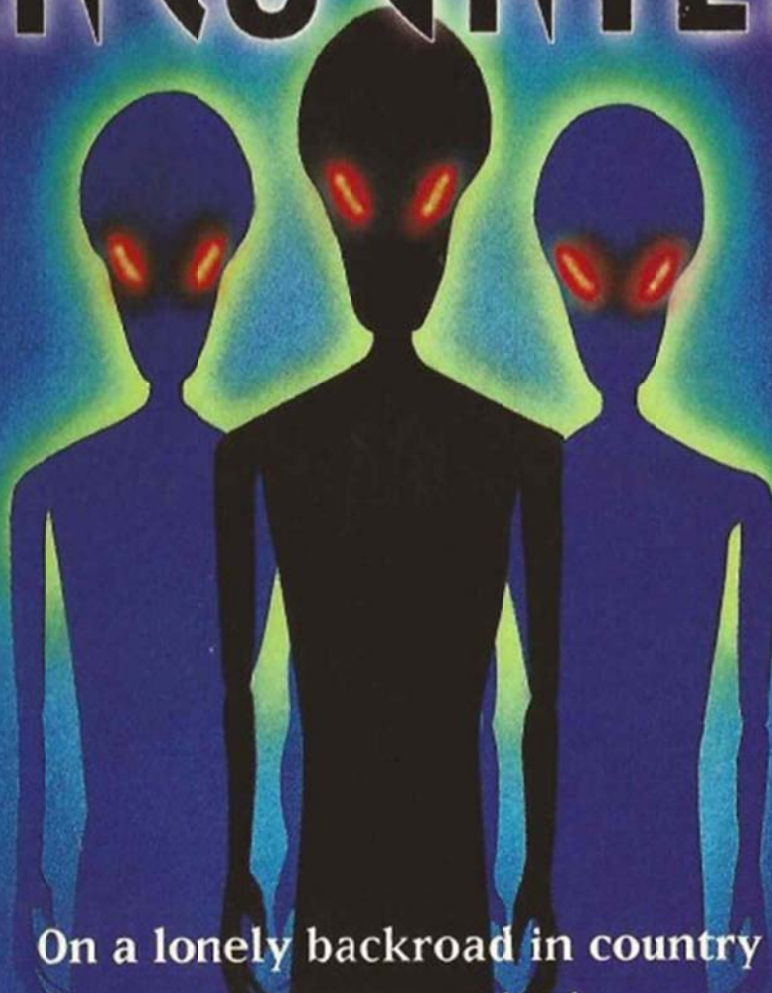


You've seen it in the 'X-Files' — now read the real thing

ENCOUNTER



On a lonely backroad in country
Australia, a young woman had an encounter
too frightening to remember — until
it became too terrifying to forget

KELLY CAHILL

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kelly Cahill is a twenty-nine-year-old mother of three who lives in Gippsland in country Victoria.

Since 1994 she has been promoting public awareness of UFO activity. Liaising with the mainstream research community, as well as with numerous first-hand 'experiencers', she also conducts her own research into the more obscure aspects of UFO phenomena.

She is currently writing a book detailing the personal accounts of other Australians who have had similar, unexplained encounters.

Some names in this book have been changed to protect the identity of those involved.

ENCOUNTER

KELLY CAHILL

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WHY selected a reason

HOW designed a way

WHERE decided the place

WHEN chose a time

WHAT saw its substance

then WHO found itself

Dedicated to the seeker of truth within each and every one of us.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the course of writing *Encounter*, many individuals stood by me with their support and encouragement. Each one has contributed to making this book become a reality, whether by means of a friendly phonecall or a more arduous task.

In particular, I would like to thank: Geraldine Seymore, Mum, Peter and Vivian Khoury, the PRA research team, Raigan and family, Linda Wright, John and Lisa Auchettl, Les and Denise Borrett, Bill Chalker, Keith Basterfield, Sherry Stumm, Duncan Roads and the staff of *Nexus* magazine, Eva and family, Matthew Favaloro, Rob Tilley, Mark Kastelein, Mae Young and Jim.

Last of all, but not least, I would especially like to thank all the members of the public who sent such beautiful letters of encouragement.

FOREWORD

by John Auchettl,

Phenomena Research Australia

In the early hours of Sunday morning, 8 August 1993, two independent groups of people travelling in two separate cars were confronted with the shattering possibility of a vision that overwhelmed logic and rational thought. So powerful was the vision seen that morning and so outrageous were the truths and possibilities, due to unknown forces or circumstances directly related to the event it was struck from the conscious mind and placed into the less tangible world of the subconscious. Nevertheless, the event was as real as these pages you hold in your hand.

On that morning, Kelly Cahill was with her husband in the car. Due to Kelly's vivid recollection of the events that followed, this extraordinary encounter came to our attention for important research on 4 October 1993.

If not for the unusual style, independence and strength of character inherent in Kelly's makeup, this event would be lost in the virtual reality realms of the mind, lost in a private but internal battle that many such witnesses face every day. It is a battle that includes constant self-examination or voices that loop over and over inside the mind, endless questions – *What is wrong with me? Something has happened to me; was it*

real? Am I losing my mind? Would I lose my job if I told anyone else about it? Who can I tell? Then, like a lightning bolt, comes the sudden and emotional realisation: *It really is true – I have had a close encounter.*

The majority of such battles are unfortunately lost. This happens when the witness suffers self-doubt, sickness and mental trauma, or when the event is repressed by the witness's own uncertainty or by the mechanics and circumstances of the encounter. In the end, the images may be locked away, never to be revealed to anyone, filed under 'restricted and private information'. But *never* does not mean *always*, and on occasions the events are released to us.

On the night of 16 September 1993, just forty days after her memory was erased, Kelly's lightning bolt struck, coming just as suddenly and with all the emotion we expect to find. The book you are about to read is the product of her revelations.

We had suggested to Kelly (as we do to most people who report such encounters to us) that she write a book as a means of therapeutic release. I have found from similar cases that putting the event down on paper eventually helps the contactee in his or her search for understanding. I call it 'therapeutic purging'. Even if nothing else is ever achieved, others may find the truth in Kelly's words. In the long run, we are left with a powerful remedy: 'a problem shared is a problem halved'.

I cannot overemphasise the importance of this close encounter. In the original research, Kelly described seeing another stationary car, and its two occupants, behind her own vehicle. This was a very important factor, and therefore the case became a high priority for research.

What happened to the others in this car, and who were they? Our search started with a detailed, thorough investigation and a number of specially worded advertisements in local papers. On 17 November 1993 I received a telephone call. We had struck 'pay dirt' – the other car with its two female and one male occupants were now known.

With the realisation that we had not only found three other possible witnesses to support Kelly's description but had also established a non-biased and independent link that offered wonderful possibilities, we could now cross reference and correlate the case.

How can you or I accept such data as fact when presented with such anonymous and anecdotal evidence? Granted, in most cases, seeing is believing, and we all want to know the truth. On talking to the witnesses,

one soon believes that they did see something! But is that good enough for us? Did they see all that they now report, or is it just prefabricated illusions, created in influenced minds; or hallucination? We really don't know. The evidence is a mixture of physical and verbal data, somewhat disjointed and always elusive. Yet to the UFO researcher it is real and needs our attention.

The first hurdle we face in all such subjects is the question of health. When we have been presented with mental or emotional problems beyond the range of our mandate, we always assign the case to professional medical practitioners. Our research policy is a policy of investigation! There is no substitute for good medical and psychological assistance. When we are satisfied that there is no problem, we are then presented with the witness's supposition that 'We are not alone!'

Academics from all levels of research and discipline are confident that the universe is full of life. There are, statistically, 1,000,000,000,000,000 stars in the visible universe that are orbited by planets that could support life. The only limiting factors that scientists employ to literally 'crash' the UFO theory are the vast distances in the universe and a lack of a future-technology paradigm to traverse them.

Each researcher finds that one of the biggest problems in his or her research is the problem of what has been called 'hidden data'. Only about one in seven (14 per cent) of those persons who witness UFOs ever make a report. This percentage falls away dramatically to about six in 500 (1.2 per cent) when the encounter involves an entity. Obviously, from a scientific point of view, the test sample is just too small.

So what happens? Why do we lose this hidden data? From our research in Australia, the answers are wide and varied: fear of social ridicule, fear of losing one's standing in the community or at work and the fear of losing one's job are some of the reasons why so many cases go unreported.

Often this hidden data is written off as lost knowledge. However, no matter how unusual, bizarre or strange it may seem to the orthodox thinker, it is data that needs to be made available to the public.

I am the first to admit that such data is a labyrinth of paradoxical accounts, but with an open mind and an effort to listen, one soon realises that this is data worthy of belief. If not, then at least it warrants examination.

It is only now, in this age of information, that such case studies can be published without all the problems and discrimination they would have attracted previously. And our data base is overflowing. Every year we receive a vast number of current encounters to research. What is going on? This is the new epoch. To neglect its importance is to deny a fundamental truth. To discard these accounts is to stumble at the edge of some unknown and possibly dangerous event that is still in its infancy.

Whatever the future holds may be a little clearer because, in the author's personal and individual way, this book does just that . . . it opens up the debate.

July 1996

PREFACE

This book is not a work of fiction. It is based on actual events, and the story is as factual as my ability to tell it. It concerns my encounter with something which, at this early stage of scientific study into the field, can only be termed an 'alien' presence. By 'alien' I do not necessarily mean lifeforms from outer space; merely the physical manifestation of something other than what we are accustomed to accepting as part of our own conditioned reality.

There are many interpretations regarding these bizarre phenomena, each of them as credible or incredible as the next. No-one who is seriously involved with pursuing or researching the subject can claim to have discovered the actual truth behind these extraordinary occurrences, even though the documented instances of such events are far more numerous than the average person might assume.

The reason for this apparent lack of knowledge in the public arena is due mainly to the insistence on privacy by those personally involved. No-one likes to submit themselves to public ridicule, which is so often the natural human reaction to experiences such as these.

This general attitude, however, is exactly what has kept us in the dark ages when it comes to gaining a greater understanding of the more profound mysteries of human existence.

Rather than hiding the truth behind the fear of unacceptability, I have chosen to speak out in the hope that others will find the courage to do the same. Repression is not the key to knowledge – public recognition has the unique quality of ensuring that an issue (whatever it might be) be opened up for further investigation. Without public awareness of just how widespread the phenomenon actually is, no response is necessary, and the problem simply remains unaddressed.

In Australia, one of the greatest inhibitors of public knowledge is the fact that the qualified professionals researching this area are not willing to risk their reputations or careers either. To date, Ufology has not been

accepted as a mainstream science; at best, it is considered to be a 'fringe' science. Yet, 'science' is exactly what Ufology will have to become, especially if humanity wishes to progress. Has our knowledge of the universe become so assured that we now see ourselves equal to God in understanding? How long can we turn a blind eye to the truth, just because things don't fit into our ideology or interpretation of the universe?

Even when Ufology does become accepted as an authentic and necessary subject of study, I am afraid that mainstream science as it currently stands does not possess the pioneer vision to fully establish a concept encompassing the entire scope of the UFO enigma.

Certainly, the physical aspect of UFO activity needs to be addressed but, equally, the metaphysical aspect needs to be considered as well, in order to understand the phenomena as a whole. Like Archangel Gabriel, the new breed of scientists will need to stand with one foot on the land – the other on the sea.

I hope this book will serve to inspire many more people in the professions of psychiatry, psychology, quantum physics and other areas to break away from mainstream acceptability and become leaders in a field that deserves far more consideration than it currently receives.

I also hope that the physical evidence surrounding this case will promote even wider interest, encompassing the truth of a spiritual or metaphysical world intrinsically linked with our own human reality, for this unique encounter is just as surely a product of intangible activity as are the down-to-earth physical data and ground traces generated.

As for any readers who believe that they too have experienced a similar encounter yet have felt inhibited about coming forward, rest assured, there are some very competent professionals available who can make a serious, non-judgmental investigation, while still ensuring privacy.

As well as research resources, there are also a number of support groups and counselling or therapy services that look after the emotional and psychological wellbeing of a growing number of ordinary men, women and children who have experienced the trauma of abduction or a close encounter.

If this phenomenon is ever to be taken seriously by the scientific community or, for that matter, the general public, desperately needed are individuals who have had these experiences and are willing to break the code of silence and speak the truth.

Contact addresses for various organisations are provided in the appendix at the back of this book. Or, for more information, you can write to me on:

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Kelly Cahill
July 1996

Those who have presumed to dogmatise on Nature as on a well-explored subject, whether they have done so from self-confidence or affectedly and in a professorial manner, have done very great harm to Philosophy and the Sciences. For, so far as they have succeeded in gaining credit, they have been instrumental in stifling and breaking off inquiry.

From Sir Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*,
Published in 1620

CHAPTER 1



'Come in,' I said as I pushed the front flyscreen door open for my visitor. 'I thought you were one of my kids at the door.'

The woman on the porch lifted her sunglasses from her head and smiled. 'You must be Kelly Cahill.'

'And you must be Wendy Ryder,' I replied, trying to feel enthusiastic about my part in the ritual introduction. I was smiling, but I was not amused. I wasn't looking forward to this interview. I didn't know this American woman. I didn't know what I might expect from her and, emotionally, I was feeling vulnerable and exposed.

Do your duty, I reminded myself. It's only for three days, four at the most, then she'll be gone and you can get back to the business of living.

'Nice place you have here, Kelly,' she said, adhering to the standard form. She was tall, her hair was brown and shoulder length, and she was wearing jeans and a sweater.

She had a slightly Mediterranean look about her, and there couldn't have been a greater physical contrast between us. I was half a head shorter than she, easily ten years younger, blonde, with blue eyes, and pale by comparison. I looked at her brown eyes and they seemed friendly. Mine, I knew, were probably sharp with distrust.

'Make yourself at home.' I showed her to the lounge room, then ducked out to the kitchen and left her standing at the front window. She could occupy herself for a moment while I fixed coffee.

'I'm sorry I'm late,' she called out.

The weather was good that day, and I knew she would be staring out at the hills, which were dotted with sheep and lush green from recent rain.

I'm proud of that glorious view, and my out-of-town visitors often say how much they envy me. I live in Gippsland, in East Victoria, and this place is as verdant and idyllic as Ireland.

My home is in a town where a horse could get you anywhere you care to go. But instead, mud-encrusted cars crawl up and down the quiet streets, ferrying children to and from the town's tiny school. On any given Sunday morning, groups of children can be seen playing on the footpaths, oblivious to the dozens of protective adult eyes peering out from behind curtained windows.

Tentatively, my visitor poked her head through the kitchen doorway. 'The directions you gave . . .'

'City people often have trouble,' I said, trying to be nice as I tipped fresh coffee granules into the percolator.

'I got a little lost, leaving town, but I know the way now,' she said. She stepped through the doorway and set two bottles of wine on the kitchen benchtop. 'Look, I brought something for us. We're going to be a while. I hope you like red.'

I do, and I grudgingly conceded what a thoughtful gesture it was on her part. Abruptly, she excused herself so that she could bring her briefcase in from the car.

The flyscreen door banged, and I came out of the kitchen. I watched her head bob past the window and started walking around the front room in silent reproach. *Why did I say yes? Why did I say I would see her? I don't feel comfortable with this!*

But by the time she returned I already had the coffee set out. The requisite forms of politeness are my proven refuge. Before my encounter, my life was as calm and serene as my surroundings but since, it's been characterised by endless intrusion. I have found that civility is the best method for coping.

We sat down on separate sofas, and she asked if I minded her recording our sessions. Straight down to business, this one: she moved fast, just as you'd expect from someone living in Australia's largest city. I wasn't exactly slow, but I'd lived with my story for three long years and, although it remained as much of a mystery as ever, I'd told it many times and expected no surprises.

I watched her confident preparations. My visitor proceeded as if she really believed that she would listen to what I had to say and come to some

easy conclusion. Regardless, because I am an honest person, I would do no less for her than I had done for any of the others. I would lay the pieces out, and she could try to put them together.

‘Is it alright if I record our conversation?’ she asked again.

‘Oh, of course.’ I made a dismissive gesture with my hand. ‘Go right ahead.’

She fumbled around in her bag for bits and pieces. Between sips of coffee, she unpacked her tape recorder and set it up.

I wanted her to talk, to chat idly while she was getting things ready, because I wanted to delay our commencement. I hate businesslike attitudes, and I’ve always felt much more comfortable speaking to someone on a personal level.

‘Gippsland is spectacular in the autumn,’ she said. ‘I’ve been to this region before, a number of times, but never to interview someone about a UFO encounter! I was thinking on the long drive from Melbourne – with country as big as this, I suppose anything can happen and most people wouldn’t even know.’

‘You’d be surprised how much gets seen and never reported.’

‘Country people keep to themselves,’ she replied sagely, and I shrugged. Country people, city people – there isn’t much difference when it comes to UFOs.

‘You know,’ she said bluntly, ‘I’m pretty new to this UFO business.’ She laughed. ‘You’ll forgive me if I make any faux pas along the way, won’t you?’

‘Of course.’

‘I’m a journalist with a background in technology, but I’ve always been fascinated by unusual and unexplained events.’

Her tape recorder was now set up, and she did a sound level check. Happy, she pressed the play and record buttons.

‘Eumemmerring Creek Encounter. Interview with Kelly Cahill. Tape One. Thank you for seeing me, Kelly,’ she said, in the seasoned journalist’s interview style.

‘Anything for research,’ I replied with a weak laugh. ‘I hope you learn something from this that will help you make up your mind.’

She smiled. ‘I expect I will. You’ve got quite a story!’

Her words seemed just a little too exuberant, bordering on the patronising. But perhaps it was only my understandable sensitivity that

was amplifying things. I'd been forced to put up with so much preconceived judgment from amateur 'experts' that I'd started expecting it from everyone.

'You know the basic outline of my encounter?' I asked heavily.

'Yes,' she nodded. 'Nice brew by the way.'

Americans. There's just something about them you either love or hate. They won't permit ambivalence in others, and yet I clearly detected it in her. She seemed unconvinced about what she had heard of my story.

'Do you believe it?'

'Well . . .' she prevaricated. 'I'd heard rumours on the grapevine that your story was unique. Your letter gave some of the highlights.'

She tapped her pencil on her pad, then sat back on the sofa. 'The thing I find most interesting about your story is the fact that there were other independent witnesses to the main event. That would definitely have to be a first, and it makes your case very special. I guess quite a few debunkers will be choking on that for a while!'

She laughed, but then saw my expression and knew that I was waiting for a straight answer.

'Do I believe it? Do I believe that you not only saw UFOs, but also had an altercation with their occupants?' She tossed her pencil aside and spoke firmly. 'I believe something dramatic has happened to you, certainly,' she replied at last. 'But whether or not you actually saw aliens is something else.'

'So you think it could all be my imagination.' It was a statement, and it came out dry.

She started to frown and I suspected that I had been too confrontational. Too bad, I thought, because I was heartily sick of the suggestion that I might have made all this up.

'Let me set you straight, right now,' I said, without raising my voice.

I assured myself that I had her complete attention, and then lifted the hem of my dress to just above my knees. I turned my left leg to the side, and pointed my finger to a spot on the outside of my calf.

'Do you see that mark?'

Slightly surprised, she looked at where my finger was pointing.

'I don't see any mark,' she said cautiously.

'Fortunately I heal very well, but not that well. Put your finger there and press.'

'What am I looking for?' she asked, touching my calf gingerly. 'Is this one of the scars left after the UFO abd – ?'

I interrupted her. 'You'll know when you feel it. Press hard.'

She did, and after a moment she suddenly fell backwards. 'Jesus, you've got a hole in your leg, under the skin! They did that to you?'

In contrast to her alarm, I was quite calm. 'This is obviously your first interview with an abductee.'

I continued without giving her a chance to recover her smugness.

'That mark was left on me as a result of the Lalor incident, which I will tell you about in due course. There is another hole in exactly the same place on my other leg. I woke up with both of them one morning, with no idea where they came from. They were purple to begin with. Only later did I begin to realise how they could have got there.'

Her mouth was slightly ajar, and I felt a sense of satisfaction.

'I have another mark, below my navel. It's faded quite a bit, but it was very pronounced at first. It's an equilateral triangle, measuring one centimetre on each side, and quite unnatural. It looked like a burn when it first appeared and the skin had also been punctured.'

I showed her the place where part of that scar still remained. 'I'll bear these marks on my legs for the rest of my life, but there are marks far worse than these – on the inside.' A slight twinge of remembrance caught me off guard: the past was so 'un-dead'. No, I told myself, this interview has to go as smoothly as possible. I had to try to explain my experience from the perspective of a detached observer – it was safer that way.

The woman's eyes were wide open. 'I've never seen anything like that before!' she said, staring at me. 'Those holes in your calves – it's as if someone took an apple corer to you.'

'It's like a biopsy.'

'Yes, of course, a biopsy. How did they get there?'

'That's the question, isn't it? How did they get there? Who made them, and why?'

'I see,' she said quietly. She lit a cigarette, and so did I.

I scrutinised her carefully through the smoke. 'Are you ready to hear my story with an open mind?'

'Definitely,' she whispered.

'Good, then I think we can begin.'

Before all this started, there was nothing unusual about my life. Nothing whatsoever. I was a completely ordinary person; a devoted housewife, a mother of three, and with no great education. My life until then was plain and simple. On a scale of ordinariness I would have been a 5.0, dead average. The Australian Bureau of Statistics could have used me to calibrate their meters.

For the record, my name is Kelly Cahill. I was born in Brisbane, Queensland in 1967, and I'm twenty-nine years old now. I was adopted at birth, and when I was very young my adoptive parents took me to Papua New Guinea, where my father worked for the Australian government before Independence. We went back to Queensland when I was eight.

At sixteen I went looking for adventure and caught a Greyhound bus to Melbourne. I never returned from the adventure, as I met Andrew when I was seventeen. He was working the night shift at a 7-Eleven store and something twigged – I fell madly in love with him, and we were married within a couple of years.

I had children, just as I always dreamed I would; we had our close friends; and we were happy, although not perfectly. We eventually decided that the city wasn't for us, and in 1992 we bought this house. The country suited us much better, and some of the best times of my life were had right where I'm sitting now.

Like all couples, Andrew and I had our 'issues' to deal with. We got married against his family's wishes – his family is Muslim, as he is. They consider all Westerners to be Christians, unless otherwise specified, as they tend to see religion as an indivisible part of culture and society. It took me a while to adjust to the difficulties that this presented because religion played no part in my early upbringing, except for the year or two when I went to the Sunday school down the road, which had become a social gathering ground for the local kids. My parents had no time for it. My father used to refer to God as 'that peanut up there in the sky', and I felt the same way until just before my conversion.

I became a true Christian when I was about twenty, when Katrina, my eldest, was a year old. I was looking for something more in life besides creature comforts, and I met some nice people from a small Pentecostal church nearby. I started going to their services and came to believe.

Strangely enough, my becoming a Christian did not upset Andrew too much – I suppose he thought this was better than atheism. But his family put a lot of pressure on me to become a Muslim: that was the expected thing for the wife of an Islamic man.

I never did become a Muslim. I explained it to them like this: ‘A person’s faith is something that cannot be changed, because it comes from within you, as a part of yourself. If you truly believe in something, how can you just drop it and then replace it with something else?’ They didn’t like this, but they gradually came to understand it.

From the time when I became a Christian, right up to the encounter, my life ran on holy rails! My entire outlook revolved around my spirituality, and all of my expectations were Christian in nature. I distinctly recall that when I first saw those strange lights, I was convinced that I had a direct conversation with God coming my way. But afterwards, I believed that I’d had a clash with the Devil.

The night that shook my world was 7 August 1993. I was twenty-five years old. When I eventually remembered what had happened, the overriding thing I felt was a sense of searing terror. And after that, grief. Grief because I lost my sense of security, and eventually my husband, as a result of it. Although Andrew was with me during the encounter, I think he didn’t cope with it as well as I seem to have done. At first he didn’t deny what he’d seen, but he claimed to have no conscious recollection of many of the events that I remembered. As for what he did see, he chose to forget it. A great deal of strain was placed on our marriage, and by June 1995 we were divorced.

I also lost my simple Christian faith because it was ultimately inadequate for explaining what occurred that night. Before we go on with the story, I want you to understand this about me – I suffered a terrible trauma as a result of that loss, and the trauma almost undid me.

Only those who’ve had their faith destroyed can understand what a dreadful experience this is. I still believe in God, but not in the way that I was taught by orthodox Christianity. My faith is fluid now; it’s no longer crystallised into a formal religion. I now consider God to be an expression of life – the seams of the box in which I kept Him have burst, and He’s now there when I need Him, not just when I am living within the context of organised religious rules.

My encounter rattled me to my very foundations. The unexplainable has a way of doing that to people, especially if it falls on you without warning, and catches you without a suitable frame of reference.

I knew nothing about UFOs before I saw one: the subject simply wasn't within my sphere of interest. I was interested in God and babies and cooking; I was interested in how to make a better home, and how we, my husband and I, could provide a better future for our children. I wouldn't have crossed the street to get more information about the subject. Like everyone else, I saw *ET* and thought the movie was cute, but I'd never read a book on UFOs, and wasn't likely to. If anything, I was one of those people who laughed at stories of 'Little Green Men in Flying Saucers'. Inwardly, I would have poured scorn on anyone who claimed to believe in them, although I'd have remained outwardly polite. And as for imagining that I might someday run into one – forget it, the thought never entered my head.

Someone once said that I was the least likely person in the world to have had such experiences. They're quite right: I can find no aspect or trait in myself that would recommend me for selection. This is borne out by what I now know of the strangers who were with me on the night it happened. They were ordinary people, just like myself. A business manager, his wife, and a health professional saw exactly what I saw. Why them? Why me? If there is a reason for it, a pattern somewhere, I have yet to find it. And although I and others like me often subsequently recall past experiences that suggest a hidden history of contact, this still does not explain the connection.

The way things work, a UFO encounter could have happened to you, and you might not even realise it. Think about that the next time you're driving down a dark and lonely country road.

'The other witnesses,' Wendy said, grabbing her pad. 'Can you give me their names and addresses? I'd like to look them up later.'

I got up and went into my study to find my address book.

'I can't give you their details, because I don't have the information,' I said when I returned. 'And even if I did, I couldn't. They've chosen to not speak publicly at this stage. But I can give you the name and number of one of the researchers, who might give you some assistance.'

She jotted down the details.

'So these people really exist,' she said when she looked up again.

'Absolutely,' I assured her. it's a matter of public record now.'

'And what's their story?'

'We'll come to that at the proper time. If you do succeed in getting in touch with them, they'll tell you what they saw, and you can compare it with what I've told you. You'll find that it matches at dozens of points – too many to be attributable to coincidence.'

She grinned and flapped the pad in the air. 'Total strangers who can confirm your story. That's the distinguishing feature about your case that grabbed my attention in the first place. The presence of another group of independent witnesses is a spectacular bonus.'

I nodded. 'The really fascinating part of their story is not merely that their particulars matched mine, but that they remembered things I didn't. I've recently seen their drawings of the event, and there is no mistake that their drawings are of the same thing. But they included fine details that I must have missed, and these later matched evidence collected in the field.'

'By the researchers?' she asked.

'Yes.'

'Mum?' a voice called from the door. I turned around to see my seven-year-old, Brian. 'When's dinner going to be ready?'

Wendy stood up to stretch. 'Hello,' she said brightly, addressing my child.

'Come in darling.'

Brian sat on my lap. 'This is Wendy. She's come to help Mummy with her work.'

'Hello,' my son said shyly. 'What's for dinner, Mum?'

'This might be a good time for a break,' Wendy said, and stopped the tape.

'Apricot chicken. How does that sound, Brian?'

'Good.' He wriggled out of my arms, and I got up as well.

'Go and get your brother and sister, tell them it's time to come in,' I called out to the fleeing figure. I turned back to Wendy. 'You'll stay for something to eat?'

'If it's not too much trouble. I like apricot chicken very much.'

I smiled.

This is much better, I thought as we went into the kitchen. No UFOs, no soul-searching, just cooking and plain old-fashioned living. I felt at home with myself again.

I put some rice on the stove, and ordinary household chores interrupted our conversation.

CHAPTER 2



My nine-year-old daughter, Katrina, sat in the place where her father used to sit. I suddenly became aware of this, and I didn't know why it had struck me. Then it came to me: her future might have been the same as my past if her Dad had stayed with us. In that moment, I realised that the relationship between Andrew and I had probably ended at just the right time. Like her brothers, Katrina deserved a fresh start, in a home without fighting, without the madness that had characterised the last days of my marriage to her father.

For about a year after Andrew left, the kids had a hard time of it. They were not being destructive, but things, 'accidents', just happened, and without their father's presence they often adopted his role, reminding me of my obligations as a wife and mother. I imagine that, as bad as things were, he still had his place in their scheme of things. Like losing an arm or a leg, I suppose you adjust and sometime, years later, you might occasionally forget. But there is inevitably a clumsy period, an uncomfortable time in which things are not yet coordinated and nothing runs smoothly. It had all been worth it, however. The peace, security of love, and trust that had developed between the four of us was priceless.

'Brian, come to the table . . .'

'In a second, Mum. I'm showing Wendy something. Wendy! Look at this!'

Brian was doing splits and cartwheels in the dining room. No sooner had the kids been introduced to our visitor than they began showing off their talents and skills. I didn't know where Brian got it from, or who had been teaching him, but he could do things you wouldn't believe. At seven, he didn't seem to know what gravity was. He jumped and landed in the

splits for the third time, then he did another cartwheel, one-handed this time.

Wendy was transfixed by the display.

'After dinner, I'll show you the only trick I know,' she said.

That got him. He sidled up to the table and slid into his seat. I took his plate.

'What trick is that?' he asked.

'After dinner,' she promised.

James stared at Wendy as if she would disappear if he blinked. His eyes were large, like most four year olds, but he liked Wendy because she had given him her attention very early on. He insisted on sitting directly across from her.

'Eat, James,' I was forced to tell him. He dipped his fork and scooped up his rice with one eye on her the entire time.

'Are you going to stay with us, Wendy?' Brian asked.

'I have a motel room in town,' she replied.

'We have a bedroom in the back of the house,' he said, and started to climb out of his chair to show her.

'Sit down Brian, there's plenty of time for that later. Wendy's going to be here for a few days.'

Katrina reached for another piece of chicken, and I got up to fetch a bottle of wine. Wendy and I each had a glass with our meal, and the children chattered away.

I looked at them anew, as I'd often done as they were growing up. I was proud of them and knew that they represented an irresistible anchor to reality. Nothing that I had ever seen or experienced could compare with them. They were literally the greatest miracle I would ever know, and that was not to make less of my encounter.

My children, my life. When I looked at them, I knew that there was an overriding order in things.

'Time to wash up,' Katrina said cheerfully when dinner was done. I beamed with pride: she didn't even have to be told. She cleared away the plates and, as if a trigger had been depressed, the boys sprang from their chairs and raced off to carry on with whatever they were doing before the meal.

'You haven't shown me the rest of your house,' Wendy said.

'Haven't I? I'm sorry. It's still light outside: would you like to look at the garden?'

'Great idea,' Wendy said, her voice mellow with the wine.

Brian overheard this and flew into the dining room. 'What's that trick you were going to show me?' he asked.

'Ahh,' she said. 'Okay, have you got a ruler?'

A ruler was produced instantly.

'Watch carefully,' she said. 'I'm going to balance this on my nose.'

'No way!' the boys said, and Katrina stopped what she was doing at the sink.

Wendy placed the ruler on the end of her nose and balanced it there for about a minute.

'Oh man!' Brian and James cried. 'Let me try!'

