

LEOPARDS IN THE SKY

for the Preconscious Mind

by Dr. Greg A. Grove

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FOREWORD

Previously used by hundreds of people in the fields of science and invention, art and medicine, business and writing--to advance the quality of life and joy of discovery--today the preconscious mind is being neglected in institutions of higher learning and elsewhere. Why is this so?

Several decades ago Sigmund Freud published his ideas about two levels of human consciousness, the conscious and unconscious. What you may not realize is that Freud also hinted at a third level of consciousness, the preconscious, which is the mind that exists between the conscious and unconscious. We use the preconscious mind when we think creatively, daydream, or meditate. Albert Einstein's great emphasis on the preconscious for generating many of his scientific theories underscores its significance. Over the years, however, the preconscious mind has not received the attention it deserves because Western society places more value on the practical and less on the imaginative.

The following 22 snapshot stories are designed to engage the preconscious mind through reflective daydream. To accomplish this aim, LEOPARDS IN THE SKY should be read slowly, meditatively. Give yourself plenty of time to visualize the setting and dip into the personality of the characters. Additionally, if you happen to find a story that is deeply compelling and has a sequel, turn next to the page at the end of the story. In this way it is possible to string together several stories of the same theme as you move in and out of reverie. More importantly, approach each story with a relaxed mind that is willing to extend the drama that gently unfolds. May your extended daydreams take on whatever theme or situation your imagination suggests, making each one uniquely yours.

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The Wisdom of Silence

It was a day unlike all other days. Autumn leaves fluttered in the wind as people scurried about, making noises that confirmed they were as much alive as Nature herself. Continuous streams of pale yellow danced across pavement and yard of a north coast village readying itself for another day's business.

Yet amid the grandeur outside, there were no visible signs of humanity inside Emile's bedroom. It was a spacious second-story room furnished with antiques successfully haggled over until the owner would go no lower. Every piece of furniture had a story to tell. The oak chest, the maple rocker, the stained-glass lamp--even the oriental throw rugs--muted urges to share their histories with him, except for the computer he kept running all night long. Emile just couldn't put it to sleep as it seemed to have a mind of its own. It was as much alive as he was, or so he thought.

The grayish glow of the screen was a welcoming guest to this professor who lived a more or less solitary existence. Even the landlady who rented the bedroom to him often mused that Emile's only friend was his computer, for she seldom greeted anyone else but him. The electronic device was more than a computer of convenience; it was a confidant who shared world-wide secrets. Day or night, the screen filled his blue eyes with compelling images of other worlds.

But this was no ordinary day. Emile had forgotten to set the alarm clock. Shafts of dawning light coming through one large window illuminated the room ever so gently. In the corner was the computer, humming its electronic Gregorian chant, waiting for the sensate pressure of Emile's nimble fingers across the keyboard. However, Emile remained buried under layers of quilts, drained of all energy. It was as if the electromagnetic field of the computer had completely sapped his mental and emotional powers over a period of months. Peeking out from under the covers, he knew he had to do something to regain his strength and humanity, even if it meant abandoning an artificial world he had come to love and cherish.

Reflections of Tomorrow

Emile sometimes wondered what occupied the third story of the Victorian he called home. His landlady, stately Mrs. Cunningham, was generous in letting him relax in the parlor or fix meals in the kitchen, but she never invited him to explore beyond the four walls of his bedroom. Once or twice he had started up the third story staircase only to return just in time to avoid precipitous contact.

But today was rife with ideas of chance and change that challenged Emile's otherwise scholarly mind. Sitting demurely in his rocking chair, lost in thought, a possessing dynamic to experience the attic for himself suddenly took hold. Certainly no harm could result while fulfilling many years of subdued curiosity. He arose with courage.

Opening his bedroom door, he popped his head out; the landing was clear. He could hear Mrs. Cunningham downstairs, humming turn-of-the-century tunes as she prepared morning tea and breakfast of wheat toast with mint jelly. The whistling teakettle and savory smell of toast made Emile want breakfast too, but his plan came first. He just had to get into the attic.

Thinking that he probably had 20 minutes to himself, he exited his bedroom with confidence and quietly crept upstairs. The walls on the third floor were paneled in oak. Pictures of bouquets, dusty with age, eyed his every move. The carpeting was unusually soft, as if it had not felt the pressure of feet for many months--perhaps years. At the end of the narrow hallway was the unfinished oak door to the attic. Its crystal doorknob reflected faint streams of light that came through the portal window nearby. As he grasped the knob, he realized his fingerprints would be a permanent reminder of entry.

The door opened with sounds from an ancient past. He ascended three dimly lit steps with heart-beating anticipation. Inside the attic were piles of leather-bound books, yellowed newspapers and magazines, and steamer chests overflowing with outdated clothing. A skylight above him cast an eerie ray that stopped at the foot of a full-length mirror. A violet ribbon tied in a bow hung around one of the posts. As Emile warily approached the mirror, he gradually came into reflective view, but his attention was straightaway diverted from himself to the speckled background on the dusty surface. Even the musty smell of the room couldn't distract his rapt attention, for reflected in the mirror were swirling star-studded galaxies in outer space, spinning out a Pythagorean harmony of the spheres.

The Used Bookstore

Saturday came along, a day for rest and recreation. Emile had plans; he loved walking downtown in the village amid the quaint stores and boisterous cafés. Their presence seemed to represent something more than commercialism to him. They were the pulse of his village where enthusiastic people proved their connection with life. An overwhelming sense of it all made him forget that he was just one person among so many.

