

The Wings Of the Morning

And Lo! If I take the Wings of the Morning, And dwell on the furthest part Of the Sea...

Even though more than half a century has passed, those words still come to my thoughts as I view in my mind's eye the scene that used to greet me as I came up on deck each morning. Our ship was ploughing its slow and straight furrow parallel with, and a few miles off, the very shore upon which the psalmist author may have trod so many years ago. It was quite early, 5 a.m., for we were working 'tropical routine', and for a day-man (or 'idler' as the Naval parlance has it), the day began at that hour. The iron main deck and the entire superstructure were awash and dripping with dew from the cool of the night, while the shore was a line of opalescent shadow to the east, back-lit by the near-to-rising sun.

Many writers, both ancient and modern, have tried to describe the colour and placidity of those eastern Mediterranean seas with greater or less success, as I used to try in my letters to my girl friend at home. Nothing disturbed the surface, other than the long line of our wake connecting us astern to the far horizon. And then there they were - the 'Wings of the Morning' - the caiques and coasting schooners, sails full set but hanging still, with no breath to fill them, but somehow 'ghosting' along and waiting for the morning breeze.

In the moments as I watched, the sun broke free of the land and even at that hour it burned. The dew vanished at a touch and the sails took on a brilliance as the light enveloped them - and the day's work began. How long it seemed, confined in the small radar cabins as I did my maintenance checks, until blessed noon when work ceased for all but the duty watch and the hands were piped to swim. The ship slowed, the whaler was lowered, and we dived so eagerly from the ship's side and into the cool depths.

What contrasts life throws at us, for within six months I was in an aircraft carrier battling its way around Britain in January storms of probably the worst winter of the twentieth century. The mountains of the Isle of Arran were snow-laden as we sought shelter within its lee and behind Holy Island, and icy were the winds as we then made our way past Cape Wrath and John o' Groats and finally to the Forth. But in spite of, or because of their contrasts, I have never lost my fascination with the seas nor my desire to be close to or on them. As I stand on my near-by shore as I often do, the expanse of the sand and the vastness of the dunes trigger memories of seemingly never ending sunny days on a similar shore where I grew up in South Wales - of fires of driftwood and smoky tea, and the long weary trudge home at night. And the high tides and gales of the autumn equinox bring back clear memories of my mother and her love of the driving spray on the rocks on probably our last outing of the year.

I wrote earlier of this attraction that water has for me and of the feast for the imagination with which I have been provided for virtually all of my life. There must be many individuals who, like me, can just gaze out to the horizon for seemingly endless time - and what do *you* see? In reality or in your own mind's eye or your own imagination? Do you look for, or even see, Tir Nan Og? Do you believe in the past existence of Atlantis, and do you give credence to the tales deriving from the alleged reincarnates from that mythical/real land? And do you gaze horizon-ward in the hope that some day Atlantis will re-emerge from the depths where 'of its bones are corals made'?

Can I ask you to put aside what you see, or imagine or hope for, and instead to join me on the self-same edge of the ocean, there to contemplate the real magic, the magic of the reality of our origins? Through the medium of television, and taking advantage of the courage and resource of undersea explorers in their minute bathyspheres, we can descend in mid-ocean to the bottom several kilometres below, and there see the origins of the tectonic plates of the continents and some of the substances of life itself. In particular, I want you to look at a 'black smoker'. ("Oh dear" said Alice to herself, nearly scared out of her wits at the thought of a Black Smoker. The only Smoker she could think of was Grimes the gardener, and he frightened her sometimes as he puffed continuously at a huge pipe stuffed with coarse twist, pouring out clouds of smoke which merged with that from the bonfire he was tending. "Now he always looks very *dark*" she said to herself, "but no, he grows such nice flowers, it can't be him..." - and Alice went and hid herself just in case the real Black Smoker came along...).

