

## Chapter 2

### Traveling, but Staying Put

I arose early one morning, before the golden sun kissed the eastern lands, and made my way to the market, where I bought the sacrosanct plants that were first introduced to me by my Xingu shaman. I loaded up my gunnysack with these precious goods and hurriedly made my way home to prepare for one of the greatest adventures of my entire life.

I went into the pantry and set out a large dish of food and a bowl of water for Cassandra and prepared to ingest the wonderful plants that had opened my eyes and my mind for the first time in my life. I quickly prepared for my adventure. I washed and dried the sacred conduits to the Xingus' spirit world and brought them into the living room, where I was going to start my bold journey to the past.

While the yellow rays of the morning sun cast mesmerizing silhouettes throughout my garden green, I enjoyed the sweet melodies of the winged fowl, harmonizing with a choir of baritone bullfrogs. With such natural beauty reverberating through the tissues of my mind—it was time. I reclined on my treasured leather couch and slowly ate one, then two, and finally several more of the sacred objects.

Almost instantly, my body felt like it was on fire. This burning sensation was all too familiar to me, since I had experienced the same feeling back in the Amazon, but at that time, the shaman was there to talk me into a relaxed state of mind, in order to help me easily slide to the other side. I began to feel very uneasy, because for this trip I was on my own and would have to calm my own mind and body before the hallowed

journey to the past. Suddenly, I heard a familiar and soothing voice.

"My dear Nathaniel, we have experienced many moons since we last shared our journey together, but don't worry; I am here at your side as your spiritual guide and brother to once again help you break the boundaries of your mind and enter the world that exists on the other side. You only need to relax and let our sacred plants do their designed work, one that results in a pleasant journey into the spiritual world, which joyfully invites you to the past at the present."

"Shaman, is that really you or just a fabrication of my mind?"

"My brother, does it matter if it's one or the other? In the end, the results are the same—I'm here at your side at this moment. My presence is one of a protector, and it's not necessary to have my physical manifestation at your side to do my hallowed work. Regardless, Nathaniel, I've always been at your side, either physically or spiritually, and I shall continue to do so until we both return to the source of life itself.

"Your spiritual self is fully aware that I've been with you in the past, at the moment, and in the future as well. Quietly think back to an earlier day, when your life was almost taken by the mighty Leonidas himself—can you feel the wind from his sword as it narrowly misses its deadly mark? And wasn't the brave king just an arm's length away from you, so close that you could smell his rancid breath of death? Couldn't you taste the fear of death itself in your mouth? Remember his last attack, and you had that mysterious metal disc in your hand...you were vulnerable to his sharpened blade. It was I that grabbed your hand around that disc that protected you from the deadly blow that he was about to deliver."

"Shaman, I did feel a supernatural force guiding my hand to shield my body from the path of that sword, but I believed that it was my extraordinarily quick reflexes that caused Leonidas's sword to smash down upon the disc and send the Spartans back to the underworld. I had no idea that was you being my savior. I am grateful and sincerely thank you for saving me and helping the Spartans complete their sacred vows. You are, indeed, a treasured brother and protector of this physical body. I am grateful and can only hope to repay such kindness in some form or fashion when called upon by my savoir."

"Brother, there's no need to express such gratitude to the one who loves you and protects you. It's enough to see that you were not harmed and lived to enjoy another adventure and to help humanity along the way as well. While you were confused for all these years about that battle with destiny, you are not unlike the others around you, since they also believe that they have innate abilities to act spontaneously when a dangerous situation occurs. Little do they realize it's the soul of a loved one who has passed that intercedes for their welfare and saves them from the imminent danger that faces them. Confusion is the norm and not the exception...most people are simply unaware of the presence of their personal guardian angels."

"But, Shaman, there were other times as well when it seemed to me that I had extraordinary abilities to save myself when danger struck. I hardly believe that you were responsible for saving me from grave injury or even death when I was only six years old. Why, we had not even met at that time; it was almost a full twenty years later that I sailed on the mighty Amazon and we saved the good captain from the evil one."