One of his favorite haunts was a used bookstore on 4th Street. It had been there since he was young, although he never understood its presence until he got older. Creative window displays lured customers inside while a green awning sheltered the displays from the sun's damaging rays.

As Emile entered the store, he was quickly greeted by the owner, an astute-looking woman in her 60s, with long wavy hair, smartly clad in a geometrically patterned dress. She was seated at the counter with an open novel in her hands. Emile smiled and paused for a moment, eyeing 15 or more aisles overflowing with long-forgotten truths. It was a mysterious, intriguing atmosphere, like the inside of an antiquated library.

On this special day, Emile felt that he would stumble on just the right book for himself. After all, he was a professor and books were the source of inspiration. He had quite a collection of his own in his bedroom, but even so, there was always room for just one more book to satisfy his need for esoteric perceptions.

As he headed toward his favorite section--mysticism and psychology--his stomach began to feel a bit uneasy, which meant he was certain to stumble on a treasure. Standing in front of the occult section, he eyed each book, listening inside himself for recognition. A large red book with gold imprinted title caught his eye. This must be the one, he thought to himself, as he delicately removed it for closer examination. It was a book of high mysticism in occult schools of the mystery tradition. He had no sooner opened it than a note card fell to the ground; he stooped to pick it up. Written in calligraphy was a chant for opening the mind to a distant higher consciousness. Overtaken by it all, Emile quickly seated himself on a small wood bench nearby. He thoughtfully read the chant to himself and soon became distracted from his surroundings. His eyes closed automatically. He was now standing in front of an amethyst-robed Adept of towering height.

Café a la verse

Emile left the book store with his newly bought treasure tucked inside a green plastic bag so that no one could see its title or surmise its contents. He was particular about not sharing his eccentric tastes with the world! He knew from hard-earned experience that only a rarefied few would eye the tome with receptive understanding. And rather than get into some refutable discussion over his taste in literature, he chose to keep his esoteric discoveries to himself.

It wasn't long before he had walked four blocks to his favorite café. The café was in an old gray-stone building that had once served as a railway depot. Now converted into an artist's enclave, it was a downtown "hot spot." Typical of most cafés, there were regulars and drop-ins.

With a white-mugged coffee in hand, he wended his way between the crowded tables to one that had a view of the park across the street. He put his book on the table and was soon caught up in the impressionistic atmosphere. Across from him was a college student lapping up pages in a book and furiously taking notes. In the corner was a long-haired man with his nose nearly imbedded in the local newspaper. Laughter rang out from two middle-aged women gossiping next to a casually dressed psychotherapist, pensively journaling. The young, attractive blond was a regular but always singularly alone. The fine features of her face and quiet demeanor projected a feeling of acceptance. Every day like clockwork she divulged the inner secrets of her life into a black journal.

Although Emile tried to be discreet in his people-watching, more often than not his sustained glances met with grimacing expressions. Getting back to reality, he slipped the book out of its plastic bag and began to read the Table of Contents. So many fascinating ideas lay ahead. Then a brief movement across the room attracted his attention. It was the therapist getting ready to leave. She deposited her pen in purse and partially closed the journal. As she gathered up the rest of her things, a loose slip of paper fell under the table without notice, and she was gone. What was he to do? Certainly that note might be important to her. He walked over and picked it up.

In the dusk of eventide
I hear the music of your soul
Your smile stirs my heart
Your lips set passions burning
Fill my arms, fill my dreams
With golden schemes.

Codex Causal

Emile slipped the therapist’s poem into his book. Perhaps he would have a chance to return it the next time he saw her in the café. At least it would be an opportune way of initiating a conversation. If anyone was to become edgy over the content of the poem, surely it would be she.

He resumed reading and sipping coffee while trying to ignore the bold sounds of Brahms’ Fourth Symphony overhead. His attention had returned to the Table of Contents where he fixated on the word numerology. An entire chapter was devoted to the history of numerology and Pythagoras during the Golden Age of Greece, 500 B.C. The Pythagorean system of numerology converts letters of the alphabet into the numbers 1 through 9 as noted in an illustration:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

Compound numbers are reduced to single numbers. Emile excitedly converted his full name and date of birth into several numerological predictions.

His Life Path was 7--a specialist, inventor, loner, eccentric--thoughtful and spiritual. He would find depth in sacred connection. Solitude was necessary if he was to discover his inner voice. This implied that his friends might consider him different or odd.

On the intuitive plane he was 7 as well. He would seldom need anything spelled out. Determined to know the truth, he would not have to worry over right and wrong because intuition would provide the right answer every time--effortlessly. A strong desire to teach would consume him, and the popularity of accepted religion would not interest him. His was to be a spiritual journey into Higher Consciousness. Momentum on the Path would be cumulative.

The last aspect was his Personality Number. He was 6, radiating understanding and compassion. He would attract people in need of comfort, even rehabilitation, who would feel safe to unload their burdens. He would be led to sacrifice personal desires for the good of others. Also, he possessed a keen sense of color and artistic taste. Surely that accounted for the aging art prints in his bedroom.

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Rachmaninov in the Afternoon

Time was fleeting. Emile checked his watch and nearly gasped when he realized he had spent 2 hours in the café, but it was a well-spent 2 hours. He was convinced that he knew more about the therapist and himself than ever before.