They had a go, but they couldn't do it. Wendy explained how it was done, but they would need to practise. She then spent a minute or so encouraging Brian to try walking on his hands. He did better at this, and from his preliminary attempts at it I knew he would have it licked within a couple of days. I expected to see him walking around the house on his hands in no time.

'You should be teaching your brother and sister how to do these things, Brian,' Wendy gently chided at the end of his demonstration. Katrina shook her head. It wasn't for her: she knew she was just a little too big for that. James, on the other hand, bravely said that he would at least try. Brian agreed to teach him, and Wendy and I went out to the front garden.

'You have a lovely home and lovely children,' Wendy said as we stepped on to the front lawn.

'Thank you.'

'If I may, I'll give you my first impression.'

'What's that?' I asked, uncertain of what was coming next.

'Well, I think you have such an idyllic life. It's so peaceful in this little town, and anyone would have to be mad to think you would invent a story like this.'

I smiled. 'Because it's obviously going to disrupt things. Yes, I know. I sweated on that fact for weeks before I told a soul what I'd seen. After all, I moved here from Melbourne to get away from things, to live a quiet life.'

'That's what I mean,' she replied. 'You could have just kept quiet about it.'

'I'm not that kind of person.'

Wendy frowned, for she didn't yet know me well enough to appreciate the significance of what I had just said. Noticing the look on her face, I offered further explanation.

'I'm the kind of person who doesn't give up easily. To understand me, you need to understand my drive and determination to solve the mystery of "why".

'That's how I am. I have to know things. I can't change that about myself. Everyone who knows me recognises this aspect of my personality. They always warn me of how dangerous my various pursuits are, but I think I'm tough enough to survive.

'To me, truth is more important than anything else. If I know that the truth is being repressed or hidden, the fighter instinct comes out in me. I don't know who it was that said, "Truth is worth dying for", but he and I would have made a great team!'

I said no more, letting her appreciate the flowers, the fresh air and the sunset that we shared.

I thought then about how I would relate my story to her. It would be so easy to serve her up the potted and prepackaged version, complete with all my conclusions. It would be simple, except that I didn't have any such conclusions. I had no explanation of 'what it all means' to give her, only what I knew — which was what I saw, what I felt, and the effects that these events consequently had on my life. I could give her those, but the questions they posed meant that she might end up as uncertain as I about what had occurred, and I feared that I might sound as if I was being deliberately cryptic.

Each piece of the story was a clue, and I would relate the story by presenting these clues in the order in which I received them. In the end she would have at least as much as I have, short of the pain — a profound mystery that would probably never be solved. I could only wish her well and do my best.

'Coffee?' I asked when we were back inside.

'Yeah, for sure.'

As I went into the kitchen to put the kettle on, Wendy called out: 'Should I make us a fire?'

'If you want,' I said vaguely, but it wasn't that cold. I was trying to anticipate what our next 'session' would be about, and deciding where I should begin my story.

I listened to the sounds coming from the lounge room, and Wendy's banging around reminded me of the noises that my husband used to make when he was lighting a fire. He was always cold. He needed a fire going all the time. When I made this seemingly innocent connection, I realised where I needed to begin.

I set the coffee down, rearranged the ashtrays, and looked at the kitchen clock. We had roughly an hour before the kids had to go to bed.

'Are you all set?' I asked.

'Yes. I've got a fresh tape.'

We sat down.

'I gave you some background about myself, a bit about my religious beliefs and how they were woven into my lifestyle, and I told you a little about my husband. Now I want to tell you about something that happened to me in July 1993, about a month before the main encounter.

'This was the first thing that occurred in this house and which, at the time, I clearly regarded as being supernatural. Later, as the whole picture started to fall into place, I linked it to UFOs. But even when it happened, without thinking about UFOs at all, it was unquestionably strange. This is as good a place as any to start.'

'I'm all ears,' she said cheerily.

'Before I tell you this, however, I feel the need to explain something. It's simply this – when these things happened to me, I was a Christian, a "true believer". Christianity has nothing to do with UFOs, I know, but I either tell you the story in its proper context, as I perceived it at the time, or I remove all reference to religion and give you the potted version. Which would you prefer?'

'Give it to me straight, as you lived it.'

'Thank you. Because if I filter it, much of the story will make no sense. You simply won't be able to understand my reactions to things. If it sounds crazy to you at times, or it offends you, then remember that you have chosen the more intimate and honest version.'

'I'll bear that in mind,' she said.

I relaxed somewhat, and began the story.

'I found that the longer I was a Christian, the more intent I was on getting to know God. I wanted to get closer to Him and become perfect: "Aspiring to be a saint", I call it. In a way, I look back on that now and see that my relationship with God was very much like my relationship with my husband. I loved Andrew, and I wanted to be perfect for him. I loved God, and wanted to be perfect for Him. These were my prime motivations.

'In pursuit of perfection in the eyes of God, I began spending more and more time in the back bedroom of our house. I would closet myself in there for hours on end, praying, reading the Bible, and seeking His presence.'

I got up and grabbed one of my old Bibles to show her. 'This is one of the Bibles I used while I was studying in that back room. As you can see, virtually every page is heavily marked with coloured pen, and my notes are in the margins. I would start at the beginning and work through towards the end, and when I literally filled one Bible up with my notations I'd start on another one. I marked several like this.'

Wendy was suitably amazed. I put that Bible back and picked up another one, the special one. 'This Bible has next to no markings in it, except for the first few pages.'

'Why not?' she asked, inspecting it.

'I'll tell you why in a moment. It's quite important.'

She set the Bible down.

I stayed in the room for about six weeks straight, hardly eating, hardly coming out except to go to the bathroom, or to deal with some minor family emergency. My husband looked after the kids while I was doing this because, oddly enough, he didn't mind.

Andrew had an abiding respect for divine things. He didn't go to the mosque, or pray three times a day, although he did observe Ramadan. He wasn't greatly religious, but he brought God into his life out of habit, in the way that some people do. He added 'Bis'm'Allah', 'God Willing', to everything he said regarding future intentions, and he made me say it too. Andrew often pulled me up for neglecting to say that in my day-to-day speech.

I don't think he minded me spending so much time in the back room because he recognised in his own funny way that something holy was

going on between God and me, and that consequently it was his duty to make it possible for me to continue.

One night, in the third week, I was in the room praying my heart out to God for some indication that He really cared about me, and truly accepted me. I was doing this hour after hour, and then I said a peculiar thing: 'Why can't you be closer to me? I want you here! I want your pure presence.'

As soon as I said this, an incredible thing happened. I suddenly felt a breathtaking, overwhelming presence in the room. A surge of energy washed over me, which caused my heart to race, my skin to flush, and my hair to stand on end. I felt a tingling sensation all over my body. That might not seem like much, but my heart was pounding so hard that I was on the verge of blacking out, and I stayed like that for fifteen minutes solid. I was unable to move, or speak, or get up: I was afraid that I would have a heart attack if I did move.

During that fifteen minutes, it seemed to me that something was being poured into my head, like a high-speed data transmission. I couldn't hear it, or at least I couldn't catch what was being transmitted, but there was no denying that it was going on, and I stayed there in this strange altered state until it was finished. When it finally left me, I had the clear idea that my prayer had been answered by God's showing me a small taste of His power.

I couldn't handle it. It seemed that a point was being made – if I couldn't take even that little demonstration, then how could I possibly handle His full presence? I got the message.

After that realisation, about a minute or so later I suppose, I found I could get up. I stood, but my whole system was in shock. My entire body had been seriously affected, and the nearest thing I can think of to describe it is the shock of childbirth. My knees were like jelly, and all the colour had drained from my face. I was experiencing the symptoms of real physical shock, and when I finally looked in the mirror I almost didn't recognise myself.

The obvious question is why I connect this to UFOs, if at the time I was sure that the event was related to God? The answer lies mainly in the presence of the energy that I felt going through my body. It was very similar to the energy I experienced during the encounter, except that my interpretation of it was totally different.

When I came out of the back room Andrew saw the state I was in and was alarmed. He made me sit down, and asked me what was going on. I didn't realise how bad I looked.

When I explained what had happened in the back bedroom, Andrew told me that he had seen a flash of light fill the night sky, from horizon to horizon, but there was no thunder or lightning. He connected it with what was going on with me in the room, and it frightened him.

But I wasn't really frightened. I just prayed that God wouldn't do that to me again, not ever in my entire life!

At the time, we both regarded the experience as something supernatural, and neither of us connected it to UFOs. To Andrew and me, it was definitely a 'God thing'. Now, however, I know that it wasn't quite so straightforward.

'I'm giving you the whole story, one piece at a time, so form your own conclusions, Wendy. As more strange things happened to me, the less firm my old conclusions became. In the total context, that experience certainly seems related to the UFO experience, but I will not mock the divine. There are some things that I just won't form a firm conclusion about.'

'Did anything else happen?' she asked.

'Yes, my Bible went missing; the unmarked Bible that I showed you. I couldn't find it anywhere, and I *never* take my Bibles out of the house. I looked for this specific one constantly, high and low, because it was the only one I had that was clean and unmarked.'

Wendy inspected the Bible again, then set it down. 'Did you think there was anything odd or unusual about the Bible going missing?'

'Odd, of course, but it was really no more than an annoyance.'

'What's the big deal about the Bible then?'

'This Bible was symbolically returned to me in a dream just after the encounter.'

'Wow. I hope you're going to tell me all about *that!*'

'Yes, when we get to that part of the story,' I said, laughing now because Wendy was becoming impatient to hear all about it.

I continued my 'retreat' for another three weeks. When I finally surfaced, it was because Andrew and I were due to go to Melbourne, to my friend Eva's house, for her daughter Sarah's eighteenth birthday. Eva and I knew each other before I met Andrew, so we've been friends for over ten years.

Eva lives near the Dandenongs, and the usual route we take is through the outer Melbourne suburb of Fountain Gate, through Belgrave, then up to Monbulk. Andrew and I planned to set out in the afternoon, and to spend the evening with her and her family. The kids were in Melbourne that weekend with their grandmother, Andrew's mother.

It was August, when it can get very cold, but that day was an exception. I was wearing a green and black patterned synthetic knit jumper – it was reasonably thick, but for insurance I threw my heavy winter coat on the back seat of our car. We left more or less on schedule. It takes an hour and a half to two hours to get there, going through Narre Warren North on the Belgrave-Hallam Road.

We used to go up and down that road fairly frequently, and nothing unusual had ever happened to us. At the particular time I'm coming to, we were heading up into the mountains from Cranbourne. It was just getting on dusk and we could still see trees and the long shadows they cast on the fields. Andrew was driving, doing maybe 110 or 120 kilometres an hour, the usual speed in that area.

He and I were getting along alright that day, but we weren't doing a lot of talking. I was mostly just thinking my own thoughts and looking at the scenery, because the drive is long and boring. We didn't have the radio on because the reception isn't great along those roads, and I also didn't want the intrusion on my thoughts.

It was very quiet in the car – we had both settled into that timeless long-drive state, where you feel like you're in a bubble and it's the world that's moving past, not the other way around. All of a sudden, I saw something out of the corner of my eye, through the passenger window, that snapped me into alertness. There was a break in the trees that lined the road, and through the break I could see a big paddock, going right back to some low hills. The paddock was cleared, there were no obstructions, and no buildings in the vicinity. We were just on the outskirts of Belgrave South, before you get into the township.

I saw a row of orange lights in the paddock: unusual lights that were produced by an object on the ground. A fluorescent mist surrounded them and they weren't natural, that was instantly obvious. This object was like nothing I had ever seen before – it was a couple of hundred metres back from the road and low on the ground, and the lights were large. What I saw had a distinct circular shape, and the outside was rimmed with the lights. By the time this thing caught my attention, I had maybe two or three seconds to look at it, then it disappeared from view behind the trees as we drove on.

We were past it, and although I craned my neck around to see more, I couldn't. I sat in my seat with my mouth hanging open. Without saying anything at first, I looked at Andrew, to gauge whether or not he had seen it. He hadn't, because he was concentrating on the road.

My mind was in a whirl! For several seconds afterwards, I went over what I'd observed. I could recall five or six lights in all, and the object was surrounded by an orange haze. The lights were in the middle of this haze and they lit it up. As I went over my observations, I realised that the haze was like the thin cloud around yellow fog-lights that line the road as you approach a town, but more fluorescent. The object itself was about three car-lengths wide.

It caught me by surprise, and left me breathless. This 'thing' was altogether very strange! For a few moments my mind swelled with disbelief. Had I actually seen a UFO? That's impossible! They don't exist . . . they can't exist!

It was too much to contemplate, and I must have been mistaken. There had to be another explanation, and yet I couldn't doubt my own eyes. I was totally confused at being presented with something, which was possibly a UFO, that my mind had been programmed not to accept as a reality. Amazement and logic began to play a vigorous game of tug of war with my reasoning.

I was in a dilemma, but this did not last for long. My spiritual mindset reasserted itself, and I solved my problem in a uniquely Christian fashion. I began to pray, as it seemed the natural thing to do at the time. I had to accept that this 'thing' might just have been a UFO, but after a few minutes of wrestling with the implications I concluded that, even so, it was still within the 'province of God'. It was therefore a good thing, and no doubt I had been meant to see it.

If this was an answer to my prayers, even if it was something that I could not comprehend, God must have sent this thing to help me. God was at long last acknowledging my devotion to Him. I had finally been heard! This sounds silly now, but at the time it made perfect sense, and it was the only rational answer that I could come up with.

Sitting there beside Andrew, hurtling down the road in the car, the seconds ticked by while my mind turned the whole thing over again. Then I acted. I turned around in my seat and said in my mind: *Wait for me. I'll be back down this way in a few hours!* It was a mental projection that I flung to whoever was involved. *Don't go away. I'll see you later.* I believed that if it was something to do with God, I would have been heard. I had no real expectation that it would wait for me to come back but maybe, just maybe, something closer to God would be able to tell Him: 'Hey, there's someone down there who really needs you.'

A few minutes later, I settled back in my seat and turned my attention to my husband. He didn't seem to have noticed my fidgeting, which gave me the opportunity to consider what I might tell him, if anything. For a whole five minutes I thought about it, but finally I just couldn't keep it in and thought: *Stuff it! I'm going to tell him!* Sure, he might pick on me, but I was at bursting point.

'Andrew . . .'

'Umm,' he said, still in bubble-mode.

'I just saw something very strange.'

'Yeah?'

'I saw some lights in a paddock we passed a while back. There was this thing, like a . . .' My throat constricted, because this was the point of no return. 'There were all these lights: it was something big, and orange.'

He didn't even glance in my direction. 'It was probably just an aeroplane,' he said.

'No,' I said, 'I don't think so. Planes don't land in a field like that. It looked like a whole bunch of round orange lights, all in a row.'

'Then it was probably a helicopter.'

He wasn't taking me seriously.

'When have you ever seen a round helicopter, Andrew? And anyway, it was much bigger than a helicopter, and it wasn't making any noise.'

We argued it back and forth like this until he finally said: 'Oh, so you're telling me you saw a UFO. Okay then, you saw a UFO. Are you happy now?'

He was cutting. He could be that way when he disagreed with something, and when he disagreed strongly, he could be particularly patronising. I looked at him again and he was smirking, as if to say, 'I'm not going to argue with you. Have it your way, idiot.'

His look doused my excitement and made me feel like something of a twit, so I shut up. I wasn't that stupid.

For the next twenty minutes as we drove on to Eva's, neither of us mentioned it again. I didn't even bother to think about it after that, because Andrew's attitude gave credence to my own doubts. I thought, *Alright. My little moment of ridiculousness. Everybody's entitled to one of those.*

Yet I couldn't disbelieve what I'd seen. It just ceased to be so important when weighed against the prospect of an argument with my husband. It wasn't worth looking like a fool for, or fighting over, and I put it out of my mind. But I later discovered that Andrew had not.

It was about 6.00 pm and well past dark by the time we pulled into Eva's driveway. Eva had heard the engine and the slamming of car doors and stood on her porch, silhouetted by the light of her lounge room. The outside sensor light switched on automatically, and she hailed us as I was fishing around in the back seat for Sarah's present.

'Who have you blocked in with your car, Andrew?' she asked as I walked up the steps to her porch and gave her a kiss.

'Whoever owns the Civic,' Andrew replied, three steps behind me. 'But I won't be staying.'

'Come in anyway,' Eva said.

Eva's daughter, sister, father, and a visitor I didn't know were inside. Sarah approached and gave me an exuberant kiss, and I handed her the present I had brought — some baby-blue towels for her new 'glory box' obsession. She tore the package open eagerly.

I sat on the sofa in the large lounge room while Eva made us both a coffee. Sarah returned from her room and gleefully dumped a newly acquired pile of domestic assets on the coffee table.

'Look at all the things I got. And look what Mum gave me,' she said, presenting the diamond-set pendant around her neck.

Through the open sliding doors I could see Andrew in the kitchen, pouring himself a soft drink. Wally, Eva's father, joined him in there. He's about sixty and lives with her – he's a quiet old guy with a wicked sense of humour and a very thick Dutch accent. The two men greeted each other warmly, as they usually do.

Eva and I joined them in the kitchen, snacking as we traded the latest trivialities. Wally cracked a few of his dry one-liners in his usual jovial manner, and when the laughter died down Andrew piped up and offered a story of his own.

'You wouldn't believe what Kelly reckons she saw on the way over here.'

'What did you see, Kelly?' Wally asked, looking at me with humorous interest.

Before I could answer, Andrew blurted out: 'A UFO!' And he then told them the details, making spooky 'woooo' noises, and gesturing for maximum effect.

Everyone laughed and poked fun at me, and I couldn't help smiling. I had to admit that it did sound funny.

With eyebrows raised in amusement, Wally asked coyly, 'Don't tell me you've been seeing "Little Green Men", Kelly?'

That's when I cracked up laughing. I could handle the ribbing from Wally – it didn't seem as serious when he took the mickey out of me.

I sniffed at them in mock offence: 'All right, I'm an idiot then; go ahead and laugh at me, I don't care. You can laugh all you want!'

When all the hilarity died down, Andrew stuffed a few more crackers in his mouth and headed for the door. He was going to spend the evening with his buddies in town, and he'd be back to pick me up later on.

As Andrew was leaving, some of Sarah's teenage friends came through the door. After Eva showed them to the back patio, which was lit with multicoloured party lights, she and I exchanged knowing glances. It was time for us to leave too.

Eva and I went to play bingo. We often did this when I went over – Eva's a total bingo addict and she wasn't going to miss out on it for anything, so we left the house to Sarah and her friends. We were away for four hours, which is a lot of bingo to play. Although not as seasoned as Eva – a true bingo professional – I never missed a call and we stayed until closing time, which was 10.30 pm.

I'm as certain as I can be that we ended up back at her place at about 11.00 pm that night. I don't wear a watch and this, by the way, is how I know what time it was when Andrew and I eventually left.

Andrew had returned, and our car was parked in front of the house. Eva and I walked up the steps, and waited for someone to open the front door.

A few teenagers, not as many as I'd expected, were sitting on the lounge room sofas. The atmosphere was uncomfortable, bordering on tense, and something was amiss: there seemed to be very little partying going on. I said hello to Sarah, and a polite reply came through her pained expression. She was sitting alone in the armchair, but the couch next to her was occupied by her boyfriend, Carlo, and her best friend, Kathy. Sarah's eyes were brimming with tears, although she was obviously straining to conceal her distress.

Eva and I headed for the kitchen, where Wally and Andrew were sipping tea and watching TV. Eva put the kettle on and we chatted with the boys for a while before I returned to the lounge room to join the teenagers. Within a couple of minutes Carlo and Kathy rose to leave, and the second they were out the front door Sarah rushed through the kitchen and into her bedroom. I went back into the kitchen just as Eva was emerging from her daughter's bedroom.

'What's up?'

'That Carlo is a louse,' Eva replied protectively. 'He's been ignoring Sarah all night and now he walks out with her best friend. She's really upset and I think it's all over for them, love.'

'Listen,' I said, 'we won't hang around for much longer. It's getting late and we really have to get a move on if we're going to make it home by next week.' I didn't think a little humour would go astray under the circumstances, so I added, 'I'll just finish this coffee, then we'll leave you to your domestics.'

'Watch it, cheeky,' Eva retorted with a smile. 'It'll be your turn one day,' referring to my three youngsters who were far from even the pubescent stage.

We left the subject at that, then chatted with Andrew and Wally for a while. Less than ten minutes passed before Eva rose from the table to go and check on Sarah. Andrew and I also rose, spontaneously.

'Yep, we'd better get going too,' said Andrew.

'Well, thanks for another great bingo night,' I said as I hugged Eva goodbye. 'I hope Sarah's going to be alright. Say goodbye to her for me, will you?'

Some time between 11.30 pm and 11.45 pm, Andrew and I pulled out of the driveway and settled into our customary silence for the drive home.

Normally I might have stayed the night, as I often did on my weekend retreats to Eva's house. On this night, however, Andrew had come to pick me up, and in any case, all of the extra space was destined for the imminent occupation of teenage bodies. I would have preferred to spend a little more time in Eva's company, but the domestic situation made that impossible.

I've often thought how very different things might have been if we had stayed a little longer. I try not to think about it too much, but occasionally it plagues me. You can't change what's happened, but if we'd been able to spend another hour or so chatting we wouldn't have had our encounter. Andrew and I would probably still be together, and I would probably still be an innocent Christian.

Life might have taken a completely different turn if it hadn't been for a simple little thing like the break-up of a teenage romance.

CHAPTER 3



It was well into the night by the time Wendy and I finished our first day's session. As she was getting ready to leave, I invited her to stay the night. She declined, saying that she'd left her things at her motel. We discussed whether or not, to speed things up, she should perhaps check out and stay with us. Travel back and forth would eat into our time, and I was being practical.

She finally agreed, and between jokes about being snatched up on the road to the neighbouring town, she said goodnight and drove off. I expected her to get lost, and shook my head at the thought.

After I closed the door, I started to get ready for bed. It was late, and I was tired. It had been a long day.

When I'd changed into my nightdress, I quietly crept into the kids' bedroom and listened to their breathing. All was well but I lingered, admiring them as they slept. The interview had cut a large slice out of our family time, and the usual cuddles had certainly been few and far between that day. *Another two days, I told myself, that's all. Then my sanctuary will be my own again.*

I made my way back down the hall and through the lounge room, turning lights off as I went. Behind me I left a growing wake of darkness.

'Good morning, sunshine!' Wendy said as she came up the front steps.

Brian announced, 'She's here!' and the other kids ran out to greet her.

I was still in my housecoat. 'Let her in, guys. Katrina, boil the jug and tell Wendy I'll be right out.'

I ducked back into the bedroom and finished getting dressed. Through the door, I could hear the kids running around, chattering, and then a crash.

I stuck my head past the door. 'What was that?' I called out.

James raced around the corner. 'Brian hit his foot on the coffee table and knocked over a pile of books.'

'And what else?' I demanded.

'Nothing.'

I frowned. 'You kids clean up whatever mess you've made and then go outside!'

James took off like a shot.

I came out of the bedroom and went into the lounge, where all was in order. Wendy was seated on the sofa.

'How are you this morning?' I asked dully.

'Good! I got back to town alright, but it was tricky. I had trouble with the headlights on my rental car.'

I nodded and proceeded to prepare the morning heart-starter. I brought the coffee plunger into the lounge room with me this time. Yesterday we'd each had half a dozen cups of coffee, and I didn't feel like running back and forth again all day.

'Have you eaten?'

'I'm fine,' she said. 'I don't eat breakfast. You go ahead.'

I made myself some toast while Wendy set her recorder up. By the time I'd finished, she was ready and eager to start.

'Picking up from last night . . . ' she said.

'Where did I leave off?' I mumbled.

'The drive home from Eva's. You're just about to run into the UFO.'

'That's right. Let me see . . . '

The location was about 15 kilometres from where I'd seen the strange object on the way into town. The land was covered in inky darkness outside the cone of the car headlights, and I don't recall seeing the moon out.

Unlike during the drive up to Monbulk, I didn't allow myself to drift off or lose concentration, because there's always a danger at night that a kangaroo or a wombat might come from the side of the road. Suddenly, I

saw this thing hanging above the road up ahead. It was just a light at first, then it looked like a blimp. As we got closer to it, and I could focus, there it was! The same orange lights! I looked up at it, through the windscreen of the car. It was hanging there, impossibly, in mid-air, ahead, and to the left.

I could then see that the orange lights were really windows, because they seemed to have a glassy appearance and I could make out figures standing behind portals. The figures were silhouetted in a contrast of black shadow against orange light. There was something solid above the row of lights, so that the craft had structure and form, even though not all of it was visible.

We were getting closer, and it was hovering at about twice the height of the trees.

As we neared it, the silhouettes became more distinct, and they appeared to be looking out of the windows at us, as though they were tourists or something!

'Andrew! Look at that thing!' I tapped him on the shoulder five or six times in alarm.

'I see it. I see it,' he said, then, 'Shit it's big!'

'Look. There are people in there!' I said, gesturing wildly, as if this wasn't completely obvious. We were now less than 400 metres away from the object, and closing fast. At the speed at which we were travelling, we would be directly underneath it in another fifteen seconds.

It seems as if the craft heard me. The minute I indicated the people inside to Andrew, the thing shot off to the left at incredible speed. It didn't simply vanish: you could see that it was accelerating away, but its acceleration was beyond anything I could have imagined possible. From a standing start, it was gone into the distance within just a couple of seconds.

Andrew and I had both seen the craft for at least a minute before it went away. My heart was pounding the entire time.

'You see? Did you see that? See! Did that look like a helicopter to you?!

'I saw it,' he said, knowing I had him. I hadn't forgotten his little wisecrack earlier in the evening, and now I felt very satisfied. Vindicated in fact.

'So now you can't laugh at me. You've seen it too.'

'Steady on,' he said. 'I saw a big thing with windows and lights. That doesn't mean I saw a UFO.'

I was aghast. 'How can you say that?'

'It could have been something the government is working on. Some military thing.'

'Military thing? Are we talking about the *Australian* government here? You must be joking!'

'How would you know, eh? You never know what the government's up to these days. I'm not saying it's not a UFO, but it could be anything. Anyway – whatever it is, it's got nothing to do with us.'

That was typical of Andrew. He had always believed that if everyone minded their own business, we'd all have far fewer hassles to deal with.

He wasn't denying that he'd seen it. He saw it alright, and he was as worked up about it as I was. What it really came down to was a matter of interpretation, for there was no doubt about the existence of the thing. There it was, as hard and real as anything physical you can name. But what was it, and where did it come from? That was the real issue between us, and to Andrew it didn't really matter. As far as he was concerned there was nothing that we could do about it, no matter what it was.

Once we'd both had our say, we started to settle back into the drive. But just a moment later, near Eumemmerring Creek, something else happened.

Suddenly, there was a light in the middle of the road – a huge bright white light that seemed to cut off the entire road. It was coming from directly in front of us. It was blinding me and I couldn't see a thing; I had my hand up to shield my eyes, and my face pressed against the windscreen.

'Andrew! The light! You see that light? You see that?'

'Yeah, I see it,' he said, with the same cautious tone as when the craft had appeared a few minutes before.

'What are you going to do?'

'I'm going to keep on driving.'

I don't know why he said that. I was thinking that you couldn't drive through light that bright, a light shining directly into your eyes. I was worried that he'd crash the car. But it occurred to me later that the light could have been coming straight into my eyes from a certain angle, but not directly into his. If it was very directional, like a spotlight, he could still have seen something.

The road curved to the left, and although I couldn't see a damn thing, I could feel the motion of the car as it travelled around the bend. Looking at that light was like looking straight into the sun. Effectively, it was as bright as the sun, because my eyes were dark-adjusted. My heart was really pumping; adrenalin was rushing through my system.

'Oh my God, Andrew! We're going to see a real UFO!'

I'd seen the lights of a craft on the way to Monbulk. Then we both saw the lights a second time, a few kilometres back, although the object shot off. But this. This was something else again, and every second that Andrew kept driving brought us closer. This was it! We were going to see this thing first-hand, with our own eyes . . .

As suddenly as the light had appeared in front of us, it disappeared. But things seemed different.

We were still driving along the same road, but whereas a split second ago we were doing about 100 kilometres an hour, we were now travelling at 40. The roadway had also changed. Most dramatically for me, my heart was suddenly no longer pounding, the adrenalin had vanished and I was very calm and relaxed, almost serene.

It was like a 'cut to scene' in a film.

In the space of a blink, everything had changed, and yet we were still driving down the road as if nothing had happened. One second, the light is in my eyes, I'm sure we're going to see a UFO first-hand, and my heart is racing. The very next second, nothing. No light, no pounding heart, no excitement.

At the time, I knew that something had jumped, that *we'd* jumped, like a record needle skipping a track. I was sure that we'd missed a beat somewhere.

'What happened?' I asked Andrew softly. 'Weren't we going to see a UFO or something?'

Andrew was driving very slowly, but I hadn't felt the car braking. It was as if the car had instantly slowed down from 100 to 40 with no intervening deceleration.

I was further confused by the fact that there was a roundabout between where I last recollected being on the road, the instant before the light appeared, and the place where I next saw the road. I had been expecting the roundabout, but now we were on the other side of it, although we didn't seem to have gone around it! That was over several

hundred metres of road that we'd apparently covered in under a second, with no memory of having done so. That was impossible.

Another unexplainable thing was that when I say the light 'disappeared', it wasn't like someone turned it off, it was as if someone turned *me* off. After a bright light has been shone into your eyes at night and then turned off, you can't see for several minutes afterwards. You just see red and orange, or whatever, in front of your eyes. But I could see perfectly after the light had gone: there were no after-effects, no period of readjustment. My eyes seemed to have been instantaneously dark-adjusted once again.

It takes over twenty minutes for the human eye to become readjusted to darkness again. No exceptions. Where was I when that happened?

Without knowing anything about the 'missing time' phenomenon associated with UFO encounters at the time, I still believed that I had lost something, somewhere. Yet, superficially, things appeared normal. Something had happened, and yet nothing had happened. Someone who wasn't paying much attention would have missed the jump, and even someone who was paying attention might have observed these oddities and dismissed them. Drivers have been known to doze off and be unable to recall whole sections of road that they've driven over – this doesn't mean that anything particularly strange has been going on.

Only I wasn't driving: Andrew was.

I repeated my question because I hadn't got an answer. 'Weren't we going to see a UFO, Andrew?'

'I think so.'

We were both sluggish, confused and disoriented. Yet only a second or so before he was as animated as I was, concentrating intensely on the light ahead. I looked at Andrew and he seemed somewhat dazed and distant. He was still driving slowly.

'Then what happened to it?' I asked.

'We must have turned a corner or something.' That was the best he could come up with.

I just stared at him. 'I feel as if I've had a blackout.' This was the best I could come up with, but it didn't begin to describe how strange the feeling was. 'If we just turned a corner, how come I didn't see it? This is really weird. I feel like I've been unconscious.'

'Don't be stupid,' he said. He seemed to shake off his lethargy and docility and started driving faster.

I began to question myself. Thoughts were going through my head like, *I must have had a fit or something . . . an epileptic fit*. But all I knew about epilepsy was what I'd read in my home emergency book, and I'd never had one. I was just reaching for some kind of explanation.

Andrew was now fully back up to speed. 'All we did was turn a few corners, okay?' He could see that I was concerned about it.

'Then where was I?'

'Right here, you big nong!'

'No, this is really weird. My heart was racing a second ago.' I spoke with none of the excitement that I had just been experiencing. My body was feeling lethargic, as if I'd had a shot of something and it was wearing off. My mind, however, was turning at a hundred miles an hour, seemingly unimpaired. I was thinking normally, but moving slowly.

Neither one of us, in those first few minutes after the light went off, could muster any energy to argue. I sat back after a few quiet words and tried to relax, but I suddenly noticed the smell of vomit in the car.

