

Testimony

MARGERIE
WAKEFIELD

The Autobiography of Margery Wakefield

Margery Wakefield is the author of "The Road to Xenu" and "Understanding Scientology". The manuscript of "Testimony" was completed in March 1996. In September a copy reached Dean Benjamin [drb@cs.cmu.edu], who edited the manuscript for publication and free distribution over the Internet. This document was released on 21 December 1996, and is available on the World Wide Web at "<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/wakefield/testimony.html>"

INDEX

Prologue	4
Chapter 1: CHILDHOOD	7
Chapter 2: COLLEGE	11
Chapter 3: LONDON	16
Chapter 4: JENNY	21
Chapter 5: LOS ANGELES	25
Chapter 6: ONE BILLION YEARS	31
Chapter 7: THE GRADES	39
Chapter 8: TRAVELS	44
Chapter 9: MARRIAGE	50
Chapter 10: THE WALL OF FIRE	55
Chapter 11: OFFLOADED	61
Chapter 12: BACK TO FLORIDA	66
Chapter 13: BREAKDOWN	71
Chapter 14: BACK IN THE WOG WORLD	77

PROLOGUE

I sat staring at the Director of Processing, E-meter cans in my hands, trying to comprehend what he was saying to me.

"From now on," he said to me in the blank-faced, unblinking eyes and monotone voice of all good Scientology auditors, "you will be confined to your room. A guard will be posted outside your room at all times. You are not to leave your room for any reason. Your meals will be brought up to you. Do you understand?"

I was dumbfounded. I was being punished. But for what?

I looked up at him. "What did I do wrong?" I stammered.

But he wouldn't tell me. "This is for the security of the Org (organization)," he responded. "That is all I can tell you. Now, you may go."

From nowhere, a young girl appeared at my side.

"Dana," commanded the D of P (Director of Processing), "Will you please escort Ms. Wakefield to her room. Now."

I was dismissed.

I sat on my bed, trying to understand.

At first, I dared to hope.

"Over the rainbow," I thought. "They're going to send me over the rainbow." This was the term used to refer to the secret location of our founder L. Ron Hubbard. No one except for a few higher-ups knew where he and his personal staff were located. It was a tightly kept secret.

"They're going to send me over the rainbow because I've been having trouble with my auditing (Scientology counseling)." It was rumored that sometimes difficult preclears were sent "over the rainbow" to have their cases straightened out by Hubbard's assistant, David Mayo, or even perhaps by Hubbard himself.

I walked to the door of my room, testing. A young man was seated on the floor next to my door. He looked up at me threateningly. I retreated back to my bed.

As promised, my meals appeared on schedule.

The days passed. Slowly my hope began to fade. I seemed to have been forgotten by the world.

One night, I looked outside my room, and saw that my guard had fallen asleep. I slipped out of the room and crept down the hall to the stairway at the end of the hall. I walked down the stairs and let myself outside.

It was a clear night with an almost full moon. I began to walk through the silent

neighborhood east of the Org. Several blocks away I found a small shelter by the bay with seats overlooking the black water.

I sat and looked out over the water, trying to think. For some reason, my mind refused to cooperate. I had the sensation of trying to work through thick mud. What was I to do? Where was I to go?

A few blocks away was the Org, my safety. Here, outside, was the dangerous "wog" world. As I later tried to explain to people outside Scientology, I was like a two year old child. I was incapable of leaving home. They owned my soul. The ties binding me to the Org, though invisible, were more powerful than any physical bond could have been. I was in a trap more powerful than any cage with iron bars and a lock. Mentally I belonged to them.

Slowly I began to walk back to the Org. I opened the door and returned quietly to my room. The guard was still sleeping. Not knowing what else to do, I went to bed.

The days passed.

One night, three people from the Guardian's Office came to my room. They told me to pack.

"Tomorrow," they told me, "you will be taken to the airport. You are to fly anywhere out of the state of Florida. You will not be able to return here. You are to stay out of any Scientology center wherever you go."

I was in shock. I understood what it meant. I was being offloaded. I started to cry. I begged them to change their minds, but it was useless. The orders had come from above.

My shock turned to anger. They couldn't just get rid of me like this. For twelve years I had given them everything I had. My time. My money. I had slaved for them. They couldn't just throw me out.

But I knew they could.

I had seen it happen to plenty of others.

My vain hopes of going over the rainbow were completely dashed. I tried to think after they had left my room. Offloaded. But why?

Slowly, I understood.

It was the Swiss woman.

A week earlier, a Swiss woman who was on the same advanced levels as I was, had thrown herself off the breakwater by the Org and drowned. It had been in the papers and when it was discovered that she was a Scientologist, it had caused embarrassment for the Org.

It was well known that I was doing poorly with my auditing. I had been having terrible nightmares and waking up screaming in the middle of the night. During the day I wasn't doing much better.

I was an embarrassment to the Org, and as I was always complaining about my auditing I

set a bad example for the other preclears, some of whom had paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to be here.

I understood. The Swiss woman. They were afraid I was going to commit suicide too. I had practically said so in my auditing.

So I packed.

The next morning I was taken to Tampa International Airport in a van, under guard. They asked me where I wanted to go.

Still in shock and feeling like I was living a bad dream, I answered reluctantly, "Madison, Wisconsin." Where my parents lived. I had no place else to go.

The flight passed like a dream. My guard sat beside me. I looked down at the snowy, February fields of Wisconsin. It was all too much to comprehend.

For twelve years, there had ceased to be life outside of Scientology for me.

At that point, death would have been preferable to exile. Actually, I anticipated death. For it was well rumored in Scientology that to leave with an incomplete level of auditing could result in death within twelve days.

I got off the plane and my guard disappeared. I looked around for my parents whom I had called from Florida to let them know I was coming. I didn't see them.

Suddenly, I was alone and adrift in the wog world.

The thought filled me with terror.

CHAPTER 1: CHILDHOOD

My story begins on November 20, 1947 -- the day Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip were married.

My grandparents were in the living room of their large Victorian home, listening to a broadcast of the royal wedding, when the phone rang. It was my dad.

"It's a girl," he announced. That was my beginning.

I was born in a small town in Michigan's frigid but beautiful Upper Peninsula, sometimes referred to by its inhabitants as "God's Country" because of the northern shorelines and scenery and crisp unpolluted air.

At first we lived in an apartment above the hardware store which my father managed. My first memory is of lying on the floor of that dark apartment playing with my schmoo. When I could walk I would go with my mother to the back deck to hang out the laundry. Sometimes we would go down the long flight of front steps and into the waiting world.

When I was two, my brother Charles was born, an event I do not remember.

My first memory of my mother is of her standing in the kitchen of the apartment making cut out cookies shaped like chicks and letting me put in currants for the eyes.

My first memory of my father was of him blowing up my birthday balloons and popping them with his cigarette while I sat on his lap and screamed. Although my father had many good qualities, and worked dutifully and hard through the years to provide us with a comfortable life, there was also a sometimes streak of unhappiness which would affect us all.

My parents met through a photograph.

My mother and my father's sister shared a dorm in college and my future aunt had a picture of my very handsome father in uniform on her dresser. My parents began to correspond during the war and they were married shortly after the war ended.

It was a difficult marriage. Both young, and too soon with a growing family, they made the discovery too late that they were in many ways not compatible. There were frequent arguments and I grew to hate the hostility between them.

I would hear their voices quarreling into the night and lie in the darkness wondering what was going to happen.

When I was four, we moved into the grey house on the hill, and this became my new world.

The most important person in my world at that time was my grandfather. My grandparents lived in the Victorian house down the street and around the corner from our house, and their house was a wonderful world to explore with its four stories full of rooms and secrets.

My grandfather loved to play with me, and I remember him swinging me on the wrought iron gate behind their house in a game I never grew tired of. Or he would show me the roses in his

garden. Or he held me on his lap and read to me. He had a wonderful love of books which I would later come to share.

During my fourth year, my grandparents took me with them on their annual mid-winter trip to Florida. In Georgia I was sick to my stomach and my grandmother introduced me to Milk of Magnesia. The next day I was asleep on the back seat of the car, and I awoke to see palm trees and I was terrified.

My grandparents taught me to read on that trip by pointing out signs and reading them to me. When I returned home I could read, although no one realized it. I would amuse myself at the table by reading all the cereal boxes and milk cartons.

Florida was a paradise. I loved the beach and the water and the long walks my grandfather took with me, and the serious conversations he patiently held with his four year old granddaughter. Somewhere I have a picture of him and me that winter walking on the beach, and it is my favorite picture. He was a gentle and kind man.

Florida was full of surprises. Once we rode in a glass bottom boat and they put me down on the glass and I was mesmerized by the living world beneath me.

My grandparents took me to a movie one day. There was a scene in an ad at the beginning of a man falling into a big bowl of tomato soup. I started to scream at the top of my lungs and nothing would quiet me down. Finally my desperate grandparents carried me outside the theater and I remember my grandmother was very angry. We didn't go back to the movie.

Soon we were back in Michigan and the next new world for me was Mrs. McKeivitt's kindergarten. It was a confusing world with so many new things happening all at once. Graham crackers and orange juice, naps on our blankets, songs at the piano, coats in the coatroom and always having to look up at the grown up people in the world.

Each new teacher had her own specialty. In first grade it was reading. I was bored. I already knew how to read.

To pass the time and the interminable boredom, I used what resources I had. I would spit on my small brown desk and draw pictures with the spit. One day, engrossed in this way with my first artistic attempts, I looked up to see Miss Faull staring down at me, far from amused. I got the ruler on my hand. That was the end of my artistic career. To this day I draw only stick people.

In second grade it was penmanship. Travelling ovals were Miss Prince's one mission in life. She was an elderly spinster. One day, when we came back from lunch, she had us close our penmanship books and sit quietly at our desks with our hands folded. The world, she said, was going to end at two o'clock. We sat and watched as the minute hand made its inexorable way to the hour. Nothing happened. We waited some more. Then we went back to penmanship. It seemed a little strange at the time, but the idea of the world ending is incomprehensible to a seven year old.

At about this time my brother John was born. I remember my mother's water breaking and several days later she came home with the new baby.

By this time Charles and I became playmates. We spent hours together in the block of woods across the street from our house making up endless versions of cowboys and Indians and cavemen.

One night my father brought a black and white television home and we tried it out before dinner. Soon Crusader Rabbit and Zorro and Lone Ranger were a part of everyday life.

When I was seven, my parents and my grandparents took me to a concert in a nearby town -- the Roman Sisters, a traveling duo-piano sister act. I discovered the piano.

I would not leave my parents alone. I wanted piano lessons. I wanted to play this magical instrument.

Soon after, I came home from school to find a piano in our living room, a gift from Aunt Jessie. I was ecstatic. I got Pat Gilles, a neighbor girl, to show me how to play. She brought over a piano book and I caught on.

The next morning I got up early in the morning and sat down with one of the books that had come with the piano and I silently figured out all the notes. Soon I was playing all the songs in my mother's grey and purple books, and soon after that it was decided I did need a teacher.

After a few miserable lessons with an irascible local teacher who used to hit my hands with a ruler when I made a mistake, I complained loudly enough to be given a chance with someone else.

That someone else turned out to be a wonderful woman in a nearby town who took me under her wing and introduced me to the joy of music. She will always be my friend.

There were many happy events in my childhood, plenty of things to look forward to: Fourth of July bicycle parades, roller skating, discovering the first crocuses poking through the last snow of winter, playing in the puddles of melting snow on the way to school, baseball in the street, overnight parties with friends, and trips to visit Grandma and Grandpa Graves in South Dakota.

Little did I know that my parents' marital problems were coming to a head. I was not even aware that they had separated. I was sent for the summer to my grandparents in South Dakota where I spent a mostly happy summer.

Two things of importance happened that summer.

The first was that I discovered religion. I was about eight years old. My grandmother kept Baptist tracts in the bathroom and I started to read them. I was entranced by the stories about Jesus. Soon he became my invisible friend. He used to meet me in the white room in the back of the house and we would talk. My grandmother gave me a Bible and I read it with great interest. I was in love with Jesus.

The second event of importance happened on the Fourth of July, and it was a shadow that crossed my life for the first time.

I had been having the feeling when I was around the friends my age that my grandmother introduced me to, that there was something amiss. It was a subconscious feeling. But at the Fourth of July picnic, the subconscious shadow came to the front. I knew that something was wrong with me. I didn't tell anyone because I didn't know what to tell. I just knew that something was wrong. I knew the wrongness only as a shadow for which I had no words.

The shadow followed me home. Back in Michigan, I began to see things in the windows that

weren't there. Hideous faces. I would go and hide under the telephone table in the hall.

Later in junior high school I tried to find words for the shadow.

"Something is wrong," I told my science teacher. "I have no personality." That was the only way I knew to describe it.

From the time I came back from South Dakota, the shadow was always there. It is with me still. The only difference is that now I have words for it. But I am getting ahead of myself.

When I was ten years old, my sister Joann was born. I was delighted.

When Joann was a baby she slept in a crib in my room. One night I woke up and heard strange noises coming from her bed. I went over to her, not sure what was happening. I went and woke up my parents. They came in to see. My sister was choking.

My parents rushed her to the hospital where her life was saved. She had indeed been choking, a complication of an illness called infant roseola.

I always loved my sister. If I did save her life, that is the best thing I have ever accomplished in my life. That, in itself, would be enough.

CHAPTER 2: COLLEGE

My grandparents had a large cottage on Lake Superior called Bete Gris and I loved spending time there with my dad's three lively sisters and their families. The happiness of those families contrasted with the unhappiness I felt in my own home.

One night when I was about eleven years old, my mother woke me up in the middle of the night and told me to get dressed and we drove the thirty miles back into town. All I was told was that Grandpa was sick.

The next time I saw him was in the hospital. He was in a coma. Then came the funeral. After the funeral I was standing in the porch of my grandparents' house. There were a lot of people in the kitchen and my grandmother was in the back bedroom and she was crying as other women tried to comfort her. "What was happening?" I asked. I still didn't understand that Grandpa was dead.

I continued to be miserable at home. School offered a respite from the constant bickering of my parents. I loved to read and I enjoyed doing well in school. I was just not a happy child. I tried to get attention from my teachers by always excelling and doing extra work and asking a lot of questions. The attention I got from my teachers helped to compensate for the lack of love at home.

I had a best friend named Christine, and when we went to her house and she and her mother hugged and kissed I felt the pain of not having that love for myself.

In junior high school, I began to develop crushes on some of my teachers, both male and female. Mostly I wanted them to be my parents. My usual routine each day was to come home from school, scavenge whatever food I could from the kitchen, then go up to my room and close the door and the shades and sit in the dark, eating and fantasizing about different teachers adopting me. This was my lonely world.

I was still playing the piano, and I was entered by my teacher in various music contests all over the state. After one of the contests, a film was shown about a music camp called Interlochen, in lower Michigan. I knew at once that I wanted to go there.

Somehow I managed to get the address of the camp. One day I came home from school when my mother was out, and I set up the tape recorder and made a tape of my playing. Without telling anyone, I sent it to Interlochen. Within a few weeks, I got back a letter saying that I had a scholarship to the camp. I took the letter to school with me and I cried all during study period. I was so happy that I could get away from home.

My parents did agree to let me go, and for the next two summers I spent eight wonderful and happy weeks at the camp. Because of my shyness, I did not do well at performing, but I had a gentle piano teacher from Hungary named Balint Vazsonyi and he taught me to love the music I was playing.

At about this time, Interlochen opened a year round academy, and I begged my parents to let me go. I knew that Mr. Vazsonyi was one of the teachers there.

The first year they said no, but during my junior and senior years they finally relented and I was allowed to go to the Interlochen Arts Academy.

These two years were probably the happiest of my life. I flourished with other young people who were more like me and loved music. During my first year, I won a part in the concerto contest and played the first movement of the Beethoven First Piano Concerto with the orchestra, with the aged Dr. Maddy (who had founded Interlochen) conducting. I got a standing ovation.

My piano playing helped me make friends at the academy. A highly idealistic and high spirited group of young people in a utopian setting far from home. I loved it.

I had my first boyfriend, another pianist named Greg, although it was an innocent relationship. I was not ready for sex, scared off by my mother's frequent lectures about the dangers of men and sex.

The shadow took a back seat during those two happy years, but it was still there, lurking in the background. I would say I was in remission, but not for long.

After I graduated from Interlochen, the question was not whether I would go to college, but where. I wanted to go to a small college, but my father wanted me to go to his school, the University of Michigan, and it was less expensive. I didn't mind as I knew that several of my friends from Interlochen would be there.

I enrolled at U of M in the fall of 1965, in the music school. I had a small room in the basement of one of the women's dorms. I soon paired up with Bill, who was a violinist from Interlochen with bright red hair. We had given a recital together at Interlochen and now became best friends.

Bill and I began experimenting sexually on the long walk home from the music school to the dorms, across a golf course. We found a spot in the woods adjoining the golf course and this became our secret hiding place. We made out and attempted sex, although we were both very awkward.

One night while we were making out under a bridge in the winter cold, I had my first panic attack. It came out of nowhere. I froze with fear, unable to talk. Bill became alarmed and took me to the clinic, but by then it had passed. It was merely a harbinger of things to come.

During that year, I began to feel funny and my vision was affected. I would get a very bad feeling and then everything around me would look watery and strange. I had a feeling of doom, that something terrible was going to happen. This experience became more and more frequent. I must have told someone about it, because I ended up seeing a female therapist at the clinic, although I never felt a bonding with her and the sessions did not seem to make sense. After awhile I quit going.

One night when Bill and I were together in his room, he asked me to go on a picnic with him the next day in the nearby state park. His older brother and his brother's girlfriend would also be going. I said sure.

The next morning I woke up with a strange feeling and a high fever. I went to the clinic and they found my temperature to be 103 degrees. They put me in bed and I was not allowed to go on the picnic. Later in the afternoon, a nurse came into my room and she quietly told me that Bill and his brother and the girlfriend had all been killed on their way to the picnic in a head on car crash between their Volkswagen and a truck.

I was in shock. I called my mother and she came to take me home. I dropped out of school.

I remember standing by the window in my parents' bedroom, staring out and trying to comprehend what had happened. I could not cry. I didn't cry until about twenty years later when, driving on the freeway one day in Tampa, Florida, I heard on the radio the Franck Violin Sonata that Bill and I had played in our recital at Interlochen. Twenty years later, the tears fell.

My mother did not seem to know how to deal with the situation either. That night she took me to a movie called "A Thousand Clowns", presumably to take my mind off my grief.

When we got home, my parents had a fight. My father was sitting in the family room watching Johnny Carson and my mother came and stood between him and the TV, trying to get him to talk to her about something. He took his foot and just kicked her out of the way. That small act of violence somehow shattered whatever link to sanity I had at the time. I knew I could not stay in that house.

I went upstairs and called Craig Sheppard, one of the piano students at the University of Michigan. I remembered him talking about a concert pianist who lived in Philadelphia who needed a governess for her children. Did she still need a governess? Craig said he would call me right back. Within minutes he called and gave me the phone number of Susan Starr, the concert pianist in Philadelphia. I called her and I told her I would come the next day.