He bundled up the red book, put the coffee mug in the dirty-dish bin, and whisked himself out the glass front door. Outside, the world he had neglected was a harbinger of cacophonous noises and swiftly-flowing pedestrians. He set his course for home. The bold autumn rays cast shadows here and there, and a playful breeze whipped up loose leaves and scattered them around parked cars.

Approaching home, he said hello to a woman weeding the garden and to her husband raking leaves. They seemed like gentle folk. The mailman turned the corner in his small truck and was madly stuffing mailboxes; he waved. Within seconds Emile was on the brick walk leading up to the front door where Mrs. Cunningham had fastened a harvest scarecrow to celebrate a season of reds and golds.

Now inside his bedroom, he decided to relax and listen to his favorite composer, Rachmaninov. The surging splendor of the Second Symphony wafted throughout the room. Fragmentary tunes lengthened themselves into swirling eddies of melody against an ever-evolving lush harmonic background. Emile mused to himself:

I sit, spellbound--the louds and softs resonating
inside me, as if being taken on a journey,
the journey you had in mind
when you penned the composition--
a journey into the deeper aspects
of your being

What joy and pain I feel.
Are these the emotions of a struggling artist?
A prophetic genius of sound and silence?

I'm carried along willingly
on this caravan of sound.
Do not stop; continue to feed me
with your thoughts and I will be transformed into someone
you'd be proud to call your confidant.

Whispers of the Past

As the recording of Rachmaninov's Second Symphony concluded with a decisive chord, Emile's sense of reality gradually returned. The afternoon had turned to dusk and a lingering sunset lit up the night sky; hunger had begun to ravage his stomach. He briskly left his sanctuary of solitude and headed toward the downstairs kitchen. Within minutes he had whipped up a tasty dinner: cheese and pepperoni pizza, mixed salad, white wine. Because Mrs. Cunningham was out shopping, he lingered over every bite.

Dishes washed and put away, he headed upstairs to his bedroom again to do dig into the red book he had just purchased. He now considered the book more than informational; it was magical, for after all it put him in touch with his numerological self, and the handwritten chant had opened his mind to cosmic consciousness. As he nestled into his rocking chair, he eagerly searched the Table of Contents for a dynamic chapter on pendulum dowsing.

Chapter thirty-three began with a history of dowsing. Apparently credible evidence has pointed to many ancient cultures--Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, Polynesians, and even American Indians--that used the pendulum for magical purposes. Over time pioneers in the field published books about dowsing. In France, Belgium, and Italy, practitioners of the Catholic faith became particularly expert. There were no serious conflicts between orthodox religion and dowsing because the dowser was utilizing the constancy of God's natural forces. This detecting and measuring of electromagnetic vibrations or rays from any source, living or inert, extended to minerals, plants, animals, and man himself. Moreover, vibrations that constitute the angelic, celestial, and divine have been tapped by the movements of the pendulum. Emanating rays from the supernatural and mysterious suddenly opened their "throats" and gave "voice" to the past.

The text placed a reassuring emphasis that most people, about 80 percent, possess the ability to channel these invisible rays or waves through muscular reflexes that are transferred to the pendulum they are holding in their dominant hand. Emile thought, Why not join the ever growing list of medical men, research workers, priests, geologists and policemen who have specialized in using this intriguing instrument to disclose volumes of truth. Certainly, becoming an effective dowser was a matter of degree. Emile felt he possessed all of the qualifications to become a dowser: humility, focused attention with no preconceived idea of what the result would be, relying solely on pendulum reaction. The book emphasized that the dowser must leave the answer entirely to the pendulum.

Emile Tries Pendulum Dowsing

Emile was convinced that pendulum dowsing could open up new sources of information. After all, since the 1920s, men of science and industry, medicine and agriculture, had used the pendulum for noble purposes: to locate diseases, to increase crop production, and much more. Indeed, he was certain that the pendulum would allow him to explore the deeper, more hidden levels of himself or simply “read” the quality of people, places, situations, or things. As he noted, the pendulum finds its place in the many methods and paths to self-awareness which have become popular over the years: Astrology, I Ching, and Runes, for example.

The text gave directions on how to make a simple pendulum out of 4 inches of sewing thread and a paperclip. A dowsing chart in the red book provided a handy way of indicating whether his questions would be answered yes or no. Using the symbol of a cross, the word yes was printed at the top and the word no to the left end of the horizontal line. A question mark was at the end of a dotted line that moved out at a 45 degree angle from the center of the cross. Emile grasped the thread with his dominant hand and began to swing the paperclip over the chart’s question line in an up-and-down direction. He was aware that the question asked must be specific and without possible misinterpretation. So, to get started, he asked a simple question: Is today Wednesday? The pendulum slowly rotated downward and swung across the no plane; that was a correct answer. Returning to the question-asking line again, Emile posed another query: Based on men my age, am I in good health? The pendulum slowly moved, then swung rapidly across the vertical yes line--another true response.

Emile continued to ask questions to which he knew the answers, and each time the pendulum responded correctly. Now he was eager to do something more daring, to tap into past life incarnations. He selected a few professions which he thought he might have been in previous lives. He was surprised to learn that he had been a medical doctor, a lawyer, and a psychologist. Probing deeper, he recalled the names of a few famous psychologists and asked if he was ever any of them. For each man he named the answer was no. Then Emile recalled buying a dissertation written by a psychologist at Columbia University, Henry Alford Ruger. He immediately stopped dowsing and selected the slim book from the bookshelf--THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EFFICIENCY: An Experimental Study of the Processes Involved in the Solution of Mechanical Puzzles and in the Acquisition of Skill in Their Manipulation, 1926. On the title page was Ruger’s position at the university, Assistant Professor of Education, Teachers College. He dowsed whether he had been Ruger and the answer was an astonishing yes! Aside from this one scholarly work, who was Ruger and what were his accomplishments?

