

Dr. Sean Fische is sitting at the desk in his office in Astoria, Oregon. He starts the tape recorder, and begins to tape some notes before his session with his friend and patient, Terry Kline. Terry is one of several patients who are taking part in Sean's five-year study on Past Life Experiences.

“Over the past five years, Terry's dreams have become increasingly lucid and puzzling. All of his thirty some dreams have involved maritime activity around the turn of the century on an East Asian coast--most likely China. Terry believes that he was an Oriental sailor in a past life, which would explain most of the dreams he's had. I, however, really believe that PLE's, during dreaming or under hypnosis, are just jumbles of input from past experiences that make their way to the subconscious mind. On the other hand I am intrigued because Terry, unlike any of my other patients, maintains that he has never so much as seen a picture or picked up a book about this subject.”

“During the past eighteen hypnotic sessions with Terry, all of his PLE recollections have taken place in the same area of the Orient. He can recall the same objects and landmarks. One of which, I found out Tuesday, was of a structure that actually did exist on the shoreline of an island off the coast of China. It was a religious monument, destroyed in W.W.II, that is still referred to in the folklore of the area. But, with no record of any pictures having ever been taken, it is improbable that Terry could have seen it in a book.”

Sean stops the recorder and walks over to his file cabinet to get the rest of Terry's file. He goes to his briefcase and pulls out the information--

regarding Terry's recollections--that he has gathered over the past week. There is a book about items lost to WW II, and a Fax from a colleague that contains information regarding a Chinese phrase that Terry used during a session a couple of weeks earlier. He adds these items to Terry's file and sits back at his desk, re-starting the recorder.

“Most of Terry's PLE's appear to have even been on the same ship. The puzzling part is that some of the recollections seem to be from the viewpoint of different people, all of whom are Oriental except two--English- speaking, white males. If these are PLE's, how then can Terry be more than one person at the same time in the same place?”

Sean pulls two sets of transcripts out of the file.

“Two of the recollections are particularly amazing. The detail in his recollections are impressingly vivid. These were recalled over the last two sessions,” he says, leaning back in his chair.

“In one session, Terry recalled working on an oriental junk as a crew member below deck. He saw a reflection of himself as a young Chinese man, not yet twenty years old, named Yngua. He recalled being in what was probably the galley. The descriptions of the surroundings seemed so real to him: the rough hewn of the boat; the smells of the meal cooking and mixing with the odors of pitch and tar below deck. He seemed to even *feel* the fear in the young Asian, when the ship struck rocks and water began to gush into the ship's hold. He relived running up on deck and the captain yelling a phrase that Terry recalled to mean abandon ship. Although the words being spoken were Chinese, Terry could understand what was said, and repeated the phrase. He, as the young Oriental, jumped overboard and hit his head on

something. Terry even recalled the water filling his lungs and consequently dying.”

Sean moves on to the next transcript, and pulls out a Fax that a colleague of his had sent. He staples the Fax to the first transcription and continues.

“In the next session, a week later, Terry recalled himself as a Caucasian male, named Taylor, on the deck of another ship in the same area. Looking out toward shore he, as Taylor, saw an oriental junk sinking as the crew was abandoning ship. When I asked Terry if there was anything familiar . . . he replied that he recognized the vessel’s configuration. He also recognized one of the crew--jumping overboard--to be the same young Oriental, Yngua, whose moments of life he relived in the previous session. He watched, *through the eyes of Taylor*, as Yngua jumped in the water, hit a rock and sank, not returning to the surface. As Taylor, he closed his eyes and bowed his head in respect for the demise of the young sailor. Looking into the sea, and seeing rocks, Taylor yelled for his crew to turn the ship about. But, he had yelled too late. His ship struck bottom as well. Everything became a void, and there was no more recollection from that point.”

Sean sets the transcripts aside and continues with the tape.

“This was what I have been looking for in my PLE research. There is no way that Terry could have been both of those men in a past life. Yet, Terry’s recollections are every bit as vivid as other patient’s PLE’s--the type of recollections that have nearly convinced me to believe in Past Lives myself. This is the type of recall that has intrigued me enough to spend most

of my practice in the study of PLE. Even with my skepticism, I feel a little disappointed that this may prove me right. Maybe it's just the way that I asked the questions that brought out this revelation.”

Sean picks the transcripts up and looks them over once more to try to notice anything in his questions that could be considered leading.

“I may be skeptical of past lives, but research must maintain integrity. It is too easy to inadvertently ask leading questions of a person under hypnosis. I cannot find anything in these sessions that appears leading.”

Sean sets the papers back down.

“If so, how could Terry be understanding this language if he was not actually living as that person? I found out the phrase that the Oriental captain used to tell the crew to *abandon ship*, was actually used at the turn of the century. However, it had not been used much since the late twenties, until a little before W.W.II.”

Sean stops the recorder and begins to fill out the pre-session paperwork for the arrival--in a few minutes--of Terry.

It was the middle of May, a blustery Friday in Astoria. The spring wind kept whitecaps on the waves, giving even this mild day the appearance of a winter storm. Sean's assistant tells Terry to go ahead and enter the office. He walks across the room and sits down in the large velvet recliner, which nearly absorbs him as he puts it into the half-reclined position and waits for Sean to acknowledge his presence.

Looking up from Terry's file, Sean inquires. “Having a good day Terry?”

“This weather is really compelling to me.” Terry replies. “Like the weather from the dreams. And you, Sean?”

Sean closes the file and replies. “I feel fine . . . but I prefer indoors on days like this.”

“Did you find out about the phrase that the captain yelled to the crew?”

“Yes, I did . . .when the captain yelled abandon ship.” Sean pauses. “He was yelling a phrase, that had stopped being used before W.W.II. It translates to ‘abandon ship, friends . . . may your next life be better.’ It was dropped, sometime in the 1920’s, for a more optimistic and less religious phrase.”

Sean could almost see an ‘I told you so’ look in Terry’s eyes, just before Terry’s face went to one of confusion.

“What's wrong?” Sean asks.

“I know what I saw, and it wasn’t a mistake. I *was* Taylor and I saw Yngua die in the water,” proclaims Terry, now trying to dig for some reasonable explanation. “Maybe Yngua’s spirit jumped to Taylor? Or . . .” Terry stops talking not able to think of another explanation.

“I don’t think so. Even if this were actually a past life . . . you probably would have gone from Yngua to Taylor during the session two weeks ago. Or, if you went into Taylor after dying in the sea, you wouldn’t have seen Yngua jumping off of the ship. How could you recognize yourself from somewhere else if you are still trying to save your life in yet another place?”

“I can’t see how this could be anything but a past life. It’s just too real,” Terry said, looking somewhat disappointed and confused.

“Have you had any other dreams about Yngua or Taylor?”

“No, but Saturday and Sunday I had a couple of really disturbing dreams that I was a Mexican killed in California.”

“Another PLE, you think?”

“No . . . Well, yes at first.” Terry pauses. “But this dream had a truck in it. And Alberto, the Mexican, was in that last earthquake before trying to get into the US.”

“Have you ever been to Mexico?”

“No.” Says Terry. “I’ve not been out of Oregon, except for Seattle.”

“Why do *you* think that you would dream about a Mexican getting killed?” asks Sean, as he reaches for his pad and pen to start recording the session.

“It never crossed my mind as to why.” States Terry. “It seemed at first like another PLE. It was so clear . . . so real. Just like all the other PLE’s. I *was* Alberto. It was when the truck appeared and I realized when the earthquake took place, and . . .” Terry shakes his head.

“What?” Asks Sean.

“It . . . it was just so real.” Says Terry. “Much more real than even the PLE’s are when I’m hypnotized.”

Sean notices Terry’s eyes quickly moving around as if he is replaying the dream at that very moment.

“Are you visualizing the dream now?”

“Yea, sorta. It was pretty disturbing.” Terry says with a bit of a shake in his voice.

Sean gets up and walks over to a bookcase. “Terry, would you like me to put you under for this one?” He asks, as he picks up a small wooden box from a shelf.

“Okay . . . I guess.”

“You sure?” Sean asks. He hesitates, pulling a thin rod-shaped stone from the box.

“Yea.” Terry pauses. “Yea, there was something about the dream that was familiar. I just can’t think of what it was.”

Sean sets the box back on the shelf after getting out the stone that he uses to hypnotize his patients.

By this stage in Terry’s therapy, just Sean’s reaching for the box, is enough to send him partially under hypnosis. Terry reaches down to the side of the chair and adjusts the recliner to the fully reclined position and takes a deep breath. He exhales with a bit of a sigh. “Okay Doc.”

Sean sits down next to Terry and holds the stone in front of Terry’s face.

Terry stares at the multi-colored claylike stone without blinking. His eyes follow the stone as Sean moves it. Terry starts the routine to begin his hypnosis. Visualizing himself walking out of a forest--representing the crowded mind of everyday life--and through a meadow to the shore of a pond. Terry, a fairly large person, fills up the whole length of the chair and most of what the velvet cushioning will give. Soon Terry’s hands relax from clutching the arm of the chair, which seems to spread out a bit, as if Terry has been keeping it from falling apart with his grip.

Sean turns on the tape recorder.

“When was the first dream Terry?”

“Saturday.” He answers, in a whisper.

Now Terry is sitting on a log at the edge of the pond. He bends down closer to the water and stares into the reflection of himself.

“And you’re falling asleep Saturday night.” Sean starts Terry off into a deep sleep.

“Yes.” Terry says. His voice now so very soft.

“You are totally relaxed,” commands Sean. “Where are you Terry?”

“At the pond.”

“Okay, now move into your mind . . . to Saturday night’s dream.”

“Mmm,” mumbles Terry.

“Can you get there?”

“Uh huh.” At the pond, Terry is looking at his reflection as it turns into that of the Mexican man from his previous dreams. The sky grows darker as the wind picks up, and the pond becomes the whole dream. Terry is now Alberto.