"My dear Nathaniel, I'd expect a more enlightened interpretation of the moments when you were in perilous danger than what you have just said to me. Let me explain some more,

and then you shall see and experience things in a different light. Now, what about the time when you were sailing back to your home after our great Amazon adventure? Who do you think saved you when that unexpected gale came crashing down upon *The Hattie Chester* and almost threw you into the cold and cruel sea? When you were six years old and your father's prize stallion bolted among the trees in the forest behind your family home, who stopped that proud animal from causing your passing at such a young age? I'll mention just one more time when I interceded and protected your life. Who do you think saved you on October 6, 1551 BC, when the marvelous city of Atlantis, on the island of Santorini, was obliterated by a violent volcano, which left it covered in over twenty meters of volcanic ash?"

"What? You saved me all those times, and here I thought that I was just an intuitive man. I guess ego has no bounds, does it, when it comes to such unexplained matters. I am not sure how I can possibly thank you enough for shielding this body of sinew and bones from passing too early in life. However, you must be confusing me with another person, since I have never stepped foot in the city of Atlantis—it was destroyed many millennia before I even walked this green land of ours."

"I can say with one hundred percent certainty that you did live there and that I did help you. There is more. Not now, but in time you shall become more attuned to your spiritual self and listen to the voice within to discover the many lives that you have lived. Proudly, I had an opportunity to be there and share the good times and the bad times with you. For example, you were the noted surgeon of the famous mathematician Archimedes; a hunter-gatherer on the Serengeti plains of Africa; a hardworking monk in a small French village; a country gentleman in the thirteenth century, within your precious island home; a shop owner, as you are aware of now; and soon a

captain of your own personal intergalactic vessel, hundreds of years from now."

As the shaman described the numerous times when he came to my rescue throughout my varied lives, I was hastily processing what it meant to be helped in the past and in the future. My natural resistance to what he said was soon turned to acceptance. It was at that point that I fully experienced the circularity of time and how we, as human entities, are born and passed and born and passed. And at each rebirth, we still carry the experiences from our past, present, and future lives, all tied up in our souls and our bodies. I was freed from worry and fear with this realization...I had many more chances to do what I wanted to do and to do it with those I enjoyed being with. It was a glorious moment.

"Nathanial, I can feel that you just had a moment of enlightenment, and this realization shall be carried throughout your many lives. Enjoy it and the freedom that goes along with it. However, we must resume our journey to the plains of India—there are many tears for you to witness.

"Now, relax, and focus your full attention upon what you want and where you want to end up at. Take a deep breath, and visualize the sumptuous lands of India and the exact time period you desire to visit. Remember, time is an illusion in your modern-day man's mind, since you can experience the past, present, and future at the identical moment. Feel yourself becoming lighter; feel the wind whispering in your mind as you are taken to your desires. See the sights, and smell the aromas of that time. Feel the exquisite silks, and taste the foods of another time. Let it all go, and have no resistance to what you see, feel, taste, and smell. Be like the water in a rushing river, and let the stream of all experiences take you to where you want to be. Let it

take you to where you must be in order to fulfill the next experience in your present physical manifestation."

Whilst the shaman quietly talked to me, I visualized a million occurrences, which had manifested in my mind and throughout my body. The many images and sounds comprised a kaleidoscope of different ages and events, occurring in a whirlwind of motion. It was overwhelming, and I began to react with confusion and dismay, since I believed that I might never reach my final destination.

"My dear Nathaniel, I feel that your body is beginning to emit negative vibrations, since you are being barraged by all the sights and sounds of a thousand lifetimes. Remember, you are what you think you are; so, if you believe that you are not able to reach that dream, then it, indeed, is an elusive destination. By the same token, if you believe that you are at your destination, that is entirely true as well. The end result is up to you and your mind, and being in a positive state of vibration is the first and foremost step to take when you want to achieve your goal. Now, relax, and rid your mind and body of all resistance, and focus upon what you want, and it shall all come to you as you assume a positive state of being. There's nothing good that can occur when you are in a negative state of being."

