

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTIONS

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Saturday, May 12, 1990

Nancy:

It was a perfect spring day, clear and warm. The three children and I spent the afternoon at my sister's house for my niece's second birthday party. Jessica at nine years old was a big help with the boys, Anthony at three years old and David at one. Jack stayed behind to catch up on some work.

We returned home at dinnertime, so the boys were overtired and fussy. As I hustled to get them settled, put things away and get dinner started, Jack kept trying to get my attention. "I have to talk to you. Something happened to me today," he said. Distracted by the demand of tasks before me, I barely listened to what he was saying. He persisted. "While you were gone, I saw something in the garage."

"Oh, yeah?" I absently remarked as I began to peel potatoes over the sink.

"Listen to me," he demanded, finally gaining my attention, "Something happened!"

Sensing his urgency, I turned around. Never before had I seen him in such a state of excitement and worry. Suddenly I felt the seriousness of what he was about to say. "What is it? What happened?" I asked cautiously as though he might tell me that somebody died.

As he struggled haltingly to describe the setting, he was so upset, I thought he was going to tell me about some horrible accident. In anxious anticipation, I first imagined a bleeding victim stumbling into the backyard, and then an intruder

climbing the fence and attacking my husband. Alarmed and unsure, I reached for his arm and looked him over for signs of abuse. “Are you all right?”

“Yes,” he replied emotionally, “I think so,” but he stopped speaking, his words stuck in his throat. He turned and paced about the kitchen trying to regain his composure as I watched on helplessly.

Thinking of the people in our families and fearing the answer I would get, I tentatively asked, “Has somebody been hurt?”

“No, nobody’s been hurt. Everyone’s all right,” he said, but he did not seem relieved.

I was confused, and felt a strong need at that moment to reassure him and myself. “Okay, if nobody’s hurt, then just calm down for a minute and then start over.”

Jack took a deep breath and walked around the kitchen a few times as I watched with concern. Then he began to speak more clearly, although he struggled for the words as he emotionally described strange images, sounds and events. As I listened, I frantically searched my mind for some frame of reference and repeatedly interrupted to ask him to explain details further. As I finally began to understand, so many questions invaded my mind, I realized this was just too much to grasp all at once. The kids were calling, so I suggested we get them taken care of so we could sit down together to calmly figure this all out.

As we went about our regular evening activities with the children and housework, I could see that Jack was already greatly relieved. He told me how worried he’d been all afternoon at how I might react and whether I would even believe him. I assured him, “It’s obvious from the way you’re behaving that what you’re telling me really did happen. We’ll figure it all out, whatever it is.”

As soon as the kitchen was cleaned up and the kids were bathed and settled down, I got out a notebook and we both sat at the kitchen table. I told Jack, "Okay, start at the beginning and tell me what happened step by step. We'll worry about what it all means later." I wrote, asking for every detail as Jack carefully described the course of events.

Jack:

I was working alone behind the house in my workshop, which is a converted, detached garage, hand cleaning a set of delicate Oriental rugs. It was noisy from the power vacuum, the fans and the tape player so I had to shut everything down whenever the business phone rang. My mother was in her apartment upstairs in the house and could have answered her extension line, but I was also waiting for a call from our friends Diana and Vinny to make arrangements to visit and pick up some rugs to clean for them.

As I worked, I kept seeing an instantaneous movement out of the corner of my eye. The workshop is entirely enclosed except for the side door that opens into the yard and what kept catching my eye seemed to be the sunlight flashing through it. I thought there might be someone outside stepping up to the door and stepping away again. I needed fresh water anyway, so when I walked outside I looked around, but there was no one in the yard. The sky was clear and there was no wind.

I walked up to the house to turn the hose on and heard our house phone ringing so I ran inside to answer it. It was Diana and she told me she had tried a few times to call me on the business line but that it just rang and rang. I didn't think I missed any calls so I asked her if she had the right number. She recited it correctly so we just brushed it off and continued with

our conversation. I saw the clock in the kitchen as we talked. It was two to three minutes before 2:00 p.m. when I hung up and went back outside.

