

**Light behind the Angels**  
A past life journey to enlightenment

Lauren D'Silva

Local Legend Publishing UK

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*'Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?" Actually who are we not to be?*

*You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us, it is in everyone and as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear our presence automatically liberates others.'*

Marianne Williamson, A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of a Course in Miracles.



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## *Prologue*

This is my journey from fear to empowerment. It follows the process of uncovering the light at my core, which often challenged my beliefs about myself and my assumptions about the world we live in.

I have literally been re-member-ing myself. In my quest for freedom I have followed the clues and been led to find pieces of my psyche scattered in distant lands and across time. I have healed ancient wounds, released curses and dissolved shame and in doing so freed myself from the past and made myself whole.

There has been no need to embroider what happened, I haven't needed to fictionalise my story; it is my truth. The biggest resistance in me has been to publicly own those elements that seem sensational and otherworldly.

Life is a magical and rich experience if you are ready to see beyond the surface and explore your true self. When you truly open your eyes you'll see new layers of existence that have always been there, hidden in plain sight.



## *Moving Times*

*Life is full and overflowing with the new. But it is necessary to empty out the old to make room for the new to enter.'*

Eileen Caddy, Footprints on the Path

I had all the accoutrements of a successful life. I had a good husband, children, pets, our own house, my dream job. I had all the outer trappings that we are conditioned to strive for in Western society. So why wasn't I content? What was I missing? What was wrong with me?

Perhaps it was living in the suburbs of a busy city? I had long nurtured a dream to move away. By now my nerves felt frazzled by the hectic pace of life and congested traffic.

Every time we went on holiday I would lead the conversation round to how much better life would be if we lived 'somewhere like this' whether 'this' was the Norfolk coast, the Welsh hills, the Malvern Hills or Derbyshire. Anywhere with less congestion and open countryside felt so much better; soothing to my soul.

It seemed like my fantasy of living in the countryside would stay a dream. We never got around to doing anything concrete about it. Life was a bit too comfortable and the impetus to uproot just wasn't strong enough to make the move a reality.

Then one day it was announced my whole team was moving workplace, the journey time would be much longer. There was no negotiation, the decision had been made. I tried the new routine for six months, but my dream job had lost its lustre and I wanted out. I went to see the manager and found I was weeping with stress and frustration in his office, letting him know that I would have to resign if I couldn't move back. Emotionless he looked at me with eyes like cold poached eggs and said no exceptions would be made.

Sometimes you need a big push to pursue your dreams and this cold blooded official propelled me along my path in a way that a kind man would never have done. With no job to hold me in place this seemed a good opportunity to stop dreaming and go for the big move. Thankfully my husband agreed.

Over the years I had surfed the internet for properties in other areas, feeding my dream of an escape to the country. I'd fantasised

about what our money could buy in more remote areas of the UK. Having trained and qualified as a crystal therapist, which I loved, I had an idea that I might run a New Age shop full of incense, crystals and candles with a healing room above.

I remembered a huge four storey Victorian property on the market a year before with a shop on the ground floor. It was the same price as a small terraced house in the city and I'd spent a fair bit of time drooling over the details. It was situated next door to a vegetarian café in a little Welsh town I'd never heard of before, Llandrindod Wells.

By the time we made our decision to move the shop had been sold, fortunately for us as things transpired, you'll find out why later. I browsed the internet to see what else was available nearby.

Property in this small Welsh Spa town was substantially cheaper than locally and there were a good number of the high ceilinged, spacious, Victorian houses we both liked. I fancied the sound of a huge rectory that came with its own church hall and had fun visualising running courses there. There was a vast hotel on the edge of town just within our reach. Residential courses maybe? Before I could get too carried away my husband pointed out that he didn't really want other people in his living space and anywhere that cheap would need a lot of money spent on renovation. I reset my search criteria to a fair sized family home.

The more I researched Llandrindod the more auspicious the town seemed to me. I found out that the whole town owed its very existence to its spring waters and was dedicated to the goddess of healing Hygeia. Prosperous in the Victorian era it had fallen on hard times after the First World War, when the fashion for taking the waters became just a memory.