No, the reality of a black smoker as it pours out its gases from the core of the earth is, in itself, awesome to contemplate, for here in its turbulence are some of the materials of which we are made and, indirectly, are the source of life as we know it. In particular, I want you to see the sulphur, for in its way it is so vital to our very origin and continued existence. Without the sulphur it is doubtful whether we would have rain. Back on the surface, and, could you see them, myriads of algae that continue the process originating in the earth's bowels, taking the sulphur and converting it into an organic and gaseous form, that then disperses freely into the atmosphere. And it is around the molecules of this gas that the moisture evaporated from the seas forms into droplets, into clouds and eventually rain. Without the algae and the sulphur - no clouds, no rain; no rain, no erosion of rock to make soil; no soil, no plants; no plants, no us. But the algae have other mysteries that have long puzzled biologists. Why are they equipped with anti-freeze? At last, and a paradox only recently explained. The algae need sunshine to survive and proliferate - but they create clouds don't they, so isn't that counterproductive, life threatening even, for sun-loving algae? But the clouds create storms and storms cause algae to be sucked up and carried to extreme heights where they might freeze to death - if it wasn't for the

anti-freeze; and thus they are dispersed to other seas, other oceans. One of those incredible marvels of evolution, or a fantastic attention to detail of a prescient Creator, whichever you will.

In your imagination, can I take you even below the black smokers? The molten magma is oozing in mid-ocean, pouring through these gaps in the earth's crust, forming new edges to the tectonic plates, forcing them apart and under continents, creating the tremors and pustules on the earth's skin - the earthquakes and volcanoes. But even deeper, towards the centre of the earth, to the molten iron core. Without it you would never have been even a gleam in your father's eye. Without it life on earth would just not exist in the form that we know.

Thermal movement of the iron within the core effectively creates a magnet with two ends or 'poles' that we call north and south. The magnet in turn creates a magnetic field that, effectively, is our shield. The sun pours out the 'solar wind' in constant stream - a never-ending flow of electrically charged particles. Our magnetic shield diverts them, and mostly they flow harmlessly past. Without our shield, the planet would be 'scoured' by these particles and would be completely barren, as are the other planets that have no iron core. The particles of the solar wind arrive into our upper atmosphere at the poles, and create the magnificent displays of the auroras, while during peaks of sunspot activity they reach parts of the earth in quantity, disrupting electronic communication, and subtly altering the behaviour of sensitive people.

Take out a magnetic compass and unerringly the needle points to the north. Turn it on its edge and it will point down into the ground at an angle that depends where on the earth's surface you are - at my latitude it makes an angle of roughly 80 degrees with the horizontal; elsewhere it will be different. What it shows you is that always, everywhere, there is a magnetic field - a component of our evolution. But more than that, and unless you have special equipment you cannot see, it pulses with incredible regularity. There are various subtle low energies at frequencies of roughly one to twenty-five beats per second, but the prime one, and that linked by most researchers to the process of evolution and continued planetary life, pulses at 10 hertz (or cycles per second). It is part of the body clock that if it stops ticking or ticks to a different frequency can cause illness or even death in some organisms.

I have led you to contemplate, and I hope understand, just a minute few of the many elements that have been involved in the development and continued evolution of our lives and the other forms of life on the planet. Elements that are all pervasive and yet invisible - undetectable to the majority of us - yet without them we would become ill or die. But die we must - and what then?

Can we stay here on our lovely open shore without the noise, clutter and pollution of everyday life, and read or listen to some thoughts from a delightful book by Irish philosopher and poet John O'Donohue? I first heard them over the phone from a friend upon whom they had made an instant impression. Going into the local library later the same day, the

first book upon which my eyes lighted was this self-same *Anam Cara - Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World* - and so naturally I brought it home to read, for my friend was quite firm when she said that it would be a long time before she loaned her copy, so entranced was she with what the book had to say.

John O'Donohue queries whether space and time are different in the eternal world, and writes:

"Time always separates us...Time is primarily linear, disjointed and fragmented. All of your past days have disappeared; they have vanished. The future has not come to you yet. All you have is the little stepping-stone of the present moment.