I packed my suitcase. I had just enough money for a ticket to Philadelphia. I don't remember how I got to the airport, whether I told my parents where I was going. My next memory is of being in the plane and circling over the brown city below.

Carrying my suitcase, I got a bus into town. I had about \$2.40 in my purse.

I walked about for several hours, trying to find the address Susan had given me, 2203 Panama Street. Somehow the directions just didn't make sense. I stopped and asked a policeman for directions and before long I was wandering out on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

The day passed in this way. I developed blisters on my feet and spent part of my money on band-aids. After that I had no money for food.

Soon it was night. I asked directions again. Somehow I ended up on the subway headed for 69th Street. At the end of the line, I walked up the steps with my suitcase in hand, and a little old black man met me and said, "Miss, you don't want to be out here at night." I was in the black section of town. He took me across the street and put me on the subway headed the other way.

I took the subway to the end of the line and got out. By now it was about one o'clock in the morning. I ended up in a suburb somewhere outside of Philadelphia. I found a convenience store. I remembered that one of the students from Interlochen lived in Levittown, Pennsylvania, and I managed to get her phone number from information.

Her parents answered and I explained my plight. They were far from happy at the inconvenience but they did come and pick me up and I spent the night at their house. The next day they drove me into the city and found Panama Street and I was deposited at Susan's doorway.

Brenda, Susan's black maid answered the door, accompanied by two large dobermans. Inside it was pandemonium: Susan was just finishing up with a student; Brenda was screaming at the two young children; and Susan's ex-husband was there -- as was Susan's date for the night.

Susan had no babysitter.

After the piano lesson was over and the student had departed, I was introduced to the two small children, Eric and Lori Amada, ages about two and three. Brenda went home, the dogs were put downstairs, the ex-husband left, and Susan left on her date for the horse races. I had \$2 left and I gave them to Susan to bet on the daily double. I picked the names of the horses out of the paper.

I gave the children supper and baths and put them to bed, then took my suitcase to the small room where I would be staying. When Susan finally got home, she was angry. She had lost \$50, but I had won \$200 by correctly choosing the daily double.

I enjoyed working at Susan's. There was always plenty of activity. I liked the children and I enjoyed taking them down to the small park at the end of the block and watching them play. Susan frequently went out at night, so I had plenty of time to myself.

One day, Susan had a student who was playing some Bach. After the student left, Susan went upstairs and I sat down at the piano and started playing the same Bach piece by ear. Susan appeared at the top of the stairs.

"Where did you learn that?" she asked.

"I didn't," I answered. "I was just playing what your student played." Susan was amazed. Then my studies with her began in earnest. She gave me lessons nearly every day, and at night after the children were in bed and Susan was out, I was free to practice on her grand piano.

I stayed at Susan's for a year. She introduced me to Jewish food, especially bagels, cream cheese tomatoes and lox on Sunday mornings for breakfast. I was happy living there.

I was always hungry, however. Whenever Susan was out on a date, I would raid the refrigerator for whatever I could find, eating only enough that the food wouldn't be missed. This was the beginning of my eating disorder.

In the end, Susan became disillusioned with me as a student because of my shyness in performing. She wanted me to play a concerto with a small nearby orchestra, but I was terrified at the thought and I refused to audition.

But I enjoyed the musical life at Susan's. I especially liked listening in on her piano lessons with other students and hearing them play. Sometimes a violinist would come over and he and Susan would play together. There was always music in the house.

I was bothered sometimes by a high pitched ringing in my ears that made it impossible for me to hear what people were saying. I tried not to pay too much attention to it because I didn't know what it was. It always seemed to be accompanied by the old sensation of doom, of something awful about to happen.

Susan had a student my age named Lorenzo and we soon started dating. He was an amateur photographer and we walked all over the city while he snapped his pictures. He especially liked to visit the Italian section of the city where he would buy pickles and sardines out of a bin.

I began to visit Lorenzo at his apartment and we soon became sexually active. He was much more experienced than Bill had been and soon we were having a full fledged affair, using no

protection. It is a miracle that I didn't get pregnant.

This affair lasted during most of the year I lived at Susan's. Eventually Lorenzo asked me to move in with him, and I agreed. I got a job working as a junior claims examiner for Prudential Insurance and earned \$56 for my first week's pay.

Life continued in this way for several months. I still went to Susan's house for piano lessons and baby sat whenever she needed me. I was relatively happy except for the ringing in my ears which would not go away.

One night Lorenzo told me that he had fallen in love with another girl and he wanted me to move. I was devastated. I remember walking down the street in Philadelphia and crying unashamedly, wondering what I was going to do.

I called a friend from Interlochen named Erica Fisher, who lived in Toronto. We agreed that I would come up to visit her. I took the train to Toronto, leaving my life in Philadelphia behind without a thought.

It was the year of the World's Fair in Montreal and Erica and I were wandering around the fair when she came up with a brilliant idea.

"Why don't we go to London?" she asked. We both knew that Balint Vazsonyi was now living and teaching in London. "We could study with him," she said.

It seemed like an irresistible adventure.

I had about \$600 left from my insurance job, so we both purchased the cheapest tickets we could find on a boat leaving from Montreal and with her parents' blessings we set sail to London, England.

However, we neglected to tell Mr. Vazsonyi that we were coming, a fatal mistake.

The boat trip took six days. We would land in Liverpool and then take a train to London.

On the boat we soon got to know the ship's crew who were young boys about our age. There were nightly parties to which we were invited. Erica was shocked by my behavior. I managed to have sex with one and sometimes two of these young lads each night after the parties. I was sexually promiscuous, looking for the love in this way that I had lacked for so long.

But in spite of everything, the trip was great fun. I loved to stand out at the deck and watch the water trailing behind the boat. Water has always had a hypnotic effect on me. And there was the fun of learning the new English currency and new foods. Before we knew it we saw land. Soon we were on a train bound for London, and a new life.

As we passed through the countryside, I was struck by how different everything looked. Tiny houses crowded together. Laundry hanging out to dry. Children running about. It was fascinating.

Little did I know that the adventure ahead would end in disaster for me.

CHAPTER 3: LONDON

London! We had finally arrived. Two seventeen year olds looking for adventure in a faraway city.

For the first few days Erica and I just wandered about the city with our street map, getting to know the streets and sights, staying at night in cheap student hostels.

We finally located a small "flat" in Earl's Court and rented a piano to practice on. We showed up at Mr. Vazsonyi's apartment unannounced one day to tell him we had come to study with him. He, however, had other plans. He was soon leaving for Hungary to write a book and was far from pleased by our unexpected arrival. But he did promise to give us a few lessons before he left.

I soon ran out of funds, but my father was willing to send me enough money each month to pay the rent and buy food. I soon discovered that I would not be able to work legally in England as I was registered as an alien.

Erica and I spent the days exploring London and alternating practice times on the piano we had rented. In the evenings we went to free concerts or visited the Vazsonyi's and played with their small son Mikki.

I had no plans for the future. I thought of myself as a "hippie" and at the moment was living an appropriately hippie lifestyle as a bohemian artist and student far from home.

I especially liked wandering in Hyde Park. Erica and I would watch soccer games, meet other wandering students, watch nannies wheeling their prams through the park and businessmen in black derbies taking their noontime stroll. Or we would hang out at Speaker's Corner where someone was always on the soapbox preaching to a heckling crowd.

Erica had met an acting student named Mark and brought him home, and before long Mark and I were involved in an intense affair. I thought I was in love. Mark and I spent days exploring together, going to plays, seeking out cheap restaurants in Soho, and going to museums and bookstores. As on the boat, Erica was shocked by my sexual behavior but there was not much she could do about it.

We had made the trip to London in September, and soon it began to get colder and the days shorter. The only heat we had in the apartment was a small shilling heater in the corner of the living room, and we spent increasing amounts of time each day begging local merchants for change in shillings for our heater.

Our bathtub was located in a poorly insulated back porch. We would heat the bathwater in a kettle on the stove but by the time the tub was filled it had iced over.

Strangely, as it got colder, my symptoms began to return in full force. One night I woke up screaming in terror and Erica had to take me in the middle of the night to a local hospital. I was treated and released without a diagnosis after an examination by a very unsympathetic nurse.

The panic attacks resumed and I would be hit with them in the most innocuous places -- on a city bus or just walking along the street. The terror was intense, and it would be all I could do to get home to a place of safety and sit it out.

Although I didn't understand it at the time, I was also starting to have hallucinations. At first everything just began to look very unreal. The colors of things were very vivid and unnatural looking. If you have ever looked through an old fashioned Viewmaster, you will have some idea of what I was experiencing.

At the same time that I was experiencing these visual distortions, I would also experience periods of intense ecstasy. Everything I looked at was just so beautiful. I began to go daily to the National Gallery of Art, and I would stare for hours at a painting, caught up in the unearthly beauty of the texture of the clothing, the shading of trees or the light and darkness in a picture. I would see an unfathomable beauty in each painting.

By the time December came, I was getting sicker and sicker. Reality to me was becoming a wavy, watery world where nothing was solid or real. One day I came home and the whole living room just disappeared and I was lost in a sea of wavy white energy.

I told Erica what was happening and she went to Vazsonyi, who had just returned from Hungary. Erica took me to see our teacher and he could tell by talking to me that something was wrong. I was lost in another reality and I kept blacking in and out during our conversation.

Erica probably didn't know how to contact my parents, and I was in no shape to tell her. The next thing I knew I was taken by Erica and Vazsonyi to Heathrow Airport and they bought me a ticket back to New York. I tearfully said goodbye to them, not fully understanding what was happening.

All I remember of the flight was sitting next to a little boy with a teddy bear.

I never saw or heard from Erica again. I have no idea what happened to her. I did occasionally write to Mr. Vazsonyi in later years and saw him briefly several years later when he came to the U.S. for a concert tour.

Arriving in New York, I knew I had to get back to Philadelphia, where I knew someone. I managed to get on the right train. In Philadelphia I called Lorenzo, my old boyfriend, and he came to the train station and took me back to his apartment.

The next morning I woke up and went into the living room and looked out the window and saw London. I saw the red buses, the streets busy with people and the autumn leaves on the trees. Confused, I went outside the front door and it was cold and snowy and it was Philadelphia. But when I went back inside and looked out the window I still saw London.

When I told Lorenzo what was happening, he took me down to the Philadelphia City Hospital where I was examined by an emergency room physician. I was not able to answer any questions correctly. I didn't know who I was, where I was or what day it was. I was promptly admitted to the hospital's psychiatric unit.

By this time, my anxiety had become constant and was unendurable. I was in screaming pain every moment of the day. I wanted to commit suicide. I could not stand the pain. When Lorenzo would come to visit, the pain would go away temporarily, but it would return when he left. I would beg him not to go, and soon he just stopped coming altogether.

One day I happened to see my chart on the desk in the nurses station, and marked on the top corner was the word: Schizophrenic. That was the first I knew of my diagnosis.

Somehow my parents were contacted. My father came to the hospital and made arrangements to transfer me to a private hospital in the country under the care of a psychiatrist named Dr. Grofe. My father took me to the new hospital. I sat in a waiting room with orange chairs while my father filled out the paperwork. I remember feeling that I had to go into the room where my father was and tell him not to sign some papers. The papers were for shock treatments. He didn't sign them.

I blacked out after that. The next morning I woke up and there was a vase of flowers on the dresser in my room. The nurse told me the flowers were from my father. He had gone back to Michigan.

The excruciating pain continued. I lay in the seclusion room on a bare mattress and felt the blackness closing in on me. The terror was unremitting.

I started to have more hallucinations. As I lay in my room, I saw people I knew walk into the room from behind the dresser. Then they would disappear. I heard voices coming from the ceiling saying words that were unintelligible to me.

A lady came into our unit to teach us how to make potholders, but I was unable to comprehend what she was saying.

It was at this time that I had a most extraordinary experience.

I was lying on a couch in the dayroom after breakfast one day. The walls of the room were painted a nauseating shade of green. As I lay there, I suddenly felt myself float up toward the ceiling.

"This can't be happening," I thought. But it did.

After that I don't remember much. I remember going through the wall, but then I was in a different world. It was a world that words could never describe. Once I was there, I realized how limited and small the world we live in really is. I was in a new expanded world.

The feeling I experienced was one of expansion. I was outside of normal reality and it was beautiful. After all the pain, I was finally at peace. The feeling was so wonderful that I never wanted to go back to the "real" world. I wanted to stay in that blissful state forever.

In this other world there were colors. Mostly pastel colors and misty. While in this other state of consciousness, I knew that when I "returned" I would not be able to really remember what I had experienced, because the experience itself would be incomprehensible once I returned. But I also knew that what I would carry back with me would be the thought of it, the memory of what had happened. I would not be able to re-experience it in my memory, but I would have the memory.

I don't know how long I was "gone." The experience itself was timeless. I know that when I was back and aware of time again a couple of weeks had elapsed.

I didn't return all at once. It was a gradual return, like slowly, very slowly coming out of a fog. Similar to being born again. A gradual coming to consciousness from nothingness.

Strangely, after this experience I began to get better. For a few weeks, I still had the feelings of painful and intense terror, but gradually I began to have longer and longer periods of time each

day that were free of pain.

Eventually, I was transferred to a more open unit in the hospital. I began to make friends with some of the other patients. I also started attending occupational therapy. It was there, in occupational therapy, that I met two women who had recently undergone lobotomies. They were like robots.

I made friends on the unit with another teenager named Matthew. Matthew was scheduled for a series of twenty eight shock treatments.

Every morning, it would take about six aides to strap Matthew to a gurney, as he was kicking and screaming all the way. He was being given the shock treatments against his will. An hour or so later he would come back, and he wouldn't know who he was. We would spend the rest of the day walking around the unit and I would tell him over and over who and where he was and what had just happened to him.

We went through this every day for the rest of his twenty eight days. Matthew told me that he was also diagnosed as schizophrenic.

One weekend, Matthew and I had a pass together and we went to his house to visit his mother. It was an awkward visit.

While I was in the hospital, I was under the care of Dr. Grofe, and he was very kind to me, which I appreciated very much. It's funny -- when you're sick, you really appreciate small acts of kindness, while small acts of cruelty, for example by the nurses or aides, can be remembered forever.

But Dr. Grofe was kind. Sometimes when I would be sitting and talking with him, I would black out for awhile and not be aware of what I was talking about. But he would just patiently wait until I came "back" and then we would resume the conversation. When that happened, I would always know afterward that I had blacked out, and I would ask him what I had been talking about, but he never told me.

Eventually, I was released from the hospital to a halfway house, but I didn't stay there long. I rented an attic room from an elderly lady. The room was pink. But the hallucinations soon returned.

I remember one particularly awful night. First I heard choruses of voices coming from the upper right corner of the ceiling. Then I turned over and saw that someone was in bed with me, someone with dark hair. As soon as I saw her, she disappeared. After that I was listening to a symphony on the radio. It sounded like Schumann, but it was a symphony I was unfamiliar with. The next morning I discovered that the radio was unplugged.

I kept trying to get to the bathroom to take my medication. But then I got confused and I couldn't remember if I had already gone to the bathroom or not and this sequence kept repeating itself.

The next day I went back to the hospital. I couldn't make it on my own.

Dr. Grofe decided I might have a better chance if I were in a hospital closer to my parents. So he made arrangements for me to be transferred to the hospital at the University of Michigan, near my parents' home in Lansing, Michigan.

I don't remember anything about the flight.

I stayed in the new hospital for a few weeks. It was at some point during these hospitalizations that my father, as he later told me, was told that I would never live outside an institution.

I was determined that this would not be so.

I was getting tired of being in the hospital. I asked to be discharged, but the doctor refused. So one day, during a volleyball game in the back yard of the hospital, I slipped away unnoticed and ran down the hill to the street where I thumbed a ride into town.

I was free.

During the next few months, I made a semi-recovery. I got a job working as a sandwich maker in a small student restaurant. I started to take classes again at the music school. I met a new friend, Jeffrey, and we were soon living together.

Jeffrey was a teacher at an inner city school and a graduate student at the University. The relationship didn't last however, as Jeffrey soon became interested in another girl who lived up the street.

I was certain that his lack of interest in me was because of my weight, which at the time was about 150 pounds.

One day, after a heavy meal from McDonalds which included a sandwich and a milk shake, I went into the bathroom and made myself throw up the food by putting my fingers down my throat. I had heard about this in high school from a girl who did it.

I was surprised at how easy it was and how good I felt afterwards. Purged and clean. I thought it was my only way to keep Jeffrey. From that point, I was bulimic, and it became a terrible trap because once I started to purge, I found that I was unable to stop the habit. My purging was to go on for twenty seven years. I don't know why I didn't die.

Naturally, Jeffrey left anyway.

Little by little, however, my life was returning to normal. I worked in the restaurant and took classes at the University, occasionally accompanying students in their recitals.

It was just such an accompanying job which was to get me into the worst trouble of my life, but at this time I was blithely unaware of the new danger which lay ahead of me.

I was to go literally from the frying pan to the fire, and I only wish that I had known then, in the fall of 1967, what I know now.

CHAPTER 4: JENNY

I knew Jenny from the dorm two years earlier. Jenny was a cellist and a student at the music school at the University of Michigan. She was a gregarious and popular student, and in the dorm all the other residents would gather in her room at night for stories and laughter.

Two years later, Jenny was still at the music school. I was surprised when she asked me to accompany her on a Lalo Cello Concerto for an upcoming recital, but I readily agreed. We had a couple of practice sessions and then did the recital.

Jenny said she wanted to take me out to dinner as a way of thanking me for accompanying her. We went to a Chinese restaurant in Ann Arbor that was frequented by the students.

Jenny told me that she had just come from a trip to California to visit her brother and she said she had something she wanted to talk to me about. She said that when she was in California she had found out about something called Scientology, which was a self-help psychology that could help people with emotional problems. (Jenny knew something about my problems.) I was vaguely interested.

Throughout our meal, Jenny kept repeating over and over, "Margery, you really should find out about Scientology." I did not know at the time that she was consciously using a "repeater technique" on me that she had been taught in Scientology. The effect of the technique was to induce a light trance state.

It worked on me. After she had repeated herself about twenty times, I experienced a peculiar sensation. I felt the room shift around me. It was as if someone had taken the room and just shifted it about thirty degrees. It was a strange sensation and it got my attention. I knew it had something to do with what Jenny was trying to tell me.

"Maybe you should tell me about Scientology," I told her. That was my undoing.

At that time I had a small apartment in Ann Arbor.

"Let's go to your place," Jenny suggested. "Then I can tell you all about it." So she paid our check and we left the restaurant.

Back at my apartment, Jenny began to go into a detailed explanation of Scientology. She told me about a group of young people who lived on ships in the Mediterranean with the founder of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard. They were known as the Sea Organization. They sailed from port to port spreading the gospel of Scientology.