Did Ruger's talents and abilities match his, or did he receive an entirely new set of aptitudes in his present incarnation?

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Revelation of a Past Life

Because it was Thursday and he didn't teach that day, Emile decided to spend time in the university library researching Henry Alford Ruger. He soon came across the TEACHERS COLLEGE RECORD, a periodical about noteworthy professors and their ideas at Columbia University. Using the Index, he uncovered an obituary article of Henry Alford Ruger penned by one of Ruger's graduate students, Helen M. Walker. On the first page of the article was profile picture of Henry taken in the 1920s when he was about 50 years old. Indeed, Emile's profile shared similar characteristics with those of Henry: high slanted forehead, low-set ears, aquiline nose, and moderately full lips. Ruger was wearing eyeglasses just as Emile did. Ruger lived from 1872 to 1947. Because Henry died two years before Emile was born, the possibility of past life incarnation became even more probable in Emile's eyes.

The article mentioned Ruger's work as a research pioneer in the techniques of learning and of psychological testing. He was born in Janesville, Wisconsin, and was graduated from Beloit College in 1895, attended the University of Chicago earning a Master's degree in 1905, and received a Ph.D. in psychology from Columbia University in 1910. Henry then joined the faculty of Teachers College and taught courses in educational statistics and psychology, along with supervising the dissertations of post-graduate students, until retiring in 1938.

He married Miss Georgie Johns, school principal and teacher of German, in 1901. No children were cited. However, Ruger was always busy with wide-ranging research interests. One interest concerned the aging process. He analyzed 28 measurements made on more than 7,000 males ranging in age from 4 to 81, which had originally been taken at the Galton Laboratory in London. Dr. Ruger published three major papers based on analyses of these data, which furthered the new science of gerontology.

Henry was always consumed with the learning process and worked closely with nutritionists at Teachers College. He studied the influence of diet on learning and reaction time. He also devised non-language tests that could be used for interracial comparisons in anthropological studies.

Forever willing to refine his artistic talents, Henry studied oil painting and musical performance on the piano and violin toward the end of his life. He became quite good at painting and exhibited in Paris. Through his study of the fine arts, Ruger proved there is no barrier to acquiring and polishing talent even in old age, something that was intimately familiar with Emile.

Insightful Symbols

Emile's resolve stiffened. There was no time like the present to develop his creativity, because he secretly wanted to publish his best thoughts. He wondered if the mystical red book would have anything to say about opening himself to new ideas.

Flipping through the chapters at random, he came to one that caught his attention. It was on the topic of ancient symbols used to tap into higher states of consciousness through visual meditation on them. It seems that Pythagoras had discovered the integrative power of nonverbal designs to awaken deeper realities in his pupils. In front of him were three of the most powerful ones: the circle with a dot in the center, the cross, and the triangle.

The circle with a dot in the center was symbolic of the sun and used to release will power, courage, and leadership. Focused on the design, Emile's mind began to drift into another dimension. He saw himself as a soldier, then as an explorer. Great inner strength began to rise from within. It was a strength like the sun's penetrating energy that enables individuals to conquer, to obtain, through the right use of ethical power and spiritual motivation.

As Emile opened his eyes, he was drawn to the second symbol, the cross. It represented universal love, wisdom, and spiritual insight. Within moments deep and esoteric intuitions crammed his mind with enthralling images. He saw himself as a sage, healer, teacher and reformer. He focused again on the cross and became nostalgic for a spiritual path that honored the highest wisdom humanly attainable.

Moving down the page he came to the last symbol, the triangle. He recalled from other sources that the triangle was the perfect form. It stood for understanding and was the delight of artists and architects. Mirrored in its equilateral shape were the sand-ravaged pyramids of Egypt, the flint arrowheads of Native American hunters. He refocused his eyes on the triangle and allowed its form to emblazon itself on his consciousness.

Putting down the red book, Emile sat quietly in his rocker, allowing the presence of each symbol to stir up esoteric images from his subconscious that had lain invisible for centuries.

Emile and the Psychotherapist

Putting away his red book and grabbing another, Emile tucked the new text under his left arm and flew downstairs to the front door. It was afternoon, a perfect time for an unhurried stroll to his favorite café. The crisp autumn wind playfully tossed the branches of the trees and song birds chirped tunes that were bright with meaning.

Lost in thought, Emile pondered the wonderful times he had enjoyed at the café. Only 4 blocks away, it surely was a place where artists, writers, and musicians gathered to interact creatively. Art prints studded the walls, along with a sprinkling of mounted sculptures, and the plate-glass windows mixed natural light with the subdued lights inside, casting flickering shadows everywhere. Restrained classical music from four well-placed speakers filled momentary silences. Although popular, there was a steady turnover so that finding an available table wasn't overly taxing.

Emile wondered who would be inside as he approached the gray-stone café. Swinging the front door open with a swell of bravado, he was soon transfixed by the chatty atmosphere. He spotted his favorite table, which had just become vacant, while ordering coffee. After seating himself without mishap, he gingerly placed his book on the table and sipped the steamy brew. While glancing at the colorful array of customers, to his surprise the young blond psychotherapist, whose misplaced poem he had retrieved, was seated across from him in the corner, forever pouring thoughts into a journal. Reaching into his wallet, Emile removed her poem and, with as much courage as he could muster, approached her with a whimsical expression on his face.