“Who are you---where are you now?”

“Home . . .I’m Alberto.”

“Where?”

“Mexico. With my family.” Terry pauses, then adds. “The pictures are falling off the wall. Everything’s moving---shaking.”

Terry sees the broken down home in a Mexican slum. Built mostly of plywood and dried mud, it’s breaking apart and falling down. The family is in the back of the shack. He can hear them, but not see them.

“Pictures of what?” Sean asks, trying to establish some reference to time and place.

“The kids . . . my wife . . . Mom and Dad.”

“Why are they falling?”

“An earthquake! The kids are screaming.” Terry sees himself as Alberto running to the back of the shack. He grabs the kids and his wife and runs out of their home and into the street. Everyone in the slum is running out as well.

“Are you still in the house?” Sean asks. “Are you hurt?”

“No---Outside---Everyone is.” Terry’s face looks strained, as if trying to focus on something. “It’s day now. The house looks terrible!” Terry can see all of the shacks completely destroyed from the quake and small fires scattered about the town. It looks as though no one was seriously injured. The sky has a blanket of dust and smoke. “The sun looks like a hot piece of coal roasting away what is left of the lives of the people all around me.”

“Do you know what year it is?”

“1981, I think. I don’t know why though. . . What a way to start off the new decade.”

“Anything else Alberto?”

“My wife is carrying luggage and I ask her if that’s everything. She says no, but it’s all we can take.” A vehicle is driving toward them and Alberto recognizes it as Michael’s truck. “There’s the truck. Michael is pointing at the truck bed. He’s saying something.”

“Can you make out what he’s saying?”

“He’s saying your family has to ride in here.” Terry sees that the truck appears to be a 1978 or ‘79 model--very rusted and banged up---it doesn’t look safe to travel in the back.

“There’s a false bed in the truck.” Terry says. “It doesn’t look big enough . . . even for the two kids. It’s too long of a drive to go all the way in there. Michael says that I’m the only one with a card. We’d never get everyone across.” Terry clenches the arms of the chair and shakes back and forth a couple of times. The chair makes a loud creak as if to almost collapse to the floor.

“Terry!” Sean says. “Alberto!”

“NO!” Terry starts to sob. Breathing in short quick breaths he continues. “Michael you fool . . . didn’t you check it?”

“What happened, Alberto?”

“They’re dead . . . My family is dead.” Terry sees Alberto’s wife and two kids, motionless in the false bed of the truck. They are parked on the side of the road near a farm. The truck is setting at an angle, partially in a three-foot ditch. Michael grabs a shovel from the bed of the truck and starts to pull out one of the kids.

“It was carbon monoxide!” says Terry. “No, you can’t bury them here! We’ve got to go back!” Then he’s quiet for about 15 seconds. He sees that Michael has let go of the child and goes to the cab of the truck. Reaching behind the seat, he pulls out a gun.

“Alberto!” says Sean. “Is there anything else?”

“Michael has a gun.” Terry says, quietly. “Go ahead--I don’t have anything left--shoot me!”

“Alberto?” Sean asks. But Terry is silent. “Terry?”

“Yeah” Terry answers.

“Anything else?”

“No.” Terry sighs. “He shot me.”

“*YOU ARE BACK HERE.*” Sean says the key words to bring Terry out of the hypnotic state. He waits a couple of minutes and says, “How do you feel?”

“Sad,” Terry wipes a tear from his cheek, “but I saw it.”

“What?”

“*Sander’s Tomato Farm.* That’s where the truck was stopped.”

“So?”

“I’d never eaten that brand--until Friday-- when I made some soup. That’s what was familiar about the dream.” Terry felt relieved that at least he didn’t have that nagging feeling about the dream anymore. “I guess that’s something I shouldn’t be eating before I go to bed,” he says, half-jokingly.

Sean gets up and walks back over to the bookshelf. He opens the wooden box and starts to put the stone back. As he just about has the stone put back, he turns to Terry and asks, “Can you think of any particular food you may have eaten before the dreams about Yngua or Taylor?”

“No.” Terry’s expression turns to a smirk. “That would have to had been some pretty old food, huh.”

“What do you think of this dream?” Sean asks.

“Ya know . . . it’s kinda scary, but I’d like to know if there’s really a place like this in California. It was so real. What if it was a premonition?” Terry’s eyes widen at the thought that this could be the explanation. He reaches down and brings the recliner back to the sitting position.

“I don’t think so,” says Sean “The Earthquake. You--Alberto--said it was 1981.”

“That’s right,” Terry concedes, disappointedly. “Maybe a Ghost?”

“We’ve been over that before.” Sean says, a bit irked by the remark. “Even if one is to believe in ghosts . . . Why you? Why not someone who knew Alberto or Michael? And why up here and not down there?” Sean is even more skeptical--even cynical--about ghosts, as he is about past lives.

“Maybe Alberto’s ghost wanted to come up here. It could have been their destination.”

“That’s really stretching it, Terry,” says Sean, quelling Terry’s direction of thought.

“I know. I guess all we have are tomatoes,” jokes Terry.

Sean sits back at his desk and opens Terry’s file. He puts in the notes and stops midway through, closing the folder. He looks toward Terry, but with a blank stare at nothing in particular.

“What about Beverly?”

Sean asks about Terry’s wife. He notices a perplexed look on Terry’s face, so he adds, “The tomato soup?”

“Well, yes, she had some.”

“And, her dreams?”

“I don’t know.” Terry chuckles. “She hasn’t mentioned anything. I mean . . . nightmares or tomatoes.”

“Could you ask her?” Sean writes something on a piece of paper. “Maybe she just didn’t think it was worth mentioning.”

“You really want me to ask her?” Terry says, astonished that Sean might even consider a connection.

“Maybe it’s just a chemical thing with you. I could recommend a good psychiatrist to help you.”

“I suppose it won’t hurt to ask.” Terry says, as he gets out of the chair and reaches across the desk to shake Sean’s hand before leaving.

Sean stands as well and hands the piece of paper to Terry, who, thinking it’s the name of a psychiatrist, puts it in his shirt pocket and continues with the handshake.

“Be sure to set up another session for next week,” says Sean.

“Thank you, Sean. I will.” Terry turns and heads for the door.

“Don’t forget to ask Bev.”

“I won’t. We still have some frozen soup left for tonight. Maybe I’ll have another dream as well,” Terry comments, as he leaves the office .

Terry climbs into his Riviera and heads for home. The sky is starting to clear, allowing the sun to break through--with those beams that look like bits of heaven--highlighting different spots of land and ocean, causing Terry to flash on bits of memories of himself as Yngua jumping overboard and drowning. As he recalls being in the sea for those few moments, he remembers that he needs to stop at the market for some fish before heading home. Turning to head down the hill to the docks, he thinks that he might as well stop by work just to make sure everything is running well. Being the supervisor at the *Crosely Shipyard*, has Terry spending most of his time at work.

He pulls into the company parking lot, just as most of the other employees are leaving for the day. He sees that Eddie, the foreman, is heading out for the day. Terry pulls his car up, next to Eddie.

“Hey Eddie.” Terry yells from the car. “It looks like everything’s gone all right.”

“Sure,” replies Eddie. “But you may want to call *Binder’s Frames* when you get a chance. The last shipment was two pieces short.”

Terry grabs a pen and looks around for a piece of paper to write on. He remembers the paper in his pocket---the one Sean had handed him---and pulls it out to write the message down.

“Thanks Eddie.” Terry says as he opens up the paper. On it is written, ‘*Just the earthquake and a dark ride.*’ Terry sits motionless with a puzzled look on his face.

“You okay, Terry?”

“Aah, Yea . . . great,” he answers. “You have a nice weekend. See ya Monday.”

Terry heads for the store, still puzzled by what Sean had written on the paper. Was it something to remember, or did he get handed the wrong note? Terry felt a little indignant for a moment, thinking that maybe it was a note Sean had written to himself. Maybe the earthquake was the only thing that Sean believed. But, what was the dark ride? He puts back the note as he pulls up to *Tony’s Fish Market* and notices that his favorite fish, the *Redfish* is on sale. He decides there must have been a good catch today, so he picks up few pounds for a weekend BBQ.

Terry gets home just as his wife Beverly steps out of her BMW. It was actually earlier than normal for her to be getting home. Bev, who works as a biochemist at the **Biochemical Research And InterNational Facility On Organic Development**, south of Astoria, spends most of her time working well into the evening. This, he thinks, will be a nice change.

“Hi, Hon . . . are you actually home for the night?”

“Yes. Can you believe it, Terry! This is the first time in months,” she answers cheerfully.

“Will this be happening more often?” Terry asks, as he helps Bev with one of her many briefcases.

“No, just the opposite.” Bev peers to see what Terry has brought home. “We’re at a break between phases. The last one starts soon and it will mean more time in the lab.”

“Well, I guess we should really do it up this weekend then.” Terry says, winking at Bev. “Want to give Bill and Wanda a call and have them over for a BBQ?”

“Sure. Even if Bill is out on an expedition, it would be nice for Wanda to get out,” replies Bev.

“Why don’t you call her and invite them over for tomorrow. I’ll start dinner. Do you mind finishing off the tomato soup tonight?” Terry says as, he opens the door for Bev.

“ Sure, I guess that will be all right.” Bev answers, not sounding too thrilled.

“We don’t have to have the soup.”

“No, that will be all right. It’s really good. Probably the best you’ve ever made.” Bev still has a look on her face that puzzles Terry. It seemed as though Bev really doesn’t want to eat the soup. Is she just not thinking about what Terry has said? Can it be that she has reservations about it, because she had a reaction to it like Terry had?

“Look honey . . . if you’d rather have something else, tell me.” Terry sets her briefcase on the sofa and goes into the kitchen. “Was there something about the soup?”