I turned the water on and walked back to the shop to check the phone. From there I called my mother's house phone to ask her if her business extension had rang and she said she'd heard it earlier but not recently. Then I had her call me back to test my phone and make sure it would ring, which it did.

I got back to work, and in one minute the flashing started again. I saw it blink right at the edge of my vision a few more times, so I stood straight up and just watched for it, but nothing happened. From where I was standing, I could look out of the doorway at an angle and see part of the yard and part of the house. I walked outside to look around again, but saw nothing strange.

I went back into the shop and continued to work. In about a minute, I saw one more very bright flash, but this time the whole room remained lit up. I turned around, looked and watched. There was a slender, vertical beam of intense light standing five feet in from the front wall and five feet to the left of the shop doorway, and it was widening. Brilliant white light beamed through the seam as it opened into the same size and shape of the shop doorway, but it had no frame and seemed to be cut right out of thin air. I was absolutely horrified as I watched it open all the way.

Standing motionless in the opening was a six-foot shadowy figure, silhouetted by the light streaming out from behind it. It was shaped like a man in a long overcoat, as if legs together and arms to the sides. There were no distinguishable features except for a particular shape of a round bump rising from the top of its head.

The figure was transparent, and I could vaguely see the front of the garage through it, but there was something else beyond the doorway and the figure that looked like another room. Terrified, I was instinctively about to flee, but it was standing between me and the only way out of the shop. Then I heard a voice, but not with my ears: "My appearance is frightening you so I am going to make this image disappear, but I will still be here and I am still going to talk to you."

Then it all began to slowly fade before my eyes. I watched the light and seam slowly close and disappear. I found myself backed up against the back of the shop. My heart was pounding, my knees were weak and my whole body was shaking. I was struggling against my own mind, at a loss for what to do. I thought about getting to the house to call someone and I was about to run when it spoke again: "You are still afraid."

I thought back to it in my mind, "I don't understand this. So I'm afraid. It's human nature to be afraid." I felt it already knew that, and wondered who had said it, me or it? Then somehow I just knew this was a live being, not a ghost or spirit, but not human. Glancing around the shop, I noticed the clock said only 2:00 but I knew that 10 or 15 minutes had gone by since I'd been in the kitchen.

In shock and struggling to control my impulse to run, I forced myself to walk across the floor and out of the shop. I crossed the lawn, climbed the steps, and stumbled through the back hall to the kitchen where I sat down at the table with my head in my hands.

I have faced fear many times before, having served as an M.P. for the U.S. Army in Germany and as a policeman in Yuma, Arizona. And this was where I live, work and raise my family. I knew I had to face my fear, so I forced myself back outside and

tentatively peered into the shop. All seemed to be normal, so I stepped through the door.

Suddenly I was startled as I heard the fans and the vacuum spontaneously come back on and I realized I hadn't heard them running since I first saw the doorway. I shut off the vacuum and looked at the clock. As I watched, it proceeded to 2:01, but I was sure at least 20 more minutes had gone by. I remembered the tape player had been on also, but it had not come back on with the fans and the clock. I checked and found it shut off in the middle of the tape. I didn't turn it back on.

I looked around the shop, then set back up and started working again. Every few minutes, I looked at the clock to make sure it kept moving, which it did. As soon as I was somewhat calm, the being continued to speak to me. The voice was clear and unstrained in my mind in spite of the noisy equipment. No longer quite as afraid as I had been, I listened as I continued my work.

The being explained, "There are thirty other worlds concerned with the ecological state of this planet. Too many of man's systems are causing destruction and diminishment of Earth's natural resources. Your forests, which are absolutely essential to balance and maintenance, are already in an immediately critical condition. Because man is not capable of solving all of these problems by himself, we are going to help. We are not going to let man destroy this planet."

As I finished my work and put the equipment away, I kept thinking of three letters, Z-A-R. My mind was quickly growing with questions. I stepped from the shop, intending to go upstairs to tell my mother what had just happened, when the voice said, "If you tell your mother she will humor you, but if you wait for Nancy to come home and you tell her, she will understand."