Jenny also said that when you signed up for the "Sea Org," you signed a billion year contract. That was how long it was going to take to "clear" up this planet and all the other inhabited planets of their problems.

Scientology, Jenny explained, was a new science that contained the cure for all psychosomatic illnesses and emotional and physical problems. It was a thousand years ahead of psychiatry, she explained. In fact, psychiatry was the main enemy of Scientology, with its backward practices of shock treatments and lobotomies.

She didn't have to convince me of that. I had seen it for myself. Images of Matthew came back to my mind, and the two women I had seen in occupational therapy after their lobotomies.

The more Jenny talked, the more interested I became.

The history of the earth, she explained, was actually millions of years old. There had been ancient civilizations that had come and gone. Scientologists had come to earth about thirty thousand years ago in space ships to try to help this planet, but they had failed. They were now back to complete the job.

Jenny also told me about the Scientology theory of "implanting." "There is no heaven or hell," she told me. After you die, your soul separates from your body and it is programmed to return to an "implant station" out in space to be programmed for its next lifetime on earth. All memories of one's previous life are electronically removed from one's mind.

These implant stations had been set up millions of years ago by evil forces. The nearest one was on the planet Venus. It was only through Scientology counseling techniques, called "auditing," that one could escape the deadly implanting cycle.

We talked until three in the morning. I told Jenny about my recent experiences in the mental hospitals, and about my terrifying panic attacks which were still a problem for me from time to time.

Could Scientology really help me get rid of the panic attacks? "Sure," Jenny said. "They have an 100% effective psychology of the mind. It's guaranteed. If it doesn't work you get your money back. But that has never happened."

I was hooked. I would try anything that promised to restore my sanity.

"How can I get this auditing?" I asked her.

"Simple," she said. "We'll start tomorrow. I'll audit you. And it won't cost you anything."

So she left. That night I had fitful dreams all about UFOs and strange people who had come to earth to save the planet. Could it be possible that I was one of them?

The next day, Jenny showed up at my apartment with a small brown box under her arm and a bag of supplies. I had a small table and we used that for the auditing.

She set up the box on the table and explained that this was an E-meter, or electrogalvanometer, that was used in all auditing.

She showed me the dial on the meter. Across the dial a needle was floating lazily back and forth. Then Jenny attached two small V-8 cans to electrical leads that hooked up to the meter. She told me to sit down and hold the cans in my hands. Then she calibrated the meter and took out some paper and a pencil.

"The meter sees just beyond your conscious thoughts," she explained. "When it comes across an area of 'charge' in your mind, it reacts and I can see it on the meter. Then I will ask you questions and you just answer whatever comes into your mind."

She began by asking me some routine questions. My name, how was I feeling, had I eaten

that day, did I have anything alcoholic to drink within the last twenty four hours, etc.

Then we were ready to begin.

Jenny began asking me about the panic attacks. She asked me questions about my past, especially questions about my life as a child and about my parents. She would frequently ask me the question, "Is there an earlier incident in which you experienced a panic attack?"

I told her everything I could think of. We went on in this way for a couple of hours, but nothing dramatic happened. I was actually disappointed when Jenny ended the "session." I had expected something more dramatic.

"It's just the beginning," Jenny explained. "It may take many hours of auditing to find out the actual source of your panic attacks."

Jenny had been taking notes during our session together. She now explained to me that she had to turn her notes in to a person known as a "case supervisor," who would review the notes and give Jenny instructions for the next session.

We walked together to a house in Ann Arbor which was the local headquarters for Scientology. I was led into a small room to see the "Examiner." It was explained that after each session I would see the Examiner and he would check out my reading on the E-meter, and I would be free to make any comments I wanted to make on the session we had just had.

The Examiner asked me to "pick up the cans," and I sat quietly while he watched the face of his meter.

"I would like to indicate to you that your needle is floating," he said mysteriously. Then, "You may go now."

I walked out of the tiny room, and there were several people in the room, sitting around waiting for sessions.

"Margery just had her first auditing session," Jenny announced. Everyone cheered from where they were sitting. I blushed at the attention, but I was pleased.

That night, Jenny asked me to go to a cello concert with her at the University. I sat through the concert, vaguely entertained, but my mind was really on the events of the day and the new experiences I had had.

After the concert, I went into the restroom. While I was washing my hands, I looked into the mirror. Then, suddenly, I felt myself separate from my body and I experienced a blissful floating sensation.

"Jenny was right," I thought. "I really am not my body. I am a spirit. There is something to this Scientology after all."

My ecstasy continued all the way home. I told Jenny about it. For some reason she seemed excited. "I think you have just had a 'clear cognition'," she told me. "That is a really good sign."

Back at her apartment, she made a phone call to California, to a man named Mario who she

said was her contact at the California Scientology headquarters. Mario was a concert pianist.

When she hung up the phone, she came in to where I was sitting with a curious look on her face.

"I can no longer audit you," she said. "You need to be audited by someone with higher qualifications than I have. You will have to go to California to continue your auditing where they can properly take care of you."

I was dumbstruck. But I didn't have to think about it for long. If it meant getting cured of my anxiety attacks, I was willing to go to the end of the earth.

"I'll go," I told her. "Just as soon as I can get packed."

The next day, I called my mother in Lansing and told her I was going to California. She drove over and we packed up my few belongings and she took them back to Lansing to store for me.

She tried to ask me some questions about where I was going, and I excitedly told her about Scientology.

"I've finally found a cure," I told her. "They can cure my anxiety attacks. It's 100% guaranteed. It's a thousand years ahead of psychiatry." I was already quoting the party line.

I remember little of the flight to California. I do remember that when we landed, I looked out the window to a pea soup below us into which we were descending. The famous Los Angeles smog.

In descending into that smoggy city, I was descending into another adventure, my relentless quest for the sanity and peace of mind that had eluded me for so many months. I was grasping at straws, but for now it was all I had.

CHAPTER 5: LOS ANGELES

In October of 1967, dressed in a hippie smock, appleseed beads and sandals, I stepped off the airplane into the bright, glaring sun of Los Angeles. Clutching my suitcase, I caught a bus bound for downtown L.A.

Jenny had given me an address for Celebrity Center, a Scientology center especially for artists and celebrities to which I had been consigned because of my piano playing. Celebrity Center was located at the corner of Burlington and Eighth Streets, in a low, one story ramshackle building just off the seedy MacArthur Park, home to hundreds of L.A.'s homeless and alcoholic population.

I didn't pay much attention to the neighborhood, however. I was here in search of salvation of emotions and soul.

When I got to Celebrity Center, I was met by an attractive woman in her forties named Yvonne, who welcomed me like a long lost friend.

"Welcome, dear," she hugged me. "We're so glad you're here. Jenny has told us all about you."

Then she led me into the main room of the Center. I looked around. Approximately twenty students were seated in the dark room at long tables set in the middle of the room. The room was silent except for the sounds of pages turning and some low whispers. A young man with a clipboard was walking slowly through the room, occasionally stopping to hand out a sheet of paper to a particular student.

I noticed various posters on the walls, and at the end of the room was hung a huge photograph of a smiling, fleshy man, dressed in naval attire. This, I assumed correctly, was L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology.

Yvonne directed me to a small table on the side of the room and introduced me to a small, smiling man seated at the table.

"Mario, this is Margery, Jenny's friend. She's just arrived from Michigan." Jenny had told me all about Mario, that he was a concert pianist and that it was he who had introduced Jenny to Scientology.

"Welcome, Margery," Mario smiled. He seemed to be an extremely good natured person with a wide grin that seemed to spread across his whole face. I liked him immediately.

I sat and talked with Mario, as it was Mario who would oversee my progress in Scientology. He had been assigned to me as a sort of mentor. As we talked, the conversation turned ever so subtly to money. Mario wanted to know how much I had brought with me.

"About five hundred dollars," I confessed, not at all suspicious.

"Then you will be able to start on the Dianetics Course," he told me, smiling. "That is exactly how much the course costs."

"But where will I live?" I asked him. "And what about food?"

"Don't worry," he assured me. "Everything will be taken care of. We'll find you some housing. You can start the course tomorrow."

So, reluctantly, I handed over to him all the money I had brought with me, and he helped me to sign some paperwork enrolling me on the course.

Then Mario handed me a small, blue handbook which I was to sit and read in preparation for the course I was to start the following day.

"Preclear's Handbook," the book was titled.

In this book, I learned that I was now considered to be a "preclear," or one who is on the way to becoming "Clear," an exalted level in Scientology. Once I was Clear, I would be rid of my reactive mind through auditing, and it was supposedly the reactive mind that had been causing me so much trouble.

Clear was not the end, however. Above the level of Clear, were the secret "OT" levels, which stood for "operating thetan."

A "thetan" was the Scientology name for the soul, that which one was. A person in Scientology was not considered to be a body. Instead, he or she was a thetan who possessed a body. And the purpose of auditing was to make one more "at cause" over one's body as well as over the world around oneself.

The purpose of auditing, the handbook explained, was to locate and remove electrical "charge" that surrounded a person's body. The charge was stored in the person's mind in the form of "engrams," or memories of painful events from one's past.

Once the charge was cleared away, not only would the person be Clear, but he would also be able to leave his body at will and travel with full perceptions to anywhere in the world or, for that matter, in the universe. This ability was known in Scientology as "exteriorization."

I tried to comprehend everything that I was reading. It was so different from anything I had ever studied before.

"Clear," I thought. "Free of my reactive mind. Free of the hated panic attacks forever." Well, this is what I had come for. I couldn't wait to get started.

It was decided that I would stay in the house right next to the Center, a two story house on Burlington Street. I was shown to a room in which there were three beds, and I chose the bed nearest the window.

I looked out the window at the bottlebrush plants outside and the clear blue afternoon sky. It was all so beautiful. Lush and tropical, a new world.

Suddenly, from nowhere, I heard my voice being called. It was a man's voice, and it seemed like the most beautiful voice I had ever heard. It was, of course, a hallucination, but at the time I took it to be an omen that I was in the right place.

I ate dinner with some of the other occupants of the house: Glynnis and Geoffrey, a young couple, another young couple with two small children, and Robert, who was a violinist who lived upstairs.

I went to bed early, but was awakened in the middle of the night by a tanned young man who came into the room and got into one of the other beds. We talked briefly. He told me his name was Lance and that he was in the Sea Organization. He had just come back from the ships.

Lance told me all sorts of things about myself, about my parents and about the hospital. "How do you know so much about me?" I asked him.

"I know because I am OT," he answered. I accepted that and lay back in the dark, thinking. There were so many new things to think about here in this magical place.

The next morning, after a hurried breakfast, I appeared at the Center promptly at eight o'clock for "course."

"We have a new student," Yvonne introduced me to the others. "Let's welcome her."

There was a hearty round of applause. I felt welcomed.

Next I was handed a hard backed copy of the Dianetics book, the "Bible" of Scientology, as well as my "course pack," a thick packet of papers all printed in red ink.

In front of the packet was a checksheet. I was to read each item in the packet, then I would be "star-rated", or quizzed, on each item by another student. Each of the articles in the packet was called a "bulletin" and they were all written by Hubbard.

I started to read.

The first bulletin was called "The Aims of Scientology," and it was written to welcome me to Scientology:

A civilization without insanity, without criminals, and without war, where the able can prosper and honest beings can have rights, and where Man is free to rise to greater heights, are the aims of Scientology.

First announced to an enturbulated world fifteen years ago, these aims are well within the grasp of our technology.

Non-political in nature, Scientology welcomes any individual of any creed, race or nation.

We seek no revolution. We seek only evolution to higher states of being for the individual and for Society.

We are achieving our aims.

After endless millenia of ignorance about himself, his mind and the Universe, a breakthrough has been made for Man.

Other efforts Man has made have been surpassed.

The combined truths of fifty thousand years of thinking men, distilled and amplified by new discoveries about Man, have made for this success.

We welcome you to Scientology. We only expect of you your help in achieving our aims and helping others. We expect you to be helped.

Scientology is the most vital movement on Earth today.

In a turbulent world, the job is not easy. But then, if it were, we wouldn't have to be doing it.

We respect Man and believe he is worthy of help. We respect you and believe you, too, can help.

Scientology does not owe its help. We have done nothing to cause us to propitiate. Had we done so, we would not now be bright enough to do what we are doing.

Man suspects all offers of help. He has often been betrayed, his confidence shattered. Too frequently he has given his trust and been betrayed. We may err, for we build a world with broken straws. But we will never betray your faith in us so long as you are one of us.

The sun never sets on Scientology.

And may a new day dawn on you, for those you love and for Man.

Our aims are simple, if great.

And we will succeed, and are succeeding at each new revolution of the Earth.

Your help is acceptable to us.

Our help is yours.

After reading this, I had the impression that Hubbard was a nice man and that Scientology was a Good Thing. And that it could help me.

I continued to read.

In the following bulletins, the idea was reinforced that there was only one way out of one's problems, and that way was Scientology:

In all the broad universe there is no other hope for man than ourselves.

And:

In fifty thousand years of history on this planet alone, Man never evolved a workable system. It is doubtful if, in foreseeable history, he will ever evolve another.

Man is caught in a huge and complex labyrinth. To get out of it requires that he follow the closely taped path of Scientology.

Scientology will take him out of the labyrinth, but only if he follows the exact markings in the tunnels.

It has taken me a third of a century in this lifetime to tape this route out.

And:

The whole agonized future of this planet, every Man, Woman and Child on it, and your own destiny for the next endless trillions of years depends on what you do here and now with and in Scientology.

Did I know that I was being brainwashed? The answer is no. I didn't even know there was such a thing as brainwashing. These are just small samples of all that I read that morning, and in the following days.

In all the propaganda of Scientology, there are four themes that predominate:

1. That there is a problem, that we are in a trap.
2. That there is a solution to the problem.
3. That the solution can only be found in Scientology.
4. What will happen if the problem is not solved.

The main problem posed by Hubbard is the imminent danger of nuclear war. And it is only Scientology that has the potential to thwart this danger:

We are the only people and the only organizations on Earth which have the technology and the ambition to attempt a clarification of situations which in other hands are considered entirely out of control, to wit, the atomic bomb and the decay and confusion of central governments.

And:

The use or neglect of this material (Scientology) may well determine the use or neglect of the atomic bomb by Man.

And:

The mission of Scientology is not conquest -- it is

civilization. It is a war upon stupidity, the stupidity which leads us to the Last War of All.

And:

The primary race of Earth is not between one nation and another today. The only race that matters at this moment is the one being run between Scientology and the atomic bomb. The history of man, as has been said by well-known authorities, may well depend upon which one wins.

There was more, much more. I carefully read the bulletins and got the required checkouts. But my head was spinning.

Each morning we had a fifteen minute break from class. I walked out into the bright L.A. sunshine and sat down on a curb next to another girl on the course named Keith.

"Wow," I said to her. "This is quite a trip."

"Oh yeah," she answered. "And it gets better and better."

"Is it all for real?" I asked her. "I mean, do you really believe this is the answer to everything?"

She gave me a knowing look and smiled. "You haven't seen anything yet," she said. "Wait until you meet a few OTs. That's where it's really at." She was referring to the people who had done the secret upper levels of Scientology.

"When you're an OT you can do anything. You can read people's thoughts, you can move the clouds and control the weather, you can travel outside your body. I can't wait to get there."

"How long does it all take?" I asked her.

"It just depends," she answered. "The fastest way is to join the Sea Org. That's what I'm going to do. Join the Sea Org and be an auditor. Just as soon as I finish this course."

I began to think. A billion years. Helping to "Clear the Planet." I decided. If they could really cure me of my anxiety attacks, I would do just that. I would join the Sea Org. Did I have anything better to do with my life?

The answer, I decided, was a resounding no. Everything that Hubbard was talking about in the bulletins, making the world a better, safer place to live, helping people. That was all I ever wanted to do.

I felt like I had finally come home.

CHAPTER 6: ONE BILLION YEARS

After I had finished reading all the bulletins in my course pack, I came to a section on my checksheet marked "Training Routines."

These were a series of drills designed to train a person to "communicate better." What I did not know, or even suspect, is that these drills are actually a sophisticated set of mind control processes designed to convert the newcomer into a confirmed Scientologist.

In the first training routine, called "TR-0" for Training Routine Zero, I sat with another student in two chairs facing each other, our knees almost touching, and we were to look into each other's eyes for two hours without blinking or moving.

In the instructions for this drill, Hubbard states: "To train a student to confront a preclear with auditing only or with nothing."

In other words, I was being trained to become an auditor, whether I wanted to or not.

In TR-0, if either of us were to blink, move, twitch, etc., we had to start the two hours over again.

At first, I found this drill very hard to do. The tears in my eyes burned unbearably. I wanted to blink so badly, but if I did, my partner would call out sternly, "Flunk for blinking! Start!" And I would have to start over again.

I went through all sorts of sensations trying to do this drill. My mouth began to drool and there was nothing I could do about it. The chair became unbelievably hard and uncomfortable. It seemed like every nerve in my body was screaming out for relief.

I began to see an aura around my partner's head, a flowing of colors and patterns of energy surrounding him. I became interested in this and it distracted me from my pain.

Eventually, what happens in TR-0 is that you dissociate. I experienced this after a couple of hours. I suddenly felt like I had floated away from my body and its pains and I had a peaceful, serene feeling like I could sit there forever. I had no desire to blink anymore. I had the fixed, trancelike stare that has come to identify dedicated Scientologists. Finally, I completed my two hours.

After this, I had to do another drill called TR-0 "bullbaited." In this drill, I sat doing my TR-0 while my partner began to ridicule me and "push my buttons," trying to get me to react. At any sign of a smile or reaction, he would again say sternly, "Flunk for smiling! Start!" And we were off again.

Sexual themes were common in bullbaiting. Also fair game for bullbaiting was my weight.

"Hey, look at this everyone," my partner would say in a loud voice so the other students could hear. He reached over to pinch me at the waist. "Baby fat! Margery still has baby fat! Say, you must be good in bed. I like my women with a little fat on their bones. Are you good in bed? Are you? Would you like to go to bed with me?" And on and on.

Occasionally I would start to smile or my lips would twitch or I would drool, and I would be flunked and we would start all over again.

Most of the TRs (there were fourteen of them) had to do with control, with learning to give and follow commands, and learning to manipulate conversation.

First, I learned to deliver a command to another person, using statements out of "Alice in Wonderland." Phrases such as:

- "Would you please tell me why you are painting those roses?"
- "Oh, please mind what you are doing."
- "Off with her head!"
- "Curiouser and curiouser!"
- "You shouldn't make jokes if it makes you so unhappy."
- "Call the next witness!"
- "Oh, you wicked, wicked little thing."
- "Oh, you can't help that, we're all mad here!"

My partner would simply acknowledge each statement as I read it out of the book in a commanding voice.

In the next TR, I learned to control the communication of others by giving acknowledgements.

When my partner would read a statement out of "Alice in Wonderland," I would answer in a loud voice, "Fine!", or "Thank you", or "I got that."