“Not exactly. Not the taste anyway,” she answers, lifting her voice to make sure that Terry can hear her from the living room.

“Sean wants me to ask you something.” Terry sets down the fish. “It ah . . . sorta has to do with the soup.” Terry walks back to the living room so that he doesn’t have to yell from the kitchen.

“You’ve got to be kidding!” Bev says, as she sits down on the sofa.

“No. I had some nightmares after eating the tomato soup . . . he was wondering if you did too.” Terry sits down next to Beverly. He leans over the coffee table and picks up a piece of mail and stares at it for a second, then looks to his wife and asks. “Did you have any--you know---odd dreams Saturday or Sunday night?”

“Well, not really odd. But I did have one that seemed a bit scary. It seemed to be rather dark, and I felt scared. But I don’t recall seeing much of anything. It was too dark.” Bev reaches over and grabs the piece of mail from Terry and sets it back on the table.

Terry stands up and starts to walk back to the kitchen

“That, plus we were really poor . . . destitute,” Bev adds, standing up, now, as well.

“What do you mean?” Terry asks as he puts the fish into the fridge.

“Well, you know, poor--in a really broken down house.”

“You mean like a shack?”

“Yea, and it kept falling apart.”

Terry is almost afraid to ask any more about Bev’s dream. Could It be that she dreamt something about the place in Mexico. He pulls a couple of bowls out of the cupboards for the soup. He feels that if Bev did actually dream about Mexico, there could be a correlation. He isn’t sure about pursuing it any further. Then Bev said the key word.

“It was almost as if our house was destroyed by an earthquake.” Bev walks into the kitchen, not noticing that Terry--with his back to her--is standing there frozen by what she just said.

“Any . . . ” There’s a crack in Terry’s voice. He clears his throat. “Anything else?” he asks.

“Not really. Most of the dream seemed scary because it was dark and I felt closed in. You know how I hate cramped places.” Bev grabs a pop from the fridge and opens it up.

“Were you in a room?” Terry asks.

“I don’t think so. It felt more like being taken somewhere blindfolded or tunnel vision with your eyes closed.” Bev takes a big sip of pop.

“Like this?” Terry pulls the paper out from his pocket and hands it to Bev.

“Yea!” Beverly exclaims, after reading what Sean had written down on the paper. “What’s this about?”

“I’m not entirely sure yet.” Terry takes back the paper and stuffs it into his pocket. “Sean wrote it down after one of our sessions.”

“Do you think that you had a past life that was in an earthquake in the dark?” Bev asks.

“No. It was actually a dream.” Terry pours the remaining soup into the bowls and puts them into the microwave. “In the dream I . . . *the Mexican* family was in an earthquake, in a slum section of Mexico. Then they were smuggled across the border to California. The wife and children died after riding across the border stuffed inside the false bed of a truck.”

“That sounds a bit familiar,” Bev says, slowly, in a very thought searching way. “But, why would he have thought that I would have had a similar dream?”

“Ah . . . hu hu...” starts Terry, hesitantly, as he opens the microwave to take out the soup, “that’s a little bit bizarre. It has to do with *this*.” Terry sets the bowls of soup on the dining table.

“With what?” Bev asks as she sets a salad and a couple of plates next to the soups.

“The soup. We both ate the soup right before having the dreams.”

“Terry,” Bev says, dismissingly, “we’ve been married for fifteen years. Most of the things we’ve eaten, we’ve eaten together.” The two stare at each other for a few seconds, and Bev continues. “I’m surprised Sean would even suggest such a thing.”

“Well, the place in my dream where I ended up was at *Sander’s Tomato Farm*. That’s what we’re eating. . . *Sander’s Tomatoes*.” Terry tilts his head in contemplation as he looks at the soup.

Bev watches Terry for a moment and looks at her soup as well. “You know...” she hesitates a moment, “when you mentioned the soup tonight--and don’t get me wrong, it’s really delicious--I felt odd about it for some reason. I wonder if I subconsciously connected it with the dream . . . like you did?”

“Yea, maybe that’s what Sean was thinking . Wait a minute!” Terry shakes his head. “I don’t think so. You couldn’t have known about the farm, because you were . . .” Terry stops. He realizes that if he says ‘dead’, that would be admitting that Bev *was* the Mexican wife of Alberto.

“Dead.” Bev completes Terry’s thought.

“Right.”

“Let me see the note from Sean again.” Bev reaches across the table.

Terry pulls it out of his pocket and hands it to her. He keeps a grip on it just long enough to cause a tug that makes Bev look up and into his eyes. He can see that she is starting to take this all very seriously, and wants to make sure that she can see that he is concerned. With Bev’s strong

Christian beliefs, Terry feels that Bev will get--what is by Bev's own standards--immersed in something that isn't considered valid by most of Christianity.

"See here?" Bev turns the paper toward Terry. "He wasn't writing this to *you*. He was writing it to *me*. He must be theorizing something to do with the tomatoes and our dreams. If I were to dream about being the same wife, that was in your dream, I would only remember the ride as being dark and enclosed."

"You know Sean isn't the type to be looking at ghosts or spirits as a theory," scoffs Terry.

"I know, acknowledges Bev, holding her hand up in a calming down motion to Terry. "But I don't think he's thinking about ghosts. Let's invite Sean and Denise over for the BBQ and ask him."

"Okay, I'll give them a call," Terry says, as he gets up to clear the table.

Beverly moves into the living room and calls Wanda to ask her over for the BBQ. Terry can hear that Bill is in town and will be able to make it too. When Bev finishes, she opens one of her briefcases and pulls out the outline for the final phase of her project at work. Because of the sensitivity of the project, she is not supposed to let anyone view any of the documentation. As she begins to go over the outline, Terry comes into the room with dessert. Bev sets the outline down on the coffee table and grabs one of the bowls of ice cream. Terry glances at the outline as he leaves the room and heads for the den. Knowing that he's not allowed to see any of his

wife's work, he doesn't glance long, but does see a very provocative bit of information.

STEP 8. *Inject Carbon Memory Strand into host Red 2.*

Terry continues to the den to call Sean and ask about coming over for a BBQ.

Bev doesn't notice that Terry has seen any of the outline, and goes on with her review.

Back in the den, Terry reaches Sean on the phone.

"Good evening. This is Dr. Fische."

"Hello, Sean. This is Terry Kline."

"Hi ,Terry. I presume you've finally read my note. Have you talked with your wife?"

"Yes. We both would like to talk to you about that. Why don't you and Denise come over for a *Redfish* BBQ tomorrow afternoon, say . . . around 4:30? Bill and Wanda will be here around five."

"Sure. Denise was about to call Bev, and see about getting something going with you two, anyway, this weekend."

"See you then?"

"Sure." Sean answers. "Did Bev remember any of her dreams?"

"Yeah," says Terry. "It seems that she had one that was similar to mine. Do you have some sorta theory on this?"

"Well, I have a few thoughts, but I'll tell you about them tomorrow."

"Okay, Sean. Have a good night."

Sean and Denise show up a little after 4 o'clock Saturday. By now the sun has made its way through the clouds and the wind has died down.

Denise rings the doorbell. Sean turns around--having forgotten the article he'd brought for Terry and Bev--and heads back to the car.

"I'll just be a second, Den."

"Okay," she answers as Terry opens the door.

"Nice to see you again, Denise." Terry gives her a hug as she steps into the house.

"You too, Terry." She hands him a quiche she prepared. "Sean is right behind me."

"Go ahead and have a seat out back." Terry heads for the kitchen, leaving the door open for Sean. "The bar is set up just outside the door. Bev will be out in a sec."

"Thanks."

Sean comes into the house and walks toward the patio door.

"Sean." Terry intercepts him from the kitchen. "You're early," he says, as he shakes Sean's hand. "Good, Bev and I have a few questions for you about the note."

"I brought something for you to read when you get a chance." Sean sets a newspaper article on the dining room table and walks with Terry out to the patio.

Terry puts the charcoal into the pit while Sean makes himself a drink. As Terry lights the coals, they all stare out at the ocean. They can see the whale-watching boats coming in for the evening run.

“You’ve been out on the whale-watching boats, Terry.” Denise remarks. “Is it the type of thing that’s worth going out on more than once?” she asks, as she stretches and draws in a deep breath of salt air.

“Oh, sure.” Terry sits down next to Sean and pours a glass of wine. “There’s something humbling about reaching down and touching a creature that big.” He takes a sip of the wine. “It gives you a little different perspective on life.”

“Like being next to an elephant at a circus?” Sean asks.

“Yea, a little. But I would be afraid of getting crushed if I were that close to an elephant.”

“What about the whale wrecking the ship?” asks Sean.

“I never felt that anything like that would happen.”

“I think I would be afraid the whale would think we were a Japanese trawler,” Denise adds.

“They play whale songs in the water to attract the whale,” replies Terry. “They must play songs that make the whales secure about the boat.”

“Or want to hump the boat, if it’s a love song,” Sean jokes, as Bev steps out onto the patio.

“Hi, everyone!” Bev says, as Sean and Terry get up.

“Hi, Bev.” Sean gives her a hug.

Terry offers the chair next to Sean as Bev reaches over and shakes Denise’s hand. “How have you been, Denise? These guys are already talking about humping on a boat.”

“Great! I think we were talking about Humpback whales,” jokes Denise. “And you, Bev?”

The other three all give Denise a big harmonized “Oooh!” to let her know the joke was a bit reaching.

“I’m fine.” Bev sits down and turns to Sean. “And you?”

“Wonderful.”

“So . . . what about the whales?” Bev asks, as Terry hands her a drink.

“Do the whale-watching ships use whale songs to attract them?” Denise asks Bev.

“Or, make them feel secure.” Terry adds lifting his glass in the air matter-of-factly.

“Yes, probably both,” Bev answers. “I think the Whaling ships do that as well.”

Terry heads back into the house.