'Do you smell that, Andrew?'

He nodded. It was strong enough to be annoying, and it seemed as if the smell was coming from me. This sent me on a frantic hunt for the source — I checked my clothes, under the seat, everywhere. It wasn't on me and I never found where it was coming from, but I kept smelling it. I knew that *I* hadn't thrown up, and Andrew hadn't either. We hadn't stopped the car, so where could it have come from?

Looking for the source of the smell made me think of my stomach, and that's when I realised I was in pain. It was a dull ache really, a low-order feeling of discomfort and not crippling, but which went from my gut up to my shoulders. When I mentioned it to Andrew he said he had the same feeling, but we didn't go into a detailed discussion about it. I realised much later that I'd felt something similar years before when I'd had a laparoscopy. During this procedure, they fill you up with gas so they can get the laparoscope in and have a look around at your insides. Afterwards, you're quite sore internally and you feel referred pain in your shoulders because your diaphragm has been moved.

After about ten or fifteen minutes of this — talking about what had happened, looking for the vomit, and comparing aches and pains — we

both settled back for the rest of the drive home. We were silent, but I was sitting there, sore, and thinking about the craft in the air that we had both seen, and wondering what had really occurred. I went through all the possibilities – an epileptic fit, a knock on the head, exposure to the light. But it was all ridiculous and nothing made sense. Even though I knew I was missing some time, as if I had been unconscious, I drew a blank on the reason why.

When I brought it up again, which I did every so often as we were driving home that night, Andrew basically said it was just my imagination, or a daydream or something like that. That made no more sense to me than the epilepsy theory. How could both of us have imagined such a thing? I kept on until he told me to shut up. I did leave it for a while, but I couldn't keep quiet. Like a terrier, I held my grip. I *knew* that we had missed some time.

That craft . . . three times. I was thinking, *it was five hours, and it waited*. Obviously the sightings were all interconnected. But I didn't automatically leap to the conclusion that anything else had happened to us or, for that matter, that we'd even stopped the car. I was simply confused about an apparent time lapse and, as I said, at the time I knew absolutely nothing about UFOs.

Andrew and I started arguing about what time we had left Eva's house. I was convinced I'd blacked out, but neither of us wore a watch, so we couldn't settle it until we actually got home. The first thing we did when we arrived home was to go into the kitchen and look at the clock. It said 2.30 am.

'See, Kelly, I told you we haven't lost any time. It took us only an hour and a half to get home, our usual time.'

'What do you mean? Did you check the clock before you left? If we spent only an hour and a half getting home, that means we left at 1.00 am. I know for a fact that we didn't leave then: we left between 11.30 pm and midnight.'

What I was trying to tell him was that if we had left at 11.30 pm and arrived home at 2.30 am, our hour and a half of travel actually took three hours. That was impossible. An hour and a half was missing somewhere, exactly as I had believed after the light disappeared. But I obviously didn't make myself clear enough, because we didn't settle it and each of us was convinced that we were right.

'You're being pig-headed!'

'Look,' he said, 'I know we must have left at 1.00 am, because *I* was driving, and *I* know we weren't driving for more than an hour and a half. Even if we'd got home at 5.00 am, I'd still say we only drove for that long and we must have left at 3.30 am.'

It wasn't a stand-up row. We made a coffee and sat down in the lounge room to chat about it: we talked about what we'd seen, and went over the whole thing again. In the end Andrew said, 'There's nothing you can do, so just forget about it.' He could see that I might become fixated or obsessed by the incident and, to him, it wasn't worth the trouble. Perhaps that was also his way of protecting me, for when I pressed him about his concerns he said an interesting thing.

'It's not good to mess around with this business.'

'Why is that?'

'Because you don't know what they are.' He was beating around in the fireplace to make room for more wood.

'What if we were *meant* to meet these UFOs?' I asked pointedly. 'If we had met them, it might have been a wonderful experience.' I was actually disappointed.

He looked at me sternly. 'Forget it. You don't know what they are. Maybe it's nothing to do with the government: they could be demons for all you know, and the more you mess with them, the stronger they get. They come when you talk about them, or even think about them. I don't want that kind of evil stuff in the house.'

I knew I'd be better off not arguing. It could easily turn into a heated religious debate – something I had made a point of avoiding over the years. It was better to just agree that we both had a strong faith in God, and leave it at that.

'Well, in that case, I'm going to get ready for bed,' I told him.

'Yeah, you do that,' he called out as I headed for the toilet. He went back to poking around in the fire.

In the toilet, the first thing I noticed was that I was bleeding, and it wasn't my time. The blood was bright red, not period blood, and it was unusually profuse. It had soaked through my jeans. I was a bit puzzled by this, but I stripped off my pants, grabbed a pad and took care of the situation. I tossed my jeans into the sink in the laundry, hit the stain with some stain remover and left them to soak. I walked through the kitchen,

more or less in the buff, to get a robe out of the bedroom, but when I got into the light I looked down and discovered an odd mark underneath my navel.

It was a perfect little equilateral triangle, angry red, with sharp lines. It looked like it had been burned into me, or that the first few layers of skin had been removed. It measured about a centimetre on each side, and was located underneath my belly button and a little bit to the right, almost touching it. I stared at the mark for a moment and wondered why I felt no pain from it.

It was so small, roughly the size of my index fingernail. Nothing really, but it was unnaturally geometric. Again, the something/nothing paradox came into play. An unobservant person might have simply shrugged it off: it was certainly nothing to see a doctor about, and no cause for alarm. But I clearly linked it to what had happened earlier that night, although I had no idea how it was connected.

Too many something/nothings add up to a definite something, eventually. That mark, the fading pain in my stomach and shoulders, the bleeding, the craft we had seen – it seemed that they were all connected. But it was late, I was tired, and I wasn't thinking clearly enough to try and settle it right there and then. It had been a weird night and I simply headed for bed. I didn't think: *Oh, I've been branded by aliens*. I didn't think anything at all really, and all I wanted to do was sleep.

But that night, I had a strange dream.

CHAPTER 4



'I got to bed at about 3.30 am, and I recalled every detail of the dream when I woke up.'

'Tell me about the dream,' Wendy said.

I picked up a small notebook that I'd placed beside me earlier. It contained many pages of notes, jottings and detailed impressions that I'd recorded about my experiences over many months.

'Okay, I'll read what I wrote about it in my little journal. I call this section, "The Missing Bible".'

'Ahh,' Wendy said, as she picked up on one of the pieces of the puzzle. 'Here's where the Bible comes in, the one that you had lost earlier! How long had it been missing by this time?'

'A few weeks. This part was written after my later recall, so I'll have to paraphrase a bit and explain things.'

'Can you tell me the dream as you recalled it then, before your later, fuller knowledge? That way I'll get your impressions in context.'

'Let me just read what I wrote.'

In the dream, it was night and I was sitting on the side of a field. My head was between my legs, because I was feeling sick. I felt as if I'd been unconscious, and that I'd just woken up.

I looked up, and I could see a craft in a field. I also saw several creatures, and one was leading my husband off by the hand. They were definitely not human. I could not see their faces or their bodies from the elbows upwards. It was as if I was partially blinded – the lower region of my vision was fine, but when I tried to look up everything went black.

The beings shone with a silvery glow. Their limbs were long and lanky, almost anorexic in appearance. I couldn't see any details, like fingers or things like that.

I perceived, somehow, that the entity leading my husband away was female, although I could see nothing suggestive of her sex. It was just an impression I had. I got up, and like Joan of Arc I ran down a slight incline and charged at the female entity. I grabbed her arm violently and turned her around. 'Leave him alone,' I screamed at this creature. 'Don't you touch him!' I was full of anger and intense jealousy, and extremely aware of this creature's gender.

As soon as I grabbed the entity I seemed to lose consciousness, but then came to a second later. I felt as if I had snapped out of a trance and was once again seeing clearly and feeling a crisp conscious awareness, even though I was dreaming. I found myself on the extreme right-hand side of the field, approximately 200 metres from my previous position. The craft appeared to be further down the field and to the left.

I was standing over a body that was quite still, and which at first appeared to be non-human. But the body slowly changed into a human being, a man. He looked as though he was dead.

From further down the field, near the craft, a middle-aged woman ran towards me screaming, 'Murderess! Murderess!' I found this word odd, because it's so archaic. The woman was chubby and, by her reaction, I imagined the man was related to her in some way. I didn't know her, but I started to panic. All of my emotions were extreme at this point.

I had no recollection of doing anything except grabbing the arm of the female being to protect my husband. But there I was, with what I believed to be a dead body lying at my feet, preparing to fend off an hysterical woman who was accusing me of murder.

'I didn't do it! I didn't kill him,' I told myself as much as anyone who could hear me.

In those few endless moments I was stricken with an overpowering sense of grief and guilt. I couldn't remember doing this. I had blacked out, but could I really have taken another human life? I was mortified. To my way of thinking, this was the greatest wrong that a person could commit, both against God and their fellow man.

'Please tell me I didn't do it. Somebody please tell me it isn't true!' I said, over and over.

I then became aware of an arm placed around my shoulder and being led away. Obediently, I allowed myself to be guided – all of my resistance had

evaporated. I did not see who or what took me, and I had no inclination to even attempt to resist. I was too overwhelmed, and literally numbed by the thought that I had killed another living person. I was in a state of shock.

Eventually, I looked up and found myself inside a very small room. The only discernible furniture was what I initially thought to be a table, but which was actually more akin to a coffee table sized box. It was situated against the right-hand side of the back wall. There was a being standing before me, in front of the table, but once again I could not see its face. I had the feeling that this being was in some way an authority figure.

I pleaded with him. 'Please tell me that I didn't kill anyone, please,' but I was beginning to feel increasingly numb and hopeless in my guilt.

A male voice replied, in what struck me as a most sympathetic tone, 'No, you didn't kill anyone. We had to use your sense of morality to overcome your fear.' It was as if he was saying that they needed to settle me down so that they could talk to me.

'Thank God. Thank God for that!' I replied. At that moment I could have wept for joy. The relief I felt was indescribable, and a profound understanding immediately swept over me.

'It's you! It really is you! I thought I'd never find you. Thank God you're here. I've been so scared.' I obviously recognised this being as someone very familiar and trusted, although I had no idea of who he was. I got the impression that he knew me very well, that he was like 'the keeper of my soul'.

On the table behind him there was a Bible. I had noticed it a moment before. It was one of my Bibles and I recognised it instantly.

He spoke to me again. 'You can come with us, but you have to leave this behind.'

I had a choice to stay, or to take my Bible and leave. Because of being given this strange option, a fear of underlying deceit came into my mind. The feeling of trust I'd felt evaporated instantly, to be replaced by deep suspicion – anything that would expect me to give up the Bible had to be satanic. I then began to fear that I mightn't get out of there.

In retrospect he seemed saddened, but at the time all I could think about was getting out in one piece. As if he could read my very thoughts, he handed me the Bible.

I felt as if I needed to explain my choice, so I started to make pathetic excuses for why I wouldn't come with him, like 'I have to help my people,' and 'I'm going to Queensland soon,' things like that. Not necessarily the truth, but anything to

justify my choice. I didn't feel that he was going to keep me there against my will, but I just wanted to get out of there.

I lay on my bed staring up at the ceiling for several minutes after I woke up. The dream was so vivid, so real, and I couldn't recall ever having had another like it. Slowly, I put my feet on the floor and distractedly collected up my robe and slippers.

Andrew was spending his nights curled up in front of the fire on a mattress, because it was the only way he could sleep warmly enough during winter. I padded into the lounge room and stood looking down at him as he snoozed before I gently woke him.

'I had this dream about UFOs last night,' I said when his eyes were open. I could feel the warmth of the dying embers on my face.

He looked at me, and said in a sleepy voice, 'I thought we agreed last night to forget about all that stuff.'

'I know, but this dream was . . .'

He held up his hand to silence me, and when I thought about it, his advice started to make sense.

'I don't think that's such a bad idea actually,' I said soberly. 'I killed someone in my dream.'

He frowned.

'Alright,' I said, coming around slowly to his way of thinking. 'That's it. No more of that.'

He smiled, closed his eyes and rolled over. I got up, determined not to think about it again.

On the surface it was just a terrible dream, sparked by what I believed was an aborted contact with a UFO. The horror of the dream made me even more convinced that I should do what my husband said and forget the entire thing. Who needs that kind of stuff in their life? I certainly did not!

Ultimately, of course, the dream was not forgotten, and neither could I simply shelve the problem altogether. In the ensuing weeks, little somethings or nothings kept popping up, accumulating in the 'weird-basket' until it threatened to topple over.

If I were to take the route of trying to interpret this dream in the standard way, seeing the items and events it contained as oblique symbols,

I'd have an absolute field day. That's not my style, but a few points do need to be made.

Firstly, it is not at all unusual for real-life events to appear in altered form in the dream world. We can regard dreams as broken shards of actual experience that are laid out so that things can be sorted and rearranged to solve problems. In my opinion, it's not necessary to think of them symbolically. My later recollections of the content of the 'missing time' were similar to, but not the same as, the dream that I had the morning after it happened. The content of this dream could therefore have been instructive in regard to the real encounter, and that's how I regarded it that morning. I had seen a UFO the night before, and within twelve hours I'd had a very vivid dream about a run-in with aliens. I was mildly concerned, but dismissed it.

Secondly, my religious conflicts come through loud and clear. Dreams sometimes serve as a mental laboratory for resolving issues in our lives. My battle of faith was just beginning, and this was the first flag to be unfurled – the dream correctly anticipated the spiritual struggle to come.

Thirdly, and this relates to the total scheme of things, I find it very interesting that the being told me they had to use my sense of morality to shock me out of my fear. That indicates to me that these entities, if the dream is to be believed, are intimately aware of our beliefs and are adept at making use of them.

Even more interesting, perhaps, is the suggestion in the dream that I knew that being. I recognised him, and regarded him as the 'Keeper of My Soul', whatever that actually means. This being wasn't just a casual acquaintance. He and I seemed to have a relationship of sorts, with certain 'understandings' between us that carried the potential for action. I had the opportunity to go with him, but before I could, I had to do something that I wasn't prepared to do. I had to give up my religion.

A relationship with these beings? Not if I could help it!

I shrugged it off and laughed about it. It was just a dream. It was nothing. But then, a few days later, the dream turned out to be a 'something'. The Bible that the 'Keeper of My Soul' gave me was the missing Bible, the one that I had previously lost.

On Tuesday of the following week, Andrew came in from working on the car.

'I found this on the floor on your side.' He handed me the Bible that I had been hunting for for weeks. 'What was it doing there, Kelly?'

I took the Bible and looked at it, not really registering what it was. 'I don't know. I didn't put it there. I've been looking all over for it!'

'Well, it didn't get in there by itself!' He shrugged and walked off.

Suddenly, a strange sensation of *deja-vu* hit me, the dream! I then began to backtrack through my movements – there had to be an explanation. There was no chance that I might have taken it with me somewhere and forgotten about it because I never took my Bibles out of the house. There was no need, as I wasn't going to church, and besides that, I didn't drive at the time. My Bible study was completely private, and had been for many years.

The only answer I could come up with was that this particular Bible was returned to me during the UFO encounter. Although it seemed ludicrous, I had to ask myself if the dream had been a real event, and if it was, how on earth did the being get the Bible in the first place? I could only think that it may have happened on the night when I'd felt the strange power in the back room. I had the encounter three weeks after that night, and then dreamed about the Bible being returned to me. Two days after the dream, it was found in the car.

Somehow, it seemed that the Bible was taken from among my things, only to find its way on to the floor of the car. If it had been there on the way to Eva's I would have seen it, because that's where I stow my handbag. I couldn't understand it. According to the dream . . . but no, I wasn't ready for that yet. So this too remained a mystery and it was thrown, along with all the other strange events, into the weird-basket.

I tried to carry on as normal for the next three weeks, but this plan didn't work out. The reason was that my health was slowly deteriorating.

On 30 August, Andrew and the kids and I went down to Ninety Mile Beach with his family. I'd been crabby, irritable and feeling off-colour – Andrew and I had been fighting, and I was generally unwell. The bleeding that started on the night we saw the UFO had decreased and stabilised and it wasn't heavy like period blood. I normally have a two-day period, and for those two days it's full-on, but three weeks of steady light bleeding was taking its toll on me. And I had other problems as well.

There was a funny thing about this crabbiness; it was due to the fact that I had become extremely sensitive to noise, and the slightest little sound

would set me off like a rocket. This started right after we got home on the night of the encounter, and it persisted and worsened. I also started getting crippling migraine headaches: these came and went for months after the encounter, and they have only recently begun to improve. Before the encounter, I'd never had a migraine headache in my life.

Loud noise of any sort went into my head like a needle. Bright sunlight was getting to me too and there we were, heading for the beach with three children under the age of eight. It's not surprising that Andrew and I were at each other's throats. All the way down there, we just snapped at each other and bickered far more than is normal for any couple. I was usually quite circumspect around him – he was typically the one to go off, while I did most of the ducking and weaving – but that day, I was the one dishing it out.

I also started getting stomach cramps on the day before the trip, and they got worse at the beach. I was arguing with Andrew over nothing, about frying eggs on the barbecue. It was a real screaming, 'You're going to burn in Hell!' fight, right in front of his family. It got right out of hand, and Andrew finally decided he'd had enough and was taking off.

I walked down the beach while they packed up, and Andrew then drove us home. He shot off to Melbourne after we arrived, saying that he wasn't coming back. He used to do that a lot, to teach me a lesson as he put it, but I ended up in hospital that night and he had to come back to look after the kids. I was quite sick by that evening. As an indication of how my health had deteriorated, I'd lost 10 kilos by this stage. Ten kilos in three weeks, and I wasn't on a diet. My next-door neighbour could see I was not well, and took me to hospital, agreeing to look after the kids until Andrew got back.

The doctors worked out that I had a uterine infection, but these are fairly rare. The usual causes are a pregnancy which has self-terminated, leaving unexpelled material to fester in the uterus, or an infection from recent surgery – at least this is what I was told by the doctor on duty that night. I knew I wasn't pregnant, and I'd definitely had no surgery. Almost a month had passed since the encounter, so I didn't connect these gynaecological problems with UFOs in any way, shape, or form. Even if I had suspected that the UFO incident was the cause, I wasn't going to tell a doctor about it. They might have had me locked up!

My condition began to deteriorate rapidly in the hospital casualty room, and I became quite ill. The doctor immediately began a series of tests and placed me on an intravenous drip of strong antibiotics. On the second day in hospital, endometriosis was ruled out as a cause. My fever left me, and although still bleeding I was discharged with a supply of oral antibiotics. The bleeding finally stopped a few days later.

The doctor didn't seem to notice the triangular mark on my stomach, or if he did, he said nothing about it. It was so small, and by that time I'd completely forgotten about it. I remembered it only months later, along with quite a few other things, during the research period.

The uterine infection cleared up, but for the rest of the week after I got out of hospital the headaches and the sensitivity to light remained. That's how things were until what I call 'the first night visitation'.

CHAPTER 5



‘Come with me for a moment, I want you to see something.’

Wendy set her coffee down, paused the tape, and got up from the sofa. I led her into my bedroom.

‘Do you see that bed? That’s where I sleep. Look at the walls of this room, look at the wardrobe, and the doorway out into the hall, and get a feel for what it would be like to sleep in this room.’

She looked around and slowly nodded as she absorbed the scene. The pictures of American Indians on the walls, the small desk in the corner, the mirrored wardrobe set parallel to the bed. She noted the window behind the headboard, and the door facing the foot of the bed.

‘Now imagine you’re me,’ I said, as I lay down on the side of the bed that I normally sleep on, ‘and you wake up to find someone standing in the dark where you’re standing now. Whatever it is is tall, and dressed in black, and it’s looking straight into your eyes.

‘You make eye contact, and the last thing you realise before it disappears is that this figure is real, but not human. How would you feel?’

‘Terrified,’ she replied. ‘Terrified out of my mind.’

‘Remember that,’ I said, as I got up and led her back into the lounge room.

It’s all very well to consider these things in the cold light of day, sitting on a comfortable sofa and chewing the fat with your friends, but when it actually happens to you, that’s another matter. In that moment, reason deserts you and all you’re left with is raw emotion.

On 6 September 1993, I had the first of four visitations in the night. One would be plenty for anyone, believe me. To this day, I still sleep with a light on near the bedroom . . . these visitors seem to like the darkness, but I'll get to that.

I'd come out of hospital a few days before, and had received no painkillers or other medication except for a course of antibiotics. I'd been on these antibiotics before to no ill effect, and was already starting to feel better. There was nothing else going on in my life at the time that could be called unusual or out of the ordinary, apart, of course, from the ongoing headaches. I had no other stresses, and things with Andrew had returned to an even keel by the time I'd got home from hospital.

On this particular night I went to sleep and began to dream that I was lying in bed. This is usually a signal that I am about to wake up, and I don't regard it as particularly strange. In this dream, however, I became aware of a presence in the room, and the presence was coming near. Oddly though, I did not see a person in my dream – I didn't see anyone until I was fully alert, and that's important.

I then received what seemed to be a telepathic message, the tail end of which was: *Don't be afraid of what is about to happen*. It was clearly intended to calm me, as I heard it before anything had actually occurred.

I instantly felt a physical sensation. It was as if a suction device or vacuum was attached to my chest, and this seemed to be literally draining energy out of me. The thing that was being drawn out of me felt like elastic which, when pulled, created a physical sensation in my body. The feeling was as if my chest had turned into a rubber band.

At first, the warning to be calm had some effect and I was not immediately concerned. As the suction and pulling grew stronger, however, I became quite alarmed. As if in response to my fears, the force of the vacuum was reduced, but as soon as I calmed down a little, it increased again. Then the suction suddenly became much stronger, and that's when I felt terrified and was shocked into full alertness. I opened my eyes.

Standing beside me, only inches away and right next to my bed, was a tall black figure. I looked up, and could see that it was wearing a full-length hooded cloak. Its face was black, and it had big red eyes. I could have reached out and touched it if I'd moved so much as a finger, but I was paralysed with fear.

The eyes didn't glow brightly – they were dull red, like the coil on an electric stove when it's been turned off and has lost almost all of its glow. The hooded cloak fitted closely around the head, covered the shoulders and went down to below the edge of the bed. The cloak made the form relatively shapeless, but I could see the slope of its cheekbones, which were pronounced. Overall, the face seemed vaguely skeletal, and longer than that of a normal human.

The first thought that went through my head was 'soul vampire'. It was a strange thought to have, but it described exactly what I believed the thing was at the time. It made perfect sense to me – it was there to steal my soul! I had never seen anything that even remotely resembled a supernatural manifestation, be it a ghost, a spirit, or whatever you wish to call it. I didn't know what to make of this, and I certainly didn't think of it as being connected with UFOs. I hadn't yet put the pieces together.

Although I regarded this frightening visitor as a supernatural creature, there was nothing 'ghostly' about it. I couldn't see through it, and it blocked my view of the wardrobe, the door and part of the wall behind. The dim light coming through the window behind my head illuminated it, and there was an absolute concreteness about it. I could both sense and see that the being was as solid as anything you care to name.

I looked directly at it, and it stood there for several seconds and let me look. It in turn stared right down on me, right into my eyes, and continued to stare at me without flinching for the entire time it was there. Although it did move slightly, it didn't take its eyes off me for a second.

While it stood there, I not only experienced the natural terror that anyone would feel under those circumstances, but I also felt an additional horror – and there is no other word for it – which this being projected directly at me in a way that I cannot quite understand. Perhaps this horror-energy came out of the being's eyes? I don't know, but I am positive that it deliberately radiated this feeling as energy, and it was not merely an expression of malevolence.

I lay there in bed, convinced that it was literally trying to take the life out of me. I was scared out of my mind and time stood still, so that those several seconds seemed like forever as I waited for it to make some kind of move. I got the distinct impression that it stood over me just long enough to satisfy itself that I had seen it, as if to say, 'I am no dream'. It was

intimidating, if that's not an understatement. It wanted to make sure that I got a very good look.

There it was, inches away from where I lay, and then it suddenly vanished. It didn't walk out, or go 'poof'. It simply wasn't there any more. It winked out.

I continued to lie in bed without moving a hair and tried to gather up some courage. My bedroom door was open and I heard no sound in the house, nor did I detect other lights or strange presences. When I could get my breath again, I flew out of bed and bolted into the lounge room where my husband was sleeping in front of the fire.

I shook him and said, 'Wake up Andrew, wake up! I'm scared. Come and sleep in the bedroom with me!'

'What's wrong Kelly? What are you scared of?'

'I saw something beside my bed.'

'What was it?'

'I don't know. It was this black thing with red eyes.'

'You were probably half asleep. You only thought you saw something.'

It took me a good few minutes to get him to understand what I was talking about, although I didn't go into all the details. He told me to go back to sleep. I didn't care what he thought, I wasn't going anywhere until he agreed to come into the bedroom and sleep with me.

After that, I begged Andrew every night for weeks to come and sleep with me. I continued to be frightened of the dark, and this was only the beginning.

I've heard of people having what they call 'night terrors'. These happen mostly to small children, and they are usually little more than panic attacks and not associated with dreams. But there's another sleep disturbance that I've found out about only recently, called 'incubus'. In ancient mythology, an incubus is a male spirit that comes in the night to have sexual intercourse with women. A 'succubus' is the term for an entity who comes to molest a man.

In modern times, incubus refers to a nightmare caused by what the sleeper might regard as a demon. As a sleep disorder, it is characterised by a sense of a presence and a feeling of weight or pressure on the chest when being jolted out of a dream in the night. Interestingly, the derivation of the word is from the Latin *incubare*, 'to lie upon', and gives us the word

'incubate'. The demon incubus is sometimes depicted sitting on a woman's chest, with the woman writhing in agony.

These kinds of dreams are very rare, but they've been known about for a very long time. Doctors today tend to regard them simply as the product of some intense emotional state, but there may be much more to it than that.

People in the Middle Ages were not fools, in spite of the fact that their knowledge of the world was limited. They simply used mythical stories and devices to explain what they observed, whereas today we have scientific explanations. Things happened to them, and they described them the best way they knew how. They filled in the holes in their understanding with fancy, but that doesn't mean they were any more mad or delusional than we are.

What if these beings have been doing this for a long time? If the phenomenon is real, I can think of no particular reason why it should not have been happening throughout history. Certainly it was real enough to me in 1993.

I actually saw this being beside my bed. Perhaps it's the same kind of being that men and women have been seeing for centuries, but they didn't know what else to call it but a demon. We're no wiser now: we still can't explain it properly. But who can really say what is what with any certainty or authority?

Needless to say, even with Andrew in the bed beside me that night, I didn't go back to sleep, and my nerves were shattered for days afterwards.

Those eyes, staring down at me! I could have reached up and touched the entity, if I could have moved. It struck me as somewhat insolent, standing there to make sure it had my attention after I had evidently foiled its purpose. It stood there and stared, almost as if to say, 'Not this time, but there'll be other days'.

The figure was ghastly enough, but its manner, the way in which it exercised control, was the worst aspect of the experience. It was defeated, not beaten, and it knew it.

What was it after?

That was an important question that really needed an answer, but at the time I wasn't doing a lot of deep thinking. For days I was simply running ahead of the terror of it all, driven to distraction by the thought of my vulnerability. There was no dispassionate analysis — just fear, the fear

that it might come again. But this feeling lessened over the week that followed, after lying awake night after night with one eye open and expecting it to return.

Despite this, if there had been only one such incident I would have forgotten all about it. Given the way I've described my fright you might find that hard to believe, but I'm a terribly resilient person, and I couldn't afford to be otherwise with a pragmatic husband and three young children. I had to push this all aside. I had to live, and I had responsibilities.

Nonetheless, as I've said before, it's the accumulation of something/nothings that makes you stop and think. And in my spare time, I did plenty of that, once I'd managed to put some emotional distance between myself and the night visitor.

'God, that's spooky, Kelly,' Wendy said. 'You know, I've had strange things happen to me at night, when I've just drifted off. Nothing like you've just told me, but bizarre all the same.'

'Like what?' I asked.

She smiled. 'I hope you'll give me the same credit as I give you when I tell you this.'

'Of course.'

'Well, for five years, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two, my bed would shake violently every night when I closed my eyes. Just like in the movie *The Exorcist*. No matter what I did, or how much heavy furniture I piled up against it, the bed still moved.'

'No kidding.'

'No kidding. I don't often tell people, for obvious reasons. I've had a lot of wild things happen to me that you wouldn't read about, but I've never bothered going to see anyone about it. These things are called poltergeist phenomena, and my experience went on for years. It stopped, finally, when I learned to ignore it.'

I nodded.

'I've had unexplainable things happening to me for the whole of my life. I could tell you a thousand stories, of things that I have personally witnessed, things that almost no-one would believe. I've seen . . . But I won't get into that. This is your story. It's enough to say that when I hear

things like this, I slot them into my own knowledge of how very odd the world is, and they find a home. Does that make me a nut?’

I laughed. ‘Wendy, if you’re a nut, then Earth is an asylum.’

She chuckled for a moment, then said what was really on her mind.

‘My attitude is that science, as it ought to be practiced, with integrity, *must* eventually force these phenomena to yield to explanation. I’m dedicated to understanding things. If I can understand something, then it’s almost a sure bet that I can turn it into something practical and useful.

‘Kelly, honestly, right now, we probably can’t even guess at what’s behind the things that have happened to you. But someday in the future, people will take these things in their stride, because a few of the vital missing pieces will have been found.

‘You and I, all we can do now is simply record our observations. Then one day our grandchildren will say, “Ah yes, I found an old book containing an historical example of ‘Factor X’ at work. Isn’t it quaint, how easily frightened people were in the old days.”’

That made me laugh, not because I was trying to be rude, but because it was an opinion that I’d heard many times before. To those on the outside, the miraculous advances in modern science are often enough to inspire a ray of hope – the hope that some day there will be a simple answer, and one that we can all understand.

Those deeply involved in trying to unravel the UFO phenomena, however – even those with scientific backgrounds – have at some stage been forced to re-evaluate the purely scientific approach. The deeper one gets, and the more knowledge one gains, the less likely it is that the enigma will diminish in mystery, especially when it comes to the abduction side of things.

Listening to Wendy’s novice-like enthusiasm made me wonder just how long it would take mankind to develop a technical ‘science of the soul’. Finding a science to explain the physical aspects of life was proving difficult enough, but this alone would never be sufficient. Something else was needed. To explain the ‘soul changes’, both spiritual and metaphysical, that most UFO experiencers are subjected to, it was going to take a little more than just a new quantum physics theory. Somehow, I did not think it would ever happen.

Opening up the mystery of the soul has been a human aspiration from the beginning of recorded history. In 7000 years of study, mankind’s

spiritual and intellectual elite have been unable to find the key, and the door to life's great mysteries still remains locked. I did not see modern technological science being able to change that within a few generations, especially in a society where the spirit is often relegated to myth.

Wendy, perhaps thinking that I was laughing at her, then said, 'I'm sorry, I've made a speech and I hate to do that.'

Realising that my laughter had embarrassed Wendy, I did my best to make amends. I'm the first to believe that everyone is entitled to an opinion, and Wendy had as much right to hers as I had to mine.

'No, don't apologise. You're right. Someday it'll all be old hat. But go on, you were saying?'

'I was saying I've experienced a lot of unusual things, but never a night visitation like you've described,' Wendy searched her memory, 'although I had a friend once who told me something similar. She'd seen something, but it wasn't like you described. It wasn't physical, and she knew that. It might have been an evil spirit of some sort, or just her imagination, who knows what it was?'

'Did it happen again?'

'No. She was fine afterwards. It was a one-off, and she never reported any other related phenomena. Your story is very different to the run of the mill "fright-in-the-night" stuff.'