In one TR, I was trained to follow commands. My partner walked me around the room giving me various commands. "Walk over to that wall!" "Thank you!" (When I had done it). "Touch that wall!" "Thank you." "Walk over to that chair!" "Thank you!" "Touch the bottom of the chair!" "Thank you!" Etc.

Then it was my turn to give the commands.

In one drill, we were supposed to make an ashtray rise into the air simply by screaming at it with sufficient intention, called "Tone 40."

An ashtray was placed on a chair in front of me.

"Stand up!" I screamed at the ashtray. Then, when it didn't rise, I was permitted to raise it up with my hands.

"Thank you!" I screamed at the ashtray.

"Sit down on that chair!" I again screamed at the ashtray.

"Thank you!" I put the ashtray back down on the chair.

You were supposed to do this drill until the ashtray would rise on its own, simply from the force of your commands. Someone later told me that Hitler used to do this drill with his soldiers, only with an apple instead of an ashtray.

By the time I had finished these drills, I was well on the way to learning to control others, and

to be controlled.

These drills are repeated over and over in Scientology. They are included on every course that one takes on one's way up the "Grade Chart," the hierarchical chart of all the courses in Scientology.

When I wasn't "on course" doing TRs, I usually went with Mario to his apartment on Lafayette Park Place to have dinner with him and Yvonne. (They were roommates.) Mario had a piano in his apartment and he was indeed a very accomplished pianist. Sometimes he would let me practice on his piano during my breaks from class.

It was during my visits to Mario's apartment that I made the discovery that he was gay. That shocked me. I thought that Scientology was supposed to cure you of all aberrations. That shows how naive I was at that point.

The way that I found this out is that there were frequently young men that came over for dinner, and on the nights that I spent on Mario's couch, when it was too late to walk back to the house on Burlington Street, the young men didn't leave. They disappeared into Mario's room with him and stayed the night.

One night, Mario asked me if I wanted to go to "Clear Night" with him. I accepted eagerly. I knew that these Monday night happenings at Celebrity Center were usually restricted to those who had attained the level of Clear or above (OT).

Mario managed to sneak me in the door. He was a celebrity, so he was not really questioned about me.

The place was packed. I sat in the back of the room on a wooden stairway so I had a clear view of the stage. The lights were darkened and the air was warm and moist from the bodies packed in the room on a balmy California evening.

Yvonne was the mistress of ceremonies. She was greatly beloved by everyone at Celebrity Center and when she came on the stage there was wild applause.

After a short talk about the progress and weekly statistics ("stats") of Celebrity Center and a pep talk about how well Scientology was doing all over the world, Yvonne got down to the real business of the evening: introducing all those people who had gone "Clear" that week.

One by one the new Clears came up onto the stage. Then they were expected to give their "Clear speeches."

One man talked about how wonderful it felt to be free of his reactive mind. "It's so peaceful," he enthused. "All the chatter, the internal voices are gone. I am free at last."

Another person talked about how he was able to exteriorize from his body and travel all over the universe.

"You won't believe what's out there," he said. He talked about flying over the waves of the Pacific Ocean, of flying out into space and visiting other planets which had cities and advanced civilizations.

I was enthralled. I had never heard anything like this before. I managed to get Mario's attention.

"Is this for real?" I asked him.

He just gave me a knowing, mysterious smile. Mario was not only Clear, he was OT3, which meant that he had completed the secret upper level on which one learns the great secret of the history of the universe. Scientologists were divided into three categories: Preclears, or those not yet Clear; Clears; and OTs, those who were on the OT levels.

The atmosphere in the packed, humid room grew more and more enthusiastic as Clear after Clear got up to give their speeches. One man talked about going into an adjoining apartment (out of his body) and stopping a murder. Others talked about controlling the weather, communicating telepathically, moving objects with their thoughts, etc.

The applause got wilder and wilder.

After everything was finished, Mario went down to the front and began to play the piano. He improvised something he called his "space music," and it was quite beautiful.

When we left at close to midnight, the stars in the sky looked brighter to me.

I wanted to be Clear. Of that I was sure. I told Mario and he smiled. "You will," he promised. "And soon."

The next day, on course, I had a new purpose to my studying. I couldn't forget the events of the previous night.

I listened to tape recordings of Hubbard that were on my checksheet, and he seemed to be a jovial person, full of certainty. Being an uncertain person myself, I found these lectures comforting and reassuring.

Soon it was time for me to receive some Dianetic auditing, part of the course.

I went into a small room with another person who was to be my auditor. He set up the table and the E-meter much as Jenny had done in Michigan.

I sat down and held the cans in my hands.

He asked me a series of questions.

"Locate an incident in which you experienced a panic attack." I did.

"OK," he continued. "What is the date of the incident?"

I remembered back to an attack I had had about a month ago.

"What is the duration of the incident?"

"About an hour," I told him.

"OK, move to the beginning of the incident. Close your eyes."

I obeyed.

"Scan through to the end of the incident."

I mentally remembered the incident in question.

"Tell me what happened."

I told him.

"Is there an earlier incident containing a panic attack?" he asked me.

There was.

We went through the same sequence of questions.

Finally we came to the first time I could remember having a panic attack, that night under the bridge in Ann Arbor with Bill.

After we finished going through that memory, we seemed to get stuck. I couldn't remember anything earlier.

My auditor ended the session.

He took his notes in to the Case Supervisor for a "C/S" (instructions for the next session).

I was told I had to go for a Review session, which meant to me that something had to be corrected.

I knew from reading the bulletins in the course pack, that in Dianetics, one was supposed to go into one's past lives. That was just kind of accepted by everyone.

In the Review session, the auditor asked me what "considerations" I had about "running past lives." I said I didn't know.

The Review auditor took me back to the last incident I had run, the panic attack I had under the bridge in Ann Arbor.

Then he asked me the same question the other auditor had: "Is there an earlier incident containing a panic attack?"

"Close your eyes," he told me. "Just see if anything comes to your mind. It doesn't matter how far fetched it might seem. The idea is just to let the pictures come into your mind."

I was anxious to please. I knew I was expected to come up with something. It took awhile, but soon I had an image in my mind.

"It's a baby," I told him. "I see a baby."

"Good," he said with enthusiasm. "Now let's run it." And he asked me the standard Dianetic questions.

"I see my mother. I am in a crib. And I am having a panic attack. I am afraid of her."

"OK," he continued. "Is there an earlier incident containing a panic attack?"

Again, I sat with my eyes closed.

I was beginning to get the idea.

"I see a prison," I answered, my eyes tightly shut. "My arms are in chains."

"Good," answered my auditor. "Now, when was it?"

I was stuck again.

"Don't censor it. Just say what comes into your mind."

"OK," I tried to concentrate. "It's about 1400 A.D."

"Good," my auditor sounded pleased. "How long did it last?"

"About an hour," I responded. "I was going to be executed. And I was having a panic attack."

Now we were off. My auditor continued with me until I was proficient in "running past lives."

"When was it?" he asked.

"Six quintillion years ago," I answered. "I was just a particle in space. I was being attacked by laser beams by some enemy particles. I was having a panic attack."

It was getting easier and easier.

Soon the session was over.

I was returned to my regular auditor. I never had trouble running past lives after that. I did it for hundreds of hours.

Now that I was an accomplished Dianetic preclear, it was time for me to audit another student, as a prerequisite to finishing the course.

I was astonished when I showed up at class one day, and was introduced to my preclear. It was an eight year old boy. He was having trouble wetting his bed, and his parents wanted him to get some auditing.

I took him next door to my room in the house on Burlington Street. I set up a card table and put my E-meter (which I had borrowed from another student) on the table.

I told the little boy, whose name was David, to sit down and "pick up the cans."

He had been audited before. He knew what to do.

After going through several incidents of times when he had wet his bed, I asked the next question:

"Is there an earlier incident of your wetting your bed?"

He sat quietly for awhile.

"Yes," he answered slowly.

"Good," I responded. "When was it?"

"It was a long time ago."

"Close your eyes," I commanded. "Move to the beginning of the incident and tell me when you are there."

"OK."

"Scan through to the end of the incident."

"Tell me what happened."

"I was a baby in a little crib on a ship," he seemed to be watching a movie in his head.

"I think it was the Titanic. My parents were gone. There was water in the room. It got into my crib. Then I drowned."

We went over and over the incident. He couldn't remember anything earlier.

"I drowned on the Titanic," he told me slowly. "I think that's why I'm wetting my bed."

His needle (on the dial of the E-meter) was "floating," a signal to me that the session was over.

I took him back to the Center to the Examiner. I sent my notes on the session to the C/S and waited anxiously for the results.

Soon the folder came back. "Very well done," it was marked on the top of my paperwork.

I went back into the courseroom.

"That's it!" the Course Supervisor called out in a loud voice. "Margery has just completed her Dianetics Course!"

Everyone looked up from their work. They all started to applaud. I had to give a short speech.

"It was really fun," I said to them all. "I can't believe I'm really doing this. I can't believe I really know how to help people now."

There was more applause. I was given my course certificate.

I was now a Hubbard Standard Dianetic Auditor.

Yvonne called me into her office.

"Margery," she said. "Mario and I have been talking. We want you to join the Sea Organization."

I was still flushed from my victory on the course and all the applause.

I didn't have to think long. There was nowhere else I wanted to be. I wanted to stay here with Mario and Yvonne and all my new friends forever. Most of all, I wanted to help people. I knew I could do that in the Sea Org.

"All right," I told her. "I'll join. I'm ready to make the commitment."

"I'm so pleased," she smiled at me.

She pulled out a piece of paper from her desk.

At the top of the legal sized paper was the Sea Org logo in blue and gold lettering. Underneath, I read:

I, _____, DO HEREBY AGREE to enter into employment with the SEA ORGANIZATION and, being of sound mind, do fully realize and agree to abide by its purpose which is to get ETHICS IN on this PLANET AND UNIVERSE and, fully and without reservation, subscribe to the discipline, mores and conditions of this group and pledge to abide by them.

THEREFORE, I CONTRACT MYSELF TO THE SEA ORGANIZATION FOR THE NEXT BILLION YEARS.

I looked up at Yvonne. She was smiling.

"We want you to be one of us," she told me.

I signed.

I walked back into the courseroom, my mind reeling. The first thing I did was to tell Mario. He was excited for me.

"Welcome," he hugged me. "Now you're really one of us."

I decided to take a walk. I wandered down the street and into MacArthur Park.

I had just signed away my future for the next billion years.

It would be the adventure of a lifetime ... and beyond!

CHAPTER 7: THE GRADES

Christmas soon came and I had no money for presents for my family. Christmas had always been a big tradition in my family.

I took the few dollars that I had and walked down to a little Vietnamese store on the corner of Alvarado and Eighth Streets and bought little dollar presents for my family. I wrapped them in newspaper and sent them in a shoe box to Michigan.

My contact with my family had been sporadic. I called my father about once a month to ask for money, an exercise I always found humiliating, but I did it out of necessity.

Wages in the Sea Org were minimal. My first pay check for an 100 plus hour work week was three dollars. My highest pay one week was eleven dollars.

The way the pay was determined was as follows: ten percent of the weekly gross of the "org" (in this case Celebrity Center) was sent to Hubbard. Then, after expenses were paid, the rest of the money was divided among the staff on a units system; each job in the org was accorded so many units.

So the hundred dollars I received every month from my father was what I spent for toiletries and other expenses. My only luxury was an occasional ice cream cone for a quarter at a delicatessen a few blocks away.

On Christmas Day, I was blue. After joining the Sea Org, I was moved out of the house on Burlington Street into a house on Beacon Street several blocks away. There I had only a mattress on the floor and a blanket, standard Sea Org accommodations.

On Christmas Day, there wasn't much to do, so I wandered back to my quarters. There was a young man there who was relaxing on his mattress. His name was Richard Royce, and he was a favorite of Yvonne's because he was an excellent artist and had published a book of his paintings.

Richard and I began to talk, and it turned out that he was as lonely as I was. Soon we were making love in the otherwise deserted quarters.

A month later, I discovered that I was pregnant. Yvonne was very displeased. The last thing she wanted for Richard was a child to support.

So I was ordered to have an abortion. I was given the address of the social services office in downtown L.A. and I went there to apply for Medicaid funding for an abortion.

Having secured that, I took a bus into the Watts area of the city where there was a clinic specializing in abortions.

I was very frightened on the bus, as I was the only white person aboard, and also in the clinic, I stood out. I had the abortion, and after a short stay in the recovery room of the clinic, and some orange juice and graham crackers, I was on a bus back to the Center.

It was as simple as that. I reported to Yvonne that it was accomplished and she was satisfied.

At the time, I didn't feel any sense of grief or loss. I accepted the orders without question and simply did what I had to do to please Yvonne. I had never thought about abortion, and had never received any teaching or propaganda against it, and I didn't think of it as killing a child within me.

I think also, because of the friction in my family background, the idea of being married and having a family was far from my thoughts. I didn't want to repeat the experience of my parents. It had been too painful.

Now that I was in the Sea Org, there was the question of what to do with me. My piano playing was too amateurish to be of much use to the Center. I was used occasionally as a Dianetic auditor, especially when one of the staff needed an emergency session or "assist."

When someone had a toothache, or headache, instead of aspirin or a dentist, a Scientology procedure called a "touch assist" was used. In the assist, the auditor would press his or her finger against the body of the person being audited with the command, "Feel my finger." This was repeated on all parts of the body radiating from the center of the body out to the extremities for perhaps an hour or so, or until the ache or pain had lifted.

Going to a doctor was highly discouraged, and getting involved in any other sort of therapy was strictly forbidden. As psychiatry was the sworn enemy of Scientology, any sort of psychological or psychiatric help was especially forbidden.

I worked as sort of an aide to Yvonne. I carried messages for her over to the Advanced Org which was located a few blocks away. Sometimes I made trips to the other Scientology organizations: the Los Angeles Org, located on Ninth Street, or the American Saint Hill Organization, named after Hubbard's mansion in England.

Yvonne had moved to the house that I now lived in, although she had her own bedroom. I was used as a cook and babysitter in the house when they were short of help. One of my duties was to watch over the two young children of one of the Center's more advanced auditors. As I have always loved children, I was not unhappy with this assignment.

So the days passed.

My illness was temporarily in remission. I was having no bothersome symptoms and the panic attacks had seemed to abate, which I of course attributed to the auditing I was receiving.

One day, as I was sitting on the wooden curb outside Celebrity Center, a young man named Carlos came up to me.

"I hear you've finished your Dianetic auditing," he said to me. "I'm a student on the Grades, and I'm looking for a preclear to audit. Are you interested?"

Was I ever!

After Dianetics on the Grade Chart, were the Grades from Zero to Four. Normally these Grades would cost thousands of dollars, but there were always students around the Center looking for preclears to audit for free, so they could complete their course.

We went to Carlos' apartment a few blocks away, where he set up his E-meter and I sat down opposite him and picked up the cans.

The first grade he was going to audit me on was Grade Zero, also called Communication, and I was very interested in this level because it said on the Grade Chart that the end result was "the ability to communicate with anyone on any subject."

As I had always been shy, this seemed an impossible goal for me, but Carlos said we wouldn't quit until I had achieved it.

He began to ask me a lot of questions about communication. He would ask the same questions over and over again. Questions like:

"Who can you communicate to?"

"My mother," I answered.

"What can you communicate to your mother about?"

"About school, about clothes, about money, about anything."

"OK," he continued, "who else can you communicate to?"

"My father."

"What can you communicate to your father about?"

"Mostly about money. We talk about money."

"Who else can you communicate to?" And this went on and on.

About an hour into the session I was getting annoyed with this asking the same question over and over again. I felt myself getting angry.

"Who else can you communicate to?" Carlos asked for the fortieth time. I had given him every answer I could think of.

"Anyone," I said angrily. "I can communicate with anyone. About anything."

Then I started to laugh.

"That's the answer, isn't it? I really can communicate with anyone about anything. Why didn't I ever think of it before? What have I been so afraid of all this time?"

Carlos didn't say a word. He kept watching his E-meter.

Finally, he looked up at me. "I'd like to indicate that your needle is floating," he said, watching me carefully.

I was in shock. Did I realize I had just become the victim of hypnotic suggestion? Not in the least. But I did have the "end phenomenon" of the level. I knew with certainty that I could communicate with anyone on any subject. Of that I was sure.

"End of session," Carlos announced. "You can put down the cans."

We walked over to the Examiner together. I was laughing all the way.

"I can't believe it's so simple," I kept telling him. "Is that all there is to it?" He didn't answer. He just smiled.

He turned his folder in to the Case Supervisor. I was told to wait in a chair in the lobby.

About a half an hour later, I was called into the classroom.

"That's it!" called out the Class Supervisor. "Margery has just become a Grade Zero Release!"

Then there was the usual applause, and I had to make a speech.

"I just can't believe it is so simple," was about all I said. I was still laughing inside about the whole thing. It seemed like something inside me had burst, some invisible bond had released, and my reaction to it was one of hilarity. I couldn't stop laughing.

During the next few days, Carlos and I audited the next four grades. All were similar to Grade Zero, but none of them had as much of an effect on me. However, I passed each one with flying colors.

On Grade One, the focus was on life problems.

"What problem could you confront?" Carlos asked me. Then, "What problem would you rather not confront?"

Eventually, I realized that I had "the ability to recognize the source of problems (myself), and make them vanish," the "end phenomenon" of Grade One.

Grade Two had to do with guilt. The questions were:

"Tell me some things you think you should not have done to another." And, "What have you done to another that you regret?"

I was getting the hang of these levels. I began to look for the required "cognitions" that I was supposed to have, and our sessions grew shorter and shorter.

"I don't feel guilty about anything I have done."

I was then a Grade Two "completion."

Grade Three had to do with change.

The questions were, "What do you want changed?" and "What do you want unchanged?"

The cognition was that I was free of the upsets of my past.

Grade Four was a bit more confusing, as it concerned something called one's "service facsimile," a psychological mechanism that Hubbard said we all had, a way of making others wrong.

There was only one question: "In this lifetime what do you use to make others wrong?"

I don't remember what answer I came up with, but whatever it was it was enough for me to pass the test.

I was now a Grade Four "Release" and had only three levels to go before I was Clear.

Shortly after this, I was walking to Mario's apartment one night, when I experienced a most remarkable event.

I was walking along the street when suddenly I felt like there was a tremendous explosion all around me.

I looked around. Everything looked much brighter than usual. Colors were vivid in an unreal way.

At the same time, I had a realization that there was nothing but the present. The past did not exist. All there was was the Now.

I felt exhilarated. The vivid colors and the feeling of elation continued all the way to Mario's. When I got to his apartment, I told him what happened and he seemed quite excited.

"You have just had a Clear cognition," he told me. "That is a great sign of progress."

I had to go to ASHO (the American Saint Hill Organization) to the Examiner to "attest" to what had just happened to me.

After a short wait, it was confirmed and announced in the lobby that I had indeed had a "Clear cognition."

This meant that I could bypass a level called "Power" and go directly to the Clearing Course, via a short course called the Solo Course on which I would learn to audit myself. (On all courses above Power, one audited oneself on the E-meter).