"Pardon me, but I believe you left this behind the last time you were here," he said guardedly as he held the poem out for her to seize. The therapist looked up suddenly with shocked expression: to think her poem had been in the hands of another!

Taking the poem from Emile and examining it, she sputtered, "Why, so it is! I'm so glad to have it back! Won't you have a seat?"

Still bravely composed, Emile sat down quietly, not knowing what to say next. But that didn't matter. The therapist introduced herself as Yvonne, closed her journal, and slid it to one side. "You're probably wondering why I wrote such a sensuous poem," she said rather embarrassingly as her face reddened slightly. "Now that my life is nearly as open as my journal I will tell you about the man who inspired those romantic musings"

Celluloid Fantasy

Dark billowy clouds scudded across the late afternoon sky. Emile barely got home before droplets of rain spotted streets and sidewalks along his tread-worn path to and from the café. Entering, he darted upstairs to his bedroom where he shelved the unread book he had taken to the café. He lingered in front of the window and watched the silver-lined clouds trail off to meet the horizon in a blaze of orange.

The cheerless atmosphere outside had triggered an impulse to see one of his favorite movies, “The Ghost and Mrs. Muir” (1947). As the film began, Emile fell in love again with the stormy, surging music and the quaint English coastline of the early 1900s. He began to see a parallel between his life and Lucy’s in that he too had broken from his birth family years ago and struck out entirely on his own. He had forged a career by himself and fortuitously found lodging in Mrs. Cunningham’s 1920’s Victorian. Through it all he nurtured a pioneering spirit similar to the one that drove the film’s characters to explore new social worlds that tested the reality of the beyond.

Emile focused on the haunting ghost, a cantankerous Captain Gregg, who certainly had a mind of his own, but was supportive of Lucy’s desire to remain in his home, Gull Cottage. The two eventually collaborated on a book about the sea captain’s life, which became a best seller, providing Lucy with a comfortable income to remain there with her daughter and maid until her death. It was an ideal situation. She was living in two worlds, the living and the departed. She was near the fog-found coast that carried wind-swept ships to and fro in the sun-bound day and the mist of night.

As the film came to a close, Emile felt compelled to write a sea-inspired poem:

THE SEA’S REVENGE

Waves that lick the shore at night
Rock sailors’ starry dreams
‘Mid creaking planks and pillowed sails
O’er seas of endless gleam.

Yet fathoms shriek of ghostly keep
Of those once slumbered who
While storm-gales ripped those dreams and sails
Before the dawn broke through.

The Adept Speaks

After dinner, Emile fondly recalled the mysterious appearance of the amethyst robed Adept he had encountered in his imagination while at the used bookshop. Was it luck or full-fledged synchronicity that he found the mystical chant on a slip of paper inside the red book he purchased? Fingering the slip of paper again, he decided to repeat the chant experience and see what might happen this time. Within moments his eyes closed automatically as they had before, and within his mind's eye the amethyst robed Adept materialized. This time the Adept was not silent.

“You wondered if discovering me was pure chance? Of course not. The universe is not of chance but of purpose and plan through the activity of God. It was I who led you to the red book and the chant. According to Divine Intelligence it was time we should meet, even if only for a second or two.

“I am one of many Adepts who engage the minds of spiritually sensitive human beings like yourself. You are my charge and should take me seriously. We have become visibly enjoined at this time so that I might instruct you in the deeper aspects of life. You have proven yourself worthy of my attention, Emile, by passing certain tests I placed in your way over the years. But more of that later.

“I reside in the Sun Temple located eons from earth, home of the 7 Rays and Archangels, Angels, Masters, and Saints. There I find inspiration and refreshment from my earth-bound work. Great libraries of wisdom are at my disposal; music of the spheres feeds my soul. I am always available to you on the Inner Plane through your preconscious mind. While you daydream or meditate, I am ever present to fill you with insight and knowledge, to make your daily walk easier and more eventful. But you must ask for my help.

“The insight I have for you streams through the ethers and is then converted into odic energy where it is used by your mind, soul, and body. We will meet again, Emile, and I will have more to share with you at that time.

Emile gradually regained conscious reality; his eyes opened and he felt cosmically alive.

Daubs of Debussy

It was Sunday afternoon and the sun was bright in the cloudless sky. Busy inside the Victorian as usual, Emile had just finished his laundry and other personal chores, and was ready for a break. He always loved the way music calmed his agitated, active mind. Since he was in the mood for something other-worldly, he gravitated to the music of Debussy.

As a new art movement in the late 1800s, Monet and Manet tried to capture their first impressions of a subject using juxtaposed brush strokes of pure color on canvas. They were spellbound by the continuous change in the appearance of a cathedral at different times of the day or the play of mist on wildflowers in a field. Many of their subjects were bathed in iridescent sheens or engulfed by luminous haze.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) led the way in composing music that was inspired by impressionist painters. Through melodic fragments and breathy tones, he portrayed nature scenes as far-off with distance or over-bright with the unreal colors of a vision. In his NOCTURNES (Night Pieces), Debussy sketches tonal impressions of clouds scudding across a moon-lit sky, a torch-lit festival, and siren songs along a fog-bound coast. As Emile listened to this music, he contemplated what might have inspired Debussy to compose such magnificent soundscapes. Raptured by it all, the music surged in strength, then diminished into sounds that had a haunting effect on his psyche.