When the soul leaves the body, it is no longer under the burden of space and time. The soul is free; distance and separation hinder it no more. The dead are our nearest neighbours; they are all around us. Meister Eckhart was once asked, where does the soul of a person go when the person dies? He said, no place. Where else would the soul be going? Where else is the eternal world? It can be nowhere other than here. We have falsely spatialized the eternal world. We have driven the eternal out into some distant galaxy. Yet the eternal world does not seem to be a place but rather a different state of being. The soul of the person goes no place because there is no place else to go. This suggests that the dead are here with us, in the air that we are moving through all the time. The only difference between us and the dead is that they are now in invisible form. You cannot see them with the human eye. But you can sense the presence of those you love who have died. With the refinement of your soul, you can sense them. You feel that they are near.

My father used to tell us a story about a neighbour who was very friendly with the local priest. There is a whole mythology in Ireland about Druids and priests having special powers. But this man and the priest used to go for long walks. One day the man said to the priest, where are the dead? The priest told him not to ask questions like that. But the man persisted and finally, the priest said, 'I will show you; but you are never to tell anyone.' Needless to say, the man did not keep his word. The priest raised his right arm, the man looked out under the raised right hand, and saw the souls of the departed everywhere all around as thick as the dew on blades of grass.

Often our loneliness and isolation is due to a failure of spiritual imagination. We forget that there is no such thing as empty space. All space is full of presence, particularly the presence of those who are now in eternal, invisible form."

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Lovely, and in some ways, comforting images. Perhaps an over-simplification. Doubtless, everyone reading this will have some view or belief of 'life after death'. Some will have beliefs shaped by their own experience; others will have entrenched views laid down within the

unshakable dogma of their religion - sometimes comforting, sometimes frightening. Yet others will totally deny, and refuse even to contemplate, the possibility of continuing into a spiritual state. If you are one of the latter, yet nevertheless continuing to read of my actual experiences, I am at a total loss to know what, if anything, I can write to convince you, although truly, I can no longer concern myself whether I do or not. Perhaps, consciously or unconsciously, there is the unspoken belief that in acknowledging the existence of a spiritual state of being, you have to take on board all of the paraphernalia of a religion. A horror that you would have to go to some place of worship; that your life would be constrained by thoughts of 'sin' and 'damnation'. You may look at all of the human misery and turmoil, disputes and wars fought in the 'name' of religion - stoked by concepts of 'promised lands' or minute differences of textual interpretation - and curse all religions.

Believe me, you can accept the reality of the existence of a state of spiritual being without even remotely embracing any religion, or altering your way of life. But more important, much more important than your own enlightenment, you could use the knowledge and understanding so gained to achieve what I am so desperately trying to get you to achieve - the release from torment of people who are plagued by intrusive spirits.

Sometime, on a clear night, go out of doors, look at the stars, and reflect on what you can see. With your eyes or with the addition of your telescope, they are all there for you. They mean what you want them to mean. You do not have to be an astronomer to appreciate them, even to understand much of what you see. Although such devices as the Hubble telescope bring us wonders of vision, what you see is out of reach, out of touch. Some will look at, for instance, the Pleiades and imagine communication with Ascended Masters. Others will look for their future, and accept the predictions of astrologers who will interpret the 'signs'. Look at Orion and Sirius and reflect that, so we are told, the rulers of Ancient Egypt attempted a physical/spiritual union with these stars and that the Ghiza pyramids represent on earth a model of the constellation. In like wise, people try to give you a view of religion, of spiritual interaction - but reflect further, the only people who can tell you what it is like to walk on the moon, to travel and walk in space, are the people who have actually been there. So look at the stars, look at the planets, 'examine' the world of 'spirit'; take your own view of them all - but also remember that there are individuals who have had a different 'real' experience. Maybe they have something to tell you.

And before we leave the stars, reflect also that the light from the nearest star had already started upon its journey to you long before the first human, homo sapiens, had taken a single step upon this planet. Yet here you are, at the very forefront, the cutting edge of evolution; the very latest model. What do you make of yourself? My oft quoted Paracelsus could never have known how immense are the distances to the

stars, but he, like us, must have looked; imagined; dreamed - and as he dreamed, so he wrote:

"...the human body is vapour materialised by sunshine mixed with the life of the stars."