You can say that again, I thought to myself. Even in UFO literature I've never come across another person who has had their chest sucked by a big black thing.

'You mentioned that you had four night visitations. Was it always the same being?' Wendy asked.

'It was either the same one, or one of its brothers. I realised that, after I got back part of my missing time.'

CHAPTER 6



I had only just finished telling Wendy about the first night visitation, when I got a call from Margie. Margie is the mother of one of my daughter's friends, and Katrina had phoned me the night before to ask permission to stay over at their house. I had agreed.

It was Katrina's birthday, and Wendy had generously offered to take us out as a family to our favourite pizza restaurant in a nearby town. We were all looking forward to it.

Margie was coming over with my nine year old in less than half an hour, so it was a convenient place to break. While I got busy straightening up, Wendy attacked the fireplace and cleaned out the ash from last year's fires. I accused her of having thin blood, which comes from living soft in the city. She told me that she'd always loved a wood fire, and took the opportunity to soak up some natural warmth whenever she was in the country. I could understand that easily, as I'd had my fill of cities long ago. I was here to stay, and I didn't envy her having to go back to the smog and the choking traffic.

She was still hard at it when Margie came. We laughed about how neglectful I'd been, allowing the ash to pile up at the back to such an extent. I joked with Margie about how good it was having someone else to do the chores I hated and, even better, someone who actually enjoyed them. Wendy had no sooner finished with the ash when lumberjack fever struck and she headed out to the woodpile to try her hand at chopping kindling and splitting wood.

Margie left after some conversation, and I then got the kids ready to go out. Katrina made sure that her younger brothers were dipped and scrubbed. James wanted to wear his favourite pants, but he'd stained them

in the garden and we did battle till he agreed to change them. When I was finally ready, I came into the dining room to find Brian entertaining Wendy with more cartwheels, and he showed her the progress he'd made in walking on his hands. James was trying hard to catch up with his older brother, but there was a significant gap in ages and aptitude. He landed badly, twisted his wrist slightly, got up, and gave it a shake. A minute later, he was at it again. I didn't dare to discourage him, and he wouldn't have dreamt of quitting.

'Come on you kids, get in the car,' I said at last.

'Can we go in Wendy's car?'

Wendy had a nice Pulsar Q, and the kids couldn't stay away from it. Someone had already put a chocolate handprint on the driver's side mirror, but Wendy hadn't said anything about it.

'It's quicker if we go in our car. Wendy doesn't know the way. Come on, out you get.'

It was a forty-minute drive, which is nothing to us. We left early enough to allow time to get there, eat, and drive back in daylight, because there was something wrong with the headlights. We would be in trouble if darkness fell before I could get us home.

The pizza party was nice, and we took shameful advantage of the smorgasbord. The kids made weird concoctions out of ice-cream and had a great time, and for a moment I could almost forget that there was anything unusual about our little group. I looked around at the other patrons and thought about how much my life had changed in the past three years, and how different I was. There were days in the past when I'd look at the achievers of the world and wish I was more like them. These days, just to be an average person again was something that I knew in my heart I would never attain.

How far from average could a person get than to be a UFO experiencer? I knew that wherever I went in my life, this knowledge would intrude and I would be different – odd. And by going public with my case I had, in effect, given my life away. In some sense I had become public property. Who on earth would have thought, and only a couple of years ago, that I would eventually find myself sitting in a Pizza Hut, celebrating my daughter's birthday with a journalist who had come to interview me.

Once upon a time, I believed that a world in which there was a loving God was enough to make life livable, no matter how transient our existence

might be. Now, no matter how hard I tried to live in the moment, the beings, the encounter, and the knowledge always managed to find a way to intrude on my enjoyment of life. There were times when I was driven to strive even harder for the UFO reality to be acknowledged, but there were other occasions when I could quite easily have changed my name, sold up, and started a new life somewhere else. This was one of those times.

A fugitive might feel this way. A person who was running from the law could never enjoy simple pleasures.

Sitting in that pizza restaurant, knowing the full extent of what I was yet to tell Wendy, I perceived in a deeper way how my experiences had effected me.

I would never again feel like a normal person.

'You're not going to eat that goo are you?' Wendy asked Brian. He beamed at her, sensing a challenge. James reached over and dipped his straw in Brian's mess, demanding a taste. He detected a flavour he had omitted from his own creation and crawled under the table to add it from the dispenser.

Wendy watched the kids while I went outside to have a cigarette. When I came back, Brian was glassy eyed and I knew he was full.

'It's almost time to go,' I said, eyeing the sky as the sun sank lower toward the horizon. 'Katrina, take your brothers into the bathroom and clean them up so we can go.'

She did, and when they came back the roundup began. I herded my mob to the door, and Wendy took care of the bill.

On the way home, Wendy complimented me on how well-behaved my children were.

'I try hard. They are good kids.'

We got home just on dark, and Wendy breathed a sigh of relief. 'I've been stranded on country roads in the dark too often to not be worried about things like faulty headlights,' she said as I switched off the engine in the driveway.

We piled into the house and I decided to crack a bottle of wine. I knew what was coming in that evening's instalment, and I needed something to calm my nerves.

Wendy made a fire in the newly cleaned out hearth, using the wood and kindling she had chopped that afternoon. She'd checked out of her hotel before coming to see me that morning, as we both felt that it would

be more convenient if she were to stay with us until we were done. I suggested she could sleep in the back room, but she laughed and asked if she could stay in the lounge room. 'Call me superstitious,' she said, 'but too much stuff has happened in that back room for me to feel comfortable there.'

It was settled, and the kids ran around to get in as much playtime as possible before it was time for them to hit the sheets.

'Where are we up to?' Wendy asked when we'd finally settled down and the tape player was rolling again.

'I've finished relating the first night visitation.'

'Right,' she said. 'So tell me what happened next.'

'Well, you might find this hard to believe, but I didn't connect this night visitation to the UFO sighting. It probably seems obvious to have done so, but it didn't occur to me. When I said that I was determined to put all that business out of my mind, I meant it. That's exactly what I'd done, and it worked.

'I didn't put it all together. I simply thought that it had been a strange few weeks, and left it at that. What I didn't know, however, was that things were just warming up.'

When I say it had been a strange few weeks, I'm not exaggerating. Some other very strange things were happening in addition to what I've related so far, as if those weren't enough. Within days of the encounter, things were literally going haywire.

The first instance of this struck me as being a simple oddity. I woke up in the middle of the night, and the TV was blaring. Andrew, who could sleep through shelling by heavy artillery, was lying next to the fire as usual. I would say it was about 2 am, and I got out of bed and stumbled into the lounge room to turn the television off. But no sooner did I get into the room, but it suddenly turned *itself* off.

I stared at it dumbly for a moment, not knowing what to make of this. I knew I'd turned the TV off before going to bed, so it shouldn't have been on in the first place. For it to then turn itself off when I came near,

well, that was very strange indeed. But I was too tired to think about it much and turned around and went back to bed.

A day or two later, the video player started acting up. I was watching TV, and when I went out of the room to get a cup of coffee, the machine ejected the video tape. It then proceeded to develop other little quirks: initially it would play up only when I was out of the room, but the machine later started doing it when I was present. The video started skipping scenes in movies, but only certain kinds of scenes. It skipped over scary scenes and one night, in a particular movie we were watching, it ejected the video about twelve or thirteen times.

At first this was quite spooky, but it grew on us after a while and our 'haunted' video eventually became a source of amusement.

It would be sensible to ask why I didn't simply take the machine off to get fixed. The answer to this is that it didn't seem 'broken', but rather as if it was playing games with us, pranks. Instead of taking it to the shop, I began to think I should have it exorcised. It got to the point where we just had to laugh.

But not only was the video acting peculiarly – strange things started happening to everything we owned that was electrical, and this was a household-wide phenomena. Our other electrical appliances started blowing up. We went through several expensive items, like the refrigerator; light globes burned out within days of being replaced; and the TV continued to turn itself on and off.

Andrew put all this down to the vagaries of our electricity source, and he eventually became quite obsessed about it and started a minor war with the power company. He had their technicians out here constantly, looking for faults, but none were found. He blamed the electricity people because that made sense to him, but other things were happening which could not be explained by such a simple conclusion. He had no answer for these incidents.

An example is that the starter motor in the car would turn over by itself. It did this quite a number of times, and Andrew would race outside at night, thinking he was about to catch the thief who was trying to steal his car. There was nobody there. He'd double check the kill switch, but it would do it again as soon as he came back into the house. This went on for days.

On top of that, I was getting electric shocks when I touched things, but the shocks were from objects that don't conduct electricity, like wood, soil, stones in the garden and the like. There was no mistake about this because it happened again and again and again. I thought of it as some sort of 'poltergeist activity' at the time, but there were no books flying around the place, or things like that.

This phenomenon began a few days after the encounter on the road; it built up very gradually and continued throughout the time when my case was being researched. It didn't stop until after the fourth night visitation, in January of 1994 and, altogether, there was a period of about seven months when our house was like something you'd see in 'The X-Files'.

By the middle of September 1993, my situation was that I'd developed migraines, I had a strange gynaecological condition, I was feeling very unwell, I had odd marks on my body, I'd had a bad dream, I'd had a visit from a very frightening figure in the middle of the night, and unexplained electrical disturbances were occurring in my home at irregular intervals. Despite all this, it was *still* not obvious to me that these things had anything to do with the strange objects I'd seen on the night of 7 August. To tell the truth, I'd virtually blotted the events of that night out of my mind.

Taken singly, each item on the list of oddities seemed unusual, but of no great importance. Collectively, however, they should have added up to something startling, but without the benefit of a clear head and hindsight, everything appeared to be unrelated and none of these things could be traced to any single cause. There was nothing you could put your finger on and say, 'Ahh! See! There! That's why this is happening to me. It's because of that!'

You might say, 'Gee, that's pretty dumb. I'd have put it together in a flash!' But if you come to that conclusion, it's probably because you're familiar with the literature on UFOs. I was not. I did not know that seeing a UFO could have consequences, and that's the point. So what if I'd seen a UFO! What did that have to do with my migraines?

I saw no causal relationship between those lights on the road and my weird situation. After four weeks, the lights that I'd seen had become so unimportant when compared with my daily problems that I'd almost forgotten them entirely.

The clues that I needed to bring the picture into focus were locked up in my missing time — once they were recovered, everything came together. With only what was buried there, and nothing else, I was ultimately able to begin making sense out of what was going on. But while those memories remained hidden away, I didn't have a chance.

Let me tell you about the incident that triggered my first recollections.

It was 16 September 1993, and Andrew and I had been invited to an afternoon barbecue by an old friend of mine, Anne. Her husband George, who is Lebanese, got along well with Andrew and we were looking forward to the evening.

As usual, we dropped the kids off at their grandmother's and the trip to Anne's house was uneventful. We talked and had a good time, just the four of us, and that evening George wrapped some potatoes in foil and put them into the coals of the fire for a treat.

We sat around talking about every wild and woolly thing. To be frank, I'd started off the conversation by giving them some of my fairly esoteric gems of religious wisdom that had been gleaned from my recent Bible studies. George tried to keep it light initially. He is an atheist, as is Anne, and he finds it difficult to discuss religious perspectives without getting up in arms. Soon, however, we were engaged in a full-on debate about the psychology of people who need an invisible caretaker to rely on.

From religion, the conversation somehow took an unlikely turn to the subject of UFOs and George pounced on this. 'Now there's a mixed bag of nuts for you. People who see flying saucers, my ass! There's nothing out there — no space men, no Martians . . . I mean . . .' and off he went.

I was actually quite relieved to be off the hook, so I went right along with it when he opened fire on the 'Little Green Men' crowd.

'This UFO nonsense is bullshit!' George said, laughing derisively.

I joined in, and was about to throw in my two-cents worth when Andrew suddenly piped up and said, 'You wouldn't say that if you'd seen what Kelly and I saw coming home from Eva's place a few weeks ago.'

You could have knocked me over with a feather.

'What did we see coming home from Eva's? I don't remember seeing anything.'

'Yeah you do. Come on Kelly, you couldn't forget it that easily. We argued about it all the way home. Don't you remember the lights?'

'What lights?'

'Are you kidding me? You were the one who pointed out that the object wasn't moving or making any noise. It was huge, that thing, like a footy field lit up for a night match.'

I honestly didn't remember what he was talking about. I'd blotted it out of my mind completely.

'Andrew, I did *not* see anything!'

'Yes you did. I'm telling you that you did. It was hovering in the middle of the road. We got really close to it.'

'Be serious,' I said, amazed. 'Don't you think that if I saw something like that I would remember it?'

'Okay, have it your way, but we did see something.'

I truly didn't remember, but Andrew wasn't joking and deep down I knew it. Not because I actually recalled the incident that he was referring to, but because I knew my husband. He would be the last person on earth to expose himself to ridicule, especially if he knew that what he was about to say was a lie.

What he said left me puzzled. For the life of me, I couldn't remember what he claimed we had seen. The conversation made me think, and I couldn't get it out of my mind. He recalled seeing something, and he was prepared to admit it, and defend it. Under those circumstances, I had to question myself. Slowly, through the course of the next week or so, I began to remember bits of that night, but only the lights on the way to Eva's and the strange 'blimp' on the way home. He was right, we *did* see something, and when I realised that, it bothered me that such a big thing had happened and I had unconsciously pushed it aside.

But there was more to it than that, of course. Such a massive oversight threatened my self-confidence – if I could forget something as momentous as seeing a UFO, what else had I forgotten?

I didn't bother to tell Andrew of my recollection. It seemed pointless.

'Put it out of your mind,' he had said on the very first night.

That's presumably what I'd previously done, on his instructions, but it was too late for that now. Having forgotten it once, I *couldn't* forget it a second time. The damage was done.

This was the real beginning for me, and the beginning of the end of my relationship with Andrew, although I didn't know it at the time.

I took it as far as I could for a few days – I racked my brains, but I couldn't remember any more. All I had at that point was the recollection of the orange lights on the ground and in the air. Nothing more. For those who have never seen a UFO, that might seem earth-shattering but what was I to do about it? I didn't have enough information to launch a dinghy, much less a massive inquiry.

Over the days that followed I went through a pattern of thinking about what I could remember, then putting it all on the back burner when I struck a dead end. It was not until two weeks later that I picked up another thread, and this one was attached to a great big cable which I used to haul back a significant portion of my lost memories from that terrible night. The entire case was about to be broken wide open.

CHAPTER 7



We were travelling to Eva's house once again: it was 1 October, and I was going to spend the weekend there. Andrew would drop me off and pick me up after a few days. I was looking forward to seeing Eva again, and this would be one of my few real breaks – I had every intention of enjoying it.

Of course, going to Eva's meant we would be travelling the same road that we were on when we had the encounter. At least it was in daylight this time.

Spring was not far off, although winter had still not given way. It was the middle of the afternoon, and the winter sun was bright, white, and high in the blue western sky. The paddocks were green and the grass along the roadside was long. It was the finest day we'd had in weeks and I was drinking it up. Andrew was driving fast, and I was thinking about what Eva and I would get up to this weekend. I had a broad smile on my face, and I was feeling light, happy and excited.

We reached a certain section of the road, a few kilometres past the Fountain Gate Shopping Centre, that seemed particularly familiar to me. I looked at the field on my left and suddenly blurted out, 'This would be a good place for a UFO to land.'

What did I just say? Those words had popped into my head from my subconscious and fallen out of my mouth without so much as a by-your-leave. Where had they come from? I supposed that I had meant the comment to be a wisecrack, but a second after I'd said them, I had an overwhelming sinking feeling.

In that instant, I knew what had happened that night. With a sickening thud, the whole thing changed from abstract to concrete. How

blithely ignorant I had been – I'd sat on a ticking bomb for eight weeks and had no idea at all.

Dread and devastation are the only words to describe the sinking feeling I experienced then. It's the feeling you might get while waiting in hospital casualty for news about your child. You lock eyes with the surgeon as he comes out of the operating theatre and without a word being said, *you know*. And then you collapse.

My head spun, and a cold sweat broke out all over my body. I knew alright. I knew that something had happened to us, right here. I was overwhelmed with wave after wave of this feeling, this dread and devastation. Something had happened here, at this spot, and I began to have my first inkling of what that something was.

I cannot stress enough how floored I was by this sensation, triggered from the depths of my mind by passing the spot where the encounter happened. My whole body was in the grip of it, and the physical effects were accompanied by graphic memories of what had taken place. That terrible feeling stayed with me all the way to Eva's. The memory flashes that came to me then were so clear and sharp, I was shocked that I could have forgotten them – absolutely shocked that they had somehow been blotted out.

These flashes were from my missing time, which was the period between the appearance of the bright light and the moment just before I noticed the smell of vomit in the car. That time had seemed to be only a second, but by the clock it was about an hour, perhaps an hour and a half.

As we drove on to Eva's house, I continued to experience flashes of recollection – flashes of us stopping the car, flashes of us getting out, of me reaching back into the car to pick up my handbag. I had flashes of seeing those creatures, those beings with the big red eyes. And more. It was terrible, absolutely terrible.

It was coming to me in little snatches. Piece by piece, my missing time, exactly what occurred during the time when I believed I had blacked out on the way home that night, started to reel out in awful clarity. Each piece triggered the next piece. It was as if I had stumbled into a secret room, with bits of film scattered on the floor. I had to take those pieces and splice them together in sequence in order to see the entire macabre production.

I didn't say a word to Andrew. I sat there, pale, with sweat beading on my lip, and remained completely silent. There was something fragile about these recollections, and I had a strong feeling that if I said something before I'd got them all, the whole thing would be shattered. In a very real sense, I was suffering in silence. I wanted to scream, 'No, this cannot be happening', but I'm not a screamer. We *did* stop the car that night. We *did* see a UFO.

I know I must have looked wan and distracted, but Andrew said nothing, perhaps because he didn't notice. His mind was on his own business.

He dropped me off in this condition and if Eva saw that I was in a state of shock, she didn't say anything either. Eva's a real hustler, on the go all the time, and one of those people who focus on what they're doing to the exclusion of all else around them. She was hot to go to bingo that evening, and normally I would have gone too, but not this time. Eva spent no more than a minute trying to persuade me, then dropped it and left me alone in the house.

From the time I arrived at her place, which would have been perhaps 6 or 6.30 pm, until she got home at eleven o'clock, I was hell-bent on assembling all of these bits and pieces into some kind of complete picture. I sat on Eva's couch, not moving all evening and totally absorbed by my mental activity. As I played the flashes of memory over and over again in my mind, the entire scenario began to unfold in vivid detail.

Each fragment that I had seen earlier acted as some kind of trigger, and arriving at each trigger was like hitting a brick wall. I had to summon up all my mental reserves to push through the barriers, and 'barriers' is the most precise way in which I can describe them. It was almost as if my memory had been deliberately dismantled and locked into my subconscious in fragments. The triggers were in effect keys – keys to unlock the memory behind each brick wall.

But when I was finished with my reconstruction, I possessed only the first ten to fifteen minutes, the very start of what happened during the encounter. To this day I am still missing at least an hour of the time, and I'm not sure that I want to know what's in the last part, because the first ten to fifteen minutes is bad enough.

The following year, researchers tried to retrieve the missing portion through hypnosis. Two attempts were made, by two separate therapists,

but it didn't work. At the time, I came to the conclusion that I just wasn't a subject who could be hypnotised at the drop of a hat. Right from the day when I first reported the encounter, I was informed that conscious recollection was far more credible and reliable than information gathered from hypnotic induction. I must admit that this advice had an incredible effect on the way in which I approached my own hypnosis sessions.

I went into hypnosis knowing that it was going to be a waste of time. Not being a person who succumbs to the idea of suggestion lightly, I needed to retain the right to control my own mind. I believed that if someone could make me remember something that I couldn't remember on my own, it would mean that I had a pretty weak mind. To be honest, I wasn't a very helpful subject at all. Since then, however, I have opened my mind a little more to the profound nature of the human subconscious.

After almost three years of searching through the realms of possibility, trying to find that hour or so of missing time, alternative techniques don't seem like such a bad idea. You see, missing time isn't like waking from an anaesthetic after an operation, because a person who has experienced it can only hypothesise on where they've been and what might have occurred. The possibilities are endless, especially when partnered with a UFO encounter. A person could well end up spending their entire life searching for a mere hour that they can't account for.

As you can see, I'm a lot more open to possibilities than before. Hypnotherapy is one of these and I have organised a few regression sessions for later on in the year.

Now I will tell you the story of what actually happened that night, as far as I can recall it.

On the night of 7 August 1993, Andrew and I were driving along that dark road near Monbulk. Until the time when the light was shining in my eyes, everything is exactly as I mentioned before – we saw the smaller craft, I saw the beings behind their windows, the craft was shining orange, and when I pointed out to Andrew that the dark shapes in the window looked like people, it shot off and disappeared.

We drove further down the road, animatedly discussing what we had just seen. Andrew had no doubts that he'd seen it, but our interpretations were different. We took a bend in the road, and when we

came around the bend, looking south, a bright light was suddenly shining straight into my eyes. Andrew saw it too, of course, and I asked him what he was going to do. He said he was going to keep driving, and that's the last thing I consciously remembered until we were travelling on the road again.

This is where the flashes of recall pick up from my conscious memories.

We finished rounding the bend and the light was no longer in my eyes, but it was coming from a craft which I could now see. This was sitting in the middle of a big paddock on our right, and it was big – really big, although not as large as a football stadium. It was in a low gully, about 150 metres back from the roadside. It was about the width of an Olympic-size swimming pool, and easily as high as a two-storey house, and it was brightly illuminated.

'Andrew! Quick, pull over! Stop the car!'

He shot me a worried look. 'Do you think so? Do you think we should stop?'

My thoughts at the time, I remember them so clearly, when he said that were *You can't be serious! Of course we have to stop! This is the most incredible thing we're ever going to see! Stop the car!*

I was excited, really excited. 'Of course I think so! This is a real UFO, pull over!'

He relented, and pulled the station wagon over to the left-hand side of the road. The craft was across the road from us and in the distance. Andrew turned to look at it and was agog: so was I. We simply couldn't believe what we were seeing. Once the car had stopped I was even more excited, more excited than I had ever been in my whole life because this was *unbelievable*. This was something that few people ever get to see. My eyeballs must have been popping out of my head, because I was trying to see everything, all at once. The awe I was feeling was indescribable.

The road was pitch black, there was no moon and no street lights. Outside the bubble of light created by our headlights and the craft, it was black all around. When Andrew turned off the headlights, the only light came from the craft in the field.

I got out of the car, and stood beside the door. I had to be careful, because I was wearing high heels with my jeans, and I didn't want to go over into the ditch behind me. I didn't want a broken ankle at a time like

this! Before I shut the door, I remembered my handbag and reached in and grabbed it from the floor of the car. I take my handbag with me wherever I go, and that night I made a conscious decision as to whether I really needed it or not. Habit won, but this act was one of the first flashes that I relived in the recall – it seems that the decision of whether or not to take the handbag caused some kind of short circuit in the missing time amnesia.

The craft was completely lit up, and it seemed to be made of solid light. I'd never seen anything remotely like it before, apart from the earlier craft. The light was mainly orange: large circles of bright orange light, like amber stop lights. This craft was a much larger version of the one hovering over the trees a few kilometres back, and the one I had seen earlier that afternoon, but it was of the same basic configuration. There was a major difference, however. Underneath this one I could see a very strange arrangement of blue light, like fluorescent corrugated iron, comprised of solid bars of alternating dark and light blue colours, with the main shade somewhere between baby-blue and aqua.

This blue light extended from beneath the orange circles to the ground. It looked like a corrugated cone cut in half lengthwise. Let me describe it to you exactly. Imagine you have an ice-cream cone, and the point is sticking down. Cut the cone in half lengthwise, right through the point, then cut the cone in half across the middle, and throw away the point. You're left with a kind of half shell, with the narrower part at the base, and the broader part on top. If the shell was made out of corrugated blue light, that would be the thing I saw underneath the craft. It was solid enough that it could not be seen through.

It was quite beautiful: spectacular in fact. The entire craft seemed to be composed of solid light, and a fluorescent mist surrounded the object – a little like the haze around a street lamp on a rainy night.

The colour of the orange circles was a little more rich than the fog lights you see on country roads. Because we saw 'people' in the craft that hovered above the road, I'd assumed that the orange lights were actually windows. The odd thing about this craft, however, was that if the circles were windows, the light did not seem to be coming from inside them. In fact, it seemed to *be* them. The circles were large enough for a man to stand up full length in.

I shut the door after I retrieved my handbag, moved to the front of the car to meet Andrew and then looked back along the road, because I

could see another light out of the corner of my eye. There was a car behind us: it was stopped about 110 metres back, and was either white or light-blue. At the time, I had no idea why I could see the colour of their car, but that was hardly important, given what I was really interested in. I simply noted it, and only later did I discover that there had been a third car behind this one. I could see two people standing in front of the car behind us, holding hands. I didn't know them.

This took all of about ten seconds. We started walking across the road. I felt like I needed to pinch myself. My mind kept reminding me, *You are conscious, this is real . . . this is really happening*, which, incidentally, was another one of the recall triggers.

I was grinning from ear to ear. There was no question in my mind that this thing wasn't a UFO. I instinctively looked downhill at the people behind us. I was glad that other people were there – it meant there were other witnesses and our story would be believed.

The funny thing is that when I saw those people, it never entered my head to join them so that we could all go together. I suppose it was because, at this point, I wasn't frightened at all. If it happened again, however, you'd better believe that I would make sure we all stayed together. That's if I didn't run like hell, which is probably more likely, given what I know now. After that quick glance behind me, my eyes were glued to the craft for most of the time.

Andrew and I held hands as we crossed the road. That's how we went, all the way to the stormwater drain beyond the edge of the bitumen. The land was higher and drier here and we stepped across the drain. In front of us was 10 metres of grass, which has subsequently been planted with trees. Beyond this was a fence, and only later did I find out it was electric – we were close to it, but we didn't touch it.

We stood there for about thirty seconds, like stunned mullets. Everything around us was bathed in that wonderful coloured light – this really was quite a show! Then, from nowhere, a tall black figure suddenly appeared in front of the craft. It was silhouetted against the blue shell and was just standing there, alone, looking at us. It was very tall, too thin, and kind of misshapen. The head was not quite right and it looked odd.

I squeezed Andrew's hand and said, 'Look, there's someone coming.'
'Yeah, I can see it.'

And then I had the bright idea of using thought as a means of contact. It seemed like a completely natural thing to do, considering that this being had, only seconds ago, emerged from a UFO!

The being was coming toward us slowly, from over a hundred metres away. As it approached, I stood there listening with my mind. I was watching and listening, when all of a sudden I heard this chilling thought: *Let's kill them.* The voice I heard was telepathic – not audible, but extremely clear. 'Them' meant us, and the thought concerned not only Andrew and myself, but the other people who were watching from further down the road.

It was said more like a suggestion, sort of 'Can we? Perhaps we should'. It absolutely terrified me, because there was no emotion or excitement in the suggestion. It was like I had overheard a discussion of options – as if this being was asking another if it was alright, if it ought to be done. I can't be any more precise than that. There had to be more of them, but in that second all I could see was one tall figure.

This chilled me to the bone, and the excitement and eagerness I'd felt only a second before disappeared rapidly. I thought in horror, *These beings have no souls!* The voice had seemed callous, devoid of feeling, and inhuman. At that moment I just knew they had no souls, and I was fast becoming aware that this was not the sweetness-and-light encounter with wise superior beings that I had expected.

All of a sudden, there was not only one being, but many. All I could see was a mass of blazing red eyes. I don't know where the others came from – like the first being, they simply appeared. In retrospect, I guess that they could have come from the blue light, but I didn't see them do this. There were seven or eight identical black beings: fourteen or sixteen glowing red eyes that were the colour of bright blood. It was terrifying.

In the same instant as the other beings appeared, an incredible physical energy hit me in waves of vibration, and the vibration carried an emotion. That's the only way I can describe it. I was hit with something that they were pumping into me in waves, and this was an emotion of pure, unadulterated horror.

You'll get the idea of what these waves were like if you imagine you're standing in front of a bass amplifier at a rock concert. Multiply the volume by ten, and then oscillate it from full to nothing, full to nothing, over and over. The waves came from outside of myself, and it was not an

internal emotional response to what I was seeing. This was imposed on me, by them, and I suspect it was transmitted via their glowing red eyes. The waves passed through my body like sound, but it wasn't a noise. It was some kind of frequency directed at me.

The immediate effect was as if someone had pressed a 'horror-button' in my head. I screamed at Andrew and the others down the road, 'They've got no souls! They're evil! They're going to kill us!'

That's when they charged.

CHAPTER 8



Wendy's eyes were wide with surprise. It was obvious that my last statement had been completely contrary to whatever she'd anticipated. I could understand that as I didn't know of anywhere else, in any of the literature that I had subsequently read on this subject, where these creatures are said to have charged at human beings.

Yet that is exactly what they did.

'En masse,' I said to Wendy, 'These beings, led by the first one – I assume he was the leader – rushed at us in an orderly formation, like troops. And as they did, they started to accelerate across the 150 metres between us. They seemed to be flying or gliding across the ground, just inches above it but still upright.

'In the very last instant, when they were just about upon us, I distinctly remember thinking that they were white. This may be because they were white all the while, and the fact that they had been silhouetted against the blue light had made them appear dark. But considering the later manifestations of dark beings, it doesn't seem likely. It may also be that the energy they were utilising to move at such rapid speed was causing them to glow white. I don't know for sure, as I saw the white for only a fraction of a second.

'As they got closer to us they continued to emanate this horror-inducing energy, which I fought against, and which I tried to warn the others about. It took three seconds flat for them to cover that distance. One hundred and fifty metres – I don't know what the world record time for that is, but a person couldn't run at that speed so it doesn't matter. Their legs were not moving, their arms weren't pumping, and they didn't jump. They were gliding, and they were on us like lightning.'

'Now,' Wendy said, still wide-eyed, 'because there was some distance between you and the other people, did the aliens split their charge? Did some go towards them and some to you?'

'Yes, they did. They got about half way across the field and then split up, one group coming toward us and the other zooming over to the others. It was organised, no question about that.'

Those eyes! My own eyes were locked to them, and if I could see anything else in the surroundings it was due solely to my peripheral vision. If I hadn't been glued to their eyes in that way, I might have turned and run, if there had been any time.

But there was not, and I stood rooted to the ground. The roaring horror-energy was still hitting me as they rushed at us, and my thoughts were scattered by it, like a deck of cards flung into the air. There was a sound, like a roaring wind, inside my head and I couldn't seem to focus my mind at all. It was as if something was interfering with the way my brain worked! It left me with little more than raw instinct to reason with, and I believe that was one of its intended effects. More than simply trying to frighten, it was disabling.

I never had a chance. It was horrifying. But I *had* to fight the effects of this energy, because I was convinced that I was going to die if I didn't.

Looking back now, those eyes were probably the worst thing. Incredibly frightening. I may be wrong in this, but I had the feeling that the energy was emanating directly from their eyes. I saw no other apparatus, like a gun, or machine or anything. They didn't seem to be aiming anything at us, except their eyes.

A moment later, a figure appeared in front of me. For all the good that it did, I think I just managed to get my hands up to shield myself when it was about two to three metres from me. An eyeblink later, I felt a tremendous blow to my stomach, right in the solar plexus, but it was an energy force rather than a punch with a fist. It knocked me backwards through the air, and I landed flat on my back in the grass. My feet came right off the ground.

I felt absolutely nauseous when I landed. I could hardly breathe, and I could barely move. I tried to sit up, but I couldn't. I was completely winded and wheezing, trying to say, 'Help me, I can't breathe!', but nothing came out beyond a whisper. They just left me lying there and I felt the panic of death. I knew that it would be the end if I didn't sit up.