Emile changed CD's and played Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun." The flute's sultry tones were soon joined by shimmering strings, which caused him to recall the origin of the music, a whimsical poem by Stephane Mallarme. In the poem, a faun (half man, half goat) awakens from wine-induced sleep and envisions two nymphs he had seen earlier in the day. Did they transport him to his lair or was he imagining such things? The warmth of the afternoon becomes too intense to pursue this line of thinking any farther, and the faun drifts off to sleep again as the music tapers to a close.

Did Debussy and his impressionist friends choose to retreat from the harsh realities of life or were their interpretations of life a deliberate attempt to put man in touch with other realities?

Artistic Temperament

The strains of Debussy's music had worked their magic upon Emile's mind, and he awoke from reverie feeling refreshed and alive. Visual images of impressionist paintings lingered in his mind as he wondered if he possessed artistic impulses to any degree.

Arising from his rocking chair, he went to the shelf where he kept the red book that had now become a treasured companion. Purchased weeks before, he had barely begun to realize its potential as a change agent in his life. Flipping through the Table of Contents he came to a chapter devoted to the arts.

The chapter began by explaining that true art helps us to live within ourselves; it helps the subconscious to rise to the surface; it gives vent to imagination and causes the observer to explore new ideas. Then it described popular conceptions of artists. It said that some people believe artists have a greater range of emotion and are blessed with tremendous resources of talent denied to others. Like the majority of poets, novelists, composers, and painters, they are viewed as spending a great deal of time alone and are likely to choose relationships that will further their work rather than those that could be intrinsically rewarding. Artists are perceived as highly disciplined, with spectacular powers of concentration. Hedonistic and impulsive, peculiar and odd, with senses keenly attuned to beauty, they seem to have an unquenchable thirst for the love of Nature. Although aggressive at times, artists are usually thought to be gentle, kind, and generous. They are individuals who exhibit intuitional abilities, sensory sensitivity, divergent thinking skills, and like to work in situations using their imagination or creativity. They may also exhibit unconventional values, imaginative hobbies, or have a philosophy of life that proclaims many artistic competencies.

Personality traits vary among males and females. Artistically inclined men tend to be adventuresome, sensitive, prone to guilt; open, creative, emotional and introverted. Females tend to be imaginative, original, expressive, sociable, dominant, feminine, and introverted, having a philosophy of life and artistic achievement. An innovative Artistic Temperament Scale appeared on the next page to assess to what degree an individual possessed these and other qualities. Emile toyed with taking the inventory. The excitement of finding out where he placed on the artistic temperament spectrum became overwhelming.

An Artistic Rating Temperament Scale

Emile turned in his red book to the page that featured the Artistic Rating Temperament Scale (ARTS). He then studied the directions to the Scale and recorded his answers by drawing a line under the response that most identified his performance.

1. I am attracted to new books and ideas.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
2. I am an excellent actor.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
3. I take pride in my appearance.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
4. I am an excellent speaker.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
5. I use intuition to solve intellectual and personal problems.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
6. I am an excellent writer.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
7. I generate unique and novel ideas that are not obvious.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always
8. I ponder the mystery and glory of art, music, and drama.
almost never / rarely / sometimes / usually / almost always

After finishing the assessment, Emile turned the page to find out how to score the Scale and what his score meant in relation to artists, writers, and musicians whose scores were used to develop a set of norms. He sensed that he did well, but how well?

Quantified Talents

Emile turned the page of the red text to discover how the Artistic Rating Temperament Scale (ARTS) was scored. He approached his work carefully and thoughtfully.

The page disclosed that each of the rating descriptors was assigned a certain number of points:

- Almost Never = 1
- Rarely = 2
- Sometimes = 3
- Usually = 4
- Almost Always = 5

He returned to the Scale and tallied his points. He scored 34. Next, he consulted the chart below for an interpretation of his performance. His 34 points was equivalent to the 85th percentile, which meant he scored as well as 85 percent taking the ARTS and only 15 percent scored better than he. This was considered an above average score, the average score earned by gifted musicians, and he was pleased with himself. Perhaps he was more of an artist than he had previously believed.

<u>Score</u>	<u>Percentile</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Percentile</u>
40	99	27	17
39	97	26	14
38	95	25	12
37	94	24	11
36	92	23	8
35	91	22	6
34	85 -- Musicians' Average	21	4
33	75	20	3
32	70 -- Writers' Average	19	2
31	61 -- Artists' Average	18	1
30	54	17	1
29	40	16	1
28	25	15	1

The article went on to say that the ARTS correlates .89 with intuition and .81 with creativity; .74 with ego congruence and .72 with IQ. Its lowest correlation is .52 with self-efficacy. Point-biserial correlations range from .55 to .77, and inter-item correlations from .16 to .64, all highly significant based on 50 protocols. The ARTS' corrected split-half internal reliability is .86.

Cagey Silence

It was now mid-morning and Emile was eager for change. He bundled up and walked briskly from his home to a picturesque park nearby. An assertive breeze pushed him along, as the yearning to be in nature swelled within. Soon a multitude of thoughts narrowed to one: the importance of silence. Certainly in the park silence was valued more than in town, yet he had to admit that silence in his life wasn't always silent. Perhaps modernist composer John Cage (1912-1992) was correct: like a valuable resource on the decline, humanity is swiftly losing the psychological and spiritual benefits of silence.