There was only one problem.

The Solo Course cost \$700, and I didn't have it.

It was time to call home.

Unbelievably, my father agreed to give me the money.

I guess he thought it was for my education.

I was elated as I waited for the money to arrive.

Just as Mario had promised, soon I would be Clear!

Free of my reactive mind forever.

I couldn't wait.

CHAPTER 8: TRAVELS

The Solo Course was taught at the American Saint Hill Organization in a large converted garage painted a stark white. There were no windows.

This was the first of the secret upper levels of Scientology, so I was required to buy a briefcase that locked and a dog leash to attach to the briefcase so that it would be attached to me at all times.

The Solo course materials were to be kept locked in the briefcase at all times except when I was actually on course.

On all the upper levels there was an implied rumor of danger. It was part of the Scientology mystique that if you did not do these levels correctly, you could die.

I showed up for my first day on the course, and was given a course pack to read, and as I started to read I found the materials quite confusing.

The idea seemed to be that everyone had in their mind, as a result of the implants received between lives, a series of electrical mechanisms called GPMs (for Goals Problems Masses). On the Solo course you were to audit these masses out of your mind by auditing long lists of opposites. For example, a Solo list might look like this:

1. Girlness - Ungirlness
2. Smartness - Stupidness
3. Fatness - Thinness
4. Lateness - Earliness
5. Kindness - Meanness, etc.

Hubbard wrote in the bulletins about a particular implant station out in space called the Helatrobus Implant and it was this implant that we would be auditing out on the Solo Course.

We had to watch several films which went into a great deal of detail about these implants and about the GPMs.

I tried hard to understand what I was reading. It never occurred to me to question or disbelieve anything I was reading, because at this point I was thoroughly brainwashed to believe that if Hubbard wrote it, then it must be true. He was my infallible source, but he was more than that. He had become a sort of god to me. He was worshipped within the organization, and I learned to worship him too.

One day as I was sitting in this course, a woman suddenly started to scream. Her screams shattered the previous stillness of the classroom.

One of the instructors came over to her and put her hands on the woman's head.

"What's she doing?" I whispered to one of the other students.

"She's trying to get her back," he answered.

Back from where? I wondered.

Later that day, a list of names was read by the Course Supervisor. My name was on the list. I left the classroom with the others on the list, and we were told that there had been a policy change, that we couldn't proceed on the Solo Course without taking the Power auditing first. The cost of this auditing was \$1200. I didn't dare call my father this time.

So I went back to work for Celebrity Center.

During the next two years, Yvonne would sometimes lend me to the other "orgs" when they were short of help. I did a variety of jobs. I sold books on college campuses, I went out on the street to find people who would come into the Org for the free lectures that were given every hour. We were told even to bring in drunks, as they would count as "stats."

Each week the statistics, or stats, from every job in the organization were turned in to the Sea Org, and they would analyze the stats to see where corrections, in the form of missions, needed to be made.

Whenever a mission came to an org, there was a lot of fear, because it was certain that someone's job would be in jeopardy and that person would almost certainly be sent to the RPF.

The RPF (for Rehabilitation Project Force) was the prison within Scientology. Anyone who flubbed up on his job, or whose stats weren't high enough, or anyone who became psychotic as a result of auditing (this occurred with a not surprising frequency on the upper levels) was sentenced to the RPF.

During this time period, the RPF was located on two ships that were moored in Long Beach. The cure for those in the RPF was sleep deprivation, and hard labor.

In 1971, while working for Yvonne, I suffered a psychotic break and I was sent to the ship. I don't remember how long I stayed on the ship, and I have vague memories of long hours spent studying, cleaning the ship, doing all sorts of enemy invader drills, and working in the galley peeling potatoes and other vegetables.

I was having a nervous breakdown. Of course, the Scientologists didn't believe in psychiatric treatment or hospitalization or medications. Instead, one was punished because it was believed that the illness was your own fault.

After I got off the ship, I started to work again, but it was obvious that I was not doing well. I was having delusions of grandeur and persecution. I accused Yvonne of being my enemy, even though she had never shown me anything but friendship.

At this same time, I had a brief relationship with another Sea Org member, and I became pregnant again, and was forced to have another abortion. I was learning to accept abortion as a form of birth control in my case.

Yvonne knew I was in trouble. She called my mother in Wisconsin (my family had moved from Michigan to Wisconsin) and told her to come and get me. I was being "offloaded" but I didn't know it at the time.

My mother did come, and we flew back to Wisconsin together. On the plane my mother tried

in vain to dissuade me from my beliefs. She had been doing some research on Scientology and had newspaper articles for me to read, but I refused. I was too far gone. I was both hypnotized and brainwashed. It was impossible to reason with me on the subject of Scientology.

Back in Wisconsin, I spent time at home trying to readjust to life in the "wog world." This was the Scientology term for the non-Scientology world. It was a derogatory term.

As I had given away all my clothes, I had an immediate problem. My mother had a sewing machine, so for the first month, all I did was sew myself some clothes.

Then I decided to take a correspondence course in computer programming. I never gave up hope in my mind of returning to Scientology, and I knew I would need some money when I went back, and computers seemed like a good way to make it.

After awhile, I got a job at the University of Wisconsin as a data coder. This was a most amazing job. There were four women employed in my section. We coded the results of all the lab tests that were done at the University. These coded sheets were stored for seven years in a big closet, and then, after seven years they were thrown away. It was boring, tedious work, but I stayed there for a couple of months.

The year was 1971.

There was one other Scientologist in Madison, an elderly professor, and I soon joined forces with him and we gave lectures on Scientology at the local Quaker center to whoever would come.

One day this professor told me that an executive was coming from the Washington, D.C. Org to give a series of public lectures, and he asked if I could put him up.

As it happened, I had moved out of my parents' house, and had a small apartment with an extra bedroom, so I readily agreed to the professor's request.

The executive arrived, and his name was Richard Romejko. While he was staying with me, we had an affair. He asked me to come to Washington, D.C. with him, and to marry him. I said yes.

My parents were furious when I told them I was going back to Scientology. I think they thought that now that I had been away from it for a few months, I was safe. Nothing could have been further from the truth. I was by no means "out."

I packed my things, and flew to Washington, D.C. To my surprise, when I got there, I was told that Richard was on a mission, and they didn't know when he would be returning. I never saw him again.

I turned over what money I had saved to the Org to buy some auditing. When I ran out of money, I decided to join "staff." I was immediately given the job as the ARC Break Registrar. This meant that I had to interview people who had a disagreement with Scientology (known as an ARC -- for affinity, reality, communication -- break) and get them to come back into the org for services. It also meant interviewing people who had just come out of a lecture and signing them up for the first course, called the Communication Course.

Since the org was located in a bad part of town, north of Dupont Circle, many of the people I interviewed were street people and drunks, and I was expected to get them to put some money

down towards a course, even if it was just a quarter. Every "sign-up" counted as a stat.

I soon got into trouble on my job. I found out that the executives at the Org were "falsifying stats." They would tell me to make up phony records for people who had supposedly signed up for courses.

Righteous person that I was, I wrote up a "Knowledge Report," and sent it off to the Sea Org, reporting my superiors for this crime.

When the Commanding Officer of the Org found out about this, I was promptly assigned to the RPF.

The rules of the RPF had changed. Now I was required to wear a grey rag around my arm, and no one was allowed to talk to me. So I spent my days in silence. I had to clean all the bathrooms over and over again. Then I was given the job of mopping up the basement of the adjoining building, which had flooded.

There were rats in the basement, and the water was a murky, filthy green. I was told they wanted to convert this basement room into a nursery.

The house I was staying in also had rats and I was sleeping on a mattress on the floor. It was a humiliating existence.

Finally, I had enough.

I approached one of the students on the course with whom I had previously become friendly, and I asked him if he would take me away from the Org. He agreed.

His name was David, and I stayed in his apartment for a couple of months. We had an affair, again using no protection and I once again became pregnant. I made arrangements to have another abortion. I came home from the clinic and was bleeding heavily and very sick. Meanwhile, that night David had decided to have a party. I remember lying there in the dark, listening to the sounds of the party and crying. What had my life come to?

On the basis of my computer experience in Wisconsin, I managed to get a job as a computer operator for a law firm in downtown Washington, D.C. I took the bus every day from David's apartment in the suburbs. I worked at this job for a year.

Meanwhile the Scientologists had decided that I could come back for services (auditing), but first I had to pay them \$3000 for my "freeloader's debt." This was supposedly the cost of the auditing they had given me as a staff member. Before I could receive new auditing, I had to pay off this debt.

So, for months, all the money I earned at the law firm went right back into Scientology. I paid back the \$3000, and I was given a clean bill of health by "Ethics," the branch of Scientology which deals in punishment.

I was unhappy working at the law firm, because I was working with another woman who was very mean to me.

I made friends with our IBM representative who came at regular intervals to inspect our

machine. He told me that IBM was looking for people to work in their Atlanta headquarters.

I applied for the job and I got it. I packed my things and headed for Atlanta. I had withheld enough money from Scientology to buy a used yellow Volkswagen, so at last I had some transportation.

I drove to Atlanta, and started to work for IBM. I was part of a team which was developing software for the manufacturing industry, and the work was extremely boring. Nevertheless, I stayed with IBM for six years, until 1977.

There was a small Scientology center in Atlanta, but they didn't have any courses advanced enough for me. This center was called a Mission, and mostly offered introductory courses for newcomers to Scientology. After that, the people would have to go to California or Miami for more advanced courses.

But I kept in touch with Scientology. I got regular phone calls from Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, demanding money. And I always sent what I could. I wanted to remain in their good graces.

I still wanted to "go Clear." I knew that it would take several thousand dollars to do this and thousands more to do the OT levels, so any money I could spare I sent to Los Angeles to be put into my "Clearing account."

During the years that I worked for IBM, I became obsessed with the occult. This was technically against all Scientology rules forbidding one from getting involved in "other practices," but I did it anyway.

I became very interested in the books by Edgar Cayce, and I devoured the stories of his past life regressions with patients.

I began to seek out friends and experiences that led me more deeply into the occult. I had a friend that taught me how to do astrological horoscopes, and soon I was doing horoscopes for all my friends at IBM, in the lunchroom at noon and during breaks.

I sought out psychics and visited them frequently. I remember one in particular who said I would have a very lonely life.

One psychic who had a small suite in the back of a shopping mall, sat and talked to me for three hours straight. Finally, after sitting that long and listening to his droning voice, I suddenly dissociated and separated from my body. As soon as that happened, he stopped talking, looked at me and smiled and told me I could leave. It was a strange experience.

I read every book on the occult that I could find, books by Jeanne Dixon, Ruth Montgomery, Jane Roberts. I frequented all the New Age bookstores and went to workshops.

I knew I needed some counseling, as I was again having the bothersome anxiety attacks. A friend introduced me to Jim Smith, who was a primal scream therapist.

I used to go to him, and we would lie on the floor and he would tell me to cry. Occasionally, he would put his hand on my abdomen and push down hard, in an attempt to get me to cry and scream.

I went to group therapy sessions where a dozen of his patients were all lying on mats in a big room, and everyone was crying and screaming.

I have to say in Jim's favor that he tried to dissuade me from Scientology, but I was still a Scientologist at heart, and I knew it would only be a matter of time before I returned to Los Angeles to do my OT levels.

While in Atlanta, I had an affair with a man named Jim R., who was an airplane salesman. The only trouble was that he never sold an airplane in the entire time I knew him. We lived mostly off my salary, or what was left of it after I sent my tithes to Scientology.

We were living free in the basement of the house of a friend of mine who was a psychic. Once this psychic had tried to put me in a trance and had then made a pass at me. I quickly came out of the trance.

Jim's three children would come over on the weekends and sleep on the bean bag chairs in the living room. I became very attached to his children and enjoyed spending time with them.

At this same time, I rented a piano and began to take piano lessons from an elderly teacher in Atlanta named Powell Everhart. When he found out that I was a Scientologist, he "fired" me as a student when he realized he couldn't talk me out of my beliefs.

Jim was under a lot of pressure at his job to sell an airplane. Eventually, when he didn't, he had a nervous breakdown. He became irrational, and began to follow me around town with a gun in his car. I became very frightened, and decided it would be best to leave town. I was afraid he would kill me.

I gave my notice at IBM and drove my Volkswagen back to Wisconsin where my parents were still living. Home again.

I was determined to get back to L.A. I had saved up about \$20,000 in my account out there and I wanted to go Clear.

I went to the Madison library and looked up the names of computer companies in the L.A. phone book. Then I sent out resumes.

One company responded. They wanted to fly me out for an interview. I accepted at once. I flew to L.A. and got the job. I went back home only long enough to collect my clothes. I was excited. This time it would work.

Soon my dream would be fulfilled and I would be Clear.

CHAPTER 9: MARRIAGE

I was on my way back to L.A. The airplane descended through the same pea soup smog.

I reported to work at my new place of employment and about all I remember about the place was that I had a boss named Jerry.

The company did contract computer programming for small businesses.

I soon made friends with another worker named Don Wakefield, and we started talking about starting our own business. We thought we could do just as well on our own as Jerry was doing.

So, Wakefield Systems Consultants was born. We worked out of Don's apartment in mid-L.A.

We were spending most of our time together. Soon we were having an affair. This happened easily because I really didn't know anyone else in L.A. except Mario, and he was usually busy at Celebrity Center.

I went to the Advanced Org, where I had my money on account, and asked when I could start the Clearing Course.

At that time in Scientology there was a new policy concerning Clears. Hubbard had made the discovery that many people were already naturally Clear, so people were being checked out on the E-meter to see if they were perhaps already Clear.

I was checked out, and much to my surprise, I was told that I was Clear! It had probably happened, they said, when I had the Clear cognition on the way to Mario's apartment several years earlier. So I had actually been Clear the whole time.

I was assigned a Clear number, and I was allowed to attest at Clear night.

Now, I could go directly to the OT levels, but first I had to take the Solo Course, so that I would know how to audit myself on the upper levels.

For some reason, I didn't start them right away. Don and I had started our business, and we soon had plenty of clients, and were working around the clock seven days a week to get all the work done. I put Scientology on the back burner for the time being, because I felt a responsibility to the business and to our clients.

Don and I became inseparable. Soon we were living together. I noticed certain things about him, but I didn't let them bother me too much at the time.

One was that he was compulsively neat. Clothes had to be put in the drawers in color order. Things had to be folded a certain way. The glass tables in the living room had to be polished daily to his exacting specifications.

We went out to eat a lot, mostly at Mexican restaurants because Don liked Mexican food. He would usually have a couple of jumbo margaritas, and I noticed that when he drank, his personality

would change. His usually sunny disposition would change into something more surly. We began to have arguments when he was drunk. I later learned that his father was an alcoholic, but I was very naive about alcoholism and didn't know the warning signs.

On a whim, Don and I decided to get married. We reasoned that we were together all the time anyway.

The wedding was planned, and we decided just to get married in our apartment, with Mario doing the service. It would be a Scientology wedding. Only a few friends were invited.

My parents and my sister flew to L.A. for the wedding which was in November. I remember my mother taking me out to lunch shortly before the wedding, and asking me if I was sure this was what I wanted to do. Instinctively, she knew that something was wrong. I did, too, but I chose to ignore the warning signs, especially the arguments that always seemed to follow Don's drinking.

We went to the courthouse to make the wedding legal. The night before the wedding, my father took us all out to eat at one of L.A.'s most expensive restaurants. I ordered cooked goose, which was ironically appropriate to the situation, because I was, in fact, going to get my goose cooked. I just didn't know it at the time.

We had champagne at the wedding which was a big mistake. After the wedding was over, and everyone had gone home, Don and I sat in the living room and we had one of the worst arguments we ever had. I don't even remember what it was about. I thought, what a way to start a marriage.

The only part that was good about our marriage was our sexual relationship. We were compatible in bed. The rest of the marriage was made in hell.

I had married someone just like my father, someone who didn't even like me.

Don was very self conscious about his height. He was short, and he insisted that I wear flat shoes. He was also extremely self conscious about his baldness, and he always wore a hairpiece and, whenever possible, a hat.

Once, during a particularly violent argument, we were in the parking garage, and I pulled his hairpiece off his head. He knocked me out. I woke up on the floor of the garage, alone.

He kept finding more and more things wrong with me. Nothing I did was right. I was too tall, not neat enough, and I couldn't seem to learn how to fold fitted sheets to his satisfaction.

We managed to work together and to keep our clients happy. I don't think any of them realized how bad our relationship really was.

We had neighbors who weren't getting along any better than we were, and we would frequently hear their angry voices through our walls. On Christmas Day, we heard a gunshot, and the emergency team came and wheeled the man next door out on a stretcher. He had shot himself in the head.

A year passed. Mostly, we just worked all the time. Don was not able to have children due to a genetic defect, so I didn't have to worry about getting pregnant.

We had a client who had offices in Kansas City, and we were hired to fly there to fix their computer system. We worked for seven days straight without a break, and I was worried about what the stress would do to our relationship.

On the plane back to L.A., Don was getting drunk on wine. I went to the back and told the stewardesses not to give my husband anything more to drink, but they ignored me.

The Los Angeles airport was fogged in, so we landed an hour outside of the city and were held in the plane waiting for buses to take us into the city. Don was drunk and was in a foul mood. He went up to the pilot and demanded to be let off the plane. He started to make a real scene. I was trying to pretend that I didn't know him.

He demanded that I give him my apartment keys, as he had forgotten his, and I refused, thinking I would get back to L.A. before he did. Eventually, they did let him off the plane.

I waited for the buses and got back to the apartment at about three o'clock in the morning. Don was waiting there. When we went into the apartment he hit me hard, sending me sprawling into the corner of the piano. Then he hit me twice hard in the head and knocked me out. When I came to, he was in the bedroom, so I just went to sleep on the couch.

In the morning, the argument continued. We were in the kitchen, and arguing, and he started hitting me again. I hit him back, which was a big mistake as it enraged him even more. He came after me, and I locked myself in the bathroom. He slammed his fist right through the wood of the bathroom door and unlocked the door.

I started to scream. I knew he was going to kill me.

My screaming threw him off balance for a minute, and it gave me the chance to get by him and get out the front door. I ran to a neighbor's apartment, and asked him to let me call the police. I stayed there until the police arrived.

I was a mess by this time. I was covered by red welts turning into bruises. The police took Don into custody, and took me to the police station where they took pictures of all my bruises. Then I was sent to the hospital, because they thought I might have a skull fracture.

At the hospital, I was X-rayed, but apparently I was all right, as I was released the same day. From my hospital bed, I called my parents in Wisconsin and told them what had happened. My dad said he would help me to get a divorce, and he did. He sent me \$1200 which was the sum demanded by the divorce lawyer.

Don spent three days in jail. When he came home, he was livid. The marriage was over.

Amazingly, we still worked together for about six months because we felt responsible for our clients and it took that long to finish up all the work. When I had finished documenting everything I had done, it was understood that I would move out. During those six months, we hardly spoke to each other. It was a hellish experience.