I'd been hurt like that once before, not winded but hurt so bad that I thought, 'If I don't get up, I'm going to die'. When I was a little girl, about ten years old, I fell down a flight of stairs. I'd been trying on a pair of high heels for the first time, and I landed on the base of my spine. All I could say was, 'Help me up. If I can just get up, I'll be fine.' My parents saw it happen but they couldn't understand me because I was on the verge of blacking out, so they just stood there not wanting to touch me.

This was the same feeling that I had in the field, that I had to fight this, or else. But I think the winding came from two sources, the hit in the stomach and landing flat on my back.

Eventually, I managed to get up. I was sitting on my backside in the middle of the space between the road and the fence. Air was coming into my lungs again, and that was when the nausea hit me. I was sure I was going to throw up at any minute. Sitting like this, trying to get myself together, I opened my eyes and realised that the worst thing I could imagine had happened to me. I couldn't see. I was completely blind!

If you've ever blacked out, when your vision fades to black and then the lights go out, you'll *think* you understand. In this situation, however, everything faded to black but I didn't pass out. I was sitting there, fully conscious although my head was ringing. I could still hear and feel things, but my sight had gone. I really freaked out. The first thing I did when I realised what had happened was to scream out to my husband. 'I can't see! I'm blind! Andrew, help me, I'm blind!'

I was half in tears, half in terror. The whole thing was traumatic, and I was now on the verge not of unconsciousness, but of hysteria. All I had to go by was my sense of hearing, and I was listening hard for Andrew. I heard his voice, and estimated he was about three metres away. I'd been standing right beside him only a few moments before, and that's how far back I'd been thrown.

I heard him say, 'Let go of me!', and his voice was croaking with fear.

Then I heard another male voice, speaking in English. It was quite strange, because it was perfect. There was no accent, and the grammar was impeccable – you just don't hear voices like that.

This voice was so remarkable that it deserves a proper description. It was better than any professional radio announcer I've ever heard. It was flawless, and ordinary men do not grow up talking like that, no matter how much education they've had. It was well rounded. It wasn't too deep,

or too soft, and the words he said were enunciated precisely but naturally. It was beautifully characterless — by this I mean that the only way you could identify that voice again was by the absence of the characteristics that normal voices possess. Most people have little mannerisms in their speech, but this being had none. It was a horrible touch of irony that such a perfect man's voice should issue from such an awful creature.

The voice I heard was not telepathic but audible, and it said: 'We mean you no harm.' It was a cliché, and ironic. The irony was that it was patently untrue, and this being's voice veritably dripped with sarcasm when he said it. He seemed to be fond of clichés, because he kept on using them throughout his address. I heard this opener as if it was a studied line, well rehearsed, and one that had been said often and to many.

I'm talking about first impressions here, and any parallel I'm likely to draw is almost certainly wrong. So if I say, for example, that the being had an aristocratic bearing, this is incorrect, even though it's probably as close as I can get to describing him. Yet it's not entirely wrong, because he did exhibit the type of hauteur that you would expect in an aristocrat. He was haughty, arrogant, and condescending.

Perhaps his arrogance came from his power, because his power and control over us was undisputed. But I had another impression when listening to him: an impression of something more terrible and demeaning than ordinary arrogance. He exhibited a sort of contempt for us that seemed to stem from long familiarity — we were unquestionably a known quantity to him. This came over loud and clear from his attitude, and from the completely smooth and competent way in which he and his group dealt with us in a matter of seconds.

They'd gone into action the very moment I screamed. There was no hesitation or deliberation as to what the plan was, and that kind of instant corps response would be very difficult to achieve, even among elite military forces. As a body, I don't think that any SAS team could have executed such a practised reflexive response. Human sport and combat is often a chaotic affair, but there was a fluid confidence in the way that these beings grouped together and came at us.

Thinking further about that, the SAS, or the police, or other groups of humans always show *some* hesitation before coalescing as a group and taking action. The reason for this is simple: every human being has a mind of its own. When human beings come together as a body, they have to

align their minds and get into step before they can go into action. Orders have to be issued by unit commanders, and targets have to be indicated. Tactical manoeuvres need to be co-ordinated, even if they've been rehearsed beforehand. Radios buzz with directions and coded commands. All of this invariably takes time, even if it's only a few seconds. Everyone in the group has to see the situation, size it up and come to the same conclusion about it. Only then can they function as a whole.

These beings weren't like that. They didn't seem to have to think about what they were doing once the main issue was decided. If, unlike humans, there was only *one* mind among many bodies, they could have acted as one group, without each individual having to stop and think, 'What the hell is going on? Oh, that woman is screaming . . . we need to do something about that. What are we going to do?'

I'm considering the possibility that the leader, the one with the perfect voice, may have possessed the only independent mind, and the others simply did what he said without question. One thing conflicts with this idea, however. The leader later issued an order to one of the others, which would have been unnecessary if he was the sole intelligence. Although one individual was definitely calling the shots, I'm more inclined to think that those beings were able to link their minds.

I continued to listen to the leader because that was all I could do.

'We mean you no harm,' he said to Andrew.

'Then why did you hit Kelly?' Andrew had almost lost his voice through fright.

That was the last time I heard Andrew speak. For the remainder of the experience I heard only that one male voice, or me raving hysterically. But in response to Andrew's question, the voice said, 'I wouldn't harm her. After all, I am her father.'

This was too much for me. I was sitting on the ground, sick, blind and helpless, but determined not to give an inch. I started screeching, 'You're not my father! I'm not your daughter! You're evil! You're not my father! I hate you! You're evil' . . . over and over.

I took what he said as mockery, because when I'd seen the earlier craft on the way to Eva's, I'd prayed and referred to God as 'Father', as I always did. I'd called out to whoever or whatever was in that craft to wait for me, and asked God the Father for help.

When this being referred to me as his daughter, I felt he was putting himself in the place of God and implying that I was consequently his child. I interpreted him quite literally. I think I felt he was claiming ownership of me, because I sometimes considered that God 'owned' me and that I was His child. That's precisely what I was opposed to in this instance, the implication of ownership.

I believe that the being may have heard me on the earlier drive, and then threw this line at me as if to say, 'It didn't get there, Kelly. This is where your prayer went; I claimed it. I guess that makes *me* your father.'

It was quite clear that he was being derisive, and that set me off. I wasn't going to have that. I wasn't going to let him get away with it. I may have been blinded, and flat on my backside on the grass, but I felt that I still had to fight everything and concede nothing. I had only one Father when it came to God, and this being was definitely not Him!

His little dig had its desired effect, however. It brought me up short, real fast. It was like hitting a brick wall at a hundred miles an hour. What scared me most, I suppose, was that God was forced out of the picture and made to be nothing in the face of this new and entirely unexpected supernatural force. By supernatural I mean that the powers that these beings seemed to have at their command were beyond nature. They could project energies across space that did harm in ways I couldn't understand.

Certainly these beings could do things that seemed miraculous. They made my God seem impotent, and brought Him into a very shabby light. The message was written in twelve-foot neon: *We are here. Where is your God?*

He'd had his little joke, and then he chuckled! He was quite secure, and laughed in appreciation of his own wit. More than that, he was laughing at us. Me especially, but also at people in general and our belief in God. That's why I say that he was haughty, arrogant and demeaning of us.

Of course, I wasn't thinking about any of the subtleties at this point. I was hysterical.

When he finished laughing I said, 'Oh God, I think I'm going to be sick.' I then put my head between my knees and blacked out. All of this took perhaps two minutes from the time I got my wind back.

I came to, I think it may have been a few minutes later, and the only thing I could hear was the same male voice. I still couldn't see, but he was

speaking at a distance, although near enough for me to hear everything he was saying.

It sounded like he was addressing a group: I mean all of us, including the people from the other car. Counting myself, that would have made four of us that I was aware of, but I later discovered that there was a third person with the other couple. We'd probably been herded together, except for me. I was still sitting on my backside and hadn't moved. The voice said, 'We're a peaceful people.'

Yet another cliché, and it sounded to me like this was a routine that he was following, his standard lecture. He reminded me of someone leading a bunch of tourists through a government facility, where you're only allowed to see the sanitised bits, not the lab downstairs where they're building weapons of mass destruction or making monsters.

He spoke so calmly that his voice had an almost hypnotic quality, but I started screaming out, 'Don't believe them, they're trying to trick you. They're trying to deceive you! They want to steal your souls!'

That's exactly how I felt, and still feel to this day. It sounds crazy, like the ravings of a religious maniac, but it contains a thread of truth that I can't shake off. Although today I'm not as religious, in the sense of organised religion, as I was then, the point remains important.

I was screaming out, 'If you're so peaceful, why are you doing this? Why are you doing this to my mind? Liars! Liars!'

I was trying to persuade the others not to believe them. I was aware of the other people, although I couldn't see them. I sensed them to my right, about five or six metres away.

This is what I wrote in my journal, not long after I recalled the encounter. I include it so you can understand the essence of the experience.

I then directed my sobbing towards the other people, hoping they could hear me.

'Don't believe them. They're not really peaceful. They're trying to trick you. They want your souls. They're trying to steal your souls.'

I know this idea may sound ludicrous. But, deprived of my logical faculties, and at the same time convinced that the beings had no souls, it was sound reasoning at that particular moment to believe that souls were exactly what they were after.

I was under the total conviction that the deceit of these beings was so manipulative that if, for even one brief second, they were allowed to interchange truth and deceit in the heart of a person, that person had duly forfeited their soul. Maybe this says more about my fears and religious convictions than factual knowledge, but basic instinct still won the right to prevail that night. I sensed only an all-pervading evil and no pretty words had a hope of changing that unless I stopped feeling what I was feeling.

These beings were definitely not the wise and benevolent types that you sometimes hear about in such encounters. They tried to pass themselves off as that, but I saw right through them. I felt a sense of duty, an obligation to warn the others who were there that night. These beings had no souls, as far as I could determine, and it was logical to assume they were in need of the ones that we had.

It seemed to me at the time that they might have been subsisting on souls, on the energy that they contain, to keep themselves alive. They needed souls to live. They wanted them, and they got them by deceiving people into agreeing to co-operate.

The other thing that became clear in the field that night was that *I had known them previously*. I didn't know where I had met them before, or how, but I was operating on a subconscious recognition of them. I recognised these beings, not so much from anything I saw but because of the energy I was feeling. I knew them because of their force-field. The feeling that I knew them was strong enough for me to warn the other people with some authority. I had encountered them before, and I knew it, even if I couldn't quite say where and when.

These conclusions were part of my bad reaction to the experience, but at least I succeeded in interrupting the being's speech. I'm sure he didn't appreciate it much, as I think I was supposed to be unconscious.

Very calmly, and with total authority, he said, 'Will someone please *do something about her?*' It was so cutting, so condescending.

Everything was going according to plan for this being – it was all routine, except for this minor annoyance sitting on the damp grass, disturbing the operation, screeching, and flapping around. His comment sliced right through my hysteria, and made me feel like a bug. He sounded

sarcastic but not angry, because anger on his part would have implied that I had some power to derail the show.

A second or so later, and remember that I couldn't see anything, I sensed a presence beside me and a hand fell on my shoulder. The hand was real, although it wasn't heavy, malicious or violent. I can still feel it now in my memory, through my jumper, which was reasonably thick. It was between the touch of a woman and a man, if you can imagine that. One of the others had been dispatched to deal with me, because of what the leader had just said.

A wave of disgust washed over me as I felt that hand on my shoulder, and I instantly gave full vent to my anger. I believed this being had no right to touch me, that I was in God's care, and that whatever these things were – devils, aliens, or what-have-you – they had no rights as far as I was concerned. No rights to touch me, possess me, or do anything to me or with me.

I was full of extreme, righteous anger and I was no longer hysterical. There were laws, God's laws, but more than that, the rule was that they could not touch anyone who had not given their consent. Strangely, I also lost much of my fear and suddenly felt more in control. I no longer believed I was going to die, and I didn't even care if I was going to die or not. It ceased to be important.

Although I could not see I directed my eyes towards where I thought the beings were, and anger burned through them. I knew they could see that, if they were looking.

'How dare you do this to these innocent people?' My righteous anger came forth like a raging river and I bellowed, 'HOW DARE YOU! HOW DARE YOU PUT TERROR INTO THE HEARTS OF THESE INNOCENT PEOPLE! GET OUT OF HERE, YOU HEAR ME? IN THE NAME OF GOD, GET OUT OF HERE AND GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM!'

I *roared* at them from my pulpit in the grass.

'That was a strange way of dealing with the problem,' Wendy said, with one eyebrow arched in my direction. 'So you screamed those words at them.' She cleared her throat. 'Fine. A little grandiose, perhaps, for my taste.'

I shrugged, and thought back with amusement to my Pentecostal conditioning. If there was ever a person who knew how to put the devil in his place, it was a Pentecostal!

Wendy folded her arms. Finally she said, 'The burning question is, though: did it work?'

I shifted in my seat. 'The next thing I knew was that I was back in the car.'

'Amazing! Truly amazing!' she said. She eyed me carefully and finally said, 'Now tell me, what do you think *really* happened after you roared at them? One of them had its hand on your shoulder, you were yelling at the top of your voice, and the next thing is you were back in the car. You told me you still have at least another hour of missing time.'

'I don't recall what happened after that,' I replied evenly.

Wendy stood up and paced, agitated and disconcerted.

'Well *something* happened, Kelly, because you had that triangular mark below your navel, and nothing that you've suggested to me so far can explain that.'

'This is true,' I said softly. 'I don't think I touched the electric fence, and anyway, it wouldn't have left a mark below my navel – that sort of mark would have been much higher. The researchers and I went back there, and that possibility was eventually eliminated.'

'So where did the mark come from?'

'I don't know.'

'It must have happened after the hand touched you, and before you were back in the car. They obviously still had their way with you!'

'I can't remember.'

'I wish you could.'

'I don't want to remember!'

'I can understand that. But . . .'

I lit a cigarette. 'The whole experience was so terrifying that for days after I recalled it I was no good for anything. It threatened to destroy me.'

After a long pause, Wendy said, 'Alright. We'll leave that for now. Change tack. How do you feel about your reactions during the actual incident? You could hardly call yelling at them at the top of your lungs an "enlightened" response. It might have been less traumatic if you had reacted differently.'

'The thing to remember,' I said coldly, 'is that they weren't interested in dialogue. Do you understand? They honestly couldn't have been less interested in what we were thinking, how we felt, or what our opinions were.'

'I imagine that *you* might have tried to talk with them, to ask them questions and find out what they were about. But you wouldn't have been given the opportunity. The other people recall no such exchange. According to them, they were taken on board the craft, where various procedures were performed on them before they were released. Do you get what I'm saying? What I did and how I felt did *not* matter to them. It only matters to us.'

'But there is one other thing that I have neglected to mention, one redeeming feature of those last moments.'

'And that is?'

'When I roared at them, they hesitated. It threw them slightly. The hand on my shoulder paused, it seemed to lose its firmness and then the hand was lifted. I think they hadn't anticipated such a response, and it's the only thing I did which seemed to have an effect on them.'

'That was the only thing in the entire incident which did not run according to their script. It deterred them for only a second, but it did deter them. Everything else that happened was well within their expected parameters, as far as I can determine from their smooth, confident handling of the situation. But not that. It set them back on their heels, if only for an instant.'

'You're saying that they don't like surprises?'

'Uh huh. I really got the impression that they relied on working things out to a fine degree in advance. Or maybe their energy force swats the human consciousness so hard that they rarely have any trouble from anyone. Whatever, they were very good at what they did, but surprises throw them — or at least mine seemed to.'

'Now that *is* interesting,' Wendy said. 'They did seem to take great pains on that score, didn't they? They came in superior numbers, with overwhelming force, and they operated at night. They seem pretty risk averse, when you think about it.'

'Risk averse?'

'They take no chances. Things are scripted so that "shit doesn't happen". They use stealth and excessive force to eliminate any chance of failure.'

'It would seem to be that way,' I said.

'But even given that,' Wendy added, 'what were they really doing? Why did they go to so much trouble? What did they want?'

'Perhaps we'll have a few more answers when all the pieces have been laid out.'

CHAPTER 9



Try to imagine how I felt on that night at Eva's. In the space of a few hours, I had gone from mild curiosity about something that Andrew and I had seen on the road a few weeks before, to receiving a bundle of very disturbing, violent memories of something wilder than my imagination could encompass. I would challenge anyone to maintain a calm and dispassionate perspective on something like this.

As these memories came flooding back, I had to ask myself if I was going crazy. I'd wondered a similar thing on the night when I thought we were going to see a UFO and apparently didn't, but I now had serious doubts about my sanity.

There was no denying the reality of what I remembered. It was an actual memory, and just too real and vivid to be a dream or a fantasy. The recollection that I had was a memory in the same way that you remember anything about your past. No more, no less. And I wasn't remembering something from my childhood: this was contemporary. This took place in October, and the encounter happened the previous August, just eight weeks previously.

That night at my friend's house, as it all came back to me, I was alone and it took me hours to pull myself together. As I've said, I linked one flash of recollection to another until the whole thing was there, and I was devastated at the end of it all.

Eva came back from bingo, and after a cup of coffee she chatted away until it was time to go to bed. I know I wasn't holding up my end of the conversation, but I don't even think she realised. And to be frank, I could hardly tell her what I'd recalled — how would she believe me if I could hardly believe myself. I wasn't yet able to tell anyone, let alone my best

friend. Talk about risk aversion, I was risk averse for a long time after that evening. I just didn't need the complications.

I think its fair to say that the recollection of what happened on the road that night turned my whole world upside down. Apart from my cherished relationships, nothing meant anything to me any longer because everything I believed in was shaken to the very core. I felt my entire system of logic lurch and careen off into a ditch.

Andrew picked me up on the Sunday, and during the drive home I started telling him what I had discovered, although not every detail.

'We *did* see a UFO that night, Andrew.'

'I told you we did.'

'But I have something else to tell you.'

'Oh?'

'We stopped the car that night. After we saw the light we stopped the car. I've been remembering what happened all weekend.'

'I don't remember us stopping the car.'

'I figured that. But do you remember how we talked about missing some time? I was sure that we were missing an hour and a half.'

He became angry. 'Don't start that again Kelly! I know how long it took us to get home. We left late.'

'No we didn't. Andrew, I'm trying to tell you that something terrible has happened.'

'Nothing happened.'

'You just said that you remember seeing the UFO! That's nothing? Gee, what would it have to be before you called it a something? A nuclear explosion?'

'I don't want to get into this.'

'I remember the aliens, what they looked like, what they did. Most of it, but not all.'

'What? You've got to be kidding. You're crazy!' If he laughed any harder we would probably have had an accident.

'But I'm serious, Andrew. We stopped the car and there was this big UFO in the field, and all these tall black things. You just don't remember it.'

He laughed again. 'Alright, alright! I don't care. You can say you saw aliens. You can say you saw pink elephants if that makes you happy.'

'Aren't you at all curious about what they looked like?'

He giggled, as he often did when he knew I wasn't going to shut up until I'd had my say. 'You make me so crazy sometimes! Of *course* I'm interested, darling! Ha ha . . . tell me . . . go on, you're going to anyway!'

I knew he was joking, but I was dead serious. 'Remember the time when I came running out of the bedroom a few nights after we saw the UFO? How I told you I'd seen this tall thing with big glowing red eyes, standing beside my bed?'

He remembered, and gave me an exaggerated nod over the steering wheel as he drove.

'Well, the thing that I saw in the bedroom was exactly the same as what we saw on the field that night.'

'Not we. You.'

I sat back in the seat with my arms folded limply. I'd expected a little more satisfaction from unburdening myself to my husband. If I wasn't so shellshocked by all the memories, I might have found time to be angry. Instead, our conversation had only increased my sense of isolation.

When we got back to our place, I told him that I'd decided to let someone know about this. I knew that there had to be people who would be interested in what I'd seen and experienced: scientists, the government, somebody!

He didn't want me to do that, but my mind was made up. I needed help with this, and I barely thought about the fact that I would be disobeying him if I went ahead. I was in a desperate state and I needed answers. I felt a sense of duty, but to whom I didn't know.

I took the first steps the following day. It was Monday and I was at home by myself. I rang the universities one by one, getting their numbers from the telephone directory. I asked each of them if they happened to have a department of parapsychology.

Of course they didn't, but I didn't know where else to begin. Every university put me through to their psychology department instead, and the response was mixed when I explained my situation. I think it's positively hilarious now that I've managed to get more of a perspective on things. Some were helpful, in that they listened even though they couldn't help, but others were downright rude and hung up on me.

There's one exchange that I'll never forget.

'Dr P speaking. How can I help you?'

'You're with the psychology department?'

'Yes.'

Fumbling for words, I said, 'How can I put this? I'm looking for someone who knows about UFOs.'

'You've seen a UFO?'

'Yes, I have.'

'There's not much that I can do for you, but I do know how you can get some help.'

'Yes?' I asked, clicking my pen, ready to take down a possible new lead.

'Have you got a copy of the Yellow Pages?' he asked.

'I do. Hold on a minute . . .' I tucked the phone under my ear while I rifled around among a pile of phone books.

'Look up "Psychologist",' he said. 'Pick the name of the doctor living closest to your area and book yourself an appointment.'

He hung up.

I could feel my face flushing bright red with humiliation. We'd spoken only a handful of words and that was his conclusion, totally on the basis of the fact that he believed UFOs were not real.

This is what I wrote in my journal after my search for an understanding ear was over and I was in the competent hands of professional researchers. I needed to get it out of my system — the anger, the humiliation, and the unfairness of it all.

I cannot express enough my disillusionment at the sad and sorry fact that of all the authoritative bodies I was obliged to deal with, the greatest humiliation I underwent was due to the attitude of the university faculties. Not only was I treated as if I possessed the mental attributes of a two-year-old, but on several occasions the phone was hung up at the mere mention of the word UFO. It is this same attitude that prevents the entire populace from gaining any further insight into this admittedly bizarre, but very real, phenomenon.

An open mind seems to be a closed shop as far as many mainstream psychologists are concerned. The extreme difference between theory and experience is either ignored or not recognised. I have to say that if the 'it didn't happen to me, so it didn't happen to you' mindset is as progressive as it gets in mainstream psychology, then I think that three-quarters of the profession ought to chuck in their day jobs and find something constructive to do with their lives. To move

ahead in anything, a person has to open their eyes and look, not squeeze them tightly shut, utter the magic words 'go away, you don't exist', and then open them again and expect the problem to be gone.

I admit that there are a lot of fruitcakes in the world who 'talk to Martians' regularly, along with bag-ladies who know the Queen on a first name basis. I'm sure that mental health professionals get calls from those types every day of the week. But I wasn't hitting them with nonsense like that.

Since that time I have got to know quite a number of psychologists and psychiatrists who work in the UFO field. Their operations are probably a little bit clandestine, but I'm sure that this will change with the emergence of more pioneers like John Mack, Harvard Professor of Psychiatry. In recent years, he has launched a one-man crusade to bring abduction experiences into the public realm, much to the disconcertion of his Freudian colleagues and the general profession.

I know a number of professionals who admire this man's attitude greatly, and who would give just about anything for the same opportunity, but the fear of professional ridicule forces them to go underground. This is a particular problem here in Australia.

Anyway, I obviously survived the insults, and I eventually came across someone who was fairly knowledgeable and who directed me to the Civil Aviation Authority. I'd been hitting the phone like crazy, and when I called the CAA it started to pay off. The CAA put me in touch with a UFO research group in Melbourne, and Bill Chalker in Sydney. I remember being quite surprised that there were such things as UFO researchers. I had expected to be directed to the military or something similar – maybe some secret government establishment.

Amusing as it seems to me now, I somehow got the idea that the whole world was going to stop because of what I had seen. I thought that the President of the USA's hotline was going to ring with an urgent call from Down Under, saying, 'We've got a woman here who's seen a UFO.' That's how unaware of the system I was.

But I was determined to find out what I wanted to know, and determined to do it as quickly as possible. It took me about three days of

constant calling to obtain the number for the UFO group, but I felt a lot better when I got it.

In retrospect, the logical thing to do would have been to visit the libraries. But I didn't think of doing that because I was in a crisis. This was like a personal emergency and I needed living breathing human beings to help me with this, to talk to me and tell me that I was not crazy. Books can't do that, and even if they could, I had no idea at the time that such a thing as UFO literature existed.

So I networked my way through the system, until I got in contact with a woman from Melbourne. She wanted to publish my story in a magazine immediately, but that terrified me and I backed off. It wasn't what I wanted. I wanted a scientist to examine my story because I wanted the world to know that this was real. To a degree, in my state of mind at the time, I perceived these beings as some sort of threat to humanity. How many other people might be traumatised as I was? I had no way of knowing.

It's important to remember that in the circumstances, I believed that that these beings gained power over people by deception, and what better way to prevent harm to others than by making the hard facts known.

I still believe that a scientific approach is the best way to proceed with a physical investigation, but I have become increasingly aware that there are some aspects of an encounter experience that science is just not equipped to deal with. In some circumstances it can even be a hindrance to the cause, mainly because of the limited framework of contemporary science. Ufology is a pioneer field, and those working in it are on the very edges of the scientific establishment. This is why so much controversy surrounds the subject: it is not acceptable because so little of our technological knowledge can be applied to solving its mysteries.

In the beginning, though, I wanted someone scientific and credible and when I first began my inquiries, Bill Chalker sounded like someone who could address the problem properly. Bill is one of Australia's better known ufologists and he has been working in this field for about twenty-three years. But he's based in Sydney, which is well over 1000 kilometres away from where I live in Victoria.

Bill was very comforting, however, and assured me that I wasn't a lunatic. His calm professionalism was refreshing, given the offhanded and hamfisted way in which I'd been treated up to this point. He told me that

because of the distance involved, he would refer me to someone closer, in Melbourne. Bill gave me the phone number of a man named John Auchettl, of Phenomena Research Australia (PRA).

In spite of the fact that Bill did such a wonderful job in restoring my shattered confidence in people, I still had to steel myself for the possibility of ultimate disappointment. But when eventually I got in touch with John, on 4 October 1993, my first impression after talking to him was that he was exactly what I had been looking for.

John is a wonderful man, as I came to discover, and he's every inch the professional when it comes to research. He's incredibly thorough, and when I told him the basic outline of what had happened to me, he surprised me by saying that it was not at all uncommon.

This startled me. Not uncommon? I was so ignorant of the basic facts concerning UFOs that I had mistakenly believed I was just about the only person in the world that this had happened to. I had of course heard of and seen films about UFOs, like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, but I thought that was just Hollywood stuff. I believed that my experience would take these things out of the realm of fiction and prove, once and for all, that some UFO fiction was based on fact.

I didn't know about the books of Betty and Barney Hill, Whitley Strieber and Roswell, or any of the standard literature on the subject. I did, however, know about the Knowles family who had their car lifted off the road by a UFO on the Eyre Highway in Western Australia in 1988. Everyone knew about those poor people, because they were publicly ridiculed in the press and on TV. The way in which they were treated was absolutely dreadful, and they were helpless in the face of the roasting they received.

Yes, I did remember them, and I also remembered seeing the tears in Faye Knowles' eyes as a TV interviewer turned their experience into a sideshow comedy. Now, when I thought of them, I cringed and prayed with all my might that there was some kind of justice in the world. Because if what was done to them was about to be done to me, I could kiss my privacy and self-respect goodbye.

Of one thing I was certain. My case, where physical contact between humans and aliens had taken place, seemed to be unusual. I honestly believed that the world was waiting for just one credible, bona fide

encounter, and when the facts were known the human race would be enlightened. Everyone would know the truth.

The first few days of ringing around disabused me of that idea to a large extent, but John Auchettl was the first person to inform me that ufology was a recognised, if not widely accepted, subject of study. That sounded promising and I felt that now I was in the hands of the pros, the wheels would really start to turn. But what helped me most of all was John's calm acceptance of what I had to say. That inspired me, and gave me the confidence to reveal more.

John, like Bill Chalker, reassured me that I wasn't crazy. If he had told me, 'Listen, you may have a brain tumour which is causing these weird memories and dreams', I might have believed him because he clearly knew more than I did. I was willing to accept any credible, rational explanation.

But he didn't say that. Instead, after a few calls back and forth, he told me that this had to be investigated, and that he would be in touch with me soon to set up a meeting.

I was happy to hear this. Very happy. I wanted them to research my case until they had milked it for every possible clue, particularly if they kept me in the background and fed me answers as soon as they got them. They could work out what the deal was with these craft and the beings who drove them. They could tell me and the world at the same time. I would then have discharged my duty.

My duty. I had a feeling that this experience, this contact with alien beings, was vital knowledge that had to be revealed. And there was a pressing urgency about this, because one of those entities had already visited me in my bedroom.

In short, getting into contact with these gentlemen went a long way towards realising my hopes in those early days. Hopes that I would be taken seriously, and that someone with real expertise could take it from here, so to speak.

John arranged to meet me in Melbourne on a Sunday, at the Fountain Gate Shopping Centre. He picked me up, and we went to Sizzlers for lunch. Over lunch, I told him more of my story, and especially how I believed that other people were there that night.

He was particularly interested in the fact that I had managed to recollect such a large portion of the missing time. He said that because of

this, it was unlikely that hypnosis was the best policy in my case. He explained that there were risks with hypnosis if it wasn't carried out with great care. It was not dangerous to the subject as such, but the problem lay in the fact that the story could become corrupted, especially when the subject acquired knowledge about other UFO incidents from external sources. He put me under a book ban, and did not want me discussing things with anyone else until they had what he called, 'the essentials' of my experience.

I'd told John the outline over lunch, but I initially played my cards close to my chest. There were things that happened out on the field which were too terrible or embarrassing to relate immediately. Most importantly, John told me to start immediately on keeping a journal of everything that had happened, and everything that occurred from now on.

He also gave me a survey form to fill in to help them with their study. It contained many detailed questions, and asked for drawings of what I had seen. I took it home with me to fill in later, and sent it to him in Melbourne when it was done. That was the beginning of our correspondence.

I suppose I was impatient for things to happen. The progress I'd made in less than a week was pretty spectacular, but I wasn't satisfied. I wanted John and his team to pull out all the stops, put on the siren, and go for it full time. I thought he'd get back to me within a fortnight with the full story of what he'd found.

How little I knew.

John took pains to explain to me that this was a long process, one which would be done in depth, and done with a thoroughness that I couldn't yet imagine.

I had no idea that John and his team would comb that field for every trace of anything chemical or electromagnetic, any clue they could find. On two separate occasions, I went to the location with John so that he could gather further information. Meanwhile, the research team took angles of the places I indicated, measured the distances so they could apply trigonometry and geometry to get the dimensions of the craft, and photographed everything in sight. Specialised aerial photography was only one of the techniques used. John ended up carrying out eleven inspections of the sight.

In subsequent weeks I called John almost every day, sometimes twice a day, to ask what was happening, how it was going, and so on. He never got annoyed with me, and seemed almost as enthusiastic as I had become. He certainly had a great deal of knowledge about UFOs, and we could quite easily spend several hours on the phone without realising how much time had passed.

He remained incredibly tight-lipped, however, about the details of his progress, and only months later would he say something like, 'Now I can tell you . . .' Bit by bit he filled me in, but only when he was completely satisfied that his conclusions were sound and it was safe to say something. He was profoundly aware that anything he might say could inadvertently colour things before the research was completed. John is a very careful man.

But before I had a chance to realise just how thorough John was, another event occurred, and it was perhaps this event that served more than anything else to fuel my impatience. The wheels were barely turning on John's investigation when I had another night visitation.