Deep in woody splendor, Emile seated himself on a bench near the pond. With no passersby to disturb him, he mused that there must be two types of silence--peaceful and terrifying--and that for him silence was more disturbing than calming. His mind drifted back to a time when silence was the norm. The seasonal rhythms of nature reflected the inspired strains of poetry and song, but today turmoil and din had become normal fare, alienating him from silence. Becoming increasingly aware of his environment, the silence in the park was not peaceful but full of noise: murmuring wind, rustling leaves, birds flapping overhead.

There were gentle reminders of unspoiled days in the park: the white noise of a nearby stream; open spaces of lush grass bordered with yellow flowers, which sparked thoughts of indigenous hunters decoding environmental resonance. Back in those days every noise had special meaning, oftentimes leading to a successful hunt and a tasty meal. But contemporary life demanded jealous attention, and field animals didn't feel safe amid the roar of progress.

His mind shifted contexts. He pictured himself entering a vacant room, speechless, and the gradual rise of internal voices filling the space inside himself. Unsolved problems rose to the surface and got out of hand. Cares and complaints became rivals for competition. Could it be that this inner diversion was only a means of avoiding what really needed attention? Emile recalled a favorite quote: "The problem here is not whether a person can live without friends or without feeding his eyes and ears, but that there are many people who can't stand to be alone, to shut their eyes, to gently push aside all the assorted noises and to sit calmly and quietly."

Viva Vivaldi

Walking home from the park in the chilly night air was nearly as enjoyable as when he left hours earlier. Back inside the Victorian--refreshed, invigorated, and still highly sensitive to Nature--Emile decided to rekindle his musical memory of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741).

Vivaldi was a native of Venice, the son of a barber and part-time violinist at the church of St. Mark. His close proximity to St. Mark's naturally brought him in contact with the clergy and the musical ideas of his time. He went on to become a skilled performer on the violin and toured Europe, wrote nearly fifty operas which accrued fame and fortune, and lived with a French soprano for a while. Entering the priesthood, he immediately acquired the picturesque title "The Red Priest" because of his fiery hair.

From 1703 to 1740, Vivaldi worked in Venice at an orphanage for the care and education of orphaned and illegitimate women. He provided rigorous instruction in music, and the girls gave public concerts on Sundays and festival days in groups of about 40 girls. One visitor had this to say about these concerts: "I swear to you that there is nothing as pleasant as seeing a young and pretty nun, dressed in white, with a little pomegranate bouquet over her ears, conducting the orchestra with all the gracefulness and incredible precision one can imagine."

In all, Vivaldi wrote nearly 600 concertos to train his exceptionally talented charges. He wrote so much music that many of his pieces have not been heard since he wrote them. Yet amid the ones most prized is THE FOUR SEASONS (1725). Emile selected "Winter," which is in three movements, including descriptive comments in Vivaldi's hand. As the CD began and the music unfolded over time, Emile visualized the scenery Vivaldi had in mind:

First Movement--One trembles in the snow, endures terrible winds, stamps one's feet.

Second Movement--Happy days before the fire while rain soaks those outside.

Third Movement--Outside again, one walks across the ice, reducing the pace to avoid slipping, then all the winds battle. This is winter and what joy it brings!

Mrs. Cunningham's Husband

With the magnificent sounds of Vivaldi wafting through his mind, Emile sauntered downstairs for a bite to eat in the kitchen where Mrs. Cunningham was knitting and enjoying a cup of Chamomile tea.

“My dear, you must be famished,” she said. “Do sit down and have some nourishment,” to which Emile eagerly complied. In front of him, on a flowered china plate, were two halves of a roast beef sandwich, which especially suited him.

“You know, Mrs. Cunningham, you’ve never talked much about your late husband,” replied Emile as he tried not to garble words with his mouth half full. “What became of him?” Mrs. Cunningham looked up, set her knitting aside, and said, “My late husband was an Italian illusionist and mesmerist of some repute who grew up in Chicago in the early 1900s. After training with the renowned Cardini, he traveled to nearly every civilized country, performing his works of magic. His stage name was The Great Turini, and he could hold any audience in the palm of his hand for hours. After he retired from the stage, he and I moved here and bought this mansion. When he passed away at age 72, I had his body cremated and the ashes put in an urn. His last will and testament specified that he was to remain in a special room he designed and built in the cellar. Would you like to see it?” Appreciatively, Emile finished the sandwich and was delighted by the invitation.

Mrs. Cunningham led the way down into the cool cellar. A few steps from the end of the stairs was a brass-plated door to the entombment where she whispered a prayer before entering. The first thing that Emile noticed inside was a suspended lantern with 6 bottle-glass panels of different colors, casting eerie reflections on the walls. The room had seven walls and seven angles, each side being 7 feet wide and 9 feet high, with triangles and spirals on the walls. The ceiling was painted to represent the firmament; the floor, the earth. At the end of the room was an altar draped in red silk with two gold candlesticks. In the center was the urn. It rested on a sheet of yellowed parchment that was decorated along the edges with glyphs of the Zodiac. Off to one side was a thick blue-velvet book that apparently held the secrets of Mr. Cunningham’s art. But what riveted Emile’s attention most were these words in Latin across the bottom of the parchment: LIBERTAS DEI GLORIA INTACTA (Freedom by means of the pure glory of God).

Spectroscope Eyeglasses

Emile and his landlady left Mr. Cunningham's entombment and returned to the kitchen, still awestruck from the mystical experience. Within no time the teakettle was whistling a jolly tune and tea was served once again--with home baked oatmeal cookies. While Emile nibbled on a cookie, Mrs. Cunningham's mysterious demeanor seemed to be holding back a secret.