“You’d think that word would get around in the *WHALE WORLD*, and whale pods all would try to destroy the ships,” Denise remarks with anger toward those who hunt to kill whales.

“I don’t believe that whales harbor that kind of animosity toward humans. Cetaceans and other sea mammals seem to be more civilized than humans,” states Bev.

“I’ve read that many people consider Dolphins the most intelligent creature on earth,” Denise says, drawing a correlation of the two aquatic mammals.

“Depending on what guidelines one uses for intelligence,” Sean suggests.

“If having no natural enemies, except man. And, having a life that consists of mostly eating, sleeping, playing, sex *and* never harming any of

their own kind, as the guidelines, then I'd say they have us beat hands down!" Bev says, strongly.

"Or fins down," Terry says, as he steps back out on the patio to another--slightly different--chorus of "Oooh's". He hands a brochure from the whale-watching ship to Denise.

"Not to mention, there have been many humans that claim that dolphins had saved their life," continues Bev.

"As you can see, my wife, here, is very compassionate when it comes to dolphins," Terry says, kidding, as he bends over and hugs Bev's shoulders.

"They appear to be very noble and loving beings," reflects Denise.

"Not to mention a good football team," laughs Sean. He looks at each of the others for a few seconds, waiting for the reaction to the dumb joke.

"What. No 'Oooh's'?" Sean asks.

"They are good!" replies Bev.

"Yea! I agree," adds Terry.

"Great team!" chimes in Denise.

All Four laugh and toast their glasses together. All being Miami football fans.

"If there's anything to this past lives thing," Terry says, bringing the conversation back to the mammals. "I think Bev must have been a dolphin somewhere along the line."

Bev shakes her head to Terry's comment and uses it to steer the conversation to the dreams she and Terry had last week.

“Sean,” Bev begins, “you must have had a theory in mind when you wrote what you did on the paper?” Bev turns to Denise and asks. “Did Sean mention this to you?”

“Yes,” Denise answers.

All eyes went to Sean. Terry took a seat. Sean looked with a lifted brow, once, at each of the others, and pushed himself up and back into his chair. Now sitting with his back straight up in the chair, as if he were a cornered animal, he puts on his ‘*I’m going to hypnotize you*’ look on his face.

“Bev,” he says, in a voice to match his look. “What exactly do you remember about the dreams?”

“Well, it was only one dream,” she replies. “I remember the earth shaking, a shack in shambles, kids crying.” She pauses a moment. “And, what seemed like moving around with a blindfold on.”

“Nothing about a tomato farm?” Sean asks.

“No.”

“Sean,” Terry speaks up, “what made you think that Beverly would have a similar dream to mine.”

“Or the other way around,” interrupts Sean.

“Or . . . the other way around,” concedes Terry. “From eating the same thing?”

“The tomatoes,” reveals Sean.

“Because they were Sanders,” concludes Terry.

“No,” Bev says insightfully, “because they were tomatoes.”

“Did you read the article Bev?” Denise speaks up after letting Sean spring the information they shared on the Klines.

“No. Which article?” she asks.

“The one on the dining room table?” adds Terry. “What is the article about?”

“Well,” Sean says, “Denise has this friend from college, who is doing some anthropological studies in South America. I’d really like you to read it before I tell you about my theory.” The doorbell rings as he continues. “You know me well enough to know that I don’t want to put thoughts into your head. And, *you* probably will figure out what I’m theorizing as well.”

Terry goes to the door and greets Bill and Wanda Corbett.

“Hi Wanda . . . Bill” greets Terry, as he takes a salad from Wanda. “Everyone’s out back.” He points to the patio. “I’ll be out with the fish in just a sec.”

Wanda and Bill step onto the patio. Wanda greets and hugs Bev, then turns to Sean and Denise and shakes Sean’s hand.

“Hello, Sean. This my husband Bill.” They greet each other. “And Denise, this is Bill.”

Wanda had been over at the Kline’s and met the Fisches twice while Bill was on his expedition.

“So, Bill,” Sean sits back down, “you’re just back from an expedition?”

“Yes. A pretty rough one! The spring tours are rather stormy in the north,” says Bill. He has just returned from studying the Halibut runs up through Alaska.

“How far north did you go?” Denise asks.

“The Bering.”

Terry steps out with the fish. Bev gets up and goes over to the BBQ.

“Here you go, Hon.” Terry hands the plate of fish to Bev. “Work your magic.” He bows to her, waving one hand in a *Middle East* style of honor, as he shuffles backward to a chair next to Bill.

“*Redfish* has been Terry’s favorite fish since we moved here five years ago. The way I prepare it, however, is the only way that he will eat it,” Bev says, holding the plate up by one hand and does a bit of a bellydance as she grabs the tongs and lays the fish out on the BBQ grill.

The rest of the guests clap in sync with Bev’s movements, until all of the fish are on the grill, and then give a solid “Hey!” as she closes the lid over the soon-to-be dinner.

“Have a nice time on the tour, Bill?” Terry asks.

“Sure.” Bill answers a bit sarcastically. “The sea is my life.” He makes a face pretending to be extra virtuous about his job.

“So.” Bev lets out a long sigh as she settles into her chair, and looks toward Bill. “Are you finished with this project? Or do you go back out for more?”

“That’s it for me,” he says, as he pours another drink. “Some of the team are going back out, but I’ll be starting on the salmon runs in three weeks.”

“Yes. A wonderful three weeks too!” exclaims Wanda. “We have seven days reserved in Victoria B.C. I can hardly wait!”

Sean stands up. “I’ll get the rest of the food, Terry.”

“Thanks, Sean.”

“Oh! It’s so beautiful up there this time of year!” exclaims Denise. “Even with the crowds of tourists, it’s really fun and relaxing.”

Bev gets up and walks over to the BBQ. “Terry and I plan to go up in the fall,” she remarks, while turning the fish on the grill. “The colors are suppose to be really sensational.”

“I’m looking forward to the roses that bloom this time of year,” adds Bill.

“Okay, everyone . . . Grab a plate.” Bev announces, as Sean comes out with the quiche and salad. “The fish is ready.”

Everyone fills their plates, as Terry sets up the trays by each chair.

After sitting down, Bev bows her head and takes charge of grace. “Thank you, Lord, for the wonderful food you’ve blessed us with today.” Everyone bows their heads. Bev opens one eye and peeks toward Sean. He stops his fork--which is almost to his mouth--and bows respectfully as well. “May all of your children . . .” she continues, “be blessed even more.”

Everyone goes silent and starts to devour the meal.

“This is great!” mumbles Denise, her mouth still full with a bite of fish. She swallows it and continues. “What do you use?”

“That’s a secret,” Intercepts Terry, “that only Bev and the fish, know.”

“She does salmon equally as well,” claims Wanda.

“Great salad!” Terry remarks.

“Thanks. It’s Greek,” explains Wanda.

“You said earlier that you’d be working with salmon,” Denise says, turning to Bill.

“Yes,” Bill muffles, as he swallows a bite of food, “after the spring runs have totally finished.”

“Why’s that?” Denise asks.

“We do each study at different times of the run, to allow us to catch stragglers and sometimes discover new breeds of the species.”

“It’s amazing the distances these fish travel,” remarks Sean.

“That’s for sure.” Wanda, adds sarcastically. She gives Bill a poke with her finger, indicating that she is remarking on the distances Bill travels rather than the fish.

“Yes . . . well,” Bill says, feeling a bit guilty, “it’s a fun job. Just look at these *Redfish* for example,” he points to his plate. “They travel clear over here to live for three years, up and down the West Coast.”

“And, I’m very glad too!” Terry interrupts, while holding a piece of fish up with his fork.

“Then.” Bill nods in agreement. “They head all the way back to spawn at some fresh water inlets on some islands off the coast of China.”

“China?” Terry chokes out.

“I don’t even think those islands show up on most maps,” adds Bill.

Terry looks up at Bev, who is now frozen still, and then over to Sean who has stopped eating. He starts to ask Bill another question.

Sean holds his forefinger up to Terry and waves it, stopping Terry from continuing.

“We’ll talk later,” Sean whispers. Both of them settle to the back of their seats.

“Bill says that the islands are really gorgeous,” Wanda remarks.

“You’ve been there, Bill?” asks Sean.

“No, but I’ve seen some of the pictures from the documentation done on an expedition a few years ago.”

“Have you ever brought any of them over here . . . to the house, I mean?” Sean continues.

“No. These are up in Washington at *The Sound* in Seattle.” Bill answers, referring to **Sound Of Life Animal Conservation Expeditions (SOLACE)**, his employers.

Sean’s attempt to see if it was possible for Terry to have seen the pictures doesn’t pan out. He is intrigued by this whole situation, now more than ever, because of some of the comments made.

“This sounds very interesting, Bill,” Sean says. “Is there any way I might be able to see these pictures?”

“Sure, if you want to come up to Seattle with me sometime.”

“We’re heading to Canada Friday,” says Wanda. “Maybe you could head up that way with us. We’re planning to stop by *SOLACE* and *Pikes Market*.”

“I, uh . . . ,” Sean pauses as he looks over to Terry--Friday being Terry’s day for their sessions, “think I can arrange to get Friday off.”

“I wouldn’t mind hitting *Pikes* as well,” Terry adds.

“You both want to come up there?” Bill asks, a bit surprised.

“I think it’d be great to have them along for the first part of the trip,” Wanda exclaims, after putting together a few things Bev had mentioned months before, and now having an idea of why Sean and Terry are really going up *to SOLACE*.

“I would like to go to *Pikes* as well.” says Denise. “If it’s okay, I can check on getting Friday off.”

“This sounds great,” Wanda says. “How about you Bev?”

“Sorry, but I’ll be pretty much incapacitated for a week or two.”

“Your project should be finished by then though, right?” asks Wanda.

“Yes. Hopefully.”