We visited and as soon as we arrived I felt at home. Exploring Llandrindod's Rock Park, tasting the cold blood tang of the free running Chalybeate Spring, walking through tree lined paths to the whispering River Ithon, eating ice cream at the lake, all of these things easily won us over.

The air was clean, the pace of life was unhurried and I felt relaxed in a way I'd never done in the city. Living here would be like a permanent holiday.

On our first visit I fell in love with one of the houses we

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viewed. An airy semi-detached Edwardian property on three floors, with seven bedrooms and three large receptions. It was stretching our budget, but simply magnificent and I loved it as soon as I stepped through the front door into a black and white tiled entrance hall spacious enough to hold a party in.

Back in the City I was teaching Crystal Therapy with a friend and we decided to run a Healing Arts Festival together. We had a psychic reader there and I chose to have a reading with him. Clive turned out to be a true clairvoyant and he gave me a more detailed and specific reading than I'd ever had before. He taped it and I listened to it in the car many times. I'm not sure what happened to that recording, but I can still remember the key details. He picked up on our move straight away,

"I'm seeing Wales, not North or South Wales, Mid Wales, somewhere near the Wye valley. That's funny; we are looking in that area too. I like New Radnor."

Wow, spot on! Llandrindod Wells is in Mid Wales and not far from the River Wye which runs through our neighbouring town of Builth Wells. Clive's reading continued with a description of the house, however this didn't match our intended Edwardian property at all.

"An old place, quite small with something a bit wonky about the roof. There are flag stones and a big step to the kitchen, a big inglenook fireplace too. I can see a stream no wider than this table and there are badgers. Your man is outside chopping wood. When you get this place the relationship will just flourish. At the moment it isn't so good but this will suit you both. He's working at something outdoors."

It was true that our marriage didn't feel emotionally fulfilling, but it was an efficient working partnership. We got on well enough, didn't argue and loved our two children. There wasn't much spark; after so many years together maybe that was natural? Perhaps the move would change things?

Clive's picture of a cottage style property seemed rather unlikely. Year on year I would rent a cosy holiday cottage, a style I personally love, and annually my tall husband would bang his head on low beams and swear loudly. Once he nearly knocked himself out. As for chopping firewood and working outdoors? He'd always done

office jobs. Gifted with intelligence he was a policy writer, a meeting organiser. This was a very different version of him.

There was a warning for me that didn't make sense until much later, "Men see your power and they try to nick it." Clive moved on, "You do know you are a healer don't you?" I nodded. "You'll both do healing but he'll heal in his way and you'll heal in your way."

My husband had always been supportive of my healing and been a long suffering guinea pig while I'd been training as a crystal therapist, but despite his own natural psychic ability he didn't show a great desire to join in. Perhaps that would all change too?

Clive and I swapped phone numbers and agreed to keep in touch with each other. It was interesting that he was particularly drawn to the pretty little village of New Radnor, with its main street supported by a huge castle mound that rises behind like an upturned jelly mould. It's only new in the sense that it isn't as ancient as Old Radnor. In a search to find the happiest place to live in the UK New Radnor topped the poll.

Over the next few months we visited Llandrindod and viewed more properties, including return visits to the Edwardian house. It was the start of the second Gulf War and it made me smile to see our prospective neighbours were protesting NO WAR in huge whitewashed letters on all of their windows. I'd been active in the Green Party years before and I'd joined a CND candlelit vigil on the eve of the first Gulf War. The press photographer singled me out for a portrait photograph on the front page of the local paper at that time, much to the irritation of the woman who'd organised the vigil and to the amusement of all the school children I taught. Peace protesters would be fine as neighbours.

We'd been staying at a welcoming Arts and Crafts style B&B where the proprietor was always friendly, helpful and the font of knowledge on all things local. I asked him about the shop I'd seen on the internet before and enquired where the vegetarian café had gone. He pointed out of his window to a little run of shops opposite. They'd been there, but the shop had sold a while back and the café was closed now. I told him about the house I'd set my heart on and a strange piece of synchronicity emerged. The former proprietors of the café lived in the house next door. They were the peace protesters. It seemed that they really were destined to be our next door neighbours.