In a bit of a daze, I went into the house and washed up, then paced around for a few minutes. I couldn't just wait for Nancy so I went upstairs to my mother's apartment. Sitting with her at her kitchen table as she watched television, I started to try to tell her what had happened. I described the bright light but she seemed not to be listening to me. When I tried to describe the doorway, she asked, "How have you been feeling? What have you eaten all day?" I told her, so she asked, "Are you getting enough sleep?" I told her yes, so she asked, "Have you been working with any chemical cleaners?"

I finally gave up and went back downstairs to wait for Nancy.

Nancy:

While I was writing everything down, I asked Jack to show me where he saw the doorway. We walked out to the shop and I began to draw a diagram. As Jack was describing the details of the shape he saw standing in the doorway and I was carefully drawing it, strangely, it was coming back to me from my own memory. As I drew the peculiar bump on the top of its head, suddenly I recognized this as "the man" I saw in my bedroom when I was four years old! I was astonished, and told Jack about it.

I had seen him standing motionless in the dark, framed by the dim outline of my closet doorway. I wondered why he was there but was unafraid. I asked him, "Who are you?" but he wouldn't answer me so I went downstairs and asked my mother who he was. My mother told me I was dreaming, but I knew I wasn't so I persisted. She took me back up to my room to show me there was no man. And it was true – the man was gone. My mother put me back into bed where I laid wondering who he was, where he went and why my mother wouldn't believe me. I had never

completely forgotten about this childhood experience or stopped wondering what it was, and had supposed that some day I would know.

We had to get the kids ready for bed and were running out of a few staples so Jack went to the store while I took care of things at home. On his way out, he checked the clocks; the one in the shop and the one in the kitchen both had the correct time. When he returned, we stayed up for a while longer to talk more about what happened.

Sunday, May 13, 1990

Jack:

I woke up from a dream that I was on my way home from Star Market in our big green 1978 Mercury Cougar. Before I got to where our street meets Washington Street, I suddenly saw another doorway like the one I saw in the shop, but bigger this time, right in my lane on the road. I drove the car right through it and continued on.

Turning onto Granite Street, where we live, I saw another green 1978 Cougar parked in front of our house. As I pulled in directly behind it I noticed it was rusting and aging in very much the same way as ours.

I parked, went into the house and heard the usual dinnertime commotion coming from the back of the house. I walked through the living room and dining room and into the kitchen expecting to be greeted by everyone as usual, but instead I was shocked. No one looked up or paid any attention to me. I saw that everyone in the family was there, even myself. There were two of me!

I realized that each family member was completely unaware

of my presence as I watched and listened to them getting ready for dinner, preparing the meal, setting the table and talking to each other about the day. I related to Nancy this strange dream and she wrote it down.

Later in the afternoon I was on my way home from Vinny and Diana's, driving along River Street in Dedham, when I was suddenly startled by a vision in the sky ahead. It was the outline of another doorway, a lot like the one I saw in the garage the day before. There was a shadowy figure of a man at the threshold, poised in the middle of a step. I was startled again as I recognized the shape of the figure as my own. In just a few seconds, it faded until it was gone.

Nancy:

This brought up more questions about the doorway along with the possibility that Jack has already been through it and just didn't remember. That made us wonder what else we don't remember. We began to consider aliens and dimensions and time traveling like we've seen in science fiction shows on television.

This is already a very busy time of the year and in our lives with three children at home and the rug cleaning business to run. We have a lot to do and think about over the next few days.

Thursday, May 17, 1990

Jack:

We've finally begun to calm down and get back into the routine of normal life. There were deliveries to make so I loaded up the truck and planned my route. It was overcast and damp and I hoped the rugs wouldn't get wet.

Done with my last stop, I was on my way home when it began to rain hard. I flipped on the wipers and listened to the radio as I rolled along with the other cars on Route 1A. My mind began to wander as the traffic slowed where the two lanes funnel to one at the intersection of Gay Street.

I couldn't help but question my own sanity. I'd never heard of anything like what happened on Saturday really happening. These things are only in science fiction stories, I thought to myself. I believe ghosts exist and in life-after-death but I've never had a particular interest in the supernatural. I was content with just my faith and the simple understanding of God the way I always had it.

