



MEMBER STORY

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I was an accident. I was the last child, unplanned, and at the tail end of what was considered a safe age to have a healthy child.

I was raised in a very spiritual home, propagated primarily by my mother, who was “so spiritual that she was of no use to anyone here on Earth,” or so my sisters would say. When I was very small, my mother told me that, when she was pregnant with me, she was visited by an angel, and it asked her if she would be willing to have a son, that someone needed to be born at that specific time and that she would be the mother necessary for this being. We never spoke of it again until the last time I saw her before she transitioned. We went for coffee as she had something urgent to discuss; she brought it up again. I always thought that she had just said that because my sisters told me I was an accident, along with all the terrible things older siblings say to the little one. But it was the last time I spoke to her, and it was the last thing she said. She must have known she was about to go; nobody else did.

When I was a child, my mother and I would spend hours talking about spirituality from a Christian perspective, as that was the path she most resonated with. It was interesting though, the things she would say to me that I would not hear again for many years, things like: “When I want to know what time it is, instead of looking at the clock immediately, I like to ask myself what time it is, then look.” And she was generally always right on the money with her “guess.” She would make Jewish symbols and hang them on our Christmas tree; she called them “Chrismons (Krizmonz),” and I am uncertain where the name came from. She would also speak of numerology in the Bible, so many things. She never really fit into what the church was doing. She was pure passion, all that she was. It hurt me to see her never really accepted in church circles.

Due to the nature of my upbringing, my highest aspiration was to be like Jesus. From my understanding as a child, I could think of no one greater to be like. All throughout growing up, I remember the struggle between trying to be like my friends and trying to be like Jesus. If I cussed, I would immediately ask forgiveness. If I had a thought that was not harmonious, I would ask forgiveness, not because I didn't want to go to hell (maybe a little) but because I wanted to be the best I could, like Jesus. Consequently, I found myself in a constant tug of war. As I got older, I would stray and do things the church would call rebellious, but never too far before my conscience brought the hammer down. This was the beginning of a pendulum that I would ride from pole to pole, cycle after cycle, for many years. Throughout the years, however, that same voice of conscience would reappear with very specific instructions and messages.

As a youth, my Uncle Joe, my father's brother, was not at all a part of anything that was happening in our family. Only a few times did I see him. He was not at all religious, yet he was an amazingly intelligent person, just brilliant. He lived in Half Moon Bay, California. I spoke with him several times over the years and he never once said anything about mysticism, however I remember as a child my father coming home from a visit and saying that, while he and my uncle were talking at the bar in his house, a Coke can slid across the bar; apparently it freaked out my father. I asked about it several times as that seemed very interesting to me, however it was played off and never spoken of again. I asked my uncle about it years later and he encouraged me to monetize what abilities I may have rather than spend all my time on something like that. He neither denied nor confirmed. He transitioned on Thanksgiving Day 2014, a time he decided upon.

Fast forward several years, and I was still riding the pendulum, only it seemed to stay on the depressing side far longer, sometimes to the point of just wanting to die; it all seemed so pointless. Life would bring opportunities via relationships and jobs that would teach me things about some process or method that, like a parable, would reveal some far deeper truth, but I could not see it all. These were just pieces along the way that I would keep for future reference, even though I did not know it at the time. One job after another, building me up to take another step upward, into another role where, again, I would be subjected to more and more, always compounding. These were all very unrelated things that eventually became evidently clear to me that they were very much connected. My mind was always processing everything, thinking, and rethinking. I always knew that there had to be more to life than just waking up, working for money so we can buy stuff, then die; and, if we were good enough, go to heaven. It just made no sense. There had to be more. Had to be. Yet I was still trying to be what I thought I was supposed to be, like Jesus, but failing miserably, and feeling guilty for just being alive. I had been called out in churches so many times; the speaker would point to me in a crowd and say: "You!!! Youth and Music!" I did not know what to do with that. Yes, I play music, and I do resonate well with youth, so my thought process was that I must need to be a youth pastor. I worked with the youth at a church for quite some time until it was evident that I was never going to be a youth pastor. I just did not fit their mold; I just thought a bit too far outside the box. All along I was losing faith in Christianity, as there were so many thorns in my mind that I could no longer ignore.