“Then, you’ll be able to tell us about it when we get back from Canada?” Wanda petitions.

“Maybe,” Bev answers, looking a little lost in thought. “It depends on how things go.” She quietly sits back down, obviously running the things through her head that were said tonight.

“How about playing some Pictionary everyone?” Denise requests as she gets up from her chair.

“Sure!” choruses the rest of the group. They play as the sun sets into the ocean.

Terry gets up first the next morning and starts breakfast. The smell of the coffee brewing awakens Bev. She gets up and comes into the dining room and sits at the table.

“Good morning, Honey,” Bev yawns.

“Hi, Hon.”

Bev picks up the article that Sean left on the table the night before.

“This must be the story on that friend of Denise’s.” Bev reads the article while Terry gives her a cup of coffee and continues cooking.

“What would you like this morning?” he asks.

“Oh. . . over easy on toast is fine. Listen to this.” She takes a sip of coffee and reads some of the article to Terry.

“It says here that Professor Stevens has come to the conclusion that the Kamani tribe uses the *Tomato-like* Bartawa plant to somehow obtain their deceased loved one’s memories by growing the plant on the burial site. He is convinced that each of the family members can recall memories, while in a trance, that they could have not possibly known while the deceased was alive.’ This must be what Sean meant about the tomatoes causing our dreams.”

“How could the professor know that the tribe isn’t just superstitious or something?” Terry asks as he drops a couple of eggs into the pan.

“According to this, he has spent the last three years there; and some of the things that the relatives recalled, had only happened between him and the deceased.” Bev searches to find the paragraph she was just at, and continues. “Here. He says, ‘When the little granddaughter recalled a conversation that I had with her deceased grandfather, she even used some English words that I know for a fact she couldn’t have heard from anyone

else but myself or the deceased. I had only used the words that one time, and the grandfather had no contact with anyone from the time of our conversation to the time of his death. She even recalled where we had the talk. Something else that no one in the tribe knew but the two of us’.”

“That does sound like the way that I recall some things.” Terry says, as he brings Bev her breakfast and sits down .

“Stevens says that the tribe believes that the spirit of the loved one goes into the plant. If the family eats the plant and its *tomato-like* fruit, they will each gain the knowledge that is intended for them from the deceased.”

“Sean would never go for that *spirit* stuff,” Terry remarks.

“I know.” Bev says, as she puts down the article to start eating. “Maybe there’s something more scientific involved . . .physical, even.” She looks at Terry as he eats to see if he’s catching on.

Terry stops and looks up. “Physical Memory?” he says, in astonishment, with both eyebrows raised.

“It has to be somewhere,” says Bev.

“Yea, but isn’t that more of an electronic impulses sorta thing? Ya know, synapse or endorphins or something. That stuff you work with on the rats.

“Mice,” Bev chides. “And , yes, synapse does have to do with it. But there also has to be a physical place for the memories to reside. How else could we put two and two together?”

“I guess I’ve just never thought of memories being in one specific place. More like just flowing around.”

“Well, there is that too.” Bev remarks. She gets up and moves over to Terry’s lap, to divert him from asking anything more about her work.

“And, speaking of putting two and two together . . .” She caresses his neck now. “We are going to be missing each other quite a bit over the next few weeks. How about romping for a few hours before church?”

“Bev!!” Terry replies, acting flabbergasted. “Right before church?”

“What better way to celebrate what our Lord has blessed us with,” Bev leans in and firmly presses her lips and breasts into Terry.

“Oh yes. . .Bless me, Lord,” Terry says, looking heavenward, picking up Bev and heading into the bedroom.

At the Fische’s house, Sean is home while Denise is at church. He steals this opportunity to try to reach professor Armand Stevens and get more information on the article written about his study in the Amazon. Having called the Committee on Scientific Research earlier in the week, he calls professor Stevens’ research base in Brasilia.

“Hello, Stevens’ Research Base. This is Clara. Can I help you?”

“Hello, Clara. My name is Dr. Sean Fische of Astoria, Oregon USA. I’m trying to contact Professor Stevens.”

“I am sorry, Dr. Fische, but Dr. Stevens is three days up river at the moment. He is not due back for seven or eight more days.”

“Is there anyone else that may be able to help me with a few questions on the study he did last year with the Kamani tribe?”

“I’ll let you talk with Mario Torez. Please hold.”

“Thank you, Clara.”

Sean pulls out a copy of the same article he gave to the Klines.

“Hello, this is Mario,” comes a strongly accented voice from the other end of the line.

“Yes, good day, Mario. This is Dr. Fische. I have a few questions about the study Dr. Stevens did with the Kamani tribe last year.”

“ Si. I was one of the guides for Dr. Armand on that study,” answers Mario, using the professor’s first name with familiarity.

“Has the professor determined why the Kamanis are able to recall their loved ones’ memories by eating the Bartawa plant?”

“The Bartawa intercepts the spirit and learns all that the dead know.”

“Is this what Dr. Stevens believes?”

“It is what happens when the spiritual memory and physical memory depart from each other.”

“And, Dr. Stevens has said this?”

“Maybe not in those exact words, Señor. Dr. Armand will be back in seven days to get supplies for the next study. You may be able to talk with him then.”

“Is the professor still studying tribes that eat the Bartawa plant?”

“No. The Kamani are the only ones that use the Bartawa. He will be visiting the Barraru. They are a tribe of cannibals.”

“They still eat humans?”

“Only enemies. The government keeps an eye on them. They do not do this much anymore. Mostly they have pretend ritual ceremonies.”

“Why do the Barraru only eat their enemies?”

“The greatest warriors of the tribe eat the enemy to learn all that he knows about the village. This way they can attack the most important huts. And, if the enemy knows about the Barraru village, they will change their own huts to fool the rival tribe.”

“What if the Barraru think of the professor as an enemy and eat him?”

“They ate a White man once many years ago. The warriors became crazy, when they learned what the white man knows.”

“Is there a chance that I might be able to come down there and talk with Dr. Stevens?”

“If you want to try. But, I cannot speak for Dr. Armand.”

“Could you please give me some information on who I should contact for accommodations?”

“Yes. You can call the Hilton with the 1-800 number,” Mario says with a laugh.

“Thank you very much, Mario,” answers Sean, feeling a little chagrined. “You’ve been a great help.”

“Goodbye, Dr. Fische.”

Sean hangs up and sits for a few moments as he runs the information he just received through his head. He comes to the decision to go ahead and try to meet Dr. Stevens. He calls the Hilton in Brasilia.

Monday, just a little before noon, Bev arrives at work to begin the last phase of the Memory Enhancement Project, at the **Biochemical Research And InterNational Facility On Organic Development**, just south of Astoria.

Bev sits down at her desk and begins to tape the notes for the final phase.

“After five years of research, we have finally isolated the substance in the brain that we believe is physical memory. Having developed the **Micro-Magnetic Array Unscrambler Isolator (MMAUI)**, Benny and I have been able to isolate most substances in the brain by their unique magnetic fields. This stage of the project involves injecting the extracted Carbon Memory

Strands (CMS) from the brain of a deceased test mouse, and have them assimilated into the brain of a live test mouse. To prove that my theory is correct, a live mouse will be injected in the neo-cortex with the CMS from a mouse which had previously negotiated, and mastered, a maze purely by memory. All of the mice from the last stage showed normal memorization of the same maze. It took each mouse an average of thirty attempts to be able to negotiate the maze with a minimum of two seconds per moment of hesitation. The maze was thoroughly sterilized between each run, and the food was only identifiable by sight.

This final phase of our project, which Benny and I have personally labeled 'CARMA'--for **CAR**bon **M**emory **A**ssimilation--, is considered a last grasp effort to identify the possibility of how the theory of 'Race Memory' in DNA might work. This could show how species slowly improve themselves each generation."

Bev stops the tape when she hears her assistant Benny Thomas coming down the hall.

Benny walks into the lab with the maze for the next experiment.

"Good morning, Bev."

"Hi, Benny. How are you this morning?"

"Excited." He replies with a grunt, as he sets the maze down on the table.

"Me, too," says Bev, as she gets up from the desk and walks over to the cages, on the floor, containing the test mice. "Go ahead and start the CARMA CAM."

Bev waits for the camcorder to start, then reaches into the cage marked *RED 2* and pulls out the test mouse.

“You’re on, Doc.” Benny says, throwing his arm out as if presenting Bev to a theater stage.

Bev moves over to the test table, making sure that the mouse, *RED 2*, cannot see the maze from above.

“Start the timer Benny,” she says. She sets down *RED 2* at the beginning of the maze.

Just as Bev steps away from the maze, Benny gives the camcorder a bang with his fist, as he looks into the monitor, trying to get a clearer picture. He doesn’t succeed, and moves over to the maze to stop the test.

“Let her go !. . . LET . . HER . .GO !!” Bev yells, as she moves closer to the maze, spreading her arms out as if protecting a child from an intruder.

Benny moves away from the maze and gives a tug at the monitor's video cable to see if it is causing the interference on the screen. “I’m not sure that all of this is getting on tape,” he says, reaching for the monitor’s knobs. “Shouldn’t we start over?”

“NO! If this only happens once, it wouldn’t mean anything to us anyway.” Bev moves over to the console. “Just let her run this one out and we’ll start over, after the CAM is fixed.” She rubs the top of the monitor as if she were giving *RED 2* a gentle touch, instead of the monitor to make it work better. “Come on, girl. You can do it,” she pleads.

“She doesn’t seem to be hesitating much at all!” exclaims Benny. “I injected her only five hours ago!”

“How long did she sleep after the injection?” asks Bev, as she moves in closer to the monitor.

“Two hours, fifteen minutes,” replies Benny, moving his head in closer to the screen as well.

“She’s made it!” he adds, jumping over to the table and reaching over to stop the timer as *RED 2* gets to the food at the end of the maze. “Seventy-four seconds!”