Suddenly I realized everything was quiet and still, and I had been staring downward in thought, fiddling with my keys. I looked up. Everyone was stopped. I looked around and nothing was moving – not the cars or the trees or the clouds. The truck was silent. The stereo light on the radio was lit but no music came out. There was not even a sound of the rain hitting the roof. The wipers were sticking straight up on the windshield. Some cars in front of me had their brake lights on and some didn't. My own foot was pressed against the brake pedal, but I didn't remember stopping or looking away from the road.

At first I thought everyone else was waiting to see what was happening as I was, but as I peered into some of the other cars I saw that the people were perfectly motionless. The woman who was driving the car directly to my left was clearly oblivious to the event as I could tell by the casual expression on her face.

Next I spotted a woman and a little boy on the sidewalk across the street. They were hunched over a little, ducking the rain, about to step forward as if they were hurrying, but they weren't moving either.

Then I got scared and reached down and grasped the door handle. I just popped the door open a crack when suddenly everything began again and was just suddenly moving. There was no jolt. The cars didn't bump into each other; they were just moving as if they'd never been interrupted. I immediately jerked my door closed again. The wipers were slapping back and forth again and, as I heard the DJ talking on the radio, I wondered if he, too, had been frozen where he sat in the radio station.

Sunday May 27, 1990

Nancy:

The last incident caused us to become even more serious about figuring out what's happening and why. Jack is determined not to be intimidated from his work, for which he is alone much of the time. We see these events as ongoing and anticipate the next encounter with mixed emotions. We keep trying to imagine what this being could possibly be doing here with us and what it wants. Also, we've begun to wonder how this must fit in with God. We are considering, among other things, that maybe this being is really what an angel is.

So far we haven't told anyone except Dorothy, Jack's mother, and then not all of it. It's hard to describe and even harder for others to believe. We've broached the subject of aliens to a couple of our friends, but Jack and I agree not to discuss what's happening with anyone else. Understandably, he is afraid of what peoples' reactions might be.

I accept what Jack tells me happened without doubt in his sincerity, ask for the details and write everything down. I don't need to see any of it myself to believe him. I see the look on his face and hear the tone in his voice when he talks about it. I assured him, "If something could be causing you to imagine

these events, that thing would be showing up in other much more ordinary ways.”

Tuesday, May 29, 1990

Jack:

I was working on location for the second and last day in a large condominium complex, cleaning the carpeted stairways and main corridors of two of the buildings. My father, Johnny, had been helping me, taking turns cleaning and running water up and down from the basement laundry room, but he would be leaving at about noon and I would finish alone. As we worked our way along the first floor hallway we could hear strange music and chanting coming from one of the apartments further down the hall.

When Johnny was about ready to leave, the woman that hired me, who is a trustee of the complex and also lives there, came up to see how the work was coming along. She and Johnny stood together in the hall talking as I continued to work.

Halfway up the corridor a young foreign man in his mid 20s opened his door and handed me a large glass of pink lemonade, saying something to me in a language I did not understand. He seemed to be Arabian. I shut the vacuum off and said, “Thank you” as I took the glass and began to drink, thinking how nice it was of him to do that. The young man stepped back inside and shut the door as I drank.

When I finished the drink, I knocked on the door and the same man opened it. I noticed the strange music we’d heard was coming from his apartment. I said, “Thank you” again and handed the glass back to him. As he took it, he said something in his own language, smiled and went back in. My dad and the

woman trustee went on their respective ways and I continued to work my way along the corridor.

I was cleaning the bottom of the stairs on the basement level when I saw a bright, quick flash. It lit up the dim area like a flash from a camera, which I thought maybe it was until I saw another one. Then I knew what it meant.

There were a few more flashes of light, which I tried to ignore, refusing to look up, and kept vacuuming until I needed fresh water again. I emptied the tank into two buckets and was about to carry them to the laundry room when the young man I met upstairs came down and passed me with a basket of laundry. I picked up my buckets and followed him at about 20 feet behind. I saw him turn left into the laundry room half way along the corridor.

Next, I heard the laundry basket hit the floor. The man quickly backed out of the laundry room until his back was against the opposite wall of the corridor, where he stood slack-jawed, pointing and staring into the laundry room. He was frantically speaking something I couldn't understand. I hurried to see what happened, put the buckets down and looked in.