CHAPTER 10



It was 14 October, and it had been roughly five weeks since the first night visitation. Andrew was still sleeping in the bedroom with me, at my insistence – every night for those five weeks I had to beg him to come in. He complained of being too cold, he crowded me in the bed like a heat-seeking missile, and I had to shove him off repeatedly. It was unpleasant for him, as he could not stay warm, and it was unpleasant for me because I was being smothered. But none of these minor inconveniences was sufficient to make me accept sleeping alone as I was by no means over my fear from the last visitation I had received.

I called the first visitor the ‘soul vampire’, as I’ve said. I had a feeling that I could expect it back, and it did not disappoint me. This is how it came on the second occasion. It was quite late in the night, perhaps the small hours of the morning, although I can’t be sure. The house was pitch black, except for some weak light coming through our bedroom window.

This time, I was sleeping peacefully when it happened. I suddenly became fully alert because I felt something pulling strongly on my ankles. It was like I was being turned slowly so that my legs were hanging off the side of the bed. My legs were being held out straight and my hips were perched on the edge of the mattress. Whatever had a grip on me was holding my legs above the floor.

I was absolutely terrified and wanted to wake Andrew, but I couldn’t open my eyes, and I couldn’t move the lower part of my body. My upper body felt like it was made of lead, but it wasn’t entirely paralysed like my lower half. With great difficulty, I managed to grab a pillow to hit Andrew with, in an attempt to wake him. My attempt was feeble at best, and Andrew did not even begin to stir from his sleep.

At that point, the ‘presence’ tried to pull me the rest of the way off the bed, but then it stopped. It tried again, but I fought it with my mind. It wasn’t taking me anywhere, at least not if I could help it. Eventually it just seemed to give up and let go. When that happened, I found I could open my eyes. I could see that my body was back in its normal place. My legs were not hanging over the side of the bed, and everything appeared normal – it had only been a dream.

For perhaps a second or two I inspected my body in the dark and my terror decreased a little. My relief was short-lived, however. When I rolled my eyes to the left, the tall black figure, as solid and real as before, was standing beside my bed.

I stared at it, and saw the dark cloak with the hood and, as before, the figure was terrible, thin, and silent. It was not standing right beside the bed this time, but near the wardrobe; the head was turned away from me, and this time I could see its eyes. As terrified as I was, the artificial horror-energy seemed conspicuously absent.

It stood beside my wardrobe for three seconds – long enough for there to be no mistake, no possibility that I was not seeing him clearly with my wide open eyes. Then the figure vanished as it had before.

It was not a dream, for I was woken by the sensation of being dragged off the bed. The fact that I was *not* half off the bed when I opened my eyes did not mean I was imagining the figure.

I sat in bed trembling, too afraid to go back to sleep. Waking Andrew up was pointless now, and although I was severely shaken by the experience, it was comfort enough to know that he was beside me. Ultimately there was nothing he could have done, asleep or awake.

In the morning, I set about taking crude measurements. I tried to assess the being’s height in comparison with the height of the bedside mirror and this made me realise that it must have been about seven feet tall.

If you were to go into my room now, you would see that this spot in front of the wardrobe is roughly the place where you would have to stand if you were swinging my legs out from the foot of the bed and over the side. This came as something of a surprise to me. The last time, the being had been standing inches away from the head of the bed because it was doing something near my chest. I found this fascinating, because such exacting attention to spatial dimensions is not relevant in dreams. If the

figure was a figment of my imagination, it could have stood anywhere on either occasion. Instead it was standing, as a person would do, in the appropriate place for doing its work in relation to my body. I found that a small but telling detail.

That night, my terror gradually receded but it did not completely disappear. I spent the rest of the night without sleep, and told Andrew about it all in the morning. Unfortunately, it went totally over his head and he was no help at all. Looking back now, and knowing what I was up against, I think it would have been unreasonable of me to have expected anything from him except sympathy.

The experience reinforced the idea that this being was interested not only in the body but also in the soul, or life-force. The growing evidence suggested that it was after my spiritual essence, which was somehow connected to my body. This possibility sheds some light on the motivation of these beings, or at least the ones that I had to deal with.

They seemed to clearly understand the nature of something that we possess, but that we don't understand at all – the spirit within us. Ironically, the beings seemed to be dealing with and manipulating things that we are still debating the existence of. That may be why we can't understand the abduction phenomenon. The body/life-force relationship appears to be important to them, but this is something that we find intellectually vague and inscrutable. I personally believe that it's only inscrutable because we haven't yet come to terms with that side of ourselves.

Wendy squirmed on the couch, and was visibly uncomfortable with my suggestion. 'I think I get what you're saying, but forgive me if I wince. It's so hard not to pooh pooh the idea you're proposing.'

I looked across at her, and I think she was expecting some kind of reaction from me. I waved my hand for her to go on. 'Please,' I said, 'continue with what you were going to say.'

She drained her coffee and put her cup down. 'You seem to be saying that what we regard as being esoteric, our souls, is really not esoteric at all. How can I put this? That the soul or life-force exists as an objective thing, and we humans are the only ones who don't know it. *They* know it; they can manipulate it like any other energy, and it has value to them. What we

regard as being touchie-feelie is just our screwy viewpoint on a demonstrable reality. Have I read you right?

'Close,' I said, filling her cup for the umpteenth time. 'How's this for a hypothesis – they could primarily be after the life-force in us, and only secondarily interested in our biology and culture. Because of our biology, they have to deal with us on that level as well, but there's something about our spirits that keeps them coming back. All I'm really saying is that if you can accept that they are studying us physically, then why do you find it so outrageous that they should be dealing with our metaphysical side as well?

'Perhaps the life-force is real and hard and measurable to them, in spite of the fact that we have not yet learned how to measure and manipulate it. What I'm saying is only a hypothesis of course, but that's what ufology is really all about. This idea is a perfect example of the possibilities that I was speaking about earlier, it's what can come from looking for an answer to something.

'In my case, I went looking for an answer to what was happening during the night visitations. I went in looking for what they were doing, and came out with a theory of what we might be constituted of. So, if you'll let me keep going, I think you're rather going to enjoy this – it's a real doozey.

'When I said the word metaphysical before, I wasn't referring to the spirit. In my mind these are two different things entirely. By metaphysical I meant an intermediate realm, where the spirit and the physical meet as an active force – something that we might refer to as energy or the life-force.

'So let's say, for the sake of hypothesis, that all human beings are an intricate threefold identity, composed of the intangible (spirit), matter (the physical) and active force (the metaphysical). The physical identity is the one which is most commonly used and exercised, while the spirit tends to work on automatic function, without conscious recognition. This is a little like the way in which the brain automatically stimulates the nervous system, without us consciously having to tell it to do so, or for that matter needing to know how it works.

'In between all of this, the spirit is working on what it already automatically has, feeding or providing the metaphysical element (the life-force) through the matrix of our physical bodies.

'Before I continue, there's something that I'd like you to understand – it might help you to see where I'm coming from. A lot of UFO

experiencers say they had some religious, spiritual or psychic beliefs before their experiences, yet nearly all of them report dramatic increases in psychic ability and spiritual development after their experience. Something changes, and it changes drastically.

'So let's say that some people – you know, the "seeker" type – have a little more spiritual exercise up their sleeve than is average, whether it be through religion, introspection, or whatever. Through seeking, they discover things like revelation, profound understanding, the intellectually intangible. Without realising it, they begin to exercise the spirit, making it grow stronger. The spirit in turn, equipped with more strength from exercise, begins to supply more metaphysical food, a stronger life-force energy. The new energy is powerful enough to charge, like a battery, physical human attributes that were always there but had lain dormant because they needed a higher voltage of life-force energy to stir them into activity.

'So the seeker begins to see visions, hear voices, feel energies, or develop more diverse psychic abilities, all because the life-force energy has been turned up. This can come and go, depending on how much exercise their spirit receives.

'But listen to this! A UFO experiencer never stops seeking. Something has happened to them that they cannot find an answer to, so they keep searching their inner esoteric realms. They keep exercising the spirit, and the spirit keeps feeding the metaphysical element. It's not surprising that so many strange things occur to abductees, and that these incidents increase rather than decline.

'Anyway, let's assume that these beings are interested in collecting life-force energy, maybe as some form of power source or fuel. After a UFO encounter and a few night visitations, they have an instant seeker who supplies the goods on a permanent basis. All they would need to do is call around once in a while, make a substantial withdrawal, and then let the manufacturing plant do its job. Talk about a never-ending packet of Tim Tams – these beings have got it made!

'Just remember, though, that this is only a theory and the world is full of theories. It's not something that I know, and not something that I ever could know for sure unless I was the guy running around sucking people's chests. But the theory does give you some idea of just how diverse the possibilities and answers can be when you really get into it.'

Wendy nodded slowly in agreement.

'Think about it,' I said, attempting to get the case for life-force energy over more clearly. 'When the light goes out behind the eyes, we say a person has died. But what is the nature of that light? We understand the nature of the light that shines in that bulb in the lamp next to you, and the nature of the light that comes from the sun and the stars. But we know nothing of the nature of the light that shines out from a baby's eyes almost from the moment that he or she can focus. That light will shine there until death. Incidentally, it's the same light that is absent from a brain-dead patient, even when their heart is still beating and their body is kept alive artificially.'

'Maybe it sounds like I'm putting up romantic notions. But how do we really know? We know so little about these things that we can't dismiss them without showing ourselves to be ignorant. The louder we scoff, the more obvious it becomes that we're merely attempting to disguise our fear of the unknown. Scoffing is a transparent display of bravado and the more we do it, the more we begin to seem like ignorant savages.'

Wendy had listened to all this patiently, absorbing it politely, when she suddenly sat up straight on the sofa.

'Like savages!' Wendy exclaimed. 'You've just sparked an incredible thought, and the hair is standing up on the back of my neck!'

At that moment I realised she probably hadn't heard a word of what I'd just said. It made me feel sad, because I felt I'd just given her the key to the mystery of who the beings are and what they want.

'*That* was how those beings regarded you that night on the field,' she continued. 'Like ignorant savages! I've been fumbling for an adequate analogy since you told me how the leader treated you. It was like savages – that's how he seems to have seen your group!'

'Think about Captain James Cook in the Pacific,' she explained. 'To the natives of the islands he touched on, he would have seemed only marginally less alien than these beings are to us. He would have spoken soothingly to them, with a well-rehearsed speech, but underneath he held a belief that he was a truly superior specimen, an Englishman and a Christian. He too had his minions, his sailors, who did his bidding with practised ease. He came in a bizarre craft of unbelievable size, and possessed strange weapons of irresistible power. His expedition collected things, particularly plants, which seemed valueless to the locals. And he

took some of the natives back to England, most of whom were never seen again. Sound familiar?' Wendy asked.

'It's one way of looking at it,' I replied heavily.

Wendy seemed pleased with herself. 'How we look at things is the crux of the matter. It's from our viewpoint that our actions ultimately come.'

'Our very different viewpoints,' I added, before going on with my story.

The third night visitation was entirely different from the previous two in a number of ways. It happened about a week after the second one, on 23 October 1993, at 4.30 in the morning. The main difference was that I was at Eva's home, in her spare room.

Andrew and I had made arrangements to visit Eva and her family, this time for her youngest daughter's birthday. A typical teenager, she had arranged for a family and friends get-together on the weekend before her birthday. The birthday was actually on the following weekend, when the entire house was to be a 'no adults zone'.

This time I had talked Andrew into being sociable, so we left home with every intention of staying the night. I hadn't informed Eva of our plan, but this wasn't unusual. We surprised her this time however, and it turned out that it wasn't a particularly convenient time. Normally it wouldn't have mattered a bit, but there were other people staying as well, and we ended up sleeping in Eva's daughter Sarah's room. Sarah had only a single bed and Andrew would have to sleep on a mattress on the floor beside me.

I hadn't gone there to socialise with the other guests, and at the time the encounter was still at the forefront of my mind. Andrew was getting into the party though, so I ended up sitting in the bedroom in my own little world, dwelling on spiritual things and alone with my thoughts.

I was trying to think and pray my way through what was happening in my life. I believed I was going through some kind of expansion of consciousness, but there were elements of chaos, as you can imagine. I felt confused, isolated, and perplexed. Andrew, never a great one for helping me through such times, was even less inclined to involve himself in my present dilemma. He didn't like the fact that I had researchers interested in

my case, but he hadn't yet put his foot down. Eva knew nothing about what was going on, and phone calls from John and the others working on my behalf were of little help when it came to the emotional aspect.

That night, three things happened. They may be connected, but then again they may not.

The first was that while laying on the bed, I heard a voice. The voice distinctly said, '*Go and have a look underneath the car,*' I heard it in my head, loud and clear. But of course, as it was quite late, I had no intention of going outside in the dark. It was a male voice, and it was vaguely commanding. It was similar to the voice I'd heard in my head out on the field, but not quite the same.

So I ignored it. The initial alarm at hearing the voice was replaced by the deeper funk I'd brought with me to Eva's. I felt a sense of dejection, and mild depression over my inability to penetrate to the heart of what was going on. There didn't seem to be any release or redemption on the horizon. I was more lost than I had ever been in my life, and I was looking for a place of safety. It's not that I wanted to die, just that I wanted to go 'home'. Home was where God loved and protected me, and not here, where my entire concept of reality had just collapsed.

And then another astonishing thing happened. I'll tell you this, knowing perhaps that you will simply file it away in your own personal weird-basket and see nothing in it. But because it was a profoundly important moment in my life, I feel I need to relate it.

As I prayed for a way out of my situation, I was struck by an understanding that led to one of the saddest moments of my life. It was related to the spirit and the ego – by ego I mean personality, and who I am in my own eyes. I realised that I had to be willing to give that up, to leave it behind. It saddened me that I would lose the 'me' I had always known. I didn't want to lose me; I just didn't want to be here, where the entire world had changed in the blink of an eye. With resignation, I realised that losing me couldn't be any worse than *living* me. Melting into non-existence didn't seem so bad.

In a single instant, right after this thought, I went from feeling down and confused to experiencing the most incredible sense of freedom and peace that I have ever known. I had a sudden sense of being completely detached from my troubles, and removed not so much to a place as a state.

In that state, I could feel my connectedness to all other human beings, and a timelessness where past, present and future were all rolled into one. I felt no joy, no pain, no grief, just an all-pervading peace — as if peace was no longer a feeling, but a state of being. I also felt as if I was everywhere at once, which is a sensation that I won't even attempt to describe. This strange altered state continued for about fifteen minutes, and I then spent the rest of the evening in thought; going through all that was happening, all the changes in me.

Andrew came into the room and flopped onto his mattress sometime shortly after midnight. He went to sleep virtually immediately, but I continued to ponder spiritual matters. The last time I looked at the clock, it was slightly after 3.00 am.

I'd been asleep for about an hour and a half when the third manifestation occurred. This was the first visitation without a preceding dream, and I woke up from a dead sleep to find this black creature leaning over me with its head near my stomach.

This creature wasn't wearing a cloak — it was totally naked, but it didn't have any genitals that I could see, and I did have the opportunity, believe me. It was tall, and had a bulging belly, which looked more like distension due to malnutrition than pregnancy. It had long lanky limbs, and its head was misshapen, elongated. It did not have the big red eyes, although there was a definite prominence or bulge in the eye area. The eyes were there, but it seemed that they weren't 'switched on'. The skin was 'claggy', like black plasticine, and I got the feeling that if I poked it, my finger would have left an impression.

I felt intuitively that this being was of the same make-up as the others, the only difference being that this one was naked and I could see more of it. It didn't strike me that this was necessarily the same individual that had appeared before. All of them were physically real and tangible, but this one seemed as if it was made up of an absence of matter, like a hole in space.

I sat bolt upright in bed and screamed. This thing was leaning over my stomach and, although it hadn't done anything, it looked as if it was just about to. When I screamed, the creature sprang back, right away from me and *it* was horrified! I'd scared the living daylight out of it. Evidently, I wasn't supposed to wake up like that.

I bellowed in terror exactly like I had on the field, the only other time in my life when I have made such an impossible sound. What came out of my mouth was like the roar of a bull! It seems almost amusing to me now, the way that thing jumped back: it nearly tripped over its own feet trying to get away! But at the time, believe me, there was nothing funny about it at all.

It vanished a second later, and Andrew woke up to find me sitting bolt upright, dripping with sweat. I was saturated.

'Are you all right, honey?' Andrew sat on the bed beside me, because I'd started babbling about something – something they had told me.

Then I began to repeat the words that I knew I'd been told but could not remember hearing, or even dreaming. I said to Andrew, 'They told me not to be afraid . . . that a man was going to come and kiss me! Then I woke up and this black thing was leaning over me. It was going to kiss my navel, not my face!'

'They're *real* Andrew,' I said over and over. They're not people, they're not human, but they're real!

I knew then, with absolute certainty, that these things were not human in any way, shape or form. Yet they were completely real and physical.

Something had obviously told me not to be afraid, and had attempted to calm me in preparation for this visitation, but their alienness frightened me so much that the suggestion didn't take. I was more frightened than I would have been if another human being had come into my room and done the same thing. Something was about to touch my body, for reasons I could not understand, and it was not like us.

'Now,' Wendy said. 'You already had the triangular mark.'

'Yes. Although at that stage I'd forgotten all about it.'

'Was that the exact same spot where this "man" was trying to kiss you?'

'The exact same spot.'

'Do you think . . .?'

I shuddered and thought about the horror I had felt during the first visitation, when the cloaked being had tried to suck the energy out of me.

On the third occasion I had woken up just in the nick of time – who knows what might have happened if I hadn't?

Wendy saw me shudder, but she pressed on with her idea. 'In August, a deposit? In October, a withdrawal?'

I looked at her blankly for a moment, then realised what she meant.

'Oh God, now I know what you're saying. Look, honestly, I don't think so. The previous bleeding had stopped and after this visitation I had no subsequent gynaecological problems, and no additional marks. That sort of connection did not occur to me at all.'

I had to give the woman some credit; she had certainly done her UFO homework. I could see where she had got the idea from, but impregnation, although spoken of extensively in abduction cases, was something that I just couldn't see as applicable in my situation.

Andrew dragged me into the kitchen and made me a cup of coffee. My hands were shaking so badly that I couldn't have done it myself. I had woken up the rest of the household, and they all came into the kitchen to find out what had happened. I gave them some sort of explanation about a nightmare – Andrew wouldn't have wanted me to say anything more about it, and I didn't want to get into it either.

Finally, we went back to bed, and by this time the sun had come up. That made me feel a little safer, and I finally crashed out.

The next morning – or I should say when we finally got up, because we were absolutely wrecked – we ate a late breakfast and threw our things into the car. We thanked Eva for her hospitality, I apologised for waking everyone up, and we hit the road.

While we were driving into Melbourne, I remembered the previous night's warning and said to Andrew, 'When we get home, I want you to check under the car.'

Looking a little puzzled, Andrew asked, 'Why do you want me to check under the car, Kelly?'

'It's just something I heard last night – a voice told me to look under the car.'

He rolled his eyes. He was getting a bit aggravated about the whole UFO thing. 'What do you think you're going to find under the car?'

'I don't know,' I retaliated. 'I was told to check underneath the car.'

'Look!' he responded. 'You're going to drive yourself nuts if you keep this up!'

I shut up.

We went to visit his mother in Melbourne, where the kids were staying, and decided to leave them there because they were having such a good time. We then drove on towards home.

But just as the city started to thin out, we suddenly heard a really loud clunking sound, and something scraping and banging underneath us. The car was making a tremendous racket, and everyone on the street was looking at us as we drove past.

We pulled the car over, and Andrew got out to have a look at what was going on. He checked under the bonnet, but could find nothing wrong. Finally, he slid underneath the car and found the source of the problem. The flywheel cover was hanging on by a thread.

I had a dig at him then, and I managed to get him to laugh. It was one of the last we ever shared together.

CHAPTER 11



The following day, after we'd had our lunch, Wendy made it clear through little signs like tidying her tapes that she wanted to keep going with the story.

'Where did I leave off?' I asked as I sat down and prepared for another session.

'You were talking about . . . ah, that's right. The thing with the car.'

'Driving home? The banging noise? Andrew getting out to have a look underneath?'

'That's it.'

'Alright. Yes, now I recall.' I collected my thoughts. 'I think I need to make the distinction between that particular incident, when I heard the voice that told me to look under the car, and the rest of the UFO encounter phenomena in general. I think the proper term for hearing prophetic or warning voices like this is "clairaudience". Now that definitely is a paranormal type of thing, and the only reason I bring it up at all is because I believe that the shock of all the contact had rattled my spiritual cage a little.'

'That's intriguing. What exactly do you mean?' Wendy asked.

'I mean that there is a core set of UFO-specific events which are physical and tangible, and which leave after-effects that can be seen, felt and measured.'

'Like the scars on your body and under your skin . . . the puncture marks.'

'Yes, and they're correctly called scoop marks.'

Wendy made a note.

'Tangible after-effects – physical marks on my body and in the field, things that I haven't told you about yet – these are the traditional indicators. The researchers found a whole set of them, but more on that later.

'I was saying that there is this core set of UFO-related events that are real, which are directly attributable to the encounter with aliens. Then you have another set of phenomena that are *indirectly* related to the encounter, and which are a result of the trauma of the experience. With quite a number of abductees, you often see strange phenomena which seem to be purely psychic and triggered by shock. In my case, the most obvious of these were the poltergeist-like electrical energy disturbances.

'I believe that the physical and emotional shock of seeing these beings and their craft, and perhaps having some sort of relationship with them, as the night visitations seem to suggest, can and often does upset our psychic or metaphysical balance.'

'What do you mean by upset? I'm trying to understand this.'

'Upset . . . exactly what the word means. A balance has been disturbed. Paranormal events can be associated with emotional imbalances and trauma brought on by fear of the unknown. My trauma occurred when I encountered the aliens on the field.

'When you get to know individuals who have had abduction or UFO experiences, you often find that they've been subjected to bursts of psychic, metaphysical and spiritual phenomena in their lives soon afterwards. This fallout is what I call the after-effects.

'Take NDEs – near death experiences - as another example. People who've had these often report the same kind of unusual activity and spiritual transformation in their lives as abductees do. Most of these individuals are people who have experienced an obvious life-changing event.

'This is why I mentioned my clairaudience, which was nominally present before my first recognised encounter, and which blossomed afterwards.'

'Ah ha!' Wendy said. 'Perhaps this is why some people are of two minds as to whether the contact experience is ultimately good or evil, because they experience a subsequent spiritual growth spurt immediately afterwards!'

'You've got it. I have an experiencer friend who lives nearby, who always says that her experiences were terrifying with a capital "T". But she tells people that she has changed enormously, and her life has taken a new direction which she wouldn't swap for anything, in spite of the ordeals she's been through. There is a redemptive quality about the process.'

Wendy shook her head. 'I don't know about that. I think that you lot have simply made something good out of an evil thing. I think that if you'd had an NDE instead of an encounter, you would have performed just as ably. That's the type of person you are: you're strong and determined. Someone else might have gone through exactly the same thing, become a complete raving lunatic, and not have profited from it at all.'

'That's beside the point though,' Wendy said, waving her pencil in the air. 'You were saying that it was an event that rattled your cage and sent shock waves through your system.'

I nodded.

'I can accept that,' she said. 'But I see no *inherently* redemptive quality in the contact experience. It doesn't seem that these beings have good intentions, and they don't intend for you to grow. Maybe I'm completely out of line here, but I think it's a dangerously misleading error to say that this sort of experience is intrinsically good.'

'A lot of people would disagree with you there,' I pointed out.

'Sure,' she said. 'It's only my opinion. Maybe they aren't devils, as you first believed, but they certainly aren't the good guys either. For all we know, they may just be clumsy and thoughtless, or what some might regard as deliberate maliciousness is possibly only ordinary callousness on their part. But perhaps that's being too kind. Maybe, when a scientist grabs a rat out of a cage and does his grisly worst, he's not thinking badly of the rat. Maybe he's not thinking anything at all, but the consequences are still the same to the rat!'

'Don't get me wrong,' I said. 'When I say that the process may be redemptive, I'm not saying that *they* mean it to be that way, and I agree with you that some people turn it around for themselves. But, leaving aside the idea that the metaphysical acceleration may be instigated for underhanded purposes, there are still a lot of benefits in the spiritual awakening and growth that an experiencer goes through. I for one wouldn't give it back for the world. Maybe at the root of it all there's both

good and evil, but it's all cause and effect. Man has been plagued with the same duality since the year dot.

'The thing I want to draw your attention to is that in some cases, psychic phenomena may be clinical indicators of a previous contact. If the contact experience could be studied more closely, such a set of clinical indicators could one day become quite important. But Western science has a long way to travel before that idea can be treated seriously.'

'Using an unrecognised phenomenon to indicate an unaccepted condition,' Wendy said wryly. 'Ha!'

'Anyway,' I said. 'That's an interesting aside. Remember that we've been following the story in chronological order.'

'In October I had a startling realisation, a recall you might say, which is perhaps on par with my recall of part of the missing time.'

'I'll now tell you about "the Lalor incident".'

This incident was something that occurred *before* my August 1993 encounter. You see, only after the encounter did I realise the implications of what this earlier incident meant, and that it was likely I'd had a history of contact.

I recalled the Lalor incident at the time when I had barely recovered from remembering what I'd thought was the one and only contact experience I'd ever had. But, as I was due to discover for myself, many abductees report uncovering deep memories of earlier contacts which are flushed out in the process of researching the one they had regarded as their very first.

I've mentioned the first dream I had, in which I apparently already knew the tall being who handed me my Bible. And I've also explained how I knew intuitively what was going on that night in the field, when I was sitting on the grass. I kept saying that I *knew* these creatures were evil, and that I needed to warn the other people. The fact that I knew all this was puzzling until I recollected the bulk of the Lalor incident.

What I've already related about the main incident in the field was told exactly as I recollected it when the details first came back to me. I deliberately made no reference to anything that had happened previously, and I simply explained exactly what I thought and felt at the time. But I'd

had what I now believe to be a prior experience that I was not consciously aware of.

It was in October 1993, when John Auchettl was in the middle of his investigations, that my recollection of the Lalor incident surfaced. In the weeks following my initial report of the encounter, I kept getting this flash, quite strongly, that suggested I'd previously experienced the energy I had felt on the field. The flashes of recollection kept coming but I kept shoving them aside, labelling them as ridiculous. I eventually had to accept the fact, however, that I'd felt this energy vibration before.

John had given me a mild nudge, telling me to search my memory for anything that might have happened to me earlier which was of a similar nature. I thought about it, came up with a blank, and said, 'No, there's nothing like that. This is the first experience of its kind in my life.' I recall vaguely thinking at the time that this was a stupid suggestion, because I was sure I knew my own life story.

But there was that one little anomaly which wouldn't go away, the hazy feeling that I had felt this power previously. It was coming off the book ban that finally cracked this open for me, and tiny triggers continued to point to one moment in Lalor. It was as if my subconscious was saying, *Look at that Kelly. What happened there?* I brushed it away, but like a pesky fly it came back again and again.

Lalor is the name of a place, a northern suburb of Melbourne where Andrew and I lived for a year or two before moving to the country. I was nine months pregnant with my youngest child, James, when the incident occurred. I had just turned 24, and the period when the incident and other strange events happened was between late September and 14 October 1991. The reason I remember the last date so well is because James was born the day after it all ended.

The initial flash was a memory of opening the back door of our house in Lalor, a bright light hitting me in the eyes, and then feeling this vibratory energy and blacking out. Every time I thought about the power on the field, this image came too, as a connective thought. What I have to stress, though, is that the 'memory' of this incident was only an image in my mind, which was coupled with a similar 'emotive' memory. I wasn't able to recall the physical act of opening the door, or experiencing what I was seeing.

I began to recognise that there was a two to three week period of activity in Lalor which seemed odd.

Here's how it all began. I had an extremely vivid and emotionally powerful dream and it was so unusual that I told it to my friend Silvana the next day. Silvana was a good buddy of mine, and I could tell her virtually anything. We studied the Bible together and particularly loved Revelation, and I suppose that if I was going to dream of anything, it should have been the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

Looking back now, I rather wish it had been that. My dream was bizarre, in that the elements bore no real relation to my environment, but it was so vivid that it felt real, until I woke up of course. In the dream – well, let me read it to you from my journal. I wrote the dream down as I remembered it, when I was doing the research with PRA. Of course, it occurred a few years before, but the details were so clear that I never forgot it.

In the dream, I found myself inside an object that appeared to be an hourglass made of flesh. I was aware that I was expected to squeeze through a small opening, into a chamber filled with liquid. I knew that I was going to be forced to go through, whether I wanted to or not.

Beside me, a stern female voice ordered me to stop acting like a baby. She told me that I 'had to do this, whether I liked it or not', and 'to stop being so immature about it'. I experienced incredible humiliation at being spoken to in this manner.

Although I could see no-one, the stern tone of the female left me with the impression that she wasn't interested in my fears, or me as a person. All she seemed to care about was that I completed the task expected of me.

During the dream, I'd been so panic stricken at the thought of drowning or suffocation that I didn't fully comprehend what the 'hourglass' was. It was only when I woke up that I realised it was almost like being inside a womb, and the pushing through was like a birth into another womb filled with fluid. It was more like going back in than coming out.

When I related the dream to Silvana the following evening, I had to stress the richness of the experience's sensations and emotions. Of course, I wouldn't have connected this in any way at the time with UFOs. I interpreted the experience as some kind of symbolic and spiritual rebirth experience. I said to Silvana, 'Maybe there's more to the idea of being "born again" than either of us have previously suspected,' and this provided great fuel for our philosophical kitchen-table discussions.

Eventually, Silvana and I went into the lounge room where Andrew was sitting. We hadn't been there very long before something very strange happened. This part is going to sound so over the top that you might think I'm teasing you. I wouldn't mention it at all, except for the fact that John took it seriously when I told him.

As the three of us were sitting in the lounge room at about 7 pm, we heard this strange noise. It was a beating sound at first, the beating of air, and I quickly realised it was the noise of a helicopter. I left the lounge room and went on to our second-storey verandah to see what it was. You won't believe it, but there was a helicopter outside – it was in front of our house, about 10 to 15 metres in front of me, and hovering at the level of my eyes.

It hovered there while I watched it. The wind that this thing was generating whipped my hair all over my head and tugged at my maternity clothes. I didn't have my glasses on, so I couldn't see any fine details, but there were at least two figures seated in the helicopter. I thought to myself, *What on earth are they up to, coming so close to houses!*

The neighbours did not come out, however, and I don't know why: perhaps no-one was at home in the nearby houses. I called out to Andrew and told him what was happening. He didn't come out, and neither did Silvana – they simply couldn't be bothered. They knew the helicopter was there, but at the time they didn't think it was important enough to get up off the couch to have a look. Andrew said to ignore it and it would go away.

The noise it was making was terrible. I thought it was the police at first, which was logical, but there were no markings on the helicopter. It was completely black. I kept expecting to hear someone call out over a loud hailer, 'Drop your weapons,' or 'Stop right there!' but it never happened.

It sat there for fifteen minutes at least – it seemed like a very long time to me. I kept going out on to the verandah, getting blown around, looking at the figures and wondering what they were up to. But they just

sat there. I couldn't see their faces, but I was sure they could see me. It had no lights on the outside, and it was totally bizarre. In the end I just had to ignore it, as Andrew had suggested, and eventually it did go away.

That was the helicopter incident, and I've obviously never forgotten it. It isn't every day that a chopper parks itself, mid-air, right in front of your house. Most people have certain scenes which they've observed that never leave them, and this is one of mine. But I never connected it to UFOs, not for a second and certainly not until I learned of the ufology link between black helicopters and UFOs.

There are a number of theories that encompass this area, but I personally don't care for that side of ufology. I have realised, however, that nothing can ever be discounted just on the basis of opinion. I'll give you a short rundown on this side of things, so that you'll get the idea of another angle, or maybe I should say another 'denomination', of the UFO debate.