"Sometime I want to take you to the attic where Mr. Cunningham's magic things are stored," she said. "I'm sure he would love for you to have his spectroscope eyeglasses. They provide hours of amusement."

Not knowing what to say, Emile sipped his tea and continued to listen intently. "The glasses were made many years ago by a magician who loved history. There are two lenses in the grooves of each eyeglass with the numbers 0 through 9 around the edge of the frames. You simply rotate the lenses so that the clasp for each lens marks a date, such as 19 on one eye and 35 on the other. In this case, you would begin to see all the events of 1935 where you are standing."

Emile was dumbstruck. Struggling to catch his breath, he said, "Let's go there now. I would love to experiment with the glasses, to discover who lived in my room." With a gentle nod, Mrs. Cunningham set her cup down, and the two of them ascended the staircase that led to the third story.

It took patience on Emile's part not to let on that he had already explored the attic by himself, and his patience paid off. Mrs. Cunningham opened the attic door without suspicion. Once inside, she knew exactly which trunk to open to retrieve the glasses. "Ah, here they are!" she exclaimed, "and they are in perfect condition."

Just as quickly as they had arrived, they exited, and Emile went to his bedroom clutching the glasses proudly. He adjusted them to the year 1925, five years after the house was built. Within seconds after putting them on, he saw a pretty young girl putting away freshly laundered clothes in a polished chest next to the large window. She looked to be around 10 years old, in good health, and jovial. She picked up a book, reclined on her bed, and started to read. The novel, *TREASURE ISLAND*, held her attention for nearly two hours, until she sensed it was nearly time for supper and left abruptly for the dining room.

Just as soon as Emile removed the glasses from his face, his vision returned to present time. He adjusted the lenses to O O O O, an existence before recorded time, and cautiously put the glasses back on his face.

Leopards in the Sky

Setting aside the spectroscope glasses, Emile drew the drapes and found comfort in his favorite rocking chair. Life had been good to him. He loved his job and the company of his charming landlady, the respected Mrs. Cunningham. He visited cafés with a treasured tome in hand, then freed his mind during leisurely walks in the park. He was in good health and moderately wealthy by the standards of his day. He counted his best friends, all on one hand, as loyal and trustworthy--something of a rarity.

Emile reached toward the end table and grasped a massive book of poetry. Opening it, he reflected for a moment on his feelings for poetry. He loved the succinctness with which the poet could express a myriad of emotions and the way poems evoked visual images. In front of him was a poem written by the great American poetess Emily Dickinson (1830-1886). Always secretive, a recluse in her New England hometown of Amherst, many didn't realize she wrote more than 1700 poems on subjects ranging from Nature, Life, and Love to Time and Eternity; only 7 were printed in her lifetime. Immediately after Emily's death, her sister Lavinia discovered hundreds of poems in a box and eventually had most of them edited and published in a series of books.

Emile's favorite poem was "The Juggler of Day." The well-crafted metaphors stirred his imagination:

Blazing in gold and quenching in purple,
Leaping like leopards to the sky,
Then at the feet of the old horizon
Laying her spotted face, to die.

Stooping as low as the kitchen window,
Touching the roof and tinting the barn,
Kissing her bonnet to the meadow, --
And the juggler of day is gone!

Continuing to embrace the mood of the poem, Emile meditated on the thought that leopards of spotted gold and purple suffused the evening sky for Emily Dickinson as well as for him. With the descent of sun upon his home, Emile continued his reverie . . . gently drifting to sleep . . . still clutching the book of poetry to his chest.

Annotated Resources

If interested in the novel THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR by R. A. Dick, your public library may carry it. The novel was the basis for the 1947 B/W movie by the same name (check DVD's online). Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, copyright 1945; 174 pages. ISBN: 0-89968-395-9.

There are many publications of Emily Dickinson's poetry. My favorite is the COLLECTED POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON (illustrated); original editions edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and T. W. Higginson. Avenel Books, New York, 1982 by Crown Books, Inc; 256 pages.

Fascinated by pendulum dowsing? There's a highly practical method on the market: THE DOWSING BOOK AND KIT by Walter Woods, published by Barnes and Noble, copyright 2006; 48 pages. The kit comes with a pendulum, pendulum chart, and a booklet of suggestions for getting started.

One of the most beneficial texts on personality, myth, symbolism, and art therapy is SIGNS OF LIFE: The Five Universal Shapes and How to Use Them by Angeles Arrien, published by Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, New York, copyright 1992; 93 pages. The book is chock full of amazing illustrations, along with a rapid self-administering / scoring test that will completely turn your world upside down.

The spiritual/psychological benefits of symbol meditation can be found at The Balancing Program's web site: www.thebalancingprogram.org. This is a disciplined approach that has a proven track record on more than 50,000 people over the years. Learn how you can become balanced, hence more efficient in the use of your Mental Potential, Emotional Coefficient, and Reaction Symbol energies.

Continuing along the same line as symbol meditation is the text THE SEVEN HUMAN TEMPERAMENTS by Geoffrey Hodson. The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India/Wheaton, Illinois, USA, copyright 1952, 1968; 81 pages.

If you desire more information regarding numerology, YOUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED: A Manual of Numerology for Everybody by Florence Campbell (1931, 1958) can't be beat. DeVorss & Company, Publisher, 245 pages.

Curious about human consciousness? Any of the books by David R. Hawkins should satisfy that yen for psychological and metaphysical truth.