There again was the strange doorway of light about five feet inside the laundry room. It was wide open and we could see through it into a huge, round room. The room was empty except for bright white light that seemed to come from all around. The floor shone with bright blue and white light and seemed to meet the wall halfway up in a slight curve. The top half of the wall was slightly less bright.

I was in such a state of relief and elation that someone else could see this! I tried to tell the frightened man that I've seen this before and asked him if he ever had, but he couldn't understand me. All I could do for him was gesture and say, "It's

okay, it's okay." This, the man seemed to understand.

I pointed for him to look at the wall. The corridor lights had cast shadows of us that stood posed as still as if in a snapshot. My shadow still held the two buckets and the other man's was still pointing. We were moving but our shadows were not!

The doorway and the room beyond it remained, as if to invite us inside. As this thought crossed my mind, the other man stepped forward, as if on cue, into the laundry room, and up to the doorway, pushing his basket out of the way with his foot. I was right behind him, about to grab him if he didn't stop. We peered into the room. It was extremely bright yet it didn't hurt our eyes. It seemed foggy or unfocussed.

The man began to speak but not to me. He was calling out to Allah and praying hard by the way he sounded, as he eased his right arm in through the doorway up to his elbow. I gripped tightly onto the back of his pants, trying to hold him back. As we watched his hand and arm, they seemed to change somehow on the other side. They became less clear, seeming to disperse with the light. He took a step and leaned in further so I firmly yanked him backward away from the doorway and shouted, "No!" His arm came right back also and seemed fine. The young man and I looked it over carefully and found it to be unharmed as far as we could tell.

I was afraid he might walk right through the doorway next and I wasn't convinced it would be safe, so I led him back into the hallway. Our shadows remained motionless on the wall in the same positions as before. The doorway was still visible when we left the laundry room together and started toward the stairs. I didn't think I should leave the man alone so I escorted him back to his apartment. I was surprised to see there was another man there, who is about my age and also appeared to be an Arabian.

We entered the apartment and the young man excitedly began to describe what had just happened in the laundry room. The other man was trying to calm him, using his name, Raja. I shut the door so no one else would hear, and listened as Raja continued. At first the other man smiled and shook his head as if it were a joke, but as the account went on, he began to listen carefully, breaking in only to ask a few questions, and looking occasionally at me. Although I couldn't understand the words, I imagined what I knew they must have been saying by the gestures and tones of the conversation.

Finally the other man said to me in English, "I am Raja's cousin and this is my apartment. Raja is visiting the U.S. and will be going back to Arabia soon."

The cousin then asked me to describe what happened. Raja was still very excited and kept cutting in to ask his cousin to translate what I was saying. We talked back and forth for about 20 minutes, Raja and me in different languages, and Raja's cousin in both.

Raja wanted to call his father, who, his cousin told me, is an Arab ambassador working at the United Nations building in New York City. His cousin was trying to talk him out of it and so was I. It would take time to tell carefully and we felt it should be done in person. Perhaps it would be unwise to talk over the phone to the U.N. building about this kind of thing.

Raja and his cousin were still talking about it when I was ready to leave. I gave them a few business cards in case one of them wanted to call me, wished them luck and excused myself. I had work to finish and I still had to go back down to get my buckets and empty them in the deep sink in the laundry room, which I did without incident.

There was nothing there to see except an ordinary laundry

room and Raja's laundry basket with his clothes in it. I wondered if Raja would come down to get it while I was there, but he did not.

Nancy:

Jack arrived at home relieved and excited that someone else has finally seen the doorway with him. Of course, we thought it should have been me by now, but my apprehension of the mere possibility is enough to appease that idea. Besides, we have the feeling it isn't over, and who knows what will happen next.

As Jack described the day's incident to me and I carefully wrote it down, we realized that the deep state of dumbfounded confusion we've been enveloped in since that first day is subsiding, and we find ourselves looking at everything in a completely different way.

There must be some kind of a reasonable explanation for these incredible things and we're determined to make some kind of sense of it all.