“That’s only seven seconds more than *RED 1*!” remarks Bev, euphorically. She comes over and picks up *RED 2*. “And on the first try!” she continues on, as she walks *RED 2* over to the cage.

“We’ll need to inject *YELLOW 1* into *YELLOW 2* now,” says Bev. “But this time we won’t let *YELLOW 2* sleep. We’ll just use a local anesthetic and wait the same five hours.”

“I’ll get the maze sterilized and set it up.”

Bev goes to the VCR, and rewinding it, finds that it recorded okay. She returns to her desk and restarts the tape log.

“The first test with *RED 2* went perfect. The next step is to define the rate of assimilation. We will do three more tests with *YELLOW 2*, *BLUE 2* and *GREEN 2*, using no sleep, and five hours for *YELLOW 2* to start off.”

Bev stops the tape and pulls out the outline for the next CARMA phase. She adds some steps to the original agenda, then restarts the tape.

“I have added a few steps to the experiment for testing the *method* of assimilation. Up until now, we have been injecting the mice directly in the neo-cortex. If my theory is correct, we should be able to put the CMS into the food next, and the mice will be able to assimilate the CMS through digestion. I’m not sure that any other reputable facility would consider confirming these studies. The confirmation of this theory has connotations that I’m not sure I want to accept.”

Bev stops the tape and goes over to start the CARMA CAM. After adjusting the picture, she moves to the cage marked *YELLOW 2*, and pulls

out the mouse. Bev applies the local anesthetic, and after letting it take effect, injects the CMS that was earlier removed from *YELLOW 1*. After setting the timer for five hours, she returns to her desk and starts the tape log.

“*YELLOW 2* has been injected and placed back in the cage with a stimulator to keep her awake for the full time.” Bev pauses and interjects some of her concerns. “I have no doubt that the next few tests will be successful. However, if the tests using the CMS in the subject’s food are even partially successful . . .” Bev stops the tape as Benny returns to the lab.

“The maze will be done in about an hour. Will it be all right to take lunch?” Benny asks, as he sets down a cup of coffee for Bev.

“Thank you, Benny, for the coffee,” Bev says. “Go ahead and take lunch, but make sure it’s no longer than an hour.” She turns toward the test table and continues, “Would you turn the camcorder off before you go?”

“Okay.” Benny replies, walking over and shutting it off. “See you in an hour.”

Once Benny is gone, Bev restarts the tape after reviewing where she has left off.

“If the CMS can be assimilated through digestion, the theory of race memory could be substantiated by the idea of memories being fed to the fetus through the umbilical cord with the other nutrients. Unfortunately, it is not yet possible to identify if any of the mother’s memory strands have made their way *to* the fetus. If the mice could talk, maybe we could . . .”

Bev stops the tape before continuing to record the experiences of Terry and the tomatoes. She breaks into a cold sweat and goes to the lab door to lock it.

Sitting down again, she restarts the tape.

“If the CMS can be assimilated by digestion, the mouse would not have to inherit the memories from the mother through the umbilical cord at birth. If the mice were to eat the remains of their dead they would be able to assimilate those memories. It is only under dire circumstances that mice would resort to cannibalism. However, they do eat the insects that digest the remains and the vegetation that grows in the decomposed remains. I may need to add yet another stage to this phase of the experiment. I am thinking of letting some worms eat the CMS from the third group of mice, *if* the third group are able to run the maze after eating the CMS from the second group.”

After five hours of waiting, Bev and Benny set up for *YELLOW 2*.

“Okay Benny, let her go,” Bev says, while she starts the camcorder.

“That’s incredible! She’s running it just as fast as *RED 2*,” bursts out Benny.

“I had no doubt,” Bev says, unexcitedly. “I’ll inject *BLUE 2* now. Have the maze ready in an hour,” she commands Benny.

“Is something wrong, Bev? You don’t seem very excited.”

“Oh no, I’m fine. It’s just that I’ve added a few more steps and we’ll need to really get on the ball. I’ll need you to have another two mazes made, identical to this one. If my theory is right, we won’t want to be waiting around too long.” Bev moves to the cages and brings out *BLUE 2*. “Can you have the other mazes in an hour?”

“Sure, no problem,” Benny replies, looking a bit puzzled as he stops the timer. “Eighty-two seconds. A little slower,” he says, as he heads out to accomplish his tasks.

“Oh!” yells Bev. “Bring me some worms . . . say fifty or so.”

“Worms?”

“Yes. Regular earthworms. As soon as you can.”

Benny leaves and Bev sits back at her desk to add more to the log.

“I’m going to isolate the CMS from *RED* and *YELLOW 2* now. This extraction will be added to the food for *RED* and *YELLOW 3*. I doubt that assimilation of CMS can take place any quicker than normal digestion, so they’ll have to be left overnight. The last mouse, *PURPLE 1*, I will use as the control. The CMS from *PURPLE 1* will be fed to *PURPLE 2*. My guess is, the time to run the maze will be proportionately different.”

Bev removes the brain of *RED 2* and places it in the MMAUI. After completing the thirty-minute long process on each mouse, she returns to the desk to call Terry.

“Hello, this is Terry,” comes the voice on the other end of the phone.

“Hi, Honey. I’m going to be late tonight.”

“I figured that. Do you know what time?”

“No, but I’ll also be leaving again really early in the morning, so I don’t want you to try and stay up for me.”

“Okay, Hon. I’ll leave dinner in the fridge.”

“Thank you, Terry. I really appreciate it.”

“No problem, Bev . . . I love you.”

“I love you too, Honey. . . See ya.”

Bev hangs up just as Benny comes back into the lab.

“Another all nighter?” he asks, noticing her hanging up the phone.

“Yup,” she answers. “I’m isolating *RED* and *YELLOW 2* now.”

“So soon?”

“Yes. I’m going to feed the CMS to *RED* and *YELLOW 3*.”

“Feed?” Benny asks. “You mean, as in have them eat it?”

“Yes. I think that the mice will be able to assimilate the CMS by digestion. We’ll need to be back at 4:00 A.M. to run the test after they’re done eating and fully digested. We’ll let *RED 3* sleep and keep *YELLOW 3* awake. You go get some sleep first and I’ll watch to make sure that *YELLOW 3* doesn’t sleep.”

“What about *BLUE* and *GREEN 2*?”

“Are the mazes ready?” Bev asks.

“Should be any time now.”

Benny leaves and returns with the three mazes. He sets them up and goes to the CARMA CAM to adjust it to a wider angle for the three mazes.

“You ready, Bev?”

“Sure. You get *BLUE 2* and another timer. I’ll grab *GREEN 2*.”

They both start the mice at the same time--like a race. *BLUE 2*, the one that slept for one hour after the injection, starts off slightly better than *GREEN 2*, which had no sleep.

“Eighty seconds on the nose,” Benny says, stopping the timer.

“Eighty-nine,” Bev says, after a moment. “The sleep seems to help them assimilate better.”

“Or, the lack of distraction,” offers Benny.

“Yes. Most likely,” concedes Bev. “You go get some sleep now and be back here at 11:00P.M. tonight. I’m going to mix the CMS with the food and feed the first two.”

“Anything you say, Doc. See ya at eleven.”

Benny leaves, taking two of the mazes with him for sterilization. Bev stays and mixes the CMS of *RED 2*, *YELLOW 2* and *PURPLE 1* into separate portions of food for the next step. After feeding the mice, she resumes entry on the tape log.

“With the success of the first stage of CARMA, and in anticipation of this next step working, I feel a little uncomfortable. If this works as well as I think it will, it makes me wonder about the connotations to humans. We know that similar Complex Carbon Strands are found in the brain of the human corpse. Up to now it was believed that this was just empty residual matter, as with the rest of the deceased body. As a Christian, I believe this to be true because of the afterlife. The fact that mice leave active CMS upon death, does not discount this. However, the thought that *my* dreams of a week ago could be someone’s *residual physical memory* transferred to me through tomatoes, has me rethinking my belief in afterlife. How can the people, whose memories I recalled, have gone on to an afterlife, if I am processing their memories? If I continue this line of study . . . will I disprove my own beliefs? If I stop at this point, I will still question *my* belief. But, others who never hear of these tests, will not have to put *their* beliefs to the question. Would this be fair to truth? Regardless of my feelings, the facts are still out there.”

Bev stops the tape once more and continues with the experiment, keeping *YELLOW 3* awake for the next few hours.

Terry, now at home, has found out from Bill that they will be heading for Seattle at 5:00A.M. The phone rings and Sean is on the line.

“Hello, Terry,” Sean begins, “were you able to get Friday off for the trip to Seattle?”

“Yeah, no problem. Bill and Wanda will be heading up at five. Can you be here around four-thirty?”

“Sure.” Sean pauses for a moment. “How do you feel about the chances that these pictures may be of the same islands from your dreams?”

“A bit weird. I don’t mind believing that it is a past life, but if this has something to do with the fish . . .what about other things I’ve eaten?”

“Like tomatoes?”

“Yeah! Am I going to have these dreams from every little thing I eat? Or, maybe my other dreams, that weren’t so vivid, are someone else’s memories as well.”

“I wouldn’t worry too much about eating.” Sean says to calm Terry down. “Even if it *were* the things you ate, this is probably a rare occurrence.”

“I sure hope so. If not, this would be an awfully difficult ingredient to list on the label.” Terry jokes with a little bit of uneasiness in his voice.

“Well, I’ll see you Friday morning at four-thirty, Terry. You take it easy.”

“Okay. Bye, Sean.”

Terry goes to the kitchen and opens the fridge. After scanning the contents for something to eat, he decides to skip dinner and head straight to bed.

Bev makes it home for some rest, and back to work at 4:00 A.M., without Terry knowing that she had been in at all. When she arrives back at

work, Benny is busy setting up the mazes and the video equipment for the next stage.

“Good morning, Bev. Did you get some rest?”