"Oh wise one, I hear your soothing voice and feel the love and tranquility that emanate from your very soul. I shall resume my journey, however, with positive thoughts and feelings."

As the lightness of my positive energy took hold and replaced the blackness of negative energy, I began to see the great moments of history whirl past me, and I was privileged to witness them firsthand. "Shaman, I am moving down along the tunnel of time as if being taken by the warm waters of a

stream...there is no resistance, only enjoyment, and I am experiencing a multitude of events that I have read about in the great books from the past."

"I'm alongside you and also share your experiences, Nathaniel. I knew that you would be able to rise to the occasion and make your journey to India to witness one of the saddest and most devastating times in history. It is your responsibility to go back to your country and warn the politicians that they must change their warlike attitudes, or we shall, once again, face the death and destruction of millions upon millions of people.

"You must also travel to the future, long after the 1800s, and explain to those living at that time they should not have forgotten what they already know as truth. They must open their eyes and see the past for what has occurred so that they do not experience the same tragedy in the future. They must also handle mother earth gently so that she is able to sustain our kind and not eliminate our kind. This is your greater mission in life, and you must fulfill it or live an unfulfilled life that has been wasted on trivial things, such as parties and the latest gadgets of the wealthy and the privileged."

"My dearest friend and protector, I shall take up your challenge and face it head on and strive to have my dreams fulfilled in my numerous past, current, and future physical manifestations.

"Shaman, listen to where I am and what I am experiencing at this moment. I started my journey, and my first stop was the small town of Beziers in southern France, with a population of around twenty thousand people. It was the night of July 22, 1209, and I witnessed the execution of an entire village; they were accused of being heretics."

Tears rolled down my face, since I was helpless to save the many women and children who were needlessly slaughtered at the hands of those devils.

"Nathanial, it was a tragedy and just shows how irrational humankind can be at times when power and money fuel personal agendas."

"My next stop was October 17, 173 AD, and I came upon the philosopher king himself, Marcus Aurelius, writing his famous work *Meditations*, while in the midst of his Sirmium campaign. I have a copy of it in my library, which I frequently refer to in my daily life. He was completing the third book in the series, and he immediately sensed my presence, even though I was not seen by the human eye. He stopped writing and asked my name—he had an acute sense of awareness and was clearly an enlightened individual. I could feel his peaceful and tranquil nature, although I had just arrived and stayed for what seemed to me a few moments. It was a shame that I was unable to stay longer and discuss his ideas of the Stoic philosophy; they have always piqued my interest, and to have a discussion with such a wise man would have been time well spent."

"Yes, I agree that his writings are worth reading and have inspired many philosophers, writers, and politicians throughout the ages."

"Then it was March 8, 28 AD, and I was in Nazareth, and I was in the home of the peaceful and wise Nazarene himself. As I approached him, I saw a warm glow of colors emanating from his entire body. As I outstretched my trembling hand to touch his, he spake quietly to me."

"My brother, it has been a long time since we have embraced and spoken at length about the wonders of our Creator. As such, it appears to me that our lives are like a mighty river

possessing two tributaries...while each is going to end up at the same destination, they are traveling the land by different routes. Yet, with the time that we have, although it is short, we must follow the angel of peace and make the most of it and love ourselves and our neighbors to make this world a better place for our children and our children's children when we return to the Source. Shall you have some cool water and break some bread with my family and me before you resume your long journey?"

"My kind and wise brethren, your hospitality is greatly appreciated; however, there is no need to feed my body on this journey; rather, I need to nourish my soul to reach my final destination."

"Then let it be so. May I remind you to always believe in the love and the wisdom of the one who created everything from nothing. His pure love and wisdom are there to guide each of us until the four compassionate winds stop blowing and the seven life-giving seas stop flowing. If you keep the love of man and beast the focus of your journey, your spiritual self will be nourished in a way that even the most sumptuous foods, prepared by the best cooks in our lands, could never succeed at fulfilling your physical body. Prepare your soul to receive eternal life when you drink from the river of life, eat from the tree of knowledge, and feed upon the book of natural laws. After all, your spiritual body lives forever, while your physical body feeds the lands. You are, indeed, a wise man to follow the sacred way of the laws to nourish your spiritual self. The laws that exist within each physical body are the only means by which a soul can build a bridge from the physical realm to the spiritual realm. My hope is that my words shall feed your soul, and until we shall meet again, may you travel in peace, Brother Nathaniel."