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It felt so right and so guided, despite Clive's picture of a cosy cottage.

Back home we put our house on the market and got a pleasant surprise. House prices had moved rapidly upwards and the dream house was more affordable than we'd thought. Our house sold quickly and within a few months we'd moved. We had an interesting introduction to the town. Our moving date was set right in the middle of Llandrindod's annual Victorian Festival and so our first impression as new residents was decidedly quirky. Gentlemen in top hats and frock coats walked arm in arm with ladies wearing enormous bustles carrying parasols. Perhaps this was an early sign of the bizarre twists of fate that life would present over the coming years?

The children arrived a few days later, brought to the town by my parents. They turned up just in time for the grand finale of Victorian week, a dazzling fireworks display over the town's lake. I felt it was a fitting welcome for the pair of them.

Our new house was wonderful. It had been neglected over the years and needed someone to love it. At one point it had been a nursing home and it still had the old stairlift and washbasins in every bedroom. The bathroom was tiny and claustrophobic, decked out in a cracked plastic 70's avocado suite. Many of the windowpanes were broken and had been 'mended' with sellotape. I felt it made the house look like it was wearing broken National Health specs. There was plenty of scope for improvement and we threw ourselves into renovation with gusto.

The beautiful black and white checkerboard tiles in the hall disappeared under a grotty grey carpet in the inner lobby and emerged again in a vestibule on the other side. Our first action had to be to pull up the carpet and find out whether the tiles extended right though. They did! We hired an obliging handyman who went around repairing windows and chopping out rot from window frames, turning his hand to just about anything that didn't involve going up ladders. We converted one of the larger bedrooms into a palatial bathroom fitted with a clean white bathroom suite. It was such a grand space that Clive enquired, "Does that bathroom have its own postcode?" on his first visit.

Gradually the house responded to our care and started to feel loved again. Our neighbours were just as welcoming as we'd hoped and we found we had plenty in common. Guy headed up an

anti-nuclear charity, meeting with ministers to challenge the building of new reactors. Susan was a teacher. Their little granddaughter visited often and struck up a friendship with my son. We were honoured that they re-opened the 'window' in the hedge which they'd allowed to grow over whilst the previous owners had been in residence. Now we could share a chat over coffee and hand small children through the gap to play together. It was a lot of fun.

My husband and I both loved the house and the area, but he found it difficult to find work and in those early days I was obliged to travel all over England to carry out the education consultancy work I'd secured. I felt like I'd moved to Wales only to have to leave time and time again. Leaving did underline how at home I felt here. There was a huge sense of relief and a feeling of homecoming whenever I drove back over the border and saw 'my hills'.

As I type, Canada geese have flown past my window in a V-shaped skein honking softly to themselves. I'm looking out upon fields, trees and distant hills. Six years on I still adore this area and give thanks for the courage and impetus that we both needed to make the move.



## *Journeying to Other Realms*

*When fairy tales and legends old  
Tell the true history of the world'*

Novalis

I'd been introduced to a lovely aromatherapist, Marie, who combined her talents as a contemporary artist with her holistic therapies. I'd seen her before. She cut an eccentric, but striking dash around Mid Wales, wearing layers of bright and sparkly clothing, standing out like an exotic bird in this muted landscape populated with welly wearing hill farmers. Her flat was no less striking and incongruous; you stepped from a gloomy Victorian landing into a bohemian palace, with walls daubed in bright colours, every nook adorned with fairy lights, feathers, pictures and ornaments. I loved to visit this magical place and she was always a delightful host.

Marie introduced me to a shamanic healer, Patricia. We got on well together and on Marie's recommendation I decided to do her Introduction to Shamanism course. That was a life transforming decision. I'd been aware of my guides working with me for some years, feeling them around me, sensing their hands over mine when I was healing and knowing that they were helping me, but I didn't know any names or have a picture of them in my mind. All I knew was that their energy felt supportive and I could trust them.