Actually, I was devastated by the divorce. I thought of it as my own failure. I felt terrible for the violence that we had created, and I felt it was just as much my responsibility as it was his.

After the six months, I had nowhere to go except back to Scientology.

I moved into the new Celebrity Center which was now located in the old Hearst mansion on Franklin Street. I was given a small room for which I paid a nominal rent.

I went job hunting and managed to get a job as a data processing manager for a law firm in downtown L.A. I spent a happy year working for this firm, but somehow they found out that I was a Scientologist and they fired me. I came to work one day, and my replacement was already there at my desk.

It was just as well, I thought. Now I could get on with doing my OT levels.

I began to get more and more involved with Scientology. I signed up for the Solo Course, and when I wasn't on the course, I signed up to do some volunteer work for the Guardian's Office in the Cedars Complex of Scientology.

The Guardian's Office of Scientology was the branch of the organization involved with clandestine activities and lawsuits.

Recently, eleven Scientologists had been arrested for infiltrating the IRS and FBI offices in Washington, D.C. and stealing tens of thousands of classified documents. The Guardian's Office in L.A. was helping to prepare for the trial.

Scientology had hired private investigators to look into the personal lives of all the Justice Department attorneys assigned to prosecute the case against the Scientologists. It was my job to take the information they had amassed, and to compile dossiers on the attorneys to be used by the Scientology attorneys in court.

They were especially interested in any information about sexual deviance or extra-marital affairs that could be used to blackmail the opposing attorneys. I had to mark these passages in red and tab them for our attorneys. One of the attorneys I compiled a dossier on was a man named Raymond Banoun.

One day, a meeting was called for all the Guardian's staff to attend. I sat in on this meeting. The subject of the meeting was what to do with an ex-Scientologist named Michael Meisner, who had defected to the FBI with all of the secret materials of Scientology.

But somehow, Scientology had gotten Michael back in custody, and had him secluded in a motel room somewhere in L.A. The plan was to take him out on a boat into the ocean, tie weights on him and "deep-six" him, in other words, drown him. This would have been done, but that night Michael managed to escape through a bathroom window and he returned to the FBI where he was given protective custody. No one has heard from him since.

The other problem that was discussed at that meeting was what to do about Paulette Cooper, an author who had written a book highly critical of Scientology. She was one of Scientology's most feared "Suppressive Persons," or enemies. The decision was made in that meeting to kill her, but the details were not discussed.

Later, I heard that someone disguised as a flower delivery man had gone to Paulette's apartment, but Paulette's cousin had opened the door and was mistaken for Paulette. The delivery man held a gun to her head and pulled the trigger, but the gun misfired and the cousin was unhurt. That was just a rumor that I heard. I don't know if it was true. I do know that Paulette was harassed by the "Church" (of Scientology) and later settled out of court with them.

I didn't think anything of these macabre plans. I believed the Scientology motto: "the greatest good for the greatest number of dynamics." In other words, if these murders had to be carried out to protect Scientology and the future of the world, then the ends justified the means. That's how brainwashed I was.

The Solo Course had not changed much during the years I had been gone. I still had to read the bulletins about the GPMs and the Helatrobis implants, but I forced myself to get through it and understand as much as I could. I practiced auditing myself on the E-meter, by holding a "solo can" in one hand, while I wrote down my notes with the other hand.

Soon, I was a "Solo Completion." I was ready to do the OT levels.

I have to explain at this point, that there is a mystique in Scientology about these secret upper levels, and particularly about the level called OT3, on which one supposedly learns the great secret of this universe that has been hidden for millions of years, until, of course, it was discovered by Hubbard.

Part of the mystique of these levels is that they are highly dangerous. As Hubbard said in one of his bulletins, "Running a GPM badly can be quite deadly."

The OT levels were highly confidential. All the materials had to be kept locked in the briefcases attached to one's arm with a dog leash. Even married couples were not allowed to discuss the levels they were on with their spouse. It was rumored that if you were told the contents of a level before you had actually achieved that level yourself, you could die within days from pneumonia.

I didn't question a thing. Again, if Hubbard said it, it must be true.

But I was ready for the adventure. I would accept the risk. Live or die in the attempt, I would be an OT!

CHAPTER 10: THE WALL OF FIRE

The concept of "OT" (operating thetan) is important in Scientology, as it is the promises made for the OT Levels that motivate many Scientologists to remain in the organization and work their way up the Grade Chart, otherwise known as "The Bridge to Total Freedom."

The concept of "OT" is similar to that of the "Urbarmensch" used by Hitler to signify the superior Aryan man, the superman.

In the Scientology cosmology, eons ago, at the beginning of the universe, we existed as thetans, but possessing superior psychic powers. Over the millenia, as we became involved in the physical universe, called the MEST universe by Hubbard (the acronym for matter, energy, space and time), we gradually lost our superhuman abilities as we became involved with physical bodies, and were subjected to the crippling electronic incidents known as "implants."

Enter Scientology. For the first time in recorded history, Hubbard promises his followers, a way has been found to restore human beings to their long forgotten superhuman abilities, known in Scientology as "OT abilities."

The OT levels, and the "OTs" who are on them, are highly regarded by Scientologists still on the lower grades. The awe inspired by "OTs" in Scientology is somewhat like the respect given to PhDs in a university setting, but with an added aura of religious reverence.

So, I was about to enter into this hallowed realm of Scientology.

I reported to the Advanced Organization with my briefcase in hand, and picked up the materials for OT1.

The instructions said to go to a crowded place, so I took a bus to a nearby suburban mall. I took out my instructions. There was a single command: "Spot a person," and I was to do this until I had reached a cognition.

I walked around the mall, spotting people for an hour or so, and soon had some sort of realization, to the effect that I was unique, that I was not like any other person on earth.

I rushed back to the AO (Advanced Org), and went directly to the Examiner to attest, and I turned my paperwork in to the C/S (Case Supervisor).

I waited anxiously in the lobby. Shortly afterwards, it was announced: I had passed OT1.

For this I had paid \$2,750.

OT2, which I started the next day, was a bit more complex and also more expensive at \$5,225.

On OT2, one is supposed to gain "the ability to confront the Whole Track." OT2 is a preparation for doing the very important and dangerous level of OT3, on which one will confront the "Wall of Fire," and learn the great hidden secret of "this sector of the universe."

On OT2, I soon discovered by reading the required bulletins, I would be auditing out more

implants. Some of these implants were:

- The Electrical GPM
- The Tocky GPM
- The Big Being GPM
- The House GPM
- The Psycho GPM
- The Banky GPM
- The Arrow
- The Double Rod
- The Woman
- The White Black Sphere
- The Hot Cold
- The Dance Mob
- The Basic GPM
- The Body GPM, and others.

Each implant was described in detail in the bulletins. I had to sit down at the E-meter and read each of these items out loud, marking down the "reads" of the needle on the E-meter, until that item no longer read.

It was a long and tedious process.

The descriptions of the incidents didn't make much sense, but I was in no position to question Hubbard's writings. After all, he must know.

For example, the "Dance Mob GPM" was described as follows:

"The duration is 7/8ths of a second. There is a pole that pulls one in. One is caught on the pole. The actual incident is in connecting with this thing and trying to get off it. The dancing comes after the actual incident, and consists of a mob dancing around one, chanting various things. In running this, get the phrases that are chanted..."

Somehow I managed to get through this level. I wasn't allowed to discuss what I was doing with any other person, so there we were, a collection of brainwashed Scientologists, locked in a room, carrying out these absurd instructions, everyone too frightened to question the sanity of what he or she was doing.

Too much was at stake. I had invested too much to ask any questions at this point. I was well beyond the point of no return. Hundreds of hours of mind-numbing TRs had turned me into a "Rondroid," an unquestioning, unthinking Scientologist.

If Hubbard had told me to kill myself, I probably would have. It is hard to explain this to someone who has not been in a cult, but you simply get to a point where you no longer question. You become a psychological hostage to the cult.

The third OT Level, OT3, known in Scientology as the "Wall of Fire," is the level to which I looked forward most eagerly, for it is on this level that Hubbard promises one will at last learn the great secret of this sector of the universe. According to Hubbard, it is this secret that accounts for the current degraded condition of man. Once you know this secret, you will then understand the world today and why it is the way it is.

At the time I started OT3, I was living in the suburb of Studio City, where I was having a live-in affair with an architect-Scientologist named Lee Cambigue.

He was already OT3.

On the big day, the day I was to start the level, he volunteered to come and sit in on the course with me for the first day. I was grateful, as I was really frightened of what lay ahead.

As we drove into the smoggy city, he asked me if I was scared.

Yes, I nodded.

I was given the secret materials in a brown folder and let into the locked room where OT3 was taught. I opened the folder and began to read:

The head of the Galactic Confederation (76 planets around larger stars visible from here, founded 95,000,000 years ago, very space opera) solved overpopulation (250 billion or so per planet -- 178 billion on average) by mass implanting.

He caused people to be brought to Teegeeeack (Earth) and put an H-bomb on the principal volcanos (incident 2) and then the Pacific ones were taken in boxes to Hawaii and the Atlantic ones to Las Palmas and there "packaged."

His name was Xenu. He used renegades. Various misleading data by means of circuits, etc., was placed in the implants.

When through with his crime, Loyal Officers (to the people) captured him after six years of battle and put him in an electronic mountain trap where he still is. "They" are gone. The place (Confederacy) has since been a desert.

The length and brutality of it all was such that this Confederation never recovered. The implant is calculated to kill (by pneumonia, etc.) anyone who attempts to solve it. This liability has been dispensed with by my tech development.

In December '67 I knew somebody had to take the plunge. I did and emerged very knocked out but alive. Probably the only one ever to do so in 75,000,000 years. I have all the data but only that given here is needful.

Good luck.

In the subsequent OT3 bulletins, Hubbard explains further. It was very hard reading. Other students in the classroom were watching me as I read to see my reaction, to see if I "got it."

According to Hubbard, millions of years ago, an evil dictator named Xenu decided to solve the overpopulation problem in his galaxy by rounding up people, freezing them, and shipping them to earth on space ships.

They were deposited on two volcanos, one at Las Palmas and one in Hawaii. Then nuclear explosions were set off, blowing these frozen souls into the stratosphere where they were collected by "electronic ribbons" (force fields) and brought back to earth where they were packaged into clusters.

After packaging, they were subjected to implants in which they were shown many different scenes on huge screens. Then they were released.

And so, according to Hubbard, the great secret of this sector of the universe is that each person on earth is not just a single person, but a collection ("cluster") of hundreds of different entities.

What I was going to learn on OT3, was how to telepathically locate these other entities of mine and audit them through the nuclear explosion and implanting that occurred 75,000,000 years ago. Then these entities would be freed, and able to fly off and find a body of their own.

I hardly heard the Supervisor when he announced the lunch break. My mind was spinning.

I went outside with Lee.

"You mean that's all there is?" I asked him. "The great secret is that I'm not just one person?"

"You got it," he chuckled. "But wait until you do the auditing. You'll feel terrific!"

As we walked to lunch, I had a peculiar sensation. I felt like my mind had just locked up, frozen in time. I couldn't believe what I had just read, it was too incredible. But I was too brainwashed to disbelieve. So my mind simply froze, unable to process anything at all.

It was at this point that my symptoms, the terrifying anxiety attacks, began to return in full force. I went to the Examiner and complained. But I was told just to continue with the level, and the symptoms would take care of themselves. I was told that this sort of "restimulation" was common while doing the OT levels.

"The way out is the way through," was a common Scientology adage that was quoted to me that day.

So I dutifully tried to carry out the complex instructions of the OT3 auditing.

I took my E-meter into a small room at the Org and sat down at the table. My notepaper was placed to my left and I held the Solo can with my right hand while I made my notes with my left. With my left hand, I also manipulated the dials of the E-meter, keeping the needle on the face of the dial so I could note all the "reads" of the needle.

I closed my eyes as instructed and tried to locate an entity. I had been instructed that I would begin to feel pressures on various parts of my body, and that these pressures would be the entities I had to audit.

I was amazed when I did, in fact, feel a pressure on the top of my head.

I opened communication (telepathically) with the entity. I tried to find out his name. I asked him if he had been implanted at the Las Palmas or the Hawaii volcano. I watched the E-meter for the reads which would give me my answers. In theory, the entity that I had contacted was the one

who was actually registering on the E-meter.

Then I guided the entity through a complicated set of questions, taking him or her slowly through the explosion and the resulting implant. I did this over and over with the entity until I felt a lessening and then a release of the pressure, and the needle on the E-meter was floating.

I had just released my first entity!

Suddenly, I heard an electrical crackling all over the room. I was startled, and I didn't know what to do, but I remembered the words of the Examiner, "The way out is the way through," and I decided to continue. The crackling sounds continued to bother me for many sessions.

I went on this way for days, auditing the invisible entities. After each session, I would turn in my folder to the C/S and would be given instructions to continue.

The boundary between reality and unreality was beginning to disappear for me.

Another event at this time also contributed to my sense of unreality.

On one of my lunch breaks from class, I was swimming in a nearby pool with another student from the course. His name was Al. He lounged at the shallow end of the pool with his arms resting on the ledge of the pool. I was in the deep end of the pool, turning somersaults in the water. Suddenly, Al was right there with me under the water.

I surfaced, and he was still lounging against the shallow end of the pool. He threw back his head and started to laugh.

"How did you do that?" I sputtered. He just kept laughing.

"It has something to do with atoms," he answered.

"Never mind," I told him. "I don't want to know. Just don't do it again."

This event only served to reinforce my beliefs in the power of OT3.

One night when I was leaving the Advanced Org, I experienced a peculiar sensation. I looked around me. As it happened during the experience on the way to Mario's many years earlier, the colors around me were again unusually bright. The stars shown clearly as points of light against a velvet sky. I had a feeling of euphoria.

"This is it," I thought to myself excitedly. "I must be finished with OT3."

I went to the Examiner.

I was allowed to attest to OT3. I had gone through the Wall of Fire and come out unscathed. I was now free of my other beings. I was alone, and the world was clear and beautiful.

The next morning I woke up with a splitting headache and an intense panic attack. What was wrong? This wasn't supposed to happen.

I went to the Director of Processing and reported my symptoms.

My folders were taken in to the C/S.

I was called in for a "D of P interview."

"What is happening," he told me, "is that you are keying in your next level. The only thing that will handle your symptoms for good is to do your next level."

"What level is that?" I asked him.

"Well, normally you would go to OT4, but Hubbard has just introduced a new level that is to be done after OT3. It's called NED for OTs (for New Era Dianetics). But right now it's only being done in Clearwater."

Clearwater, Florida, was the U.S. headquarters of Scientology, and all experimental levels were done there first.

The cost of the new level: \$16,000.

I went back to living with Lee. My symptoms were just getting worse and worse.

I was desperate.

Fate intervened. At this time, my grandmother died, leaving me a sum of money. I called my father and told him I needed the money to do a level to help me with my anxiety attacks.

My mother arrived in L.A. with the check. As usual, she tried her best to get me out of Scientology, and she was reluctant to give me the check. But Lee helped me to convince her that this was really what I needed.

Finally, she gave in.

I had the money. I could now go to Clearwater to do my NED for OTs. I flew to Clearwater in November of 1979, just before my birthday, in pursuit of the "Total Freedom" promised by Hubbard.

I had high hopes for this new level. It would work. It had to.

CHAPTER 11: OFFLOADED

The flight to Florida was an overnight flight, and at six o'clock in the morning, I was on a van headed over the Courtney Campbell Causeway into Clearwater. I gazed out at the crystalline, blue waters of the bay and felt a sense of peace.

Clearwater is a sort of mecca for Scientologists. The complex of buildings in downtown Clearwater is known to Scientologists as the Flag Land Base, or "Flag" for short, because when Hubbard's Flagship came ashore, this was their permanent headquarters.

The main building in the complex is the former Jack Tar Hotel, whose red roof rising several stories into the air towers over nearby buildings and is a visible landmark in Clearwater.

I was assigned a room in the hotel, and taken through all the preliminary interviews before I could begin my "NOTS" (New Era Dianetics for OTs) auditing.

Finally, I was assigned an auditor named Jill, and we began the first session.

To my dismay, I was told we were going to be auditing more entities, called "body thetans" in Scientology. Hubbard had "discovered" that there was a category of body thetans, or entities, which did not respond to OT3 auditing, and needed further auditing to get rid of them.

The sessions did not go well at all. I just couldn't seem to make any progress.

I began to be alarmed as the auditing hours passed by, at a cost of approximately \$800 per hour, and we weren't making any progress.

I began to complain to the C/S, and was then given a series of "reviews" which were supposed to remedy the problem.

Meanwhile, when I was not in session, I volunteered to work in the juice bar in the dining room, making up exotic fruit shakes for other guests who would come into the lounge between sessions to relax.

I had arrived in Clearwater in November of 1979. We struggled through the auditing until late January of 1980. Nothing was going well.

When the auditor told me to close my eyes and be out of my head and look around, I simply told her that I couldn't see anything. I wasn't able to "exteriorize." I kept saying, "The tech's not working." Like the story of the Emperor's New Clothes, this was the one thing you were never supposed to say about Hubbard's "tech."

I felt terribly guilty about the money. As the \$16,000 dwindled away, I became more and more desperate.

Finally, I began to break down. I began to have terrible nightmares at night. Several times, I woke up screaming, and woke up other guests in the hotel. I was not taking care of my personal hygiene and was looking more and more unkempt each day.

I went to one of my friends in the Guardian's Office, Hugh Wilhere, and I told him something

to the effect that I wished I could go back to the beginning and start all over again.

He took that to mean that I was possibly suicidal.

At about that time, the woman from Switzerland committed suicide by jumping from the breakwater near the Org (Flag). The story appeared in the local newspaper when it was discovered that she was a Scientologist, and it caused a public relations problem for Scientology, whose relations with the community of Clearwater were mostly hostile at the time, anyway.

It was known to the Guardian's Office that I was not doing well, and they apparently feared that I might become another embarrassment and public relations problem for them in Clearwater.

I was told to stay in my room. A guard was posted outside my room around the clock. My meals were brought to my room. I questioned nothing. I thought that perhaps they were going to send me to Hubbard ("over the rainbow") to have my "case" straightened out.

Finally, one night, three Guardian's Office staff members, including my auditor, came into my room and told me I was to leave Florida.

I realized what that meant. I was being "offloaded." I tearfully begged them to change their minds, but to no avail. I felt betrayed and angry. I had given my life to Scientology, and now they were just going to get rid of me?

Nevertheless, the next morning I was taken in a Scientology van to the airport and told to pick any destination outside of Florida. I made a hurried call to my parents to see if they were at home, and told them which flight I would be arriving on.

The guard came with me on the plane. I don't remember much about the flight. I was in a state of shock.

I was also worried. Not only was I being exiled, but I was leaving an upper level "unflat," or unfinished, and according to Scientology lore that meant that I could die within a matter of days.