My mother passed away. It was then that I came to realize that for so long I carried a cross that was not my own. I stayed at church and did my best because in my heart I did want to be like Jesus, but at the same time I did not want to destroy my mother, and I feared that if I ever walked away, it would. One day, not too long after she had transitioned, I was at church on a Sunday morning, playing lead guitar. As I was playing, I looked over at the other people playing their instruments and singing, jumping around, and shouting with glee. As I stood there playing guitar, watching it all happen around me, I was sad because down inside I did not feel that way; I was not "Sold out." I wanted so desperately to feel that way. If it was truly real and they found it, why couldn't I? As we continued to play, the music took on a much more intimate overtone. This was a very "spirit-filled" church: people falling down, the spirit moving, people speaking in tongues. As I played in a very intimate way, specific notes and things, I noticed that what I was playing and how I was playing it had a very direct effect on the congregation. When I

would back off, “it” would subside. I did this again several times and the reality sank in. This was not the work of the Holy Spirit; I was doing this. (Granted the congregation was very receptive to it.) But it was not the hand of god. I immediately felt like I must be the devil himself. Per Christianity, it was Lucifer that was in charge of the music of heaven, and his pride was his downfall. I left and have never set foot in a church again.

I found myself becoming very antagonistic toward religion. I felt like the first thirty-some years of my life had been wasted on a lie. I began reading a lot of books on history – “forbidden history” is the catch phrase now – but it resonated. One day, I received an email from a website that claimed to improve one’s IQ. This was odd as I had never been to the website before, but the email had an exercise that it said would boost your IQ five to six points. I was all about making myself better; introspection was always paramount, trying to be better today than yesterday. The exercise was to take fifteen minutes a day and place a penny on the table in front of you and push it with everything in you. If your thoughts strayed, take them and use them as more power to push. I did this, every day. Within a month it was like my brain was on steroids. I could concentrate so focused that I could actually feel my brain radiating some kind of energy out of my temples. My problem-solving abilities, decent to begin with, went through the roof. I could see solutions to long-time problems clearly. It was ridiculous what was happening. I began having all these inspired ideas and such. I began to see the world around me very differently than I had ever known. It was then that I knew I had to go back systematically through every major experience of my life and revisit what I thought I understood. This took time, and it was like tearing the foundation apart under a skyscraper. The building collapsed, but it was good.

It was during this time that I figured there must be a common thread between all the pagans and religions across the world. There had to be a lowest common denominator, some thing that they are all tapping into but calling different things. It seemed logical that there would be one thing. I started my journey with a free copy of *The Emerald Tablets of Thoth* that was included in a beta version of Apple OS iBook software. I had no idea what it was about or why they included it as the only book that came with the software, but I was very intrigued and read it immediately. I began to read everything I could find on Alchemy, Druidry, Witchcraft, Masonry, Kabbalah, Aleister Crowley, and everything else I could get my hands on. So much of it I did not understand whatsoever, but I wanted to get it inside my mind as raw material. We are what we eat, therefore I knew it would assimilate and grow. I was also trying to meditate; I had no teacher, so I just did what made sense. One of the first things that made sense to do was to imagine a blue laser infinity symbol right in the center of my brain, rotating on its axis. This seemed to do something. One of the many books I was devouring made a statement, “Be here Now”, and gave an example of not going into autopilot while doing mundane tasks. Rather, engage completely with your body and senses, with the subjective and objective simultaneously. This was revolutionary.

On the path to find the lowest common denominator, I would try and figure out the nature of reality. A concept would come to mind and I would build immaculate systems via parables to explain them, only to find a hole, or a multitude of holes, and watch it

crumble. However, in the remains would be a sliver of truth, the foundation of the next iteration of the nature of reality. This happened numerous times.

I rarely ever watch the television; it has always been so. However, during this time of searching and discovery I watched a show called *Nova* “Earth from Space.” At that time, I had a revelation that we only perceive a tiny fraction of a percent of the electromagnetic spectrum, that there must be stuff going on all over the place, if we just could tune into it. This television show was just that, satellites recording Earth in different bandwidths and then translating them into bandwidths we can see. This blew my mind, the harmony of it all, but it was still raw material for what was about to happen.

During this time of seeking, seeking, and more seeking, I would commute about an hour and twenty minutes each direction to and from work. I had a lot of time to think, and think I did. However, driving had always been a mundane task that was perfect for autopilot. Armed with my newfound idea of being completely present in the moment and in my body during mundane tasks, as well as new information regarding rhythmic breathing I got from a book on Druidry, and keeping my mind quiet, I put this into practice every time I drove. My commute immediately became my favorite time of the day. It was during this time while driving that I turned my attention to a leaf blowing in the wind, connected to its branch, connected to its trunk, to the earth, moving just so far because of the speed of the wind, the humidity, barometric pressure... every factor. I came to realize that there must be a mathematical equation for it all. I will spare the details for this would be a volume in itself, but it all came together, and it all made sense, in such a way that I do not have the words for, just parables and analogies. It was at this time during the daily drive that I realized that in “right here, right now” mode, I could put a topic into the machine and an audible discourse would begin. Granted it was my own voice in my mind, but it was more like a college class, teaching things that I most certainly did not know. This went on for quite some time, and finally one day as I drove to work, engaged in a lesson that was blowing my mind at what I was learning, I interrupted laughing at the complete ridiculousness of it all. I said out loud in my car, “Who are you that is teaching me these things that I could not possibly know?” “I am Arcane,” said the voice.