There were just two other participants on the day. One was a rather ample lady who was into angels and crystals, the other a shy young man. He was a Buddhist who had just left a job as a copywriter producing junk mail, which he hated. He was there to try and break through his writer's block and get into more positive and life enhancing creative writing.

We began. Patricia called in the powers of the four directions through rattling and chanting. We then moved through some energy sensing activities and Patricia explained that we'd be exploring the three realms of the shaman, the Lower World of animal spirit helpers, the Upper World of our spirit guides and the Middle World which is essentially overlying the world we live in and is the place where elemental energies can be contacted.

Soon we were on our first shamanic journey. We lay covered by blankets and blindfolded on Patricia's floor. I'd never journeyed before and wondered if it would even work for me. I tried not to let performance anxiety get the better of me and to just allow whatever was to come.

Our first trip was to visit the Lower World to find our power animal. I visualised myself standing by a huge tree with a mossy trunk which had a hollow like a doorway at the bottom. As Patricia started to drum for us I stepped in and found myself in a dark tunnel leading vertically down through the Earth. I didn't feel I was falling, just gliding down it as if riding in an invisible lift.

Arriving at the bottom I found myself in a very dark cave. I could make out glittering quartz crystals in the walls. Although it was dark I could just see creatures. A mouse scuttled past and a bat flew over my head. Suddenly, right up close to me a large black crow-like bird appeared. I asked if it was my power animal and turned a quarter turn away as I'd been instructed. Quick as a flash there it was again right up against my face. I turned to ask in each of the directions and it was there eye to eye with me before I could get any words out.

The drum beat changed to the call back, time to leave. I asked my bird if he would return with me and he spread his wings and flew up the tunnel alongside me.

I was intrigued. I had expected a bird of prey, perhaps an owl, as I have always had an affinity with them. This large black crow was not what I'd imagined and its behaviour was less than subtle. I knew this wasn't just my imagination.

We shared our experiences in the group. The Buddhist had travelled to a dry desert landscape, but had seen no animals; though he had a feeling he was being watched. The other lady had a glamorous white tiger with a magnificent jewel set in its forehead. My crow seemed a bit drab in comparison.

Our next journey was to the Upper World. After my Lower World journey I felt more confident that I could do this. We were to meet our spirit guide and if we had our power animal we were advised it might want to come along too.

The drumming started. I saw the same tree, but this time climbed to the topmost branches where my crow was waiting. I realised he was willing to fly up with me. We flew together through the

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sky and out of Earth's atmosphere into space, out of our solar system and into the stars. I felt we'd gone as far as we possibly could when I sensed a slight pressure and came through into a land, of sorts.

I was standing in a pure white landscape, snowy in appearance, although I didn't feel cold. In the distance was a picture book range of white mountains. My spirit guide was already waiting for me. Gosh, he was exceptionally handsome. He stood dressed as a Celtic warrior with a thick red cloak, fastened at the throat with a Celtic patterned brooch. He carried a sword and a golden shield. Neatly bearded with longish wavy brown hair he wore a thin gold crown with a single jewel at the front. Despite his heroic appearance he seemed familiar to me and looking into his eyes I felt I had known him for a very long time. As we stood looking at each other my big crow was hopping between our shoulders in excitement.

We stepped forward and embraced. My guide kissed me on the forehead and I was aware that my appearance was altered. I was slimmer and wearing a medieval style red velvet dress. My hair was similar, but longer and curly reddish brown. I was a ravishing 'Mills and Boon' version of myself!

I asked my Guide for his name and he replied, "Bran." I thought I'd misheard him. Next I asked if he had anything to give me and he presented me with the golden brooch from his cloak. The design was of an even armed cross with a clear red jewel in the centre. I received this gift with thanks. We embraced once again and the drum beat changed. It was time to say our farewells and return.

The Buddhist had only managed to fly a short way before he'd got tired out, so he stopped at a comfortable looking cloud and lay down to rest. The other lady had met with no less than five assorted female guides. I talked about my warrior, but omitted his name as I wasn't convinced I'd really heard it.