When I arrived at the airport, my guard disappeared. I looked around the airport, and eventually my father appeared, seeming kind of awkward and not knowing what to say to me. The prodigal daughter returning home once again.

We drove to my parents' suburban Madison, Wisconsin, home. I stared out the window at the February snow falling softly outside, and I felt the same kind of shock I had experienced many years earlier after Bill's death.

What to do now? At first, it was a matter of just hanging on to my sanity. The anxiety was intense, and finally one night my parents drove me to the emergency room of the downtown hospital. I tried to explain about Scientology, but of course I was still speaking in the Scientologese language, and the doctor probably thought that it was just schizophrenic ravings. But I wasn't hospitalized. I was sent home with a prescription for ativan, a tranquilizer.

Surprisingly, I found that the tranquilizers gave me some relief. I would ration them carefully, taking them only when the anxiety reached an unbearable level.

I felt as if my mind was coming apart. To try to make some sense out of something, I

remember working on a large jigsaw puzzle of a German castle in my parents' living room. It seemed to be therapeutic. By putting together the pieces of the puzzle, I was somehow trying to hold the fragments of my mind in some similar order.

On my mother's insistence, I agreed to see a social worker at a nearby mental health clinic. I wouldn't see a psychiatrist, because that was strictly forbidden in Scientology, but I couldn't remember having read anything about social workers, so I compromised.

The social worker tried to understand what I had been through, but he obviously had no frame of reference for my experience. I felt frustrated.

When I left Clearwater, I had been given a freeloader's debt to pay off of about \$8000, so I had a pressing need to begin making some sort of money.

I got a job as a waitress at a restaurant near my parents' home. My mother would have to drive me back and forth to work. The tranquilizers would help me get through the shift.

I was still experiencing extremely high levels of anxiety. I tried for several weeks just to walk around my parents' block, but each time I would get about a third of the way and have to turn back. I was just too frightened to make it all the way around the block. It took me about a year to master that small task.

At one point, I became suicidal, and had to be hospitalized for several days, but again the psychiatrist in charge just didn't understand the implications of my having spent twelve years in the cult of Scientology, and I couldn't explain it to him.

I felt as if I had come from another planet, and was trying to explain my experience to everyone, but no one understood, and I was very much frustrated and discouraged.

I kept writing letters to Flag, asking them to take me back, but each response tactfully informed me that they didn't want me back.

I began to get angry. I believe that my anger saved me.

After a year in my parents' house, I had gotten a small efficiency apartment not far from them.

One night, as I sat in my apartment, I contemplated making a phone call to a lawyer in Boston who was active in the movement against Scientology. His name was Michael Flynn.

Calling Mr. Flynn was a big step for me because I knew it would be considered a "suppressive act" by Scientology, and my soul would be damned for possibly trillions of years into the future. That was the way I was still thinking.

So there was a battle in my mind. The anger on the one hand, and the Scientology programming on the other.

Finally, the anger won out. I called Michael Flynn. At first he was suspicious of me on the phone, but he agreed to send me some things to read about Scientology. I agreed to read them, although I knew this would be another suppressive act on my part.

I started to read books about cults, other cults. I wasn't ready to read about Scientology, but I was willing to read about other groups. I went to the library and checked out some books. I also

went to a Christian bookstore and discovered that they had a section on cults.

I quit my job as a waitress and began to read full time, from eight in the morning until late at night every day.

I was reading one book written by the mother of a girl in a group called the Children of God. Something in that book struck me and it was the similarity between that cult and Scientology.

I kept reading.

The packet from Michael Flynn arrived and I did start to read some articles that were critical of Hubbard and Scientology.

One document outlined the many fictions that Hubbard had told us about his past and past accomplishments. This document impressed me the most, because it meant that Hubbard was a liar. The man I had believed in so strongly for so many years had lied to me.

This was the first chink in my armor.

The more I read, the more anxious I became.

I began to feel suicidal. One day, I remember driving around Madison, trying to decide how to take my life. Finally, I stopped at a pay phone and called the hospital. I explained my situation the best I could.

They were very helpful. There was a priest in the hospital, they said, who knew about cults. Could I come over and talk with him?

I drove to the hospital. I met with Father Steve Smith, and to my great surprise, he understood everything that I was telling him. He realized that I was at a point of crisis and needed help.

He drove me to the home of a couple who had lost a son to the Moonies. They agreed to keep me there overnight and help me through my crisis. I remember this woman just holding me that night, trying to calm my frightened soul. I slept peacefully that night and returned to my apartment the next day.

Father Smith continued to meet with me, and also introduced me to a professor at the University named Vern Visick who was also knowledgeable about cults. For the next several weeks, these two men became my link to sanity and I met with them often. Vern, especially, quickly became a friend and helped me through some difficult days.

One day, when I was in the Christian bookstore, I picked up a book about Christianity out of curiosity. Perhaps something from my distant past at my grandmother's house in South Dakota triggered an old memory. I took the book home and read it. It was a book by Hal Lindsey called "The Late Great Planet Earth." In the book, he talked about Jesus.

That night, as I stood in my bedroom, I knew I had to make a choice. It was either Jesus or L. Ron Hubbard. They couldn't both be God.

For whatever reason, I chose Jesus, and at that moment something miraculous happened. I snapped out of the hypnosis. It was amazing. I simply woke up, standing there in the room. The

image of a light bulb came into my mind.

Suddenly I knew without a doubt that I had been hypnotized for twelve years. And I knew that Scientology was wrong. I had been duped.

It was the Fourth of July. I walked outside and sat on a stone wall near my apartment, thinking. The only emotion I could feel was anger. I just couldn't believe what had happened to me.

Finally, I was "out." I knew there would be no turning back. I would never go back to Scientology.

I had essentially deprogrammed myself, by reading. I told Vern and Father Smith about my decision, and they were delighted. I didn't really tell my parents. I didn't know if they would understand or believe me.

But I was truly out of Scientology. After twelve long years, I was finally free. And I have never looked back.

CHAPTER 12: BACK TO FLORIDA

I knew I had to do something about the anger that I was feeling. I felt as if I had been raped -- mentally, emotionally, spiritually and financially.

I wanted to get my money back from Scientology. I estimated that I had spent more than \$60,000 in the twelve years I had been a member.

I called Michael Flynn in Boston and told him that I wanted to sue. Again, he was very suspicious of me, because he had been "set up" before, and was wary of requests from ex-members wanting to sue.

He asked me to write him a letter detailing my history in the cult.

His phone line must have been tapped, because three days later there was a knock at the door of my small apartment in Madison. I opened the door, and there were three Scientologists from Flag, and one was holding an E-meter.

They knew about the call to Michael Flynn. They had come to "make peace."

They offered me a check for \$16,000, but when I looked at the back of the check, there was a long statement typed above where I would have to sign, and the statement was a disclaimer saying that I would not sue, and would not hold Scientology responsible for anything that had happened to me.

I refused to sign.

They took me to a motel room on the other side of town. I went willingly because I was afraid of them. I knew they could kill defectors.

They wanted to do an ARC break session on the E-meter. I just told them over and over that I was no longer interested in Scientology. That was the last they ever tried to audit me.

Then they took out printed affidavits on which were printed statements implicating Michael Flynn and his brother, saying that they had coerced me into the lawsuit.

Again, I refused to sign.

One of the three men was Hugh Wilhere, my former friend from Flag. At one point he made a threat to me, saying something to the effect that he couldn't guarantee my safety if I didn't sign the papers. I knew he was saying that I could be killed.

We spent three days in the motel. They kept working on me non-stop to sign the papers. One of the papers was a promise not to sue.

I can't explain what happened, perhaps I was still under their influence after all, but after three days of this haranguing, I finally gave in. I signed the papers, and the check.

They drove me to a notary where the papers were notarized. The notary seemed suspicious, as if he suspected that something was not right here.

I took the check and gave it to my father. After all, it was his money and I didn't want it.

The Scientologists disappeared, once they had gotten what they wanted. What was really strange was that before he left, Hugh wired me a dozen roses. I didn't know what to think of that.

I called Michael Flynn and told him what had happened. I told him that I had decided not to sue after all.

That was in July of 1981.

I went back to working in the restaurant. But the anger was still there, burrowing a deep hole in my soul.

Finally, in October, I couldn't stand it anymore. I called Michael Flynn back, and said I had reconsidered. I told him the papers I had signed were signed under duress, and that I wanted to sue.

He said I would have to come out to Boston to talk to him.

I was in no condition, psychologically, to drive myself, so in October of 1981, my mother and I set out for Boston.

When we arrived at Michael Flynn's office, we were greeted with suspicion. Michael still thought I might be a "plant." But he did sit and talk with me.

He finally said that if I wanted to sue I would have to go to Florida, where there was an attorney who might represent me. The attorney's name was Walt Logan. Michael explained that the suit would have to be filed in Florida, because that was where I had last received services from Scientology.

So, we drove to Florida. For some reason, the attorneys (there were two of them) didn't want to meet us at their offices in Tampa, so we met in a hotel in Daytona Beach. I told them my story. They had me write up a complete account of all my dealings with Scientology, called a "curriculum vitae."

Then they told us just to wait until they contacted us.

My mother and I drove over to the beach in St. Petersburg and rented a motel room. And we waited. A month passed and still no word.

On Christmas Day, we bought a tiny Christmas tree and some lights and had an impromptu Christmas.

Finally, my mother had to return to Wisconsin. We looked around, and I rented a small furnished apartment in Clearwater, near a church that I had started attending.

When she left I was extremely lonely. The attorneys finally agreed to take my case, but when I asked when we would start, they seemed to be stalling me.

What I did not know at the time was that a Scientologist in California, named Ford Schwartz, was pretending to be out of Scientology, and he had told my lawyers that I was a "plant." And they

believed him.

It wasn't until a year later, when Ford finally did get out of Scientology for real, that he contacted my lawyers and told them the truth, and then the work did begin on my case.

During the year in Clearwater, I tried to put my life back together. I got a job waitressing at a small restaurant near my apartment, and I started attending a Presbyterian church. I was still feeling very suicidal, so I sought out the help of a psychiatrist. He wanted to hospitalize me.

Meanwhile, the pastor of the church had made arrangements for me to give a speech on my experiences in Scientology.

When the psychiatrist, Dr. Alfred Fireman, threatened to Baker Act me into the hospital, I protested. (The Baker Act is a Florida law designed to involuntarily institutionalize people who are suicidal.) I told him I had to give this speech. But he wouldn't relent, and I drove to the hospital and was admitted.

On the day of the speech, I tried to get a pass from the hospital but was refused. I didn't know what to do.

Fate intervened. A security man came to our floor and told me that I would have to move my car. I saw my opportunity.

I was sent with a guard down to the parking lot, but the guard was distracted by a conversation with a female worker at the hospital. He let me go to my car by myself, and I simply drove off the lot and out into traffic.

I went back to my apartment and quickly showered and changed clothes for my speech. I showed up at the church, and it was packed with people, about 1200 people, some even standing in the balcony.

I gave my speech and got a standing ovation. Afterward, I answered questions. For some of the people in the audience, this was their first glimpse into the mysterious cult that had invaded their community. The speech was a success.

On the next day, which was Sunday, a large article appeared in the paper about my speech. I had given the speech under the name of "Lee," which was my middle name, because I was still afraid of the Scientologists.

I drove back to the hospital and re-admitted myself. I didn't want to be non-compliant with Dr. Fireman. I showed them the article about my speech. I don't think they had believed my story earlier and here was proof that I had told them the truth.

The staff was a bit angry with me for running away, but I stayed in the hospital for several weeks until I was finally released.

I stayed in Clearwater for a year, but I was very lonely. I had made one friend at the church and sometimes spent time with her and her family, but I wanted to be around more people my age. Also, I wanted to go back to school.

My mother came down for a visit, and we drove over to Tampa, to the University of South

Florida. I had arranged an audition with a piano teacher there and he immediately accepted me as a student. I wanted to move to Tampa.

So we found an apartment near the campus, and my mother helped me make the move. I enrolled in the music school for piano lessons with my teacher.

I had also heard about a program at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, where you could study at home, and where you would be given credit for "life experiences." I decided to enroll in the program, and my father agreed to pay my tuition.

To support myself, I got a job working in a restaurant in the nearby mall.

But I was far from well. I was still having the panic attacks, and before long I ended up back in the hospital, this time at Northside Hospital in Tampa. It was to be the first of many stays.

In the hospital, I was put on medications and was again diagnosed as schizophrenic.

The medications made me feel tired and funny and as though I was walking through water. Every little chore, like getting up and dressed and showered in the morning required almost superhuman effort. I really didn't like the medications at all.

Sometimes, in the hospital, I would "lose time." There would be days, or parts of days, when I had no awareness of what was happening to me. I would start sentences and not remember in the middle of the sentence what I had started to say. I was lost in my thoughts. The other patients would laugh at me, and I thought this was extremely cruel. I was doing the best I could.

I had made a friend in Tampa, named Joan Capellini, who was the local volunteer who ran Cult Awareness Network in the area. Joan had befriended me after the speech I made in Clearwater.

One day I got a pass from the hospital to visit Joan at her home, and I showed her the handfuls of medications I was being forced to take.

She was angry.

"You're not schizophrenic," she told me. "You've been in a cult. Don't they understand that?"

I agreed with her. I hated the medications I was taking. So Joan and I planned my escape from the hospital.

We went back to the hospital and gathered up a few of my things, then just walked out the door. The security must have been lax that day, as it was a locked unit.

I went back to my apartment and once again tried to make sense of my life.

I managed to stay out of the hospital for awhile, but the fact was that I did need to be on some medications for my symptoms. Whenever I would have a serious panic attack, I inevitably would return to the hospital.

The panic attacks that I was having were extremely severe. When they would hit, I would become helpless, unable to do even simple tasks like dressing or taking a shower. The feelings

would become unbearably painful to the point that I would lose consciousness, and it was usually at this point that I would check myself back into the hospital. I knew I couldn't function on my own.

So life continued in this way. I would have periods at home when I would be OK, and I would be able to study and make progress on my degree. I started to take my medications out of the hospital and that helped.

The blackouts continued, however. One day Joan took me downtown to see my lawyer, and I had no memory of the day at all. She took me to a restaurant for lunch, and I ordered a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich but I don't remember ordering or eating it.

Later, I told Joan about this.

"What was I like?" I asked her.

She told me that I just seemed very suggestible. Whenever she would suggest something, I would just say OK and do it. The BLT sandwich had been her idea.

I worked hard at my schoolwork from Eckerd. I was determined to make up for lost time and get a B.A. degree. I was in the Program for Experienced Learners.

I would go to the college and pick up my box of materials for each course. There would be books to read and essays to write which I would mail in to the school.

Finally, at the end of 1984, I graduated. I finally had a piece of paper that said I was something, and somehow that helped to make up for all the time I had lost in the cult.

I continued to feel very angry, however. I just couldn't stop obsessing about the cult. If I hadn't had the lawsuit to channel some of my aggression, I think I would have gone insane from the anger. I just felt so ripped off.

People would say to me, "Why don't you just forget about Scientology and get on with your life?"

This was never very helpful.

First of all, I couldn't just make the anger disappear. I had to work through it. It was a process. And secondly, I really was trying to get on with my life as best I could.

The twelve lost years continued to haunt me. I was still not free of Scientology. The anger that bored through my soul kept me attached to it just as if I were still in it.

I longed for the time when I would actually be free -- free from the memories and the nightmares. How long would it take?

CHAPTER 13: BREAKDOWN

I was on my way back from the beach with some friends when I began to feel funny, sort of dislocated in space, not unlike some of my experiences in the cult.

Then something strange started to happen to my vision. I began to see big black spots, and soon had only about half of my vision.

These symptoms persisted throughout the week, and by Friday I knew that something was really wrong.

I had an appointment on Friday with a female psychiatrist I had just recently begun seeing. When I got to her office I told her, "I'm decompensating." I knew the feeling only too well.

It's hard to explain this feeling. The best way I can describe it is to say that normally you have a feeling of an "I", a feeling of oneness and integration, a feeling that there is someone running the show. When you decompensate, this feeling goes away and you are completely at the mercy of the terrors within.

I suppose it's some sort of regression, to a point in time before the personality has become established. All I can say is that the experience for me is unbearably painful, a kind of pain that makes me want to scream with each passing second. The anxiety within reaches an excruciating level.

After awhile the senses break down, the mind turns off under the pressure of the pain. Then come the hallucinations, delusions and other symptoms.

This is what I was beginning to experience on that Friday in Dr. Joffe's office. To her credit, she correctly assessed that I was in trouble. She called a taxi to take me to the hospital.

At that time, I did not have insurance, so I had to go to the Crisis Center, a horrible place, a place where Dr. Saenz from Northside told me he would not even put his dog. I felt the same way about the place, but I had no choice.

There is a great deal of difference, when you are mentally ill, in the care you get with and without insurance. I wish someone would do something about that. I believe that everyone in pain deserves the same level of care and treatment. In this country, that doesn't happen.

I went to the Crisis Center and sat on a chair in the waiting room. I had to wait for several hours and the chair was uncomfortable. I desperately wanted to lie down, as if that would make the pain a little more bearable.

Night came and I still hadn't been seen. Mattresses and blankets were pulled out of a closet and we were told to lie down in the hallway, and there I spent the night.

In the morning the mattresses were taken away and we were sent back to the chairs while an unpalatable breakfast of cold eggs and stale doughnuts was delivered.

Finally, I was admitted to the Crisis Center. The Center was located in an aging huge red brick structure on 30th Street in Tampa. There was a large open dayroom, and a smaller room at

the back for smoking. There were beds in the dayroom for those patients who were considered to be suicidal. Even though the smokers were confined to the room at the back, the smoke drifted out of the room and filled the whole dayroom.

Since I was new, I was assigned a bed in the dayroom, as it was not known if I were suicidal or not. As I lay on my bed, the symptoms progressed. The fear paralyzed my body. I was able to move only with great effort.

I couldn't eat. I had no appetite. The fear was too intense. My mouth became paralyzed and I started to drool. The paralysis continued to progress. I was unable to shower myself, so had to be showered by one of the aides.

The worst part for me was simply the passage of time. I would lie on my bed and count and recount the ceiling tiles in the huge room, just for something to do to take my mind off the pain.

I was terrified that the pain would never end. I remember asking one of the aides who was kinder than the others, "Will this ever end?" And each time I would ask her, she would patiently answer, "Yes," and I found that to be a great source of comfort. I always appreciated the kindness of strangers when I was sick.

The worst night came for me when I received a telephone call at the nurses' station from my mother. They called me, but I was unable to move. I couldn't get to the phone to tell her that I was all right.

At one point I went in to see the doctor, and I begged him to inject air into my veins so that I would die. The pain was that bad. Instead, he increased my medication.

This breakdown lasted for several weeks. Each day passed with a monotonous sameness. Eventually I became well enough that I began to take interest in my surroundings and in some of the other patients, and I began to have conversations with a girl my own age who was in the bed next to me. She understood what I was going through because she was going through something similar herself.