There are numerous cases on record of black helicopters tailing UFOs, hanging around purported UFO 'crash' sites, and keeping surveillance on certain abductees. These events are more common in America and I've heard of only a couple of such stories in Australia.

The general consensus is that these choppers belong to an elite military operation that is working with some kind of secret technology. Start picturing secret military installations and underground bases, and you might begin to get the idea. Some people believe that military technology is so far advanced that the UFO and abduction phenomenon is actually a human one – covert and conspiratorial, but nonetheless still human.

Of course, if this were true the human race would be in big trouble. In any case, there would be very few people who really knew about such things, and I'm certainly not one of them. I just saw a black helicopter which did something strange. It had never happened before, and it hasn't happened since. It was just a one-off, and it may be pure coincidence.

While I'm on the topic of conspiracy, I'll tell you one of the questions that I'm most often asked by people. It is: 'Have you been approached by ASIO or the government?' The answer is: no. It may be because they are just not interested in the phenomena at all, or it may be that the public profile of my case has inadvertently worked as a form of protection. I'm well known for speaking out on the subject, and if I was ever approached

by a government agency, the news of it would be all over Australia in three minutes.

Anyway, that's it for the helicopter business, except to say that it fell into the same time slot as all the other unusual things that happened at Lalor.

What occurred a few days later made the 'black helicopter incident' seem mildly amusing.

At 8 am on the morning of 14 October 1991, I woke up to find that I was lying flat on my stomach, and the sheets were soaking wet from my broken waters. As I awoke, I couldn't understand how I could be lying like that – I was very pregnant, and it would have been practically impossible for me to get into that position. I was spread-eagled and balancing on my belly, and it was as if I had been dropped on the bed like that.

James was kicking the living daylights out of me, and that's what woke me up. I was squashing him in that position, and I still shudder to think how it must have been for him, cramped up inside me with my full weight on top of him. They later told me at the hospital that my back waters had broken, but at the time I didn't even know there was such a thing as this. The fluid continued to dribble down right up until delivery.

When I finally hoisted myself off the bed, I walked into the bathroom and noticed that my nightdress was on inside out. I thought about it, wondering how I could have done something so silly. I tried to remember putting it on, and that's when I realised I couldn't remember going to bed. The last thing I could recall was sitting by myself, fully dressed in the lounge room. Andrew had already gone to bed.

I'd never had a blank like that in my memory, and I was more than a little curious about it. I was racking my brain thinking, *When did I go to bed? How could I forget that? What did I do after sitting in the lounge room?*

My unborn baby took precedence, however, and I realised that I was about to deliver. Andrew took me to the hospital, and I had to be induced on the following day because I still hadn't gone into labour.

James came without too much trouble, but two very interesting things happened subsequently which relate to that strange night.

'James was born with a collection of pea-sized nodules underneath the skin on either side of his neck: he has them to this day. They seem to be on the surface of his muscle tissue, and if you feel them . . .'

I called out to my son James. My beautiful boy heard me and entered the room sheepishly, wondering what was expected of him.

'Come here baby,' I said, and gave him a hug. 'James is four years old now, going on five,' I told Wendy. 'Stand still honey, and let Wendy feel your neck.'

To Wendy I said, 'Feel along there, on either side. Do you feel the nodules?'

Wendy nodded, sobered by the demonstration.

'Thank you honey,' I said to my boy, and he skipped off to play with his brother and sister.

'He's had them since the day he was born, but I developed them almost immediately after the birth. They started on my arms.'

'You had those lumps as well?'

'We got them at the same time. I didn't mention this to you earlier because it was linked to the Lalor incident, and I wanted to get to that in its proper sequence. Do you remember that I said I had other marks?'

Wendy nodded.

'That's partly what I was referring to.'

For James, they've never been any trouble, never caused him any pain, and they've never spread. I took him to the children's hospital, and they could find nothing wrong with him. They tested him for everything – from leukaemia to immunity diseases – and came up with nothing.

His were stagnant, but mine were like a creeping disease and they slowly advanced, a few inches a month, down the length of my body. They spread down my back, across my ribs, under my arms, and down my hips and legs. Once one had formed, it would stay there like an inflammation. Silvana, who does massages, was amazed by them and said she'd never felt anything like them before. She tried to help me, but whenever she touched me in those spots, even lightly, I felt like screaming.

You have no idea how painful this condition was. It was agony, and I made countless trips to see doctors to try to get some relief. Nothing did any good and they just kept advancing.

Beginning in late 1991, my health began to deteriorate at a rapid rate of knots and I ended up having to spend about three days a week in bed. I was constantly exhausted and I often had a fever. I had aches in my muscles and bones, there were thousands of those pea-sized lumps, and I began to lose clumps of hair. I'd stand in the shower, crying, as my hair came out by the handful. It really frightened me, and I was sure that if this continued I would go bald. It eventually stopped falling out, thank goodness, but to this day my hair is still thin.

I thought I had cancer, and that I was going to die. The succession of doctors I visited assured me that I did not have cancer, although they could not say what was wrong with me.

Eventually, I was diagnosed as having Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and my general condition certainly indicated this, although the lumps remained a mystery. Through my own research, and that has generally meant long heart-to-hearts with other experiencers, I've since discovered that I'm far from alone with this Chronic Fatigue Syndrome business and have come across a number of other experiencers with the same complaint.

Then there was another health incident, not long after I had James, that I still find hard to reconcile. It was recorded as appendicitis, but I know that it wasn't. On the day that it started I had been experiencing increasing abdominal pain since early morning. By 10 pm I was sitting on the couch, gripping my stomach with every contraction – the pains were in the wrong place, but otherwise it was like going through the full throes of labour. The funny thing is that I wasn't feeling sick or feverish; I was just in pain.

Andrew called the doctor out to our house, and he suggested that I should get myself to a hospital immediately. I caught a taxi while Andrew remained at home to take care of our sleeping children and the newborn baby.

At the hospital, a nurse explained that a blood count was needed, and blood samples were taken and tested. It turned out that my white cell count had skyrocketed; so, expecting a burst appendix at any moment, I was wheeled off to theatre at 1 o'clock in the morning for an emergency operation.

When I came to the next day, a senior doctor explained to me that there had been nothing wrong with my appendix, but that they had taken it out anyway. The pain had been caused by my abdominal cavity – the

bowels, intestines, etc – being extremely inflamed. He assured me he had come across this before, and said that he'd already placed me on an antibiotic drip.

The first doctor continued on to his next patient, but his junior intern lingered around my bed. If it wasn't for his inquisitiveness, I might not have given the matter another thought. This second doctor proceeded to explain that the viral infection needed to cause this type of inflammation should have made me very ill. He said I should have been extremely sick, possibly for weeks beforehand, and I was obviously fine other than having the abdominal pains. So when I said that these lumps spread like an inflammation, I don't think my description was too far from the mark.

The pain went on for weeks, and the weeks turned into a year and ten months. Eventually, I had the lumps from my elbows to my knees.

Now here's the really strange part of the story. After the encounter in 1993 they began to recede, in the same way as they had spread, but faster. The lumps got smaller and then disappeared, as if they were deflating. It didn't happen overnight, but they disappeared at such a rate that the problem quickly diminished in importance in my mind, particularly as it had been supplanted by the crippling migraines. I didn't notice that the nodules had completely gone until about three months after the encounter, and all I felt then was relief. Six months later, I felt more physically fit than ever before, bar the headaches.

It seems to me that this weird, unidentifiable disorder must have started during the Lalor incident in October 1991, and that it was somehow cured in the Eumemmerring Creek encounter in August 1993. I have asked myself if the lumps, the inflammation, and the hair falling out couldn't all add up to some form of radiation poisoning, possibly caused by the light and energy at the back door in Lalor. If so, James was inside me at the time, and could have received a dose as well. What is left to be explained, however, is why there was a miraculous cure after the 1993 encounter?

'Something has just occurred to me,' Wendy said. 'This hypothesis bolsters the suggestion that you *did* end up on the craft during the main encounter, because how else could they have performed this cure? You remember being back in the car, but I would say that the remaining hour of missing time was spent in the craft. It's just a theory.'

All I could do was shrug. I wasn't ready to theorise yet again about what had gone on during that hour or so of missing time. I'd been there for almost three years, searching through all the possibilities of what *might* have happened. For all I knew, I might have been zapped off to some other dimension, or time itself may even have stood still. The possibilities were endless, and they became more profound as the search deepened. The conclusion that Wendy had just come to didn't even begin to scratch the surface of the labyrinth that I had found while searching for that one hour of missing time.

I continued to tell my story.

The events at Lalor started to fall into place when I began reading after the book ban was lifted. A lot of abductees report similar incidents – that they wake up finding their underwear on inside out or back-to-front, and some people have even woken up with the wrong underwear on. It's not unreasonable to assume that abductees are being taken in sufficient numbers that such mistakes sometimes occur. Although I don't remember anything more about what happened in Lalor, in this case all the little nothings seem to add up to something – something that looks suspiciously like an abduction experience.

The scoop marks, the holes in my calves, arrived at around the same time, when we lived at Lalor. They looked like little dark-purple dimples, and so many strange things happen to your body in pregnancy that I paid them hardly any attention at the time. I didn't connect them to anything except my overall condition. I actually thought they were kind of cute, to be honest, because they were so perfectly formed. All of the original colouration has faded, but they've remained as deep gouges under the skin.

Then in November 1993, something very interesting surfaced from the investigators. I don't think I knew at the time that John had succeeded in contacting the other witnesses, so I couldn't work out what was prompting his question. Perhaps the others had reported something about triangles soon after they came forward, or maybe John was just fishing and using his own set of clinical indicators.

Anyway, when he started talking about triangles, I thought, 'Triangles? I don't know anything about triangles', and told him so. I'd

completely forgotten about the mark under my navel. It had only been of any direct importance to me on the night of the encounter. After that, it had become little more than an easily dismissed curiosity. But it would later be a very significant link between myself and the other witnesses, but because of my basic ignorance of what I was meant to be looking for, I completely missed it.

Because there were other people at the encounter site, John had put ads in the local papers in the area in an effort to find the other witnesses. The ads worked. Most of the letters that PRA received were from people saying they'd seen lights in the sky, that sort of thing, and I suppose that's to be expected. Then, the mother of one of the other female witnesses saw the ad and contacted her daughter. So John then extended his investigation to the three people involved. They had some clear recollections, but I understand that the bulk of what they remembered had to be extracted through hypnosis. The two females, however, also had conscious recollections that matched mine. These memories included stopping the car, crossing the road, and seeing the same UFO and the tall black beings. They were not able to recollect that Andrew and I were there, but the date, the time, the contact with the aliens, the drawings of the craft, everything matched.

John was pleased about this, but he told me the bare minimum to keep me happy.

I have never met these people, discounting of course our brief association on the night of the encounter. I only know that while I thought there were two other people present, there were actually three – a man and two women, all in their thirties. B– is a business manager, and in the car with him were his wife J– and her friend G–, a health professional. For obvious reasons, it's nice to know that these people are professionals, with ordinary, conservative backgrounds. Like Andrew, B– had no memory of seeing anything after stopping the car. Unlike Andrew, however, B– co-operated with the investigation and agreed to undergo independent hypnotic regression, during which he was able to recall the events in detail. Only the three women involved, myself included, had any conscious recollection of direct alien contact during that night.

The other witnesses believe there was another person, a man, who pulled his car up about 25 metres behind theirs. I didn't see him, and apparently he didn't get out of his car, but it was his headlights that

provided enough illumination for me to see the colour of the second car, and at least two of the three other people. This man has not yet been found, but they're continuing to look.

Let me read you a portion of the letter that one of the PRA staffers sent to me on 6 December 1993.

It may interest you to know that we have placed an advertisement in the local papers. From this we have received thirteen letters, and of these thirteen, we have found one family that may be related to your encounter.

Their story and the location are very close to the details of your encounter. The only problem is that they cannot recall the exact date [which they did later on]. As well as this, there was another person in their car who saw the UFO, while you remember only two. They do not recall either you or Andrew.

Both of the females involved have had past dreams, visitations and illnesses. This discovery is very exciting for us, but at the moment we are still in the interviewing stage with these people. Like you, they are all having trouble putting the pieces together and believing that it did happen to them.

If all goes well, we may be on the right track, and they may be the ones we are looking for. At any time, write everything down, then please write to Mr Auchetl whenever you have any new information, problems or encounters. This is important to you and us. Mr Auchetl wishes to help you in any way that he can.

Again, on behalf of the PRA staff and Mr Auchetl, thanks for your wonderful help and encounter report. Our best to Andrew and your family. We wish you a Merry Christmas.

'These people came forward on 17 November. You've seen the drawings that they did.'

Wendy said, 'The triangles don't get a mention in that letter.'

'No,' I replied. 'At that time, John was keeping things under tight wraps. I think the letter was written to reassure me that I was not alone, and that I was essentially correct in what I'd seen. But he refused to let me

know too much while he was conducting his research. That was terribly important.

'By the time I received the letter it was December 1993. I was off the book ban, and things had settled down a little around me. The electrical disturbances had lessened, but the psychic activity – the clairaudience, the deja-vu, seeing images of the faces of people that I would meet for the first time a week later, other premonitions – those were still occurring.

'As soon as the book ban was lifted, I got hold of everything I could find on the subject of UFOs and began studying this as intensely as I had once studied the Bible. Unfortunately there wasn't a great deal in the local library. Most of what the library had seemed to be a rehash of a handful of spectacular cases, or a sprinkling of very lightly treated anecdotal accounts.

'But I came to the conclusion that if I had known the things I later learned from reading about other abductees' experiences, I might have been of more help to the researchers. What I read prompted me to look at things I had previously overlooked due to my ignorance.

'For example, had I been familiar with the material on the subject, I would have instantly recognised the scoop marks, and I would not have dismissed the triangular mark under my navel so easily.

'However, the most important thing that I got out of my reading was something entirely different and far more personally significant. It was the confidence to tell my friends what had happened to me.'

CHAPTER 12



I was at Anne's house one day, reading *Transformation* by Whitley Strieber, when one of the biggest pieces of the puzzle clicked into place with sickening certainty.

Anne was doing her housework, and had left me to my own devices. If you recall, Anne is George's wife and my other great friend, and I routinely went to visit her, almost as much as I did Eva.

I was debating whether or not to tell Anne about my experiences. Bolstered by my reading, I decided that I would tell her and we sat down together in the lounge room. I began telling her, guardedly, about the encounter in the field. Anne listened intently, knowing that I was serious, and when I'd finished relating what I knew she told me that I had her support as a friend. For the first time since the encounter, I had someone else to confide in!

Anne continued with her housework and I kept on reading. Some time later, I read a passage in *Transformation* that made the significance of the triangle blazingly clear. Whitley Strieber wrote of having a triangular mark on his arm, but nothing clicked when I read that particular passage. It was the account of a French doctor and his son who were left with triangular marks near their navels that brought back the memory of the triangle on my own body.

I jumped up from the couch and ran into the bathroom. There it was, slightly faded, but still clear.

I cried out, 'Anne! Come and look at this!', which she did. She could see it too, a clearly marked triangle under my navel. I decided I would take measurements of the mark for research purposes, and set about doing this with a school ruler — not a very accurate instrument, but all that I could

come up with at the time. The mark appeared to be a perfect equilateral triangle, measuring one centimetre on each of its three sides.

I called John as soon as I could, and he was clearly very interested. Months later, he told me why – the two other women who were there that night on the field had similar marks in similar locations.

John decided he absolutely had to have a photograph of my mark. He said that he wanted to come over the following week with an ultraviolet camera, but Andrew put his foot down and forbade it: the idea of another man looking at his wife's body was too much.

I could understand his objections. We'd had such a simple life before my 'obsession' began. If I could have given that back to him, I would have. But instead 'this business', as he called it, had begun to intrude into every nook and cranny of our lives. He was determined to fight for what he felt were his rights, and the examination never took place.

Andrew had seen the triangle though, and Anne wrote out a statutory declaration to the effect that she too had seen it, but that was all we could do at the time. Now that Andrew is gone, I intend to have a special photograph taken, using a technology called 'thermology' that can reveal old scars in incredible detail.

'How long was it,' Wendy asked, 'from the time when you first went to the researchers, to when you told Anne that you'd had an encounter?'

'I called John on 4 October 1993, and by late December the book ban was lifted. That's almost three months.'

'I thought you said it took a long time for PRA to do the research?' Wendy said.

'The research wasn't completed then; it was still rolling on. By December, they were just getting started on the other witnesses that they'd uncovered. Andrew had been particularly unco-operative, and there was little more they could do that involved us directly. I could only sit back and wait to see what came out of the other investigations.'

'The other witnesses still had their tales to tell, right?'

'Yes, absolutely. But it turned out that things were not over for me.'

It was January 1994, and I felt much happier now that I had Anne as a friend who believed in me and in whom I could confide. Later, I received the same support from Eva. My sense of isolation was reduced, and as a consequence I found I was better able to deal with Andrew's increasing resistance.

On the night of the last visitation, I had a dream in which the light in the bathroom had gone out. This is important, because Andrew was sleeping in the lounge room again and I had been forced, through fear of these visitations, to sleep with a light on.

My dream was quite lucid, and in it I got up to turn the light in the bathroom on again, as fast as I could. But the bulb had blown, and I had to feel my way back to bed.

While lying there, I felt something grab my right hand. Whatever it was pulled hard, and I rolled over on to my side. I began to slap my hand back and forth so that it couldn't get a good grip, and it must have had more persistence than strength, because I succeeded in freeing my hand time and again. Finally, however, I gave in and the instant I did so, I woke up.

The tall black being was standing there, next to the bed, with its head turned away from me as before. I was shocked, but it wasn't as bad this time. I looked at the being until it disappeared, and then simply went back to sleep. You see, I was getting used to the visitations by this time.

But in the morning, I noticed two things. Firstly, the light in the bathroom really *had* blown during the night and, secondly, the diamond and sapphire rings that I wore on my right hand were missing. They were my mother's rings and I always wore them: I looked high and low for them, but they were gone and haven't been seen since. The other oddity is it seems that the being didn't try to take my energy on that occasion.

That was also the last I saw of this being.

In looking back on those night visitations, the only common thread I can find is that this entity or entities, whatever they were, seemed to require darkness to operate. In the final episode, my 'visitor' may have actually created the darkness by blowing the bulb, or it may simply have been waiting for an opportunity. I'd been sleeping with a light on somewhere for weeks, so perhaps it grabbed its chance when the bulb blew. I just don't know which is the correct answer.

In January 1994, I went up to Queensland for a holiday. While I was there, I took the opportunity to go to a UFO abductee support meeting. John had told me about the organisation that ran the group, and I was looking forward to meeting other people who had been through the same thing as I had. Not long afterwards, another support group started up in Melbourne, and I was on the doorstep for its very first meeting.

I began to discover, however, that there were a lot of alternative types in this scene, and here's me, a housewife from the country, getting my first close look at the crystal-hugger set. I didn't know what to make of it, to be honest. It went over my head and I didn't really fit in, so I stopped going to the meetings.

I looked up at Wendy. 'Do you think that sounds judgmental?'

Wendy smiled wryly. 'I don't know of a law that says you have to believe everything people say. Those who have no powers of discrimination quickly find their minds filling up with rubbish. I don't believe or disbelieve anything automatically; I weigh everything. Mental health is physical health, and you have to take active responsibility for it. Judge away, I say.'

'Well, if I hadn't had the corroborating data, witness confirmations, physical marks, and the guidance of a good and honest researcher, I think I would have had myself committed. I don't believe something simply because it feels good either. I needed the physical evidence to help me realise that I wasn't nuts, and from that firm basis I felt safe to begin exploring past the edges.'

'I understand,' Wendy said.

'In January 1994 I also managed to get in contact with John, who'd been away over Christmas. Remember the letter that PRA sent me? I rang and rang and rang, because the December letter had hinted at the possibility of some news about the other witnesses. When I finally got in touch with him, he had some additional information for me.

'As I mentioned, these people had also accompanied John to the location of our experience. I later discovered that the drawings they had produced were virtually the same as mine, with the exception that they included some elements I had omitted. I cannot recall if I was wearing my glasses on the night or not, but that might account for my omissions.

'The other people had also seen the beings, but they then heard a humming noise and blacked out. One interesting thing, however, is that B— reported the same temporary blindness that I was affected with during the encounter.

'One of the women, G—, reported that the next thing she consciously recalled was sitting back in the car, looking for a can of Coke that she'd been holding a second before. This was similar to my own sense of disorientation when the light went away as we were driving.'

'One second, she's holding a can of Coke, and the next second the can has vanished?'

'Exactly.'

'Wild,' Wendy said.

'I also found out that when the other three people came down the road that night, they were struck by such severe nausea that they lost control of their car and grazed a pole. There wasn't much damage but they were forced to sit in their vehicle, on the side of the road, until they recovered their composure.

'This accident happened back down the road, somewhere before the encounter scene. I've always wondered if the accident could have occurred in the same place as where we saw the bright light screening the road. To me, that light was like a barrier.

'They reported that two cars passed them just as they were about to pull off the road. The researchers believe that one of these cars was ours, and this is why the other people ended up behind us when we entered the encounter scene. It almost seems as if this encounter was meant to have multiple witnesses.

'At this stage of the research the other three people didn't know that I had come forward, or even that Andrew and I existed. I said to John, "Can you tell them? Please tell them?", but he told me that I had to wait until his work was done, and until he was ready to release his report.

'It was June 1994 before I was told that the other women also had the triangular marks. What a difference it would have made in my mind if I'd known this earlier! John was excited, and he had every reason to be, but for the sake of unbiased research he was forced to keep much of the information from me until it was properly correlated and cross-referenced.'

Wendy smiled.

'I was like a prisoner, obsessively counting up my remissions. John was as understanding as he could be under the circumstances, but my appetite for information was voracious, and the waiting from December to June was agony. It seemed to me that John was being overcautious about releasing too much information, and about preserving the integrity of his investigations. Now, however, I see the sense in this.'

'So John released the report in June?'

'No. He'd finished his research, but the report itself is not yet available. What is it now . . . March, going on April, 1996.'

'Correct. But some of the information was released to you, as you've said.'

'Mostly what I've told you already. There was a snag, you see. PRA were particularly interested in Andrew's role in the encounter, and also in his Muslim background, but Andrew wouldn't come to the party about the investigation and refused to let a report be released that contained anything to do with him. As a result, the whole thing had to be torn apart and dissected, leaving it incomplete and full of holes.'

'Unfortunately, Andrew's role in the encounter was just as important as anyone else's. It needed to be included from my perspective and the researchers' perspective, and also cross-referenced with the accounts of the other witnesses and the field data.'

'Because of this, PRA had to rewrite and rearrange the report to place greater emphasis on the other three people, who had provided far more information. But then these people backed out too, feeling that some of the material was too sensitive for public release. Solicitors eventually became involved, and poor John was left holding the data to what could be the encounter case of the century, but with no rights to release it.'

'Things like that can happen when you're dealing with people. To a researcher, every bit of factual data is a piece of evidence, yet to the people involved everything becomes a personal affront if it isn't the perfect image of themselves that they'd like to present. It's human nature. No-one likes having their dirty laundry aired in public, and neither do we want sensitive or private information being made available to others. The researcher is presented with a real dilemma – personal privacy had to be respected, but by doing this, vital research and evidence are lost.'

'Anyway, the report was held back.'

'Yes, unfortunately.'

'What else can you tell me about these other people?'

'Not only did the women have the triangles under their navels, but one of them also had ligature marks on her ankles, and both had marks on the insides of their legs. They quite clearly remember being restrained flat on their backs on tables. They couldn't talk during the encounter, but they seemed to have the ability to know what was happening to each other telepathically.'

'Right,' she said. 'I recall that you reported the sudden surprising ability to communicate with your mind under those conditions.'

'Yes, I did. But let's move on from the other witnesses, because I don't have much more information about them. There was another thing that John told me he was interested in. He sent me a computer grid image of the magnetic anomalies that he had discovered. You can see the semicircular impression.'

I showed Wendy the image.

'Yes, you can definitely see the impression,' she said.

'John and his crew found that the ground in the field had been baked under high pressure. But there was a triangular mark in addition to the semicircular magnetic anomaly.'

'We all reported seeing the semicircular shell under the craft, but I hadn't noticed that there was also a triangular tripod support. The other people had seen that.'

'I don't know how I could have missed the tripod, except for the fact that I probably wasn't wearing my glasses. John and his people found the soil changes and the magnetic anomalies, which corresponded to our descriptions of the craft's dimensions. But they also found some unusual chemical traces. John was excited about these, but I have to admit that the details threw me a little.'

'You'll have to talk to John for more information about this, but essentially the whole area was laced with sulphur. They thought at first that the marks in the ground were burns, but it turned out they had been produced by a chemical called pyrene. Although this is often found in coal lodes, it shouldn't have been present in this particular location.'

'The magnetic anomalies were in the shape of a crescent, corresponding to the quarter-moon shape that I described to you. The marks in the formation were spaced about six metres apart and these

corresponded with the tripod beneath the craft, which was drawn by both J— and G—.

‘Another thing is that John told me they found unusually high amounts of tannic acid in the semicircle. He said it was strange because the tannic acid should have dissolved over the months, due to the rain we’d had, but the acid was locked in by a coating of some sort of unidentifiable waxy substance.’

‘It was found only in that one place?’

‘Just in the semicircle shape. I don’t know what all this means, and I only mention it because I’m trying to give you all the information I have. My knowledge of chemistry and so forth is non-existent, but to John it was fascinating.’

‘I must admit that to be given information which sounds a little technical can sometimes help a great deal when everything else seems so weird. Scientific field data brings a sense of reality to the event, and I’m sure that if it hadn’t been found you wouldn’t be sitting here with me now, because I wouldn’t have gone public. I needed that physical back-up for my own security and well-being, just as much as I needed to speak the truth about the bizarre aspects of the entire ordeal.’

‘Mind you, John didn’t do all of the technical stuff himself. He used the services of independent analysts to supplement his own team’s data collection. But, when it comes to UFO research, he is every bit the competent professional and is well respected for it. His reports are technical rather than being based on a personal perspective, and he leaves the other side of things to people like me.’

‘From very early on, John started pushing me to write a book. He didn’t care whether or not it ever got published, and said it would be a good experience for me.’

‘Has it done you good, writing about it?’

‘I must admit that it has. I think John figured that it couldn’t hurt; it could only help, particularly as a means of healing, and if the book was worth publishing it might make a decent contribution to the subject. He wanted me to tell the human side of the events. At first I underrated the therapeutic benefits of writing my story down, but John was much wiser.’

‘He said a funny thing to me in June. In a casual conversation, he remarked on how much I had changed. He said something like, “I remember when you first called me. I could tell immediately that

something traumatic had happened to you just from the tone of your voice and your way of speaking. You were all over the place, and scared as hell. You've changed quite a lot, and you've recovered whatever poise and control you had before the experience. I can see that you've learned to deal with it, and that you've grown quite a lot.'"

'That's a lovely thing to say.'

'It is, isn't it.'

'But if you look behind his comment, you discover something that has a more general application. When you listen to the stories of other abductees and experiencers, you need to look for evidence that the person has been deeply affected by what they've been through. Even after a long time you'll almost invariably find a thread of shock and disruption, even horror, when they talk about their experiences. You can hear it in their voices, and see it in their mannerisms, in their whole demeanour. After a while, they might get this under control, but it's still there.'

'You're suggesting that these signs are missing in people who are merely making up stories,' she observed.

'It's a definite indicator as far as I'm concerned. Anyone who could fake such a strong emotional state would be far better off putting their energies into an acting career than trying to make up an encounter, because I'm sure they'd do very well out of it.'

Wendy laughed. 'From what you're saying, it seems that there's no real money to be made out of this UFO business. I wonder why people bother to tell their stories?'

'It's usually a crusade for truth. You definitely get some attention seekers, whose accounts are often suspect, but the type of attention they receive isn't worth the trouble. Hoaxers need to have their heads read, but genuine abductees almost always come from ordinary, stable backgrounds and have absolutely nothing to gain from it, like B— the business manager.

'I know it seems as if a lot of experiencers have derailed somewhere along the line and gone off into the never-never land of esoteric excesses. To some outsiders, this could seem the obvious reason *for* their experiences. But there was something that John told me once, right in the very beginning. This was around the time when I first started to meet other experiencers, and to come into contact with the crystal-hugger set. I've never forgotten it because, these days, it could almost apply to me as well.

'He said, "Kelly, you can never judge a book by its cover. We've had a lot of people coming through our doors who were perfectly normal when they had their encounter or experience. But to see them a couple of years down the track, you begin to wonder what world they're living in – the changes have been so drastic. Some people don't report their encounter for years, so if we get someone coming to us with a cover version of 'Flight Around the Galaxy' we don't turn them away, no matter how off the planet they seem to be. There's quite often a genuine case beneath the mess they're in."

'Those words are a great comfort to me these days. I now understand why experiencers do head off down the esoteric track – simply put, it's because they've run out of places to look.

'I'm not the same person that I was back then. For about a year, I managed to keep my usual logical, analytical demeanour while I searched the outside world for answers. But when no solutions were forthcoming I turned inward to find my own, and that's where the trouble started. I have to smile when I say "trouble", because although I know that my experiences would be interpreted as that by most people, the rich rewards I've gleaned from it all are priceless. But in the beginning, I searched through every feasible, logical reason that I could come up with.

'For weeks, I seriously thought I had a brain tumour, or premature senility, or anything physical you could imagine that would serve as a halfway decent explanation. I considered any reason *but* a UFO encounter. I finally did have a brain scan in 1994 and it turned out to be clear – to my enormous relief this ruled out one theory at least. In the end, though, I had to accept the only rational conclusion that the evidence would permit: that what I thought I saw is what I actually *did* see.

'So, yes, because of the trauma, the shock, the confusion, the marks, the illnesses, the violent flashbacks, the lack of sympathetic understanding from my partner, the isolation, the upheaval of my religious faith, and my own early denial, I *did* have a need for some therapeutic writing. John calls it "purging" and that's a good word. But anything cathartic might have done it, maybe even something like sculpture.'

'As in *Close Encounters*,' Wendy said, and I had a chuckle.

'Even that. I would recommend that people who have had such an experience should get in touch with a reputable ufologist and, while their case is being researched, do something to "purge" the negative aspects of

their encounter. It probably doesn't matter what it is: they should just do it.'

Wendy scratched her head. 'Why did you think you had a brain tumour? That would have been the last thing I'd have thought of.'

'Because of the headaches.'

'Oh, of course. You had migraines for nine months after that night in August.'

'And I'd never had them before in my life. I didn't know what was going on, and I still don't know whether they were stress related or due to the encounter – maybe it was a little of both.'

'Anyway,' I said, rubbing my hands together gleefully. 'That takes care of a few of the odds and ends. We're almost at the end of what I want to tell you, but what I'd like to talk about next is the part that I find the most interesting of all – my new purpose in life.'

CHAPTER 13



'By early 1994, I'd become proactive in my search for answers. I started gathering as much information as possible from every reliable source I could find, and my sources were increasing all the time. I started networking like there was no tomorrow, and even though John had not released his report, I nonetheless wrote to him requesting things like contour maps of sightings, under-the-counter documents, names, addresses – you name it.

'In May 1994 I published my own survey of abductees because I was looking for patterns in the data, mainly to do with psychic and metaphysical after-effects. It was distributed by several Australian researchers on my behalf. By this stage I'd gone way beyond the simple need to confirm my own experience – not only was I satisfied that something UFO-ish had happened to me, but I was beginning to look at the possible connections between myself and other experiencers.

'I received around fifty replies from Australian experiencers to the original ninety-six question survey. This has helped weed out the recurring similarities, and I intend to break it down further and send it out to hundreds of people, so that we have a statistically viable sample. The subject of encounter after-effects is close to my heart, and in my own small way I'm beginning to get a feel for the research side of things.