It was time for lunch and Patricia went to warm up some soup she was providing. She left us with a pile of reference books to look up our power animals. I flicked through the 'Druid Animal Oracle' by Philip and Stephanie Carr-Gomm. There was no Crow, but there was an entry for Raven. I was astounded to see that directly under the title 'Raven' was the word '*Bran*'. Talk about instant confirmation! My big black bird wasn't a crow, it was a raven and my guide really was called Bran. Here he was listed as one of the heroes of Celtic mythology and

'Bran' means 'raven' in Welsh. No wonder my big crow had been so excited to introduce me to him, we shared our Raven ally.

I felt shy about claiming such an important figure as my main spirit guide. I'd maintained a healthy scepticism when people claimed they were working with famous spirit guides. Suddenly here I was with a superhuman figure from Celtic legend. Why would a Celtic King be guiding me and why did he seem so very familiar?

After a great lunch, we went journeying for each other. I paired up with the other lady whilst Patricia worked with the Buddhist to help him connect with his power animal. I asked for advice on developing my healing. We were told to journey, ask the question and simply report back whatever we were shown. When my partner returned she said she'd been told I'd be a leader of the New Age. This seemed somewhat ambitious, but I noted it down dutifully.

My partner wanted advice on bringing romance into her life. I met up with Bran again. He held out his cupped hands and gold glittered, overflowing them, falling and swirling into a large bronze cauldron. I reported these symbolic images back, unsure of what they meant. I think she was a little disappointed that I hadn't come up with something more concrete, like the name and address of an available man!

We went outside for a medicine walk in Nature. We were to bring back an object. Patricia was living in a farmhouse on a lonely Welsh hillside. I picked my way across a small stream to a copse of twisted oak trees. It felt very peaceful and old. I found myself a comfortable moss covered rock and sat down. I was glad of the solitude and I shed a few tears. For some years I had secretly been yearning for the heart connection of a true soul mate and now I had felt that deep connection with Bran.

On our return to the house we went on a healing journey for ourselves. I travelled around my body and came to my left hip which had been sore. I could see what looked like a spiky metal ball wedged there and with the help of Bran I removed it. Afterwards the physical pain was gone. Shamanism was impressive stuff!

I had often asked clients to go to an area of discomfort in their bodies and imagine what they could see there. I hadn't been taught this; it had just evolved as part of the way I work. On one memorable occasion the client had been due to have gall bladder surgery. When

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she went to the area of pain she found she was swimming through a lake of horrible black liquid that was blocked from draining by boulders. As I poured healing energy into the site she imagined breaking up the stones until they were small enough to flush away and then the liquid began to drain off.

Next day she rang me. She'd been vomiting vile black stuff and had bouts of black diarrhoea overnight. She thought she was okay and was convinced she was having a major clear out, but wanted to check with me. I felt she was going to be alright, however I went on the net and the only references I could find to black stools indicated internal bleeding. I sent her straight off to the GP to get it all checked out. To his credit he didn't question her when she told him what she'd done and she was not only found to be fine, she no longer needed an operation. I now realise I had been using shamanic-style techniques without knowing it.

Returning home at the end of the course I told my husband about it, going easy on the heart connection between my guide and myself. He seemed unimpressed and rather dismissive even of the amazing Bran/Raven synchronicity and I felt slightly deflated.

Later I went onto the internet to look up Raven and Bran. I realised Raven was a powerful magickal ally and was linked both to healing and psychic work. Bran was from a pre Arthurian era and he appears in the Welsh epic, the Mabinogion, as well as being remembered in many Welsh place names. He is also named Bran the Blessed, so maybe this was why I'd received an even armed cross as a gift.

Reading further I found out that the ravens kept to this day at the Tower of London are there because Bran's head was supposed to have been buried on Tower Hill to watch over his kingdom. The legend goes that if the ravens leave the Tower the kingdom will fall and so the birds have their wings clipped, cheating a little perhaps! In the Second World War bombing of London the ravens escaped and Winston Churchill ordered more to be brought from Scotland and Wales, just showing how steeped in myth these Isles are.

Bran had possessed a magical cauldron that brought dead warriors back to life. I'd seen this cauldron on my journey for the angel lady without knowing about the myth. Everything was so closely interwoven that I knew this was a real contact.