

## Preface

Who am I? For most of my life, I never asked that question, so it never haunted me. Sure, I thought about it from time to time, but I didn't make it my life's passion to find an answer. That is, until now.

My upbringing may have had something to do with me suppressing the question of who I am. It's amazing what happens to a young person's natural curiosity after years of repression by nuns, priests and parents, threatening eternal damnation for even thinking there may be answers to the mysteries of life other than the traditional orthodox teachings of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church buries that curiosity by covering it over with so many rules and doctrines that most people never can dig themselves out. I didn't know it at the time, but I was one of those people.

The story of my Catholic upbringing will have to wait for another time however. It would take a separate book – and possibly years of therapy – to open that issue. I will touch on parts of it though, suffice to say, I'm glad I experienced it now, but at the time I was living it, I felt that going to hell and going to a Catholic grade school were parallel experiences.

I eventually discarded my faith in religion after a divorce from my first wife. Religion had let me down when I needed it the most so what good was it exactly. I quit going to church, but the church and its dogmas hadn't left me. They remained buried under years of guilt and regret, regret that maybe I hadn't done everything I should've to make my personal life turn out just a little bit better.

As I relate the story that follows, I want you to remember one thing. Everything in it is true. No matter how fantastic parts of it may sound, nothing was made up, created, enhanced or altered to make the story better. I came from a news background, so notes, journals and recordings were kept as this story unfolded in my life. Everything is verifiable by these documents or the parties that were involved themselves.

Thinking about it now, the events that transpired couldn't have happened to someone with a more skeptical personality. I spent twenty years as a photojournalist, committed to always

uncovering the truth and only believing something that was backed up by multiple pieces of information. After all those years of covering the news I couldn't help but become keenly aware when one event synchronized perfectly with another. It was ingrained into my personality to sit up and take notice the minute I heard or witnessed the same information presented by two different sources and that's how this story began for me, with the simple awareness of one solid fact; My feelings and thoughts along with actual events in my own life were becoming just a little too coincidental for even me and my Catholic background to accept blindly.