'Of course, what I do is far removed from the work of field researchers like John. I tend to spend more time on the phone talking about intimate "weirds" with other experiencers, which is the one great benefit of being an experiencer myself. When you've been there, other experiencers tend to open up and tell all. There are no guarded reserves as there are

with researchers, and ultimately you gain a deeper understanding of the reality of UFO encounters and abductions as a whole.

'You've been very busy,' Wendy said.

'My filing cabinet is bulging with stuff. I clip articles, I keep all my correspondence, and every little fact that I glean from the mountains of material I collect gets slotted into its proper place in my understanding of the whole. I do far more collating than I do filtering. Who knows: one tiny, seemingly insignificant fact that I come across by accident might just hold another lead to understanding the mystery.'

'Come into my office, I want to show you a couple of things.'

I led Wendy to my filing cabinet and pulled open a drawer.

'If you think the marks on my legs are impressive, you should have a look at these.' I pulled out a file.

'Consider this guy.' I showed her a picture of a young white male with precise round keloid scars on his legs. 'The scoop marks are in exactly the same location as mine, on the outside of both upper calves.'

I showed her several more photos.

'To date, no-one has any acceptable explanation for why these particular marks keep appearing on the bodies of experiencers.'

'That's awful,' Wendy remarked. 'Who — or what — would do such a thing?'

'That's the question of the moment, isn't it.' I closed the file when she'd seen enough.

'I could show you more images of people with similar marks on other parts of their bodies. I personally know one woman who has scars on her forehead every bit as pronounced as these. There are three of them, the width of a fingernail, in a vertical line straight down the centre of her forehead. You can't miss them.'

'The issue I'm trying to get across is that something real, something physical, is happening here. But despite the most obvious physical effects, the whole subject of UFO abduction is mostly relegated to the "cuckoo" file. My point is that if the obvious cannot be accepted, how on earth is the entire truth ever going to be known? The only ones who hold the key to any of the answers are the very people who are restrained from speaking the truth as they know it — the experiencers. There's a sort of quality control on what is acceptable and what is not which, instead of guiding us into a place of understanding, only ensures that we never get there.'

'This raises a whole lot of issues for me,' said Wendy.

'Now you see why I regard this work as so very important. While my original intention to launch a one-woman "crusade" has been redirected, it hasn't been blunted. To my mind, these phenomena have the potential to change the way we view the world like nothing else I can imagine. That's why I've got off my backside. Something has turned my life upside down, and I have to know what it is! I can't ignore it.

'Maybe I've seen the last of the beings. It seems that way, but it could all start up again tomorrow. I can't just sit back and relax now that the bulk of it seems to have passed. That's why I carry on, why I'm still searching for the answers.'

I stood in the front garden and watched as Wendy slowly drove the rented Pulsar Q out of the driveway.

This had been the most detailed interview I'd ever given, and yet something was missing – something subtle and intangible. It was always missing: whenever I related my story, it was never there. I thought about it for a while as I wandered up the front steps. The 'something' that was missing was a little like the spirit essence, or the soul.

I had offered every part of myself to Wendy – my truth, my intellect, my heart, my emotions, my humour, my questions, my theories, my understandings and lack of them – and yet something was still missing. A person could walk away from me believing or not believing and, either way, the effect on their overall life would be minimal. But as far as I was concerned, every person who knew about what had happened to me had also become my judge.

Then, like a bolt of lightning, the answer hit me!

I had given Wendy everything I could, and yet I had not been able to provide her with the essential thing that would make her believe. I had not been able to give her my own personal experience. I would always be alone in this – the only one who could every truly know what had happened to me. Try as I might to describe and explain it to others, without the benefit of personal experience no-one else could ever possibly know and really understand. There could only ever be judgment – nothing more and nothing less.

I walked into my bedroom and glanced over at the big black book on the bedside table. Picking it up, I let my hands gently caress its well-worn pages. Turning to my last entry, I wondered how old my children would be before they could understand it all. Silently, I began to write.

WHY selected a reason

HOW designed a way

WHERE decided the place

WHEN chose a time

WHAT saw its substance

then WHO found itself

ANSWERS — the word which has inspired nearly all of the changes in my mindset and spirituality since the encounter.

A very good man once said, 'Seek and you shall find.' But exactly what you *would* find was something he failed to mention — and now I know why.

In a universe full of possibilities, finding one truth is like trying to find a fish in the ocean. Simple enough it seems, but which single fish in all the deep seas was the culprit that swallowed your contact lenses? Even if you did manage to live long enough to catch and open up the billions of possibilities, new fish are being born every minute. Possibilities — that's the key word.

The search to find one truthful and real answer to the UFO enigma leaves you in the same boat in many ways. So many theories have already been proffered that the mind boggles with amazement. Somehow, I don't see this changing in a hurry. It seems that paradoxical thought can open so many doors that searching for one truth only serves to make a person more aware of the ever-expanding labyrinth that they have unwittingly entered.

I often wonder if the underlying karmatic purpose of the search for answers is not actually centred on finding an answer as such, but rather to focus on the journey itself.

The quest of finding a solution to the UFO enigma is certainly a driving force behind the seeking, but I think that more of us should stop to smell the roses along the way. If we did, we would discover that the 'seeking' has opened up realms of spiritual, mental and physical understandings which would not have been possible if the quest was completed and an answer found.

I really do feel that an acceptable answer – at least one that is agreed upon by every mindset – will never be found. Instead, I see the seeker of the hypothetical 'holy grail' coming to 'know themselves' and, as a result, finding many answers to many questions.

Personally, I can't offer a definite explanation as to why my encounter occurred, although in my own thoughts the reason centres around God and spiritual beliefs.

Although I don't possess the universe's answer to 'Why?', I *am* able to share some of the personal journey that I have embarked upon. This has become much more interesting to me than the actual encounter. When I think of relating the night on the field yet again, this provokes an inward groan of resignation, but I am always eager to explore the possibilities and understandings that have come about since.

In my eyes, the process has been an ongoing expansion of mental and spiritual awareness that has sometimes made me wonder, *If this is what it would be like, could we be given an insight into the very mind of God?* The search for answers has become a continuity of creative thought that self-procreates in paradox, giving birth to other thoughts with the same structure of self-procreation. One could almost believe they had entered eternity in ever-expanding thought.

I think that one of the greatest lessons I have learned came about because of my inward journey after the encounter. This lesson was the difference between love and fear. To most people, this is probably as obvious as the difference between black and white. In a world of conditioned illusion, however, most of what we recognise as black or white actually exists in a zone of murky grey.

From childhood, we are socially conditioned to love, with fear as our inspiration. For example, 'You cannot do that . . . it is not a loving thing to

do.’ The opposite then becomes the loving thing to do. We train ourselves to work within this mandate of love through a fear of being seen as unloving, not because it is a natural instinct within us.

Many of our religious principles of love are based on the same fear. Complying with principles that do not allow us to feel the love we are loving with, yet which serve to satisfy other people’s judgments about whether or not we are a loving person, only helps to reinforce the illusion. Love can be felt, and if you are not feeling it you are simply not giving it. The point of learning that lesson was that I had to recognise it for myself. This meant bypassing everything I’d ever been taught – I had to learn to adapt, to change, and be more open.

So overall, the effect of the encounter has instigated a kind of ‘flushing out’ process of all my traditional values and precepts – sort of wiping the slate clean, ready to begin again. This time, instead of being taught what to believe, I’m on an inner journey of discovery, where I can find and place my own beliefs according to where I have found truth.

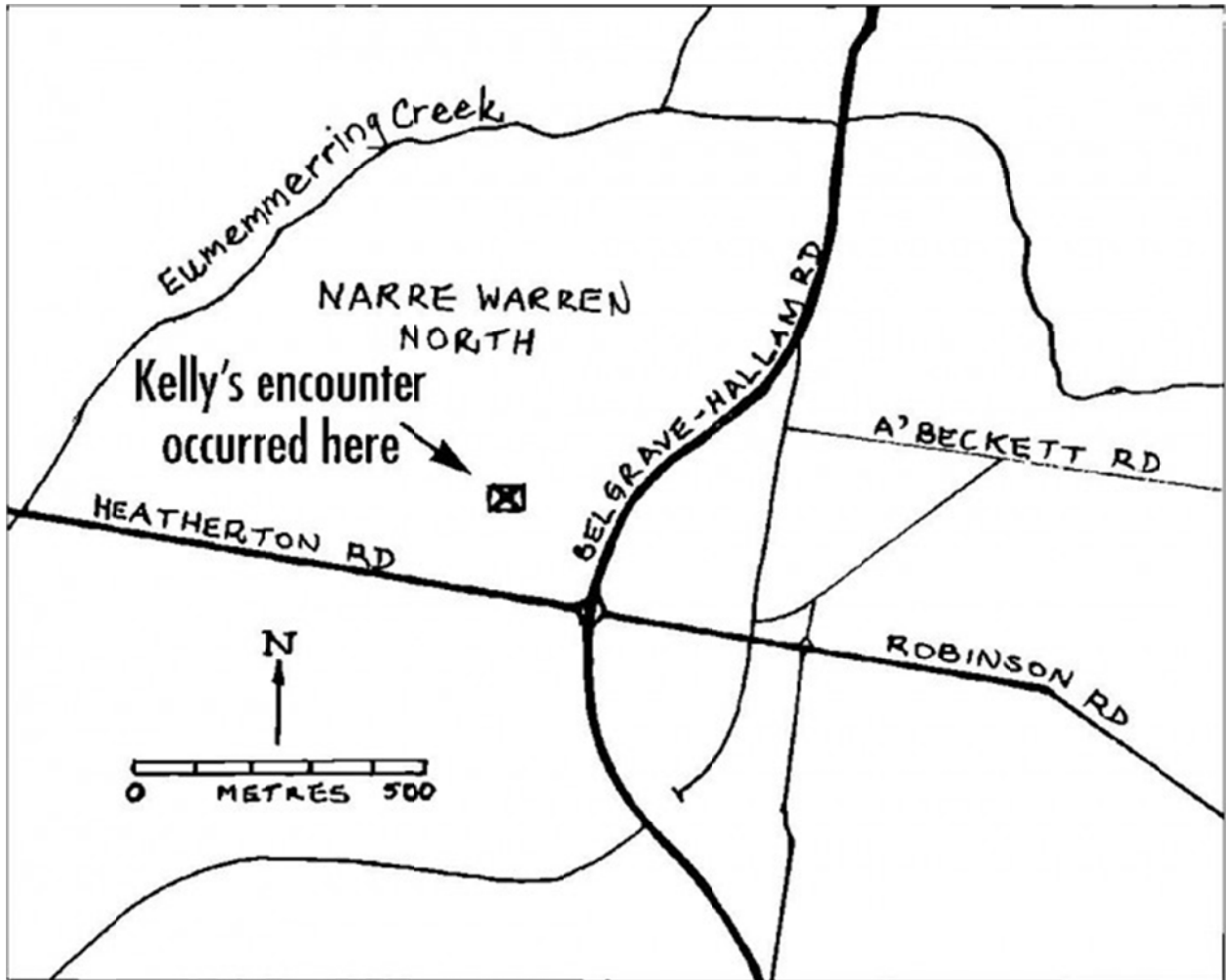
If nothing else, I have learned one thing:

You can never know anything until you have experienced it.



The author. Kelly Cahill was twenty-five when she had an encounter with unexplained entities near Eumemmerring Creek while driving home late one night from a party with her husband. Also present were three other, independent witnesses who were later tracked down by researchers.

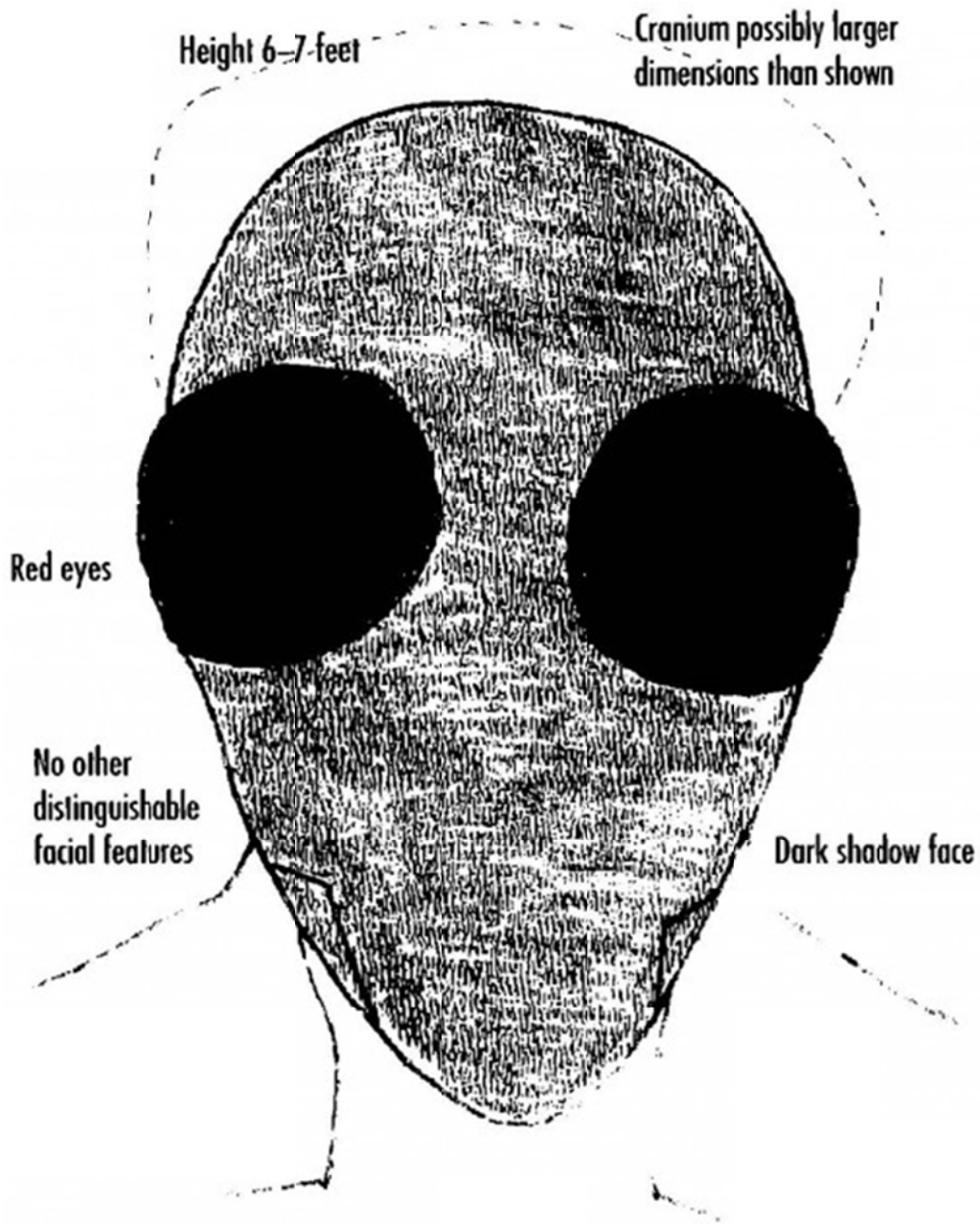
(Photograph courtesy of Andrew J. Corrigan)



Map of the area in country Victoria showing the location of the encounter.



The field near Eumemmerring Creek where the encounter occurred. Researchers from Phenomena Research Australia (PRA) carried out intensive scientific tests here over several months.



© PRA

The author's impression of the entities she saw during the encounter. There is a strong likeness between the drawing made by Kelly and those made separately by the two women who were in the other car.

J —



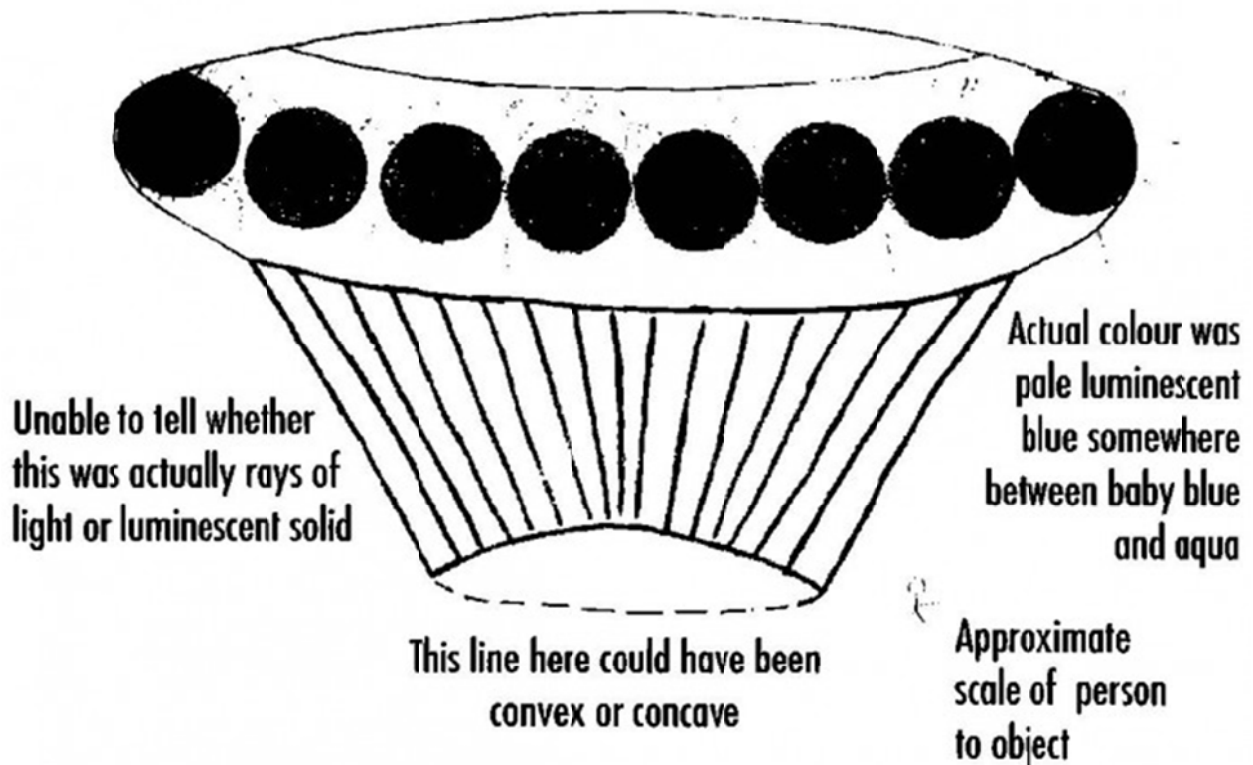
G —



© PRA

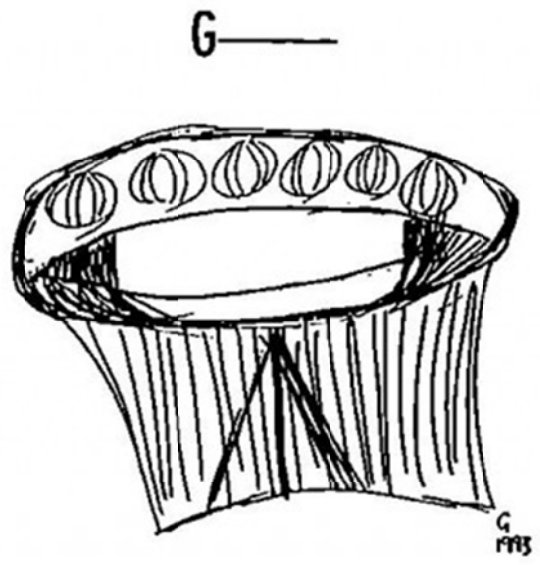
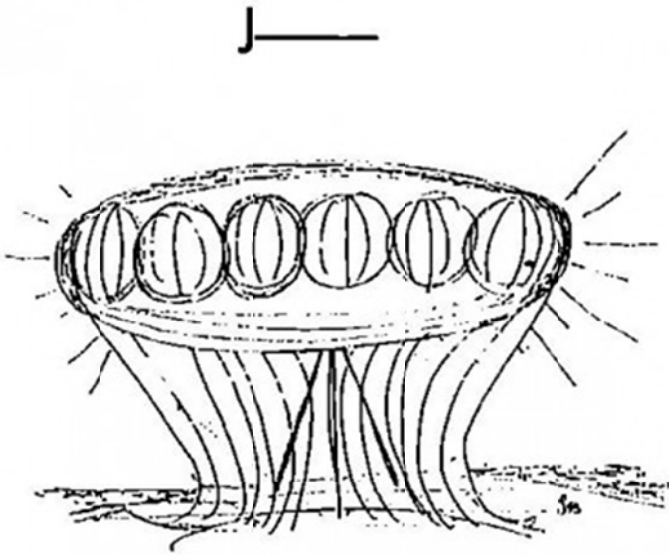
The drawings made by the two women from the other car show a marked similarity to Kelly's impression.

Circles were a darker orange of solid appearance, emitting diffused pale orange light



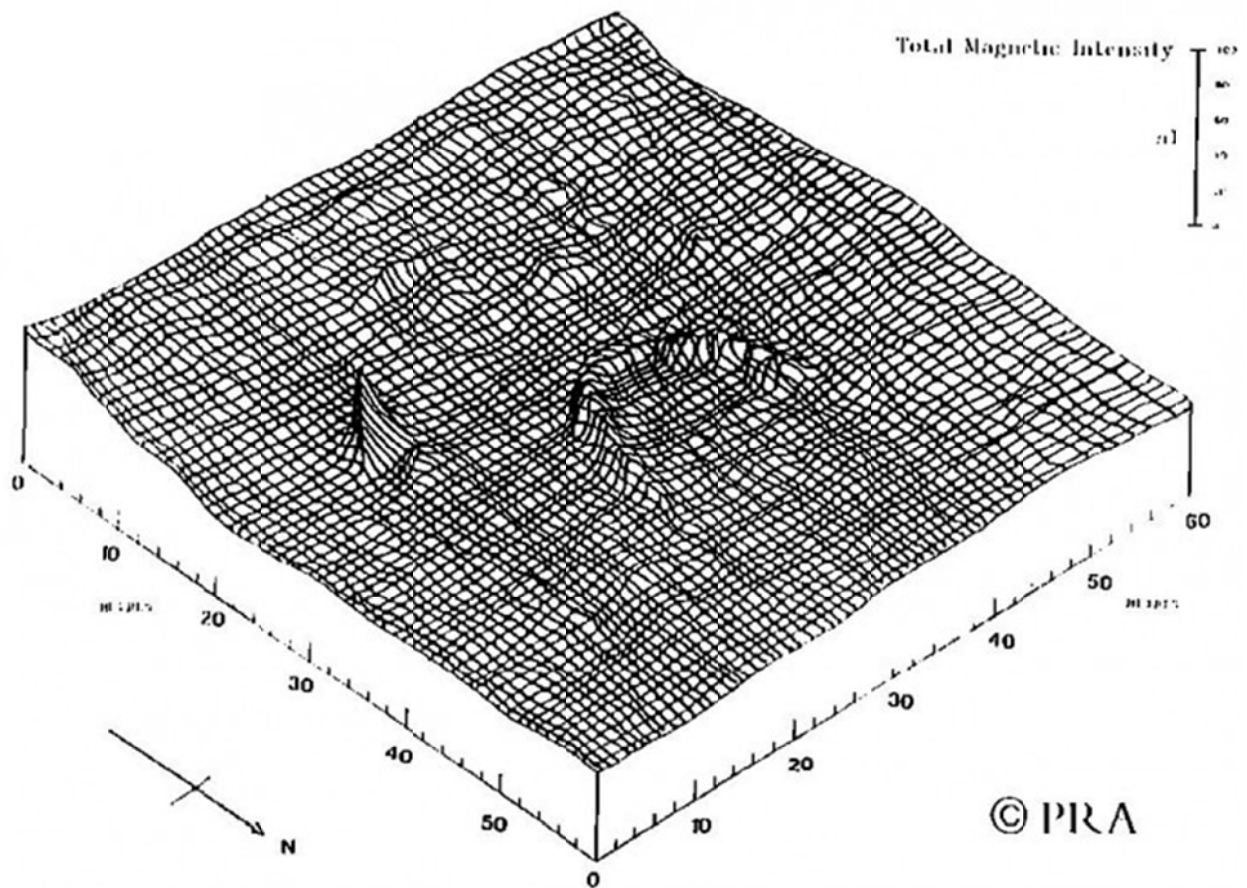
© PRA

The author's impression of the craft she saw in the field. Again, the similarity between Kelly's impression and those of the other witnesses is striking.



© PRA

Impressions of the craft by the two women from the other car. They reported seeing a tripod structure below the craft.



Magnetic levels in the field were measured by researchers from Phenomena Research Australia. These revealed higher levels in the shape of a quarter-moon, at the same place that Kelly reported seeing an alien craft.

APPENDIX

DIRECTORY OF UFO-RELATED ORGANISATIONS

There is a growing number of UFO researchers, organisations, support groups and societies worldwide, all of which cannot possibly be listed here. I have supplied several contacts by categorisation of countries, which I hope will be of some service.

AFRICA

Quest International
3 Camfer Rd
Torato 7800 Cape
South Africa
Rosemary Howell

South African UFO
Research Association
PO Box 819
Noordwyk 1687
South Africa

Matabeleland UFO
Research Group
PO Box 694
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
Vic Forward

UFO Afri-News
Gemeni PO Box MP 49
Mt Pleasant, Harare
Zimbabwe
Cynthia Hind

EURASIA

AURA-Z Research Centre
PO Box 224
Moscow 117463
Russia

Research Institute on
Anomalous Phenomena
PO Box 4684
310022 Kharkov-22
Ukraine

AUSTRALIA

Australian Abduction
Study Centre (AASC)
GPO Box 1894
Adelaide SA 5001
Keith Basterfield

Encounters UFO Support
Group
PO Box 1309
Naree Warren VIC 3805
Dianne Allen

Australian International
UFO
GPO Box 1104
Adelaide SA 5001
Colin Noris

INUFOR
PO Box 783
Kogarah NSW 2217
Miora MaGhee
02 5539406

Australian Society for
Psychical Research, WA
Professor John
Frodsham (see UFORUM)

Mutual UFO Network
(MUFON)
106 Dykes St
Mt Gravatt QLD 4122
Glennys MacKay
(research & support
group)

Phenomena Research
Australia (PRA)
PO Box 523
Mulgrave VIC 3170
John Auchettl

UFO Research NSW
(UFOR)
PO Box Q95
Queen Victoria Building
Sydney NSW 2000
Bryan Dickeson

UFO Encounter Help
PO Box 642
Parramatta NSW 2124
*Matthew Favaloro and
Bob Marx*

UFO Research
Queensland (UFOR)
PO Box 222
50 Albert St Brisbane
QLD 4002

UFO Experience Support
Association (UFOESA)
PO Box 191
Regents Park NSW 2142
Peter Khoury

UFO Research South
Australia (UFORSA)
PO Box 281
Blair Athol SA 5084

UFO Investigation Centre
NSW (UFOIC)
PO Box W42
West Pennant Hills
NSW 2125
Bill Chalker

UFORUM
PO Box 626
Applecross WA 6153
Brian Richards

UFO Investigation
Centre, Tasmania
(UFOIC)
PO Box 174
South Hobart TAS 7004
Keith Roberts

Victorian UFO Research
Society
PO Box 43
Moorabin VIC 3189

BRITAIN

Association for the
Scientific Study of
Anomalous Phenomena
(ASSAP)
St Adhelm, 20 Paul St
Frome
Somerset BA11 1DX

NARO UFO Research
6 Silsden Ave
Lowton
Warrington WA3 1EN
Peter Hough

AURA-Z Research Centre
c/- Post International
44 Clerkenwell Rd
London EC1M 5PS

Northern UFO Network
(NUFON)
37 Heathbank Rd
Stockport
Cheshire SK3 0UP

British UFO Research
Association (BUFORA)
Suite 1, The Leys,
2C Leyton Rd
Harpenden
Herts AL5 2TL
Phillip Mantle

Scottish UFO Research
(SRURO)
129 Longton View
East Calder
West Lothian EH53 0RE

Flying Saucer Review
(FSR)
PO Box 162
High Wycombe, Bucks
HP 135DZ

CANADA

UFO Research Institute of
Canada (UFORIC)
Dept 25, 1665 Robson St
Vancouver, British
Columbia V6G 362

EUROPE

Centro Italiano Studi
Ufologica
Casella Postale 82
10100 Torino, Italy

UFO Nyt
PO Box 6 DK 2820
Glentofte, Denmark
Kym Mullahansen

UFO Norge
PO Box 4332
Nygardstangen N-5028
Bergen, Norway
Mentz Kaarbo

NEW ZEALAND

Peter Hassal
PO Box 27432
Upper Willis St
Wellington

MUFON New Zealand
PO Box 27117
Mt Roshill
Auckland 1030
Murray Bott

Project Blue
PO Box 69
Paihia, Bay of Islands
Jos Wellman

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Academy of Clinical
Close-Encounter
Therapists (ACCET)
2826 O St, Suite 3
Sacramento CA 95816

Aphrodite Clamar (PhD)
30E 60th St, Suite 1107
New York NY 10022

J. Allen Hynek Center for
UFO Studies (CUFOS)
2457 West Peterson Ave
Chicago IL 60659

Ann Druffel (PhD)
257 Sycamore Glen
Pasadena CA 91105

AURA-Z Research Centre
c/- Post International Inc
666 Fifth Ave, Suite 572
New York NY 10103

Fund for UFO Research
Box 277
Mt Ranier MD 20712

Beverly J Carter (PhD)
4491 South Yates
Denver CO 80236

Fearon Hicks
140 Elaine Drive
Auburndale FL
33823-3016

Center for the Study of
Extraterrestrial
Intelligence (CSETI)
PO Box 15401
Asheville NC 28813

Institute for the Study of
Contact with Non-human
Intelligence
3463 State St # 440
Santa Barbara CA 93015
Michael Lindemann

Citizens Against UFO
Secrecy (CAUS)
PO Box 218 Coventry
CT 6238
Barry Greenwood

Institute for UFO
Contactee Studies
1425 Steele St
Laramie WY 82070
Leo Sprinkle

International Fortean
Organisation
PO Box 367
Arlington VA
22210-0367

Dr Jean Mundy (PhD)
33 Windward Lane
East Hampton NY 11937

The Intruders Foundation
PO Box 30233
New York NY 1001
Budd Hopkins

National Investigations
Committee on UFOs
PO Box 73
Van Nuys
CA 91408-0073

Long Island UFO
Network (LIUFON)
PO Box 1692
Riverhead NY 11901

PEER Program for
Extraordinary Experience
Research
1493 Cambridge St
Cambridge MA 02139
John Mack


Mutual UFO Network
(MUFON)
103 Oldtowne Rd
Seguin TX 78155-4099

UNICAT Project
1200 Murcott Court
Longwood FL 32779

Kelly Cahill was a young mother of three. She was also a sceptic — especially when it came to 'close encounters'. But driving home with her husband from a party late one evening along a lonely road in country Victoria, she was dazzled by a blinding light.

What happened next was at first too frightening to remember — until it became too terrifying to forget. As Kelly pieced together her memories of that fateful encounter, one detail stood out. There were other people there that night, people she didn't know or speak to. When researchers finally tracked them down, their story was eerily similar.

Encounter is Kelly's story, her own, very personal account of an experience for which she has no rational explanation and that has totally changed her life. Sometimes frightening, sometimes gut wrenching and sometimes out of this world, it is a story that poses more questions than it answers. When you've read *Encounter* you'll discover, like Kelly, why a close encounter is impossible to forget.

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