Arcane... I was unfamiliar with that word at the time, so I googled it and all I found was a video game company. Later that night, I did a little more research and found it (when I spelled it correctly). “Only known to the initiate.” That was pretty heavy; pretty exciting too. All of this was exciting, like a rollercoaster that I didn’t know I boarded.

During the months previous to what is written above, I had seen a video come across my Facebook page called “Alchemy – Ancient Secrets Revealed.” For whatever reason I never watched. I would start it, but less than two minutes in something would come up. Several times this happened. During all of this, the experiences in my car with the voice of Arcane, skateboarding with classes in my head, all of these things, I got to thinking that there must be someone out there that knows, really knows and that can confirm that what I am getting is correct. It sure felt like it. Books only go so far. They talk about things but never how to apply them. There had to be a school, with curriculum.

A not-so-close friend was a member of a certain esoteric school. He never said anything that made sense to me, always very obscure, due to his oath, I am certain.

I reached out to that same school and for whatever reason never received a reply. So, I turned to another organization that can be found in most towns and cities across America. I used to ride my skateboard by the local lodge as a kid. I emailed them and did quite a bit of research. For some reason though I had a sense of unease that I could not shake. It was a Wednesday that I had sent them an “interested party” email asking if there was a way I could meet them and find out more. They were gracious enough to answer with the requested information, adding that the following Monday was an open-door thing, something open to the public. I was going to go, hell or high water. I could not shake that feeling though. I thought perhaps that there was something from my upbringing that was coloring what I was feeling, and I certainly did not want to succumb to that. The following Sunday, the day before I was going to go meet this group, I was doing some metal work in my garage. I had my iPad out there connected to a big stereo for tunes while I welded. It was then that the idea occurred to me that I should at least listen to the video “Alchemy – Ancient Secrets Revealed”. Well, by the third minute I was blown away. I did no welding. I was glued to the iPad, taking notes with a sharpie all over my metal table. Planetary symbols, alchemical symbols, stages of alchemy, just a deluge of information. So much of what I had read and did not understand came clear all of the sudden, the raw materials, the puzzle pieces were coming together to reveal this amazing cornucopia. I was flabbergasted. At the end it said that there was a part two, “Solve et Coagula.” Of course I would be watching it immediately as well. Again, more of the same. It took forever for me to watch both of these because I would pause it every few seconds to write it all down and draw diagrams on my work bench. It was now late Sunday night and I was watching the end of the second video, thinking about the group that I was going to meet the next day, still feeling strange about it, not feeling bad at all, just odd, hopeful, and excited. At the end of the video a little pop up came on the screen that said something like, “Brought to you by the Rosicrucians” Rosicrucians? It was a word I had not heard in I don't know how long, and I do not remember where (possibly ads in old versions of *Popular Mechanics* I read as a kid), but I wondered to myself, “Are they those old guys that wear the red hats with tassels and ride tricycles in the parade?” (Who are actually Shriners.) I was thinking, what could they possibly know? I then googled Rosicrucian and found the AMORC website. I immediately watched the videos, read everything. I was so ecstatic that this had come my way, I cried. (I'm tearing up now just reliving it.) I was so humbled that it was real, I felt like I had come home, home like I had never known, like I had been away for longer than I could remember but as soon as I found home it all came back to the surface. I was like an ancient dried-out sponge in the desert that the slightest touch would disintegrate, that then gets filled with the most fresh and cool water in the universe. It was like I had been fumbling in a thick forest in the inky blackness of night all my life and in the distance was a little light with a small sign and an arrow that says “<-This way.” I joined immediately and read my first monograph late that night. I had come home, and I knew it. I did not go to the public event the next day, as I knew I found what I was looking for. It found me.

I have no words to express the gratitude that I feel for the Order and all the Sorors and Fraters throughout the ages that have done their part and sacrificed so much to keep the flame alive through the millennia. I am honored to be a student on this path. My life has become far more incredible than I ever would have imagined, even dared to hope

for. All of those things that have happened along the way, and I did not even scratch the surface, were small nudges, guidance, lessons, raw material... It was always there, just behind the events themselves, and it was always with purpose. My, how it changes... everything.

I apologize for writing a small book. I did not intend to do so. There is truly so much more, so many details, random words from strangers, road signs, license plates and bumper stickers, songs that I listened to as a kid only to listen to them today and just cry at the goodness of it all, that it was always there.