"As the river with two tributaries must part to reach its final destination, we also left each other, with the wise words of

the gentle man emblazed in my mind and my soul. Shaman, I was perplexed by the Nazarene's comment that it was good to see me again. What did he mean by those words?"

"You are knowledgeable beyond your years, Nathaniel; I don't believe that I need to explain to you what the man of love and compassion meant when he spake to you, do I?"

"I do think that I have an inkling of his parting words and look forward to sharing a sacred reunion with the Nazarene at some moment in the past, or shall that be in the future?"

I then refocused upon the journey at hand, and unexpectedly found myself in the boudoir of the famous Egyptian queen Cleopatra. In the bedroom, I was taken aback, since I had surrendered my present physical form and had taken up the body of her female handmaiden Iras. I had—

"What, you were a woman, Granddad? I simply can't imagine my dear, elderly grandfather wearing a petticoat."

"Yes, grandson of mine, in that life and at that particular time, I was, indeed, a woman. Why do you find that so strange? If we reincarnate throughout cosmic timelessness, why do you think that we would just return as the same gender each and every time? Do you think that you would return to work in the identical occupation or to live at the identical social status or to inhabit the same city, country, or even continent for that matter? Would that lead us to full spiritual growth and awareness, if we did not encounter many different forms and faces along our sacred journey?"

"As we become a new entity, which is different than our last physical manifestation, we experience new feelings, situations, and ways to think and react in our different bodily form. That makes perfect sense, since experiencing the same

situation from a woman's perspective, rather than from a man's, would result in different reactions, thoughts, and feelings. And I must say that when I was in my feminine form, I looked at things differently and felt things differently than I would have as a man witnessing the suicide of the queen. I believe that each and every one of us is a distinct and significant part of the universal puzzle that is created by the source, and we have no say in when we will return or what form we will return in...that decision is not ours to make."

"Grapes, I just find it hard to believe; I just can't see you as a very pretty woman." We both laughed at my little dig and my reluctance to see my granddad as my grandma.

"Now, where was I? Ah, yes...I had just retrieved a colorful woven basket, full of sweet-smelling figs, from a male servant and placed it at the feet of my mistress. As I looked into her eyes, I saw the eyes of a woman who had been weeping incessantly, and it was quite clear that she had given up on life. There was a smell of death in her finely adorned bedroom, and a gaze of total remorse was on her face.

"Although assuming the body of Iras, I was still looking at her worn and weathered countenance from the eyes of a modern man. Her looks fooled me, since we in the modern world have a vision of the famous queen's beauty; however, when she died from the bite of a deadly *Naja haje* on August 12, 30 BC, she was in her forty-first year. Thus, it should not have been such a surprise that she looked as she did at the time of her death. This was one myth that I wish I had never debunked...to think that the supposedly reincarnated goddess Isis had relinquished her beauty over time, just like the rest of us...it was quite a shock."

"Grandfather, you mean that Cleopatra wasn't the raving beauty that we think she was?"

"Yes, lad, unfortunately, the famous paintings by Reginald Arthur, in 1892, and Guido Cagnacci, in 1658, bore little resemblance to the pitiful soul who lay before my eyes as I journeyed through time. It was apparent that the years of war with Octavian took their toll on her emotionally and physically. It was a sad moment indeed as my mistress and I joined our hands in death. I watched Cleopatra pass and also felt the life ebb from my own body.

