masters, but somehow I knew how to do whatever was necessary. Why was I able to perform such miracles? This knowledge had to come from somewhere. My conclusion was that it must be the god within, whatever that was! I felt aglow; I was walking around, ecstatic. I was turned on and brilliant, beginning to believe that I was a master like Jesus or Buddha, and why not? Isn't Jesus quoted in John 14:12 as saying, "he who believes in me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these will he do."