**The Spirit and Alien Party PART SIX**

Back home, no-one had cleared up in the kitchen; it was, of course, down to me. There were crushed beer cans strewn across dirty plates and cutlery. I checked to see if there was still some dregs to drink and found only sips. Among them, were empty tins that once had food in them. Co-op Baked Beans; ‘One of Your Five a Day’ was written in large letters in a banner across the ‘front’ of the tin. I hadn’t noticed that when I bought the beans days ago.

Unknown to me, I was not the same me. Despite having a vague memory of having good personal hygiene and a sharp mind, this was not me now. I always know something has happened to me; that I am not quite here; that I am somewhere else and a different ‘me’ is here, but I can never join my selves in communication. Everything I have learnt outside of normal life; the astute and perspicacious knowledge; the tenuous connections; and the reasoning, just does not get transmitted from one ‘me’ to another. A conspiracy theorist would say that the Mandela Effect kept going on and on while the scientists at Cern, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, played with particle acceleration and collisions. I know different.

Out of my group of three, Me, Hakim and Harrari, only Harrari might be aware of anything different with any degree of certainty. She didn’t enlighten me, but I did get a feeling that I was the sole instructor at a training ground for multiple versions of me.

 ‘Alignment.’ she enigmatically said.

I needed a drink. Hakim was not important to me and Harrari seemed to fade away. Very much on my own, and both liking it and hating being lonely, I slumped into an armchair, despondent.

This duality in attitude clearly needed amending. A conduit between the two needed to be made. This had to be constructed solely from my own efforts, this much I knew. Some thoughts began to coalesce. Hakim is less important, and not needed so much because I am dull; there is no bright light, or honed intent within me now. I am not attracting spiritual attention. I am average; not a threat; inconsequential in hindering spiritual changes to our world; practically blinded to malicious spiritual activity. Monsters, creatures, nasty wisps, and all, could move around without me even detecting them. Hakim, of course, would alert me, but it would only be as a series of alarm calls that I would not recognise as Hakim’s.

‘Alarm...alarm...alarm...alarm...alarm!’

I would be in a state of panic and paranoia without knowing why; never being able to rest well, waking often in the night, jumping throughout the day, and finding recovery exceedingly difficult.

Right now, I could be in a room of industrious malevolence sewing discontent and brewing stews of confusion. Realisation brought recognition. I caught a glimpse of a human-like figure from the corner of my eye. Usually, when this happens, if your turn your head you will only see what you know to be there. At home, you will see your walls; your sofa; the door to another room and whatever has the right frequency and density to be visible to eyes that have evolved to see these things. However, I had a nature to think, ‘What else?’

Frozen in motion, the figure watched me with a mishapen head and a single open eye; the other one was swollen shut. The mishaped head seemed to be so due to multiple swellings, like it had recently been fighting and lost, and then been kicked in the head, or clubbed. Although nothing materialised or ‘appeared’, five other spirits coalesced in my vision. Lesson one was now over for my new self. Now you, or I, can see better, I said to myself, meaning me in both senses.

I felt threatened and remembered the warmonger fairie, which I supposed was a representation of a soldier. I also knew that you can be compelled to just do things you would not normally do; stupid things. Thrusting my hands into a washing up bowl with a sharp kitchen knife in it, is one such event I well remember. Deliberately riding into a kerb to give way to an ambulance that wanted to overtake me while I was cycling is another crazy thing I have done. There is no reason behind my actions sometimes, and there is no protective umbrella that we can casually open as armour against directed intent to harm us. It takes a focused mind; a firm mental position; fortitude and balance to resist spiritual and psychic attack. I, however, hungover, sleep-deprived and with no guidance, panicked and sprang from my slumped repose and bolt upright to my feet. The large head of a Great Dane dog inches from my face helped me make this decision. It was clear that by completing lesson one for my new self I had illuminated myself and attracted attention. Lesson two complete. A couple of the ugliest spirits faded. I was known to them as being observant and they had been taking advantage of my weaker self and had been opportunistic. I noticed my laptop was on and the WiFi light rapidly flickering. I never leave computers unattended and definitely never connected to the internet if I am not actively using it. I pulled the battery from it and crashed the system by removing the power lead. Cold air swirled around me and a smell of vanilla cake came to my attention, then roses or lilies or something. I had smelt these before but had never been able to make any connection with anything, and still couldn’t.

Abruptly, this departure from being naturally insentient to the external exposure of supernatural phenomena passed. I was left thinking that I was mistaken. The clarity of my experience seemed inconguous with how I now felt; foolish. Then, a piece of a jigsaw fell into place. While reincarnation is a series of lives. I live parallel lives. If everyone else has parallel lives and the Spirit and Alien Party includes spirit members who do not change, such as I do sometimes, the public would be subject to entities that may be thousands of years old with all the experience of those years of observing humans and how to set traps for them. How easy it must be for the to make a husband jealous of his wife, or his brother? How easy to bend belief and sentiment? We have seen airport security heightened so much as to infuriate passengers to close insanity, because of singular, though tragic, events. How these spirits must be sure of their future successes. This realisation wasn’t a lesson for my new self; it was alignment with all my other selves. Harrari, Hakim and I could never hope to curtail these monsters by ourselves. I needed to get sober, stop smoking, call Hakim back and make myself amenable to Harrari’s sensibilities, and find the men who never moved in the cafe when all the other spirits did.