Poetic? Mystical? Or very near the truth in the language and thought of his time? What do you think? Every atom of the material that makes up your body was there in existence when the stars were formed. Over millennia upon millennia they have been transmuted many times before they were assembled around the nucleus, the egg and sperm, that became you. Take the sulphur which inhabits every cell that forms your body; changed into organic form by the algae it is dissolved in the rain, and, on falling to earth, is taken up by plants that you eat, or by the animals that eat the plants that at second hand you eat - all the way from a black smoker. The calcium, so necessary for your bones and teeth, might derive from chalk or limestone - the compacted remains of myriads of tiny crustaceans, worms, algae, deposited in the seas over aeons. And virtually all dependent upon the action of the sun.

Evolution or Creation? It is not for me to decide for you. The records of the rocks show the remains of tiny mammals already in existence in parallel with the dinosaurs, which latter seem to engage the imagination of so many people. Is the source of the fascination the fact that they were extinguished sixty-odd million years ago and that people can let their imaginations rip, or be terrorised by someone else's imagination in Jurassic film epics? Is it because *big* is exciting? Twentieth century thinker Schumacher told us 'Small is beautiful', and there is something exquisite in the thought that, over the last sixty million years or so, that little fossilised mouse-like creature has developed into us. Species living in a coherent environment have little cause to change or develop - they are suited to their food or environment. But change causes change, adaptation and development and survival - always with the main imperatives of self-preservation, procreation and enhancement of the species. All imperatives that still reside within us. Our problem is that we have an intellect.

Fossil remains from over two million years ago show a transition from quadruped to hominid; from *homo erectus* and *homo habilis* to *homo sapiens* and *neanderthalis*, namely us, and our recently extinct collaterals. Did they die out, were they exterminated by our ancestors, these Neanderthal peoples, or did they and we merge, interbreed and become one strand? If only we could find out, we might derive some clues for the future destiny of the human race - after all, Neanderthals were around for 150,000 years, far longer than *sapiens* has yet existed. This is not a hypothetical, nor an allegorical question. Analysis tells us that they were eminently adaptable, as we humans appear to be. They adapted to changes that natural phenomena imposed upon them - climate changes, ice ages and the like. Will we equally adapt to the changes that we ourselves are imposing upon ourselves? Or will we

drive ourselves to extinction? We are already doing a very efficient job of preparing ourselves for the latter fate. I do not mean by war, although we, with modern technology, can manage to eliminate considerable quantities of people at a stroke.

No: what I am getting at is that we are becoming very efficient at making ourselves ill. For as long as people have lived in societies there have been social diseases, the products of malnutrition, poor dwelling conditions, poor hygiene; but enlightenment and resource have eliminated many of these. (I am writing essentially about the 'developed' world - much has to be done to eliminate disease from the less developed people; a moral issue too vast for my consideration here). The diseases and illnesses that we are bringing on ourselves are those resulting from affluence and technology; diseases that are both physical and mental. But, perhaps with more and increasing relevance, we are imposing upon ourselves and others a range of traumas that result from ignorance of, or a refusal to acknowledge, the existence of a 'spirit' within each of us. And beyond that, a refusal on the part of many to acknowledge the existence of intelligent and independently acting spiritual 'beings'.

I have often wondered, and continue to wonder, how and when the concept of 'spirit', of an 'otherness', arose in the minds of developing humanity. To some, and particularly acknowledging that the spirit is always represented as 'speaking', it may presuppose the existence of a language in the culture of the 'hearer'. But this need not necessarily be so, for my experience has shown me that very potent communication can be established subliminally by the creation of ideas, concepts, feelings and moods, rather than by statements or instructions spelled out in actual words. As I have written earlier, in every part of the world and in every culture that has ever left a record throughout history, there has been an acknowledgement of a spiritual dimension and of the reality of invisible and independently acting spirits. It has also been perceived and acknowledged that within this dimension there is a source of knowledge and wisdom that far surpasses the knowledge and wisdom that may be developing as the result of natural observation and experiment. And knowledge and wisdom have always been represented as coming from the 'supreme divine', who, it was always believed, had the power to impose sanctions in the event of non-compliance with the divine advice or instruction which had become enshrined in religion and religious dogma.