As the aide had promised, I did get better. I began to be able to take care of myself. Taking a shower unaided was a great achievement for me. Being able to eat again without the embarrassing drooling made me feel much better about myself.

My doctor made the decision to transfer me to another hospital called the Florida Mental Health Institute for further treatment. This hospital, run by the University of South Florida, was considered to be an alternative to the state hospital in Arcadia, infamously known to and feared by all mental patients in Florida.

I had to laugh when I got to FMHI. The program's director was dressed in orange robes and he had a picture of his guru, Rajneesh, around his neck. He belonged to a cult. I decided not to tell him about my experiences in Scientology. I didn't think he would understand.

The days at FMHI were highly structured. You were kept busy from the time you got up until the time you went to bed. I hated it. All I wanted to do was lie down and sleep, but resting was strictly forbidden. Rest was what I needed.

We did a series of slow exercises in the morning to a new age tape and I grew to hate these

exercises because they were so boring. The unit was locked, so then we would line up for breakfast, and be led single file, prison-style, to breakfast in the dining room in another part of the building.

After breakfast came a lecture about feelings, and the same lecture was repeated several times during the day with little variation. Then, in between the lectures we would have activities, like drawing and coloring mandalas, or making houses out of popsicle sticks. At night, there would be a relaxation period where we would all lie down on the floor and listen to the droning words from a tape recorder asking us to visualize our secret places and go to them in our minds.

I hated FMHI so much that I wanted to get well. The intense anxiety persisted, but now and then I would have a spontaneous break from it, and these were like periods from heaven, periods without pain.

These pain free periods of time gradually became longer and longer, and I was getting well. I was greatly relieved. My secret fear, and the secret fear of all patients at this hospital, was that if you didn't get well, you would be sent to Arcadia. This was what I feared the most. I had heard all sorts of horrible stories about Arcadia from patients who had been there.

Eventually, I was well enough to be released from the hospital and I returned to Dr. Joffe.

It was Dr. Joffe who suggested that I pursue a master's degree in social work. She was concerned about my future employment, and she said that a social work degree would be good anywhere in the country. I decided to apply.

In spite of all my hospitalizations, I had close to a 4.0 grade point average at Eckerd, and I had a good score on my GRE exam, so I had no trouble getting accepted into the social work program at the University of South Florida. It was a two year program. The second year, I transferred to Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, because I got a sizable scholarship, and so my degree is actually from Florida State.

Between the years 1982 and 1996, I had thirty nine nervous breakdowns similar to the one I have just described. It is a miracle that I was able to complete a two year college degree, and to this day, I don't know how I did it. The breakdowns were shorter, and I always managed to explain my absences in some way or another.

In 1986, I graduated, but I was far from ready to work at a full time job, and I knew it.

All during this time, my lawsuit against Scientology had been progressing, and in 1986, my lawyer called me in to his office in downtown Tampa. The Scientologists, he said, wanted to settle, and so did he. I was against the idea. I wanted to go to court. I had damning evidence that they had hurt me and I wanted a jury to hear my case.

Nevertheless, after one of my frequent hospitalizations, I had returned home to our summer cottage in Michigan to recuperate, when I received a large brown envelope in the mail.

"Sign it," my attorney told me over the phone, "or you will never receive a penny."

I tried to read the document, but the language was complicated legalese, and in my current state of mind, I couldn't comprehend it. But I knew if I didn't sign it, I would have to find a new lawyer, and there weren't many lawyers around who wanted to tangle with Scientology.

So I signed the paper and sent it back to my attorney.

When I returned to Tampa, I went to his office and he handed me a check for \$100,000. I didn't want the money. I know that seems strange, but I was so angry at not being able to go to court where I knew I could have been awarded a much larger settlement, that this check meant nothing to me.

I sent \$20,000 to my father, as repayment of the money he had advanced to the lawyer. At least I felt good about that, about being able to repay him.

Six months later, I went to a Cult Awareness Network conference in Boston, and while I was there I went on the local television station to give a talk about Scientology.

When I got back to Tampa, my attorney called me into his office. I was told that I had violated my "gag order."

"What gag order?" I asked him, incredulous.

It turned out that in the statement I had signed, there was a clause barring me from ever discussing Scientology with anyone outside my immediate family.

"What happens if I break the gag order?" I asked the attorney.

"Then you will have to give the money back to them," he answered.

I was still too angry about Scientology to keep quiet about it. I felt like a rape victim. I had to speak out. I had to warn others. I wanted to write a book about what had happened to me.

"Look," I told the attorney. "If I were on a beach and I saw a boat sinking off the shore and people drowning, and there was a sign on the beach that said, 'No running on the beach,' what would I do?"

The answer was simple. I would run for help. And that was how I felt about Scientology.

I decided to speak out.

I called every television and radio station in Tampa and St. Petersburg, and made dates to appear on various programs. I went on at least twenty radio and TV programs, desperately trying to warn people about Scientology.

I knew I had to give the money back. It was only a matter of time.

The idea of hiding the money was an option. "Put it in a bank in the Cayman Islands," my brother advised. "Buy jewels," someone else advised. But I was stubborn. I didn't want the money anyway. I didn't want anything from Scientology. I felt like they had bought me off, and I felt dirty.

So I simply gave the money away. First, I gave all my friends trips for two to the Bahamas. Then I paid for my sister and her family to come to Florida for Christmas.

I began to make out checks for \$1000 each to every children's charity I could find, and also to charities for organizations that worked with schizophrenics. Little by little the money disappeared.

I felt a sense of triumph. I continued to speak out over the airwaves. Now Scientology couldn't get the money back. It wasn't there. I was free to say what I wanted about Scientology.

Now I realize that what I was dealing with was simply my anger. I was in fact like a rape victim. I had to speak out to preserve my own sanity. I felt like there was something terribly wrong in Scientology, and I had to warn others any way I could.

Finally, I bought a computer, and sat down and wrote two books about Scientology. The first, "The Road to Xenu", was a novel based upon my own experiences. I published it myself. Now it is on the Internet for anyone to read.

The second book, "Understanding Scientology", was written for parents of Scientologists, explaining the organization. It is a thesis on Scientology. A friend and I sold both the books at Cult Awareness Network conventions and through the mail and eventually managed to get several thousand into circulation. I approached a publisher, but he said that not enough people were interested in the subject of Scientology to warrant publication.

But I was satisfied. I had done what I could. I had set up a non-profit corporation, the Coalition of Concerned Citizens, to maintain contact with ex-Scientologists and collect their stories as a kind of body of evidence.

After writing the books, I felt a great sense of relief. Finally the beast of anger inside of me was satisfied. I had done my part. I was exhausted from the effort. But the anger was gone.

Instead of anger, I now felt sorrow and pity. Sorrow for the souls still trapped in this insidious cult. Sorrow especially for the children of Scientology who are warehoused in cheerless buildings without books or toys or the normal trappings of childhood. I had once spent several paychecks on cartloads of coloring books and crayons and books and stuffed toys and delivered them anonymously to the Franklin Street Annex where the children were being kept.

In Scientology, children are considered to be "down-statistics" and are given little attention until they are of an age to be productive. I had heard stories from ex-members who had worked with the children, of children being fed spoiled food and milk with maggots in it.

I felt sorry for all the children who had grown up in Scientology and never known any other way of life. At least I had some life before Scientology to go back to. I wasn't surprised when Hubbard's oldest son, Quentin, committed suicide. His whole life had been Scientology.

I once met Hubbard's daughter, Diana, in the elevator at Flag. I was carrying a pile of piano music and I knew she also played the piano. We exchanged greetings. I always wondered what happened to her. Did she ever come to see the light about her father and about the cult?

I also felt sorry for my friend, Mario, who I knew would never get out of Scientology. I tried to call him once, but he was unwilling to talk to me. So much for the unconditional love inside Scientology. If you become, as I did, a feared Suppressive Person, the love disappears. Instead you become, according to Scientology policy, "Fair Game," able to be "sued, tricked, lied to or destroyed by any means."

Soon after I had started speaking out on radio and TV, I became subject to the Fair Game policy. Scientologists appeared at my apartment several times and threatened to kill me.

One night, I returned home late at night after a piano practice session at the University to find my front door wide open. I went inside. Nothing seemed out of place. But when I went in the bedroom, I saw a stream of red blood dripping down the wall, still wet. A warning, no doubt.

My employer at the mall was constantly harassed and told lies about me. He would be asked when I was due to get off my shift and by what exit I would be leaving. Scientologists came to the mall and followed me, again threatening to kill me unless I made a "deal" with them. It never seemed to end.

But I didn't care what they did to me. I would continue to fight back. Scientology was evil, and I just couldn't ignore it. People came out of Scientology, like I did, with broken lives and broken dreams. I will always continue to fight against Scientology and to get people out of it whenever I can. And keep people from getting into it. Evil ignored, just persists. Someone has to speak out.

I am happy to see that now more and more people who have been victimized by this cult are, in fact, doing just that -- speaking out. I am no longer the only one. The Internet has given a voice to this opposition, and ex-Scientologists are becoming more and more organized. And I am glad.

As for me, I needed to get back to my own life. I needed to work on my own recovery. I had to try to build something from the ashes. Now that the anger was gone, I had to get back to living.

CHAPTER 14: BACK IN THE WOG WORLD

In 1986, after I had graduated with my master's degree in social work, I got a job working as a mental health tech at the University of South Florida Psychiatry Center. I knew I was not ready for a high stress full time social work job.

I was hired by a very kind doctor who was interested in my piano playing. As a part of my interview, he took me down to a piano room in the hospital and had me play for him. He hired me to work on the adolescent unit at the hospital.

Until this time, I had thought that my life's calling would be working with troubled adolescents. Two weeks on the adolescent unit cured me of that delusion. Taking care of twenty four defiant and deviant teenagers was too great an onslaught to my own somewhat shaky psyche. I asked to be transferred to another unit.

I was transferred to the geriatric unit in the hospital, and I loved it at once. The elderly patients were actually appreciative of any attention given them, a great change from the hostile teenagers I had been working with. And there was a piano on the geriatric unit which I could play for the patients.

I worked at this hospital for almost three years. I didn't even mind the occasional "dirty work" we had to do: changing diapers or cleaning up other messes made by the patients. Many of them were like children, and had to be treated as such. This was my first exposure to working with Alzheimer's patients, and I discovered what a terrible disease it was. Patients with minds that had gone to mush.

Perhaps because I enjoyed the job so much, I was in a kind of remission as far as my own symptoms went, although I continued to take my medications. I still had a lot of anger in my system about my past before Scientology, and I tried to seek out counseling for this, but because I had no insurance I was not able to find a satisfactory counselor.

I lived in an apartment not far from the University, and had a succession of roommates, the last one being an Iranian girl whose boyfriend also lived in the apartment. When this arrangement failed, I moved into a one bedroom condo where I stayed for several years.

Suddenly, after three years at the psychiatric hospital, my symptoms re-emerged and I had another breakdown. I had to leave work. I drove around in my car, and I decided to commit suicide. I took a number of pills, but then went and turned myself in at the Northside Psychiatric Center. I was just so discouraged with my illness, I thought of suicide as my only way out of a bad situation. But at the last moment, I cried out for help.

And got it. One of the doctors at the psychiatric center sympathized with my situation, and signed the forms to have me apply for Social Security Disability. He said I needed a rest from work, and he was right.

The disability came through, and I resigned from the USF Psychiatry Center. To pass the time, I wrote my books, and started a small business selling t-shirts on campuses to raise some extra money. I spent a lot of time corresponding with other ex-cult members and collecting their affidavits. I was hoping that one day their testimonies would be helpful if there should ever be a government investigation into the activities of Scientology.

Of course, this never happened. Scientology has always managed to hide successfully behind the freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution, even though it is not a religion, but a form of enforced psychological slavery.

I was having a relationship with a man named Jack C., and for over a year we were companions. Toward the end of the year, I became pregnant, even though he had been tested and was not supposed to be able to conceive a child.

This time, I decided to keep the baby. I was very excited about being pregnant, for the first time. My mother even sent me some baby clothes. My sister lent me her maternity clothes.

Everything was going fine until one evening at the beginning of my fourth month, I started to bleed. I went to the hospital emergency room, and the bleeding increased. My hopes were shattered. There was no doubt about it, I was having a miscarriage.

The emergency room was very busy that night and I had to wait to be seen. I went into the bathroom, and I felt the tiny fetus come out of me. I looked at the tiny partially formed figure in the toilet and I started to cry. I went out to find a nurse, but no one was available, so I simply flushed the fetus down the toilet.

But at the moment that I passed the fetus, I had an unusual experience. I actually felt as if someone was leaving me. I felt as if there had been a presence there. My crying was not so much for the physical remnant that I saw in the toilet, but for the absence of this presence. I felt like I was saying goodbye to someone.

This experience changed all my ideas about abortion. I now knew that abortion was wrong, at least for me, and that I would never have another one. I knew that a child was involved, even in that early stage of the pregnancy.

I was finally seen by a doctor, but by that time everything was over. The bleeding had finally stopped, and I just wanted to go home.

Not long after that, I had another experience which related to my physical body. I was standing in my bathroom one day when I felt a grey cloud descend over me. I began to get sick. My hair started to fall out in clumps. I felt awful. I knew I had cancer.

I visited a friend in New York City for Christmas that year, and he was surprised by the amount of hair that accumulated in the shower each morning. Clearly, I was not well.

I was still brainwashed against doctors by my years in Scientology, so I decided not to seek medical help. Instead, I went to a health food store and bought a large supply of chlorophyll and started to take it with other vitamins. I also started to juice carrots and red cabbage in my juicer every day and drink that.

I came down with a terrible case of diarrhea which lasted for three days. Then, one night, I passed an ugly looking mass which I knew was my tumor. After that I began to improve. My hair started to grow back and I started to take long walks every day to get my strength back. Within three months I was back to normal and the symptoms have never recurred. But I still take vitamins as a preventative measure.

In 1987, my parents came to Florida for the winter. But it was clear that something was

wrong with my father. For one thing, he was depressed. Retirement had never suited him. I think he felt useless.

One day, I went over to their apartment and found him sitting alone in the dark, the curtains drawn. That gave me an indication of how he was feeling. He became interested for a short time in a gardening society, but soon he became too sick for even that.

As he had had so much heart trouble in the past, including two heart bypass operations, it was a surprise when the doctors made a diagnosis of cancer of the pancreas. In the spring, he went back up north with my mother, and he made a trip to the Mayo Clinic to see if they could do something about his pain.

I was still working at the psychiatry center at this time. On a Friday, I called him at the hospital in northern Michigan where he had been admitted. I didn't even recognize his voice. I knew instinctively that I should go up there at once.

I made the three day drive, and when I went into his hospital room, I didn't even recognize him, he had lost so much weight. There were two men in the room, and I couldn't tell which one was my father.

His doctor sent him home to die, and he came by ambulance to the cottage by Lake Superior where he died several days later. In the hospital, while he was still coherent, we had several conversations. He said he wished he had been a better father, and he thought we had a special family.

Those conversations changed my feelings about him forever. The anger that I had harbored against him for so long was gone. It was impossible to be angry with someone in so much pain and who was dying. That reconciliation changed my life. When he died, I felt a sense of peace.

Up until that time, my bulimia had continued to be a daily problem. I had lived with this secret for twenty seven years, and I had purged at least twenty five thousand times during those years. I don't know why it didn't kill me. I can only attribute it to the grace of God.

My last episode of bulimia occurred shortly after my father died. I think with all that anger out of my system, it was time for a change.

One day, after purging, I suffered a headache so severe, that I knew if I ever purged again, it would kill me. The headache lasted for three weeks. I never purged again and I know that I never will. Because I know that if I do it will kill me.

I will say that bulimia is a terrible disease. People might say, "Well, why didn't you just stop?" But it's not that simple. It is a disease. It can't always be stopped by an act of will. God knows, I tried often enough. It took hitting bottom for me to quit, as with other addictions.

By 1992, after five years of selling t-shirts on college campuses, I was ready to try to work again. I got a job as a home health social worker with University Community Hospital in Tampa. It was a challenging job, but I enjoyed it. I had a wonderful supervisor who supported me all the way.

I would hide my occasional bouts of shakes by getting up from whatever meeting I was in and leave the room. I took tranquilizers to help me get through the work. But I managed to function enough to get the job done. Again, I was having a temporary remission of sorts.

I worked for the hospital until 1995, when I again had another breakdown. To say that I was discouraged would be an understatement. I ended up back in the hospital twice in the summer of 1995.

When I was released from the hospital, they gave me another chance. The hospital let me come back in a part time position that they felt might be less stressful.

But it didn't work, and in November I was back in the hospital, this time at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa.

It seemed that my career as a social worker was over. I just couldn't tolerate the stress of a full time job with the pressures of working in an understaffed hospital.

I decided to reapply for Social Security Disability. The application is pending at this time.

In losing my job, I lost everything. I lost my apartment and had to pack up my things and put them in storage. I returned to Michigan to live with my mother.

In Michigan, I took a course as a nursing assistant, and began volunteering in a local nursing home. That is where I am now.

The future lies ahead. In spite of many discouragements, I must go on. I will try to live as productive a life as possible.

However, I cannot delude myself. The years of nervous breakdowns have taken their toll. I will never realize the potential that I might have had without this illness.

I can only say that through everything that has happened, my faith has been strengthened. We are on this earth for such a short time. I have gotten used to death through my work in the hospital and in the nursing home. I have no illusions of immortality.

For whatever reason, God has seen fit to bring me through the terrible disease of schizophrenia. I spent twelve years in a satanic cult trying to find a cure for my illness. In the end, I have found that there is no cure. There is only palliative help in the form of the various medications that I must take each day.

Yet, I am lucky. For a schizophrenic whose father was once told that I would never live outside an institution, I have done fairly well.

I have traveled to Europe. (I was given a two week trip to Holland, Denmark and Belgium by my brother who was at the time working in Amsterdam for a Dutch chemical company).

I have written two books. I have had my own business. And I have at various times been able to work and function in the "normal" world without people knowing there was anything wrong with me.

I have always had friends, people who have shared my journey in one way or another. And I finally have peace with my family. I enjoy my nieces and nephews and I do not regret not having children of my own. Perhaps God knew best when I had my miscarriage. It's all I can do to take care of myself, and I even need help with that. What would I do now with a child?

Above all, I have emerged from my forty eight years with a deep faith in God. He saved me from the car accident in 1966 with a fever of mysterious origin. He saved me from the cult with a miraculous deliverance. And He even, I believe, saved me from cancer.

I am grateful to be out of the cult. Many of my former friends are still in there. At least I am free. Free to live and to make my own choices, not living as a hypnotized robot controlled by the will of another, a despot who even though now dead, continues to exert his influence upon the unfortunate followers of the cult of Scientology.

The future lies ahead. And what will it bring? In this, I am in the same boat with the rest of humanity. I simply don't know, any more than you do, what lies ahead.

Do I regret the past? The answer is no, not any part of it. It has been a great learning experience. It has made me more humble. And it has brought me closer to God. Is that not what life is all about?