

Chapter 1:

Slowly he opened his eyes. At first everything was pitch black. He was able to move his hands and eventually his arms and was able to look around. In the far distance he could see a single dim green glow. "Where," he questioned himself. "Where am I, What happened and why is it so dark here?" Jo-Eb laid there for quite a while checking first his hands, his head, his legs and then the rest of his body. He wasn't sure exactly where he was or how he'd gotten there. He couldn't remember anything except that somehow he'd come to this place where-ever it was and was trapped. He scoured his mind but came up empty. "Okay, let's start with who am I and proceed from there. My name is, at that point everything was blank. He knew that he was a cognoscente being, he was trapped and the only thing he could do is try to get free. Once again he looked at the distant far green glow and started to inch forward.

Although he wasn't in severe pain he did feel weak and found it hard to move forward. It seemed that he was in a narrow cave and he couldn't get up on his knees as the ceiling was just inches above his head. He would low crawl using his elbows and pushing with the balls of his feet for a while then all but collapse in exhaustion. After a short rest he would redouble his efforts towards the light but it seemed the further he traveled the dimmer the glow got. At one point he wondered if he wasn't in fact pushing himself backwards rather than proceeding forward. "No, that wouldn't make sense" he thought to himself. "My mind is blank for the most part but I can discern forward from backwards movement. I'll just rest for a minute then go on." He pulled his elbows back and laid his head on his crossed hands.

This went on for several attempts. He would inch forward, test the walls and the ceiling to see if there was any perceivable difference then proceed toward that ever glowing light. He had no way of knowing how far he had progressed or how far it was to still go. All he knew for sure was that he couldn't stay where he was or he would die. On one occasion the thought of death crossed his mind. What was death, what was the opposite of death and what difference did it make. While he rested he contemplated on this issue. How did he know life from death? How could he know one from the other and how is it that he instinctively knew to go toward that inferno light that never seemed to get any closer? That much he knew but why couldn't he remember anything else. Once

while resting he searched his mind about these matters and came up blank. He didn't know who he was, why he was here or even how he came to be here. After a bit he gave way to exhaustion again and the darkness overcame him.

He opened his eyes and the mind started to function again. Something had changed but he wasn't sure what it was. The passage way seemed to be wider and when he reached toward the ceiling he found that he could not touch it. He pushed himself up on his knees and raised his hands once again to see if he could reach the ceiling. "Nothing" he told himself "Nothing but air above." With that he placed one foot on the ground and supporting himself against the wall pulled himself up. Soon he was standing, wobbly at first but at last on both feet. "This is got to be good." He said to himself "Yes from this position I can move quicker, but in which direction?" he questioned himself. Slowly he turned his head to see if he could determine where that light was. It was an eerie feeling because although there was no perceivable source of light the place where he stood was not completely dark. Rather it was as if he was in a mist yet it wasn't wet. Vision was very limited but at least he could see a couple of feet in front of him. He knew that he'd have to go but in which way? After contemplating it for a few seconds he decided he'd continue the way he was faced when he woke up. With that he reached one hand in front of himself while keeping the right hand on the wall. Slowly he placed one foot in front of the other. After several steps he reckoned that he had mastered the art of traveling like this but he didn't know just how he knew.

Then as luck would have it he placed his right foot out to continue to step forward but there was no solid ground. He pulled his foot back, dropped to his knees and with his hand attempted to determine if there was ground available. Having failed to reach anything he decided to lay down as close to the edge as he could get and see if he could gather any information by extending his arm as far as he could reach. "Nothing;" He told himself. He looked around and gathered some loose pebbles. The first one he dropped over the ledge to see if an echo would tell him perhaps how deep the crevice was. After he dropped a few he determined that perhaps the distance to the point of contact was not too far, but when it landed he heard a splash. "Water" he thought or perhaps some other liquid substance. He took a few more pebbles and tossed them forward to see if he could discern the distance to the other side. After six tries and throwing the pebbles as far as he could he decided that he couldn't move

any further in this direction as when the pebbles hit there was always a splash. What he did know was if he were to lower himself into the liquid he'd not be able to get back out again so there was no way he could move forward. After a minute he decided to move himself left away from the wall he'd been using as a guide and see if he could determine a way to get to the left wall. He got upon his knees and began to slowly move toward the distant wall. As he did something strange seemed to be happening. He knew he was moving away from the right wall but the further he moved in that direction the distance from the right wall didn't become greater. "My mind must be playing tricks on me" he thought. I know I'm moving yet the wall at my back never seems to be any further away. The wall must be moving" He continued this cat and mouse game for the better part of a half hour then stopped. Once again he reached behind him only to find that the wall was still directly behind him. He took a few pebbles from his pouch and tossed them in the direction of the abyss where the lake had been. To his surprise the report indicated that he was no longer throwing into a liquid. "Okay" he said to himself "if I can now continue to go forward that is what I'll do." With that he turned back to the original course of travel and once again slowly but surely moved forward. At first he remained on his knees then after a few seconds his confidence returned and he stood up once again.

Again he became aware that the light in the cave had become brighter and he was able to see several feet in front of him. "This is good" he said to himself, "this is real good." Just as he was telling himself that things were better the ground beneath him gave way and he slipped down a slide toward the bottom. It was on an angle so it was not a real fall it was more like tumbling down the side of a hill. He reached out but there was nothing to grab onto. He'd scoop a handful of gravel and continue his journey downwards. He reached what he perceived to be the bottom and started taking stock of himself. "Nothing broken!" he thought to himself, my thick clothing saved me from being cut by the rocks while I fell and except for my dignity being hurt I only suffered a few bruises on my neck and forehead. Once again exhaustion took its toll and he slipped back into the darkness.

When he came to he once again determined that things were different. For one thing he was no longer in an environment where light came from nowhere and visibility was limited. He was in a large room, lying on a bed of straw and the

light source was torches. He moved his head first to one side then the other. As his vision cleared he could see movement off to the far side of the room and hear what seemed to be a conversation going on. He couldn't understand what was being said but whatever it was it was surely about him and it seemed that there was two sided to the conversation. He decided to sit up and see if he could ask any questions. As he attempted to rise he determined that he was securely tied and except for his ability to move his head he was restricted securely. Once again he just listened to the commotion at the far side of the room and waited. After what seemed to be an eternity he decided to see if he could communicate with them. "Forgive me" he started, "can anyone tell me where I am or how I got here." The conversation stopped abruptly and it seemed that a dozen pairs of eyes were staring at him. Nothing was said and no one moved. It was almost as if they were petrified. "Look" determined not to be an experimental Ginnie pig he continued. "I don't know who you are or why you have tied me down but I am a human being and am entitled to be treated as such."

After a minute one of the pair of eyes came toward him. He could make out that this person, obviously one of intellect was the same as him yet different. The person was dressed in a long flowing garb that seemed to consist of blue and red streamers. As the person approached him he heard a voice that seemed to be female saying something he didn't understand. Although he couldn't understand the words he felt deep inside that the emotions being displayed showed compassion and was caring toward him. Slowly she reached out and touched his forehead. In some sort of broken English and some other language he'd never heard before she simply ask him to stay quiet for a while. He took reassurance with that and decided that since he had no alternative anyway he'd abide by her request. So once again he simply looked toward the direction where the conversation was coming from.

He'd listen intently for a while trying to determine if he could pick out any words that he might recognize and as the conversation droned on he'd laps in and out of a semi-coma. The next time he opened his eyes he felt his forehead being wiped with a damp cloth. The same person was attending to him that