Likewise, in each of these cultures, the *obverse* of the benevolent source of divine wisdom and protection has been acknowledged - namely the universal presence and action of spiritual *malevolence*. It is a source that appears to have in equal measure to the divine, knowledge and a perverted wisdom that are used to intrude into the minds, bodies and lives of sensitive and vulnerable individuals; intrusions that can encourage people into an actual *practice* of evil themselves, or which can undermine the mental and physical functioning of a person and lead to mental or physical illness, or both.

As I write, it is now twenty-three years since I began to experience the reality of what hitherto might have been speculation - the actuality of a spiritual state of existence, and the ability of spiritual 'entities' to influence the minds and bodies of humans. At this point, you might find it worthwhile to re-read the earlier section where I described the manner in which I first experienced intrusion into my mind and body. Nothing that has occurred during the intervening years has done anything to change my understanding of those events. On the contrary, everything that has happened to me since, all my experiences, have reinforced my certainty. *Every day*, in a variety of ways, I am reminded (*as if I needed reminding*) of the presence of the intruders. Gone, however, are the gross, obviously malignant, presences. No domination: no threats: no obscenities or salacious introductions into my mind. Everything that happens is at a more subtle level, almost unnoticed - would indeed pass unnoticed, if I had not gained an awareness of the whole process.

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Let us hark back together to what I wrote earlier, to the thoughts of two men who have experienced the spiritual in life - *used* the spiritual: *invoked* the spiritual: *worked with* the spiritual. Men with such widely different backgrounds and antecedents - one an Irish poet and philosopher, the other an American-Jewish surgeon *and* philosopher. The first writes:

..."Often our loneliness and isolation is due to a failure of spiritual imagination. We forget that there is no such thing as empty space. All space is full of presence, particularly the presence of those who are now in eternal, invisible form."

The second, equally, has no doubt as he states:

..."As a healer I'm trying to get people to have faith in their own lives and in the whole process of life. You can act from that faith and make the rest of your life simple, or you can keep testing (the source of your faith) and make the rest of your life difficult... I counsel you to choose your direction, make the leap of faith and fly. Let the occasional spiritual flat tyres redirect your life. That's what survivors do. They don't have failures. They have delays or redirections. *Choosing spiritual guidance also helps you to see that people's minds and souls are interconnected in ways normally obscured from our everyday vision. The separatedness most of us experience is illusory, and seeing through it makes life even more meaningful*". (My italics)

It is here, at this point in the contact or discussions that I have with individuals, that I find myself running into sand. Minds are preformed. They may be preformed through the existing religious beliefs of the person - beliefs that may be set in stone and allow for no re-

examination or interpretation. Minds equally set in stone may be those of individuals who, for whatever reason, are determined to resist completely the idea of the *existence* of a spiritual state or of individually acting spirits. I have had to make my own adjustments, and come to terms with the *reality* of my own experiences. One of the largest obstacles, points of disbelief, that many have, is with the traditional concepts of 'God'. God as creator of the Universe; God as an omniscient, prescient being, able to shape the lives of people and events on earth. On my computer screen when I switch on there is an image that came from the Hubble telescope, an image of the Whirlpool galaxy. I have it there partly for its intrinsic beauty, but more so to remind me of the *immensity* of the Universe, of the comparative insignificance of our sun and planet earth. On this earth I read of or watch almost daily the actions and behaviour of individuals and groups doing the most vile things to each other because of their varying and individual beliefs in 'God' - Who is, nevertheless, so it is claimed, the *same* for all peoples. I have a number of friends who are Buddhist, who, while having a deep and active spiritual life, nevertheless, have no belief in a 'God'.

Whenever I can, and from any available source, I acquire and study whatever is available relating to the evolution of the human species. Back and back, and yet further back they go, the palaeontologists, billions of years to 'the fish that walked': to the tetrapod that breathed air, that became a mammal and became us. Across the room on a shelf is a fossil trilobite that was alive four hundred million years ago, and elsewhere in the house a fossil ammonite from some time later - both species having been wiped out in one or other of the mass extinctions that have beset evolution. And thus and thus I try to face reality and shape my beliefs, for while my intellect and observation enable me to keep my grasp on what I can see with my own eyes, or take into my hands and accept as believable, I nevertheless have had the experiences that I have related.