"Nonetheless, this was not my intended destination, so I quickly resumed my quest for India. The many images that lay before me slowed in my mind, and I found myself outside the walls of ancient Troy. As I looked to my left, I witnessed Achilles dragging Hector's body around the fortifications for the seventh and final time. It was a disgrace how he treated the corpse of the brave Trojan...sadly, the body was desecrated before the eyes of Hector's fellow warriors and grieving father, Priam. While I felt remorse run through my body, still, I was overjoyed, since many scholars in our day believe that Homer's *Iliad* is merely a collection of war stories that happened during the Bronze Age of ancient Greece. Once again, modern man's ideas of myth were contradicted by the actual event, which I witnessed firsthand."

"Gramps, it must've been an amazing spectacle as the armor of the brave Achilles reflected the sun's rays and the horsehair plumes of their helmets bravely sought out the sun."

"It was a wonderful thing to behold, even though the death of an entire city would take place just a short while after my unexpected visit. It appeared that I was unable to escape the Bronze Age in antiquity, and in what seemed like just a few minutes of human time, I arrived on the island of Santorini at the moment when the volcano erupted in 1628 BC. It was, indeed,

scary as I witnessed the populace of the doomed cities fleeing for their lives.

"Before the complete destruction of the island occurred, I was on my way to my next stop. I had centuries to go, and it seemed that I would never arrive in India, since there were just so many historical events to witness. It was at this point that the wily shaman interjected and once again began to talk to me and had me refocus upon my end goal and not be distracted by the myriad of events that lay before my eyes."

"Nathanial, it is time to take your journey to heart and focus upon just the one place that you truly desire to be in at this moment. It must be wonderful to see the many historical events go whirring past your eyes, and naturally you would want to stop at every one, since your love of history is your first and only love in life. However, you must fulfill your destiny from the past for the future of humanity. Now, only think about India at a time when war was at hand and not peace."

"Shaman, you are right, and I know that all of these fantastic happenings are just at my fingertips. While it is difficult to let this opportunity slip through my grasp, nonetheless, I am also having a hard time imagining what the plains of India would be like nearly five thousand years ago. This lack of fantasizing is taking its toll—I have read extensively of the battle between Octavian, Cleopatra and Mark Anthony; I know much about the events that took place during the Trojan War; and I am also very familiar with the volcano and the destruction on ancient Thera, since I was there in a previous life. This knowledge of the past had helped me to focus upon the past, and I ended up at these sacred locations. However, I have only just read a single manuscript about the battle that occurred in India so long ago, and perhaps it is just myth and never, in fact, occurred as the text has it written."

“Now, this is where you are entirely incorrect and thinking as modern man does about time and the past. First, you must believe that the ancients were correct and were not just writing a quaint story or using idyllic metaphor to describe the events that, indeed, occurred. Second, you must also believe in cosmic timelessness, where everything is in the present, in the all-encompassing now—there is no past and no future, just the present, and here's where your mind is being held back by your modern-day interpretation of what time is and what time is not.

“You know full well that time is cyclical and not linear from your own reincarnations; why do you now have doubts about the concept that you fully understand and support? Third, you must let your inner self, the all-knowing self, guide you. It's apparent that you're resisting what your soul is aware of, and this baffles my mind.”

"The shaman's words were not kind; in fact, he kicked me hard in the britches and showed complete annoyance at my lack of faith and belief in what my eternal soul had let me previously experience. The wise man's words were, indeed, spot-on, and they accomplished their job, since they did shake me up and have me rekindle my faith and belief in my eternal being."

"That man certainly knew how to whip you into shape, didn't he, Grapes—the same as when my horse gets out of line and needs to be reined in and quickly."

"You are right, Son. It worked, since I refocused all of my energy on my end goal and at last arrived in India at the battle sight of a war that would leave traces of complete and utter destruction throughout the majority of the country even to this very day. So, I opened my eyes and saw two opposing armies ready to do battle to the death of each and every soldier who had taken up position on the Indian plains. It was a bittersweet

moment, since I was there and had reached my goal; still, I was also there to witness the carnage that had occurred over five millennia ago. I realized at that moment that the sacred texts had not lied; indeed, the accounts of the war that ripped the soul out of India were not just legend; rather, they described a true moment in history that was transformed to myth in the modern world."