“A little,” she says, as she checks *YELLOW 3*'s condition after it had been awake all night. “More than *YELLOW 3*.”

Bev wakes up *RED 3* and hands her to Benny after he starts the recording.

“Okay . . . start.” Bev says, to begin the test.

“*YELLOW 3* isn't moving. Do you think she's just too tired?” asks Benny.

“Maybe,” Bev says. “Look at *RED 3*. She's a bit slow, but still making the maze in pretty good time.”

“There she goes,” says Benny. “This is amazing. I would never have thought that digesting the CMS would have worked. Where did you ever get the idea for this Bev?”

“Something I ate, I guess,” she says, half kidding--and a bit under her breath.

“What?” asks Benny, as he stops the timer for *RED 3*. “Heeey . . . only 95 seconds. She really picked up after a slow start.”

“*YELLOW 3* is just about there, too,” adds Bev. “There we go. One-hundred eight seconds.”

“There must be something about sleeping that helps the assimilation,” notices Benny. “Do you think it *is* the lack of distraction?”

“It probably has more to do with the access to the sub-conscious,” Bev says. “But in a way, I suppose that does have to do with distraction. to some degree.”

“Okay, now that we agree on that point . . .what about the whole idea of feeding the CMS? Were you kidding about ‘something you ate’, or were you serious?”

“Serious,” replies Bev, now putting *PURPLE 2* into the maze. “Okay. Start!”

“Wow!” Benny gasps. “She’s starting off the same as the mice that were *injected* with CMS.”

“Yes, I figured she probably would, Bev remarks as she and Benny watch *PURPLE 2* run the maze. “Seventy-four seconds. That’s better than I expected.”

“The fact that they are doing this at all, is better than *I* expected,” Benny says in amazement.

“That’s not the best part yet.” Bev says, as she carries the mice to the MMAUI.

“The worms?” Benny asks, having figured out where this is leading.

“Yes, the worms. We will let the worms eat the CMS. I don’t think that we’ll have to wait for long. Just let *RED 4* and *YELLOW 4* eat the worms, and make sure we clean off the worms so that the only CMS will be the *ingested* CMS.”

“What about *PURPLE 2* ?” Benny asks.

“Mix her CMS in a quarter cup of water. We are going to grow a plant in that CMS.”

“Using the liquid to water the plant?”

“No, hydroponically,” says Bev.

“You weren’t kidding, Bev. The best *is* yet to come,” Benny says. Still a little confused as to how this all came about, he asks. “Why did you really think that feeding the CMS to the mice would work?”

“You could say it came to me in a dream.”

“You dreamt of feeding mice the brains of other mice?”

“No. I had an odd dream, after eating something that I probably shouldn’t have eaten.”

“Boy, how many times have *I* done that,” Benny says, shaking his head.

“Exactly my point,” says Bev.

“Do you really think that our nightmares, after eating certain foods, may be from assimilating CMS from the food?”

“Well...” says Bev, as she continues working with the MMAUI. “Maybe not all of them. Or, maybe a mixture of CMS . . .our own and someone else’s. Have you ever had a dream that includes you, but even though it was scary, you didn’t feel afraid or consider it a nightmare?”

“Yeah, sure,” replies Benny, now in real contemplation of the concept.

“But, you’ve also had dreams that you wouldn’t consider scary, yet you are racked with fear and wake up, in a cold sweat, thinking you had a terrible nightmare?”

“That sounds even more familiar!” exclaims Benny.

“What if the dreams that include CMS from someone else, caused your sub-conscious to react with fear? Maybe because the brain didn’t recognize it as CMS produced by your body?”

“That *could* explain why eating something would cause the nightmare if the food had a high concentration of CMS for some reason,” Benny says as he begins to pick up the mazes for sterilization.

“With me,” Bev says, “it was tomatoes last week.”

“For me, it’s usually pizza,” recalls Benny.

“With *tomato* sauce?” Bev adds.

“Yeah!” answers Benny. “What a coincidence.”

“Maybe not,” says Bev. “Maybe any of that kind of food . . . zucchini, pumpkin, squash, cucumbers . . .”

“Cucumbers!” Benny interrupts. “That does it to me every time. I thought it was just the gas causing the nightmares.”

“Maybe . . . maybe not.” Bev says again, leaving Benny to think about it while he finishes his work. She continues with feeding the CMS to the worms.

After taking shifts again, to keep *YELLOW 4* awake, Benny uses the time to set up for another run, and start a tomato plant seedling growing in the CMS of *PURPLE 2*.

Bev arrives the next morning at 6:00A.M., to find Benny setting up the video equipment for the triple run.

“Good morning Benny. How’s *YELLOW 4* holding up?”

“Hi. I think she’s getting tired, but I don’t think it’ll affect her run.”

“Well then, let’s go for it,” Bev says, heading to the cages. “How did *RED 4* sleep?”

“She slept from midnight to about two, then woke up for about an hour and a half. She was pretty active for thirty minutes before going back to sleep, until only just a few minutes ago.”

Benny starts the CARMA CAM and pulls out *RED 4* and brings her to the maze, where Bev and *YELLOW 4* are waiting.

“Okay, START!” says Bev, as both start the timers for each run.

“*YELLOW 4* isn’t even trying,” remarks Benny. “Maybe she’s too tired.”

“Give her some time,” encourages Bev. “*RED 4* isn’t moving very fast either.”

RED 4 makes her way through the first couple of correct turns and goes back to the start. *YELLOW 4* makes her way to a deadend and stays there.

“That’s a little odd,” says Benny. “None of the mice have ever gone back to the start.”

“Well look, she’s heading back through at a pretty good clip now.”

“What about *YELLOW 4*, Bev? It looks like she may go to sleep right there.”

“Sixty-two seconds on *RED 4*, and she’s half way,” says Bev.

“*YELLOW 4* isn’t sleeping, but she is heading the wrong way now.”

“Come on, Baby,” Bev says, encouraging *RED 4*. “There we go . . . only 125 seconds.”

“I don’t think that *YELLOW 4* is going to be getting this done at all. What’s your plan now, Doc?”

“Let *YELLOW 4* sleep for 30 minutes, and we’ll try again on the third maze.”

“Doc, you don’t seem to be as excited as I figured you’d be. Isn’t this what we wanted to happen?”

“Yes it is . . . well, maybe not,” retracts Bev.

“Why?”

“Apparently, the memory of the mice is readily assimilated and used by the other mice. This doesn’t just mean that we are able to transfer memories for a specific purpose, like we did for the CMS injected into the neo-cortex. But, if these mice *can* ingest the CMS, it means that mice in the wild may be able to ingest the CMS of other mice--in the food they eat, in their natural surroundings.”

“How would they eat it? They aren’t usually cannibalistic.”

“No. But, if something else does. . .”

“The worms,” Benny answers. “I get that part.”

“Well, what about our memories?” Bev takes a seat. “A mouse would take these memories as just being a matter of their life, not figuring that they were from another mouse. We, on the other hand, would be able to distinguish that the memories are not ours, maybe to the point of recognizing *whose they were*.”

Benny’s face turns white and he slowly takes a seat as well. “Past life,” he says, shaking his head.

“Now you’re getting the idea.”

“Oh God!” says Benny. “The thought of CMS making our dreams become nightmares is one thing, but recognizing someone else’s memories, and thinking they are a past life?”

“If there were enough strands from the same person,” Bev states. She stands up and walks over to the MMAUI.

“No reincarnation?”

“Not exactly the way we have usually thought about it being anyway.”

“It must work different for humans,” Benny says, denyingly.

“We know that the CMS in our brain *is* left in our corpse. If it turns out that they are not just empty strands . . .” Bev mentions leadingly, to see if Benny comes to the same conclusions she had.

“Where, then, is our afterlife? It can’t be just laying there in our skull, getting eaten by worms.”

“Or, plants,” adds Bev.

“No. I don’t want to have this be true.” Benny puts his head into his hands.

“I’m not sure that I do either. But, if it is, just think of the good it would bring.” Bev puts her hand on the MMAUI. “When a person has brain damage, and loses the connection to his memories, the brain finds another place to begin building back memories and recall. This!” she says, now rubbing the MMAUI, “could allow us to remove the area of the old memories, separate the CMS from the other *matter*, and inject it back into the new area, bringing back someone’s memories.”

“But, to prove this in mice is okay. They probably aren’t going to heaven,” Benny says with a bit of a pleading cry in his voice.

“I know, Benny,” Bev says, softly, to calm him down. “But facts are facts. I’m sure that this all works out together somehow.”

“How much more testing will we need?” asks Benny.

“One more set of runs should do it. We’ll have to wait and see just how fast it takes the plant to absorb the CMS in the hydroponic solution, before we’ll know how much longer it will take to finish the project.”

“Oh, yea! I forgot to mention that.”

“What, Benny?”

“This morning I was able to notice a marked decrease in the amount of CMS in the water.”

“You measured it?”

“No. You can see it.” Benny goes to the corner of the room, where he has rigged up a small greenhouse for the tomato plant. He holds up the plant.

“My, oh my!” exclaimed Bev. “The plant is drawing up the CMS almost as well as the MMAUI isolates it. CMS *is* the only thing in there . . . right?”

“That and hydrogen and oxygen, two to one of course,” Benny says, as he looks closer into the beaker.

“Well, let’s get ready to start the next runs tomorrow,” Bev says. “We’ll start by running *PURPLE 3*. I’ll come back this evening and we’ll feed her the plant. Then run *YELLOW 2*, after she’s had some sleep.”

“Okay, Doc. See ya tonight.”

“Bye, Benny.”

As Benny leaves for the sterilization lab, Bev can see that the revelation of the experiments has shaken him a bit. She turns on the recorder for the next log.