I have had experiences that I have tried to describe as fully as my powers of expression allow, and have only held back when dealing with something that is spiritually and personally too deep and intimate to share. My experiences penetrate the interface between the visible and tangible and the 'ethereal' and intangible. I have felt the physical strength employed by a spiritual source in the manipulation of my body; daily I am aware of the intrusive movement of 'others' within my self and of the interactions within my mind. In the face of indifference and outright or unexpressed disbelief, I nevertheless continue to write, to explain, in the profound hope that *some* will accept, that *some* will profit. With the acceptance will, hopefully, come application - application of the knowledge in the care and 'release' of individuals who have been similarly invaded and who have, as a result, become disturbed and ill.

As I now begin to try to describe the reality of my current or past encounters with the 'intruders', I think that you may yourself realise that I am not recounting *religious* experiences such as one might find in the lives of the saints or the like. What I am, in fact, presenting is a

series of ploys that have been used, continue to be used, to undermine my thoughts and actions and motives. You might recognise them as parallel experiences in your own life or in that of someone you care for. What I hope you will recognise are examples of what are commonly called the 'First Rank' symptoms of schizophrenia. What I also hope is that you will see that I have experienced them all, and recorded them in my own words - experienced and recorded some time before I had even become aware of such a list of symptoms. What I further hope to impress you with is the fact that *I have never been ill from this cause*.

To remind you, let me list the symptoms as given in *Schizophrenia Genesis* by Irving J. Gottesman:

1. Voices speak one's thoughts aloud.
2. Two or more voices (hallucinated - *his words not mine*) discuss one in the third person.
3. Voices discuss one's actions as they happen.
4. Bodily sensations are imposed by an external force.
5. Thoughts stop and one feels they are extracted by an external force.
6. Thoughts not 'really' one's own are inserted among one's own.
7. Thoughts are broadcast into the outside world and heard by all.
8. Alien feelings are imposed by an external force.
9. Alien impulses are imposed by an external force.
10. 'Volitional' actions are imposed by an external force.
11. Perceptions are 'delusional' and un-understandable.

Words such as 'hallucination' and 'delusion' are never my own choice, and I reject them and all their connotations *totally*. These are words used by the professionals in psychiatry and medicine, and imposed upon the 'outside' world in default of other more suitable expressions. But, and let us be clear about this, they are not words which would be chosen by those who actually *experience* the phenomena. By the time the latter have come within the orbit of psychiatry, they have often become so disturbed that they cannot describe rationally what they are experiencing, and, by default, accept what they are told - that they are hallucinating, deluded. By contrast, and as I have described, apart from the brief period at the outset of my encounter with 'voices' when I was deeply affected by what was happening to me - apart from then, all my experiences have come while I have otherwise been engaged in the *normality* of living. I drive to my local town; shop; borrow books from the library; travel to such places as the Hebrides, York, Scotland, on holiday. I have come to terms with my computer as a late starter - and you can judge my prowess for yourself. With its help I have communicated by letter or e-mail with a wide range of people including the Prime Minister and other major politicians, at least two retired consultant psychiatrists on matters about which I hold strong views, and received replies which indicate that my comments are welcome - indeed, one very well known professor of

astronomy commented that he is always delighted to receive e-mails such as the ones that I have sent to him.

Thus a life - perhaps a bit more adventurous than many, as I indulge the privileges of my seniority - a life in which I am accepted as someone who has all his marbles; a life that embraces a wide variety of interests and a life through which I have, with success, tried to help, encourage, individuals who are disturbed in their minds. As you read, therefore, please remember, and remember well, that these experiences are not the product of a diseased or sick brain or one with a chemical imbalance within, nor of an aberrant mind. Everything that happened did so when I was wide-awake and doing, or trying to do, the normal things of life. Please remember also that I am not writing on my own behalf, but as an advocate for the many who have similar experiences, who are rendered inarticulate or confused by them, who are labelled 'schizophrenic' and who suffer all that society throws at them because of the label.