“I’m confident that the digestion of the plant will work in the next test. However, I don’t think that Benny is going to be digesting the results as well as *PURPLE 3* will be digesting the CMS. *I* am a bit disturbed about it myself, but this is why I became a scientist. For my own peace of mind, I may have to confide the results of the tests with a friend. I am by no means leaving the results at this point to be final. That would be just as bad as ignoring them for my own religious beliefs. It’s possible that this friend of

mine is already on his way to the same revelations with *his* study in psychology, that we have with *our* study of physical memory. We may be able to benefit both our studies greatly by comparing notes.

Friday afternoon , Terry and Sean arrive at *The Sound*. They head to the front door, where Bill and Wanda are waiting for them.

“Come on and I’ll check you all in,” Bill says while he holds the door open for the group.

“Do they have secret information here that needs protection?” Terry asks.

“No, it’s just to make sure that there’s no tampering with any of the studies. The government often uses them for funding and some people will do about anything to get a larger grant.”

Bill pulls up a sign-in book on the reception desk and waves the rest of the group over to sign in.

“Here,” he says, handing out badges to each person, “you’ll have to wear these while you’re in here.”

They all walk down a long corridor, lined with beautiful pictures of fish out in the open sea.

“Come on in and have a seat. I’ll get the documents out of the archives.”

Bill returns a moment later with a fair sized *BANKERS BOX* and sets it on the table.

“Here’s the info on the Redfish study.” He slides open the box. “There’s even a couple of videos.”

Bill starts to hand Terry a package containing photos.

“I’ll take those,” Sean says, as he intercepts the bundle and sets them down in front of himself.

“If we’re going to do this. . .let’s do it right.”

“Okay,” replies Terry. “What do you want to do?”

“If you don’t mind going under once more for this, I’ll have you describe the area and we all will look through the pictures for anything resembling your recollections.”

“Sure. . . but I don’t think I’ll need to,” Terry says confidently. “By now, it’s all burnt into my conscience.”

“This sounds really interesting,” Bill remarks, picking up the pile of photos Sean has set in front of him.

“Yeah, this is a really fascinating place,” adds Wanda, thumbing quickly through her pile of pictures.

Terry takes a deep breath and exhales slowly as he covers his face with his hands.

“One island has a large rock that hangs out into the ocean over a small area of sand. It’s shaped like a big nose with a wart on the top.” Terry pauses a moment, taking his hands away from his face and tilting his face up, eyes still closed, as if looking up at something. “The wart is shaped like . . . like a banana.” He pauses again. “It’s covered with something like, polished bronze or copper.”

“Anything else?” asks Wanda.

“Further down the shore is a statue of a Samurai-looking sort of person,” Terry continues.

“We know that’s gone now,” Sean interjects.

“Next to it is a stone building. It’s shaped like an ‘L’.” Terry tilts his head as if to change his viewpoint. “Or maybe a ‘V’. There’s a stone path leading away from the door. It branches off in a ‘Y’ shape. One part of the path goes over to the statue, the other heads down to the shore, and a small floating dock.”

“Here!” squeaks Wanda. “The ‘L’ shaped building.” She holds out the photo to Sean, waving it back and forth. “Even the path’s still there.”

Sean takes it from Wanda, nodding his head as he examines the building.

“I think I’ve found the nose rock.” Bill says, holding the photo at an angle to get a better view.

Sean leans over to look at the picture Bill is holding. He pinches one corner and tilts it towards himself for a better view.

“Is there anything else about the place with the rock?” Sean asks, as he points to a spot on the photo.

“There’s the rock.” Terry starts recalling the scene. “And behind it, the trees.” He squints his eyes closed, as if to focus. “The trees are all windswept like large Bonsai trees. Next to the rock is a stream, coming out from the trees. And. . . something over the stream--like a small stone bridge.”

“Wow!” says Bill, looking at Sean’s finger as it points to the bridge over the stream. “This all came from a dream?”

“Dreams.” Terry says, as he opens his eyes. “Let me see these.” Sean and Bill hand the pictures to him. “That’s definitely the place.”

“Let me see that rock nose once again,” says Wanda.

“Sure.” Terry hands the photos to her and grabs up one of the other piles of pictures. “Would it be all right to see the videos?”

“I’m sure it’d be fine. If you’re through, Sean?” Bill says, pulling the videos out of the box. “I’m convinced that Terry’s somehow seen this before.”

“Me, too,” answers Sean. “I’m curious to get a look at the videos as well.”

“Yeah. This place is great. I’d love to take a vacation here.” adds Wanda.

“So, Terry, you don’t have any Chinese or Japanese ancestry, do you?” asks Bill.

“No. We checked. Mostly Irish. Horan clan from County Galway,” answers Terry.

“So it can’t be *Race Memory* then. Right Sean?” Bill comments as he slips a video into the VCR and turns on the TV.

“Well, I’m beginning to wonder about the idea of *Race Memory*. This memory of Terry’s, seems to be transferred by ingestion by many creatures over many years,” Sean remarks, adjusting his chair to view the video. “Bits of *Physical Memory* that the brain stores for later use. Most of our dreams are the process of sorting and filing the scattered bits of memory created during our consciousness. Somehow these memories lodged in the Redfish have made their way into Terry, and he came upon them during REM.”

“While I was sorting and filing,” says Terry.

“Fish memories?” quaffs Bill.

“No. Memories from someone in that area, who had died and was eaten by the Redfish,” states Sean. “Or, eaten by other things that the Redfish dined on later. And, then of course, passed throughout the food chain over several years, until getting to the fish that Terry ate.”

“We’ve all been eating the Redfish. Why haven’t we had the dreams as well?” asks Wanda.

“Coincidence, probably,” Sean replies. “Maybe we have got some of the memories. Maybe we just filed them during our sleep, without bringing them out very strongly during REM.”

“Maybe they were all in one fish.” Remarks Terry. Sean nods his head.

“This is a scary concept.” Bill says, as he sits for the video. “Anytime we eat some fish, we could be ingesting someone’s memories?”

“Any animal,” states Sean.

“Or plant,” Terry adds.

“Look at this footage,” Wanda interrupts. “It’s absolutely gorgeous. I think I’d like to eat something that would allow me to sit back and dream that I’d been to a place this wonderful.”

“I don’t think it works that easily,” says Sean. “Apparently you have to take the good with the bad. And most of the recollections, so far, appear to be of rather bad or traumatic memories.”

“I’m still a little fuzzy on the ingested memory thing,” says Bill. “Our memories can be transferred though food to others, generations from now?”

“Or maybe just years from now,” explains Sean. “It seems that the body will take all of its input at the time of death and create physical memory.”

“Strands,” adds Terry, surprising himself.

“Yeah,” says Sean, a bit puzzled at Terry’s remark.

“Bev’s working with something called Carbon Memory Strands,” says Terry. “Injecting them into rats.”

“Mice,” says Wanda.

“You know about her study?” Bill asks Wanda.

“Well, no. Bev just always corrects Terry whenever he says that she works with rats,” Wanda admits.

“So these memories can be transferred to someone else?” Bill asks skeptically.

“That’s the idea,” says Sean. “A friend of Denise’s is in South America studying tribes that use different means of transferring the memories of deceased loved ones to the surviving relatives.”

“I suppose that could be considered kind of a *Race Memory*,” says Terry.

“I heard of a tribe in South America that cremates the dead and makes soup out of the ashes,” says Bill. “Then all of the family eats the soup.”

“That sounds like the sort of thing that professor Stevens is working on,” Sean adds, turning to Terry. “Has Bev mentioned anything else about her work with the mice?”

“Ahh. Well . . . actually she hasn’t mentioned anything. I just happened to see a couple of items on a list of hers from work. I suppose I should ask all of you to not mention any of this to Bev, unless she brings it up herself. I don’t want to get her in trouble.”

“You mean *you* don’t want to get in trouble with Bev,” says Wanda.

“Yes,” concedes Terry.

“Do you think you might get Bev to talk about the study?” asks Sean. “If she knew it was about your dreaming?”

“I have a feeling she already is putting this all together, and will probably come to you,” answers Terry.

“From something she’s said ?” wonders Bill.

“No,” says Terry, “from things she hasn’t been saying.”

“I wonder if I could get access to the study on a professional level?” asks Sean.

“This would be a rather bizarre premise to approach her with. Don’t you think?” asks Bill.

“I’m going to South America, on Monday, in hopes of seeing Professor Stevens,” says Sean. “So I won’t be able to talk with Bev long enough to work in the subject of her studies. Do you think you could steer a conversation that way for me? Maybe find out a little more from her?”

“Well, I suppose,” says Terry, scratching his head. “But it wouldn’t do much good without your view on this.”

“On our way back home, I’ll fill you in on a few things I’ve been working on. Something you could bring up that may get her to talk about her mice.”

“I take it, this means you won’t be coming to Pike’s Market with us?” remarks Wanda, disappointedly.

“Well, there are a few things I wanted to get over there, before we head back,” says Terry.

“Me, too,” adds Sean.

“Okay, Pike’s it is.” says Bill, as he puts the items back in the *Bankers* box and brings it back to the archive room.

Sean arrives at the Brasilia airport at noon to find Mario waiting for him in a crowd of dozens of people, holding those signs with visitor's names on them. As he approaches, he sees that Mario is not at all like he had expected. Mario is very portly for someone who travels into the jungle as a guide.

"Hello, Mario," he yells, as he waves his one free hand.

"Dr. Sean Fische?" Mario asks. "Is this all of your luggage?"

"No, here's my ticket. And please call me Sean."

"Right Oh, Dr. Sean. Let me take the ticket and get your luggage for you."

"Much obliged, Mario. Thank you."

Sean follows Mario to the claim area. The airport is much more modern than he'd expected it to be. The people migrating through here are not what he had envisioned either. Most everyone seems to be from Europe and dressed for business rather than vacation.

"It seems that a lot of business is going though here," Sean remarks.

"This is a really growing area of the world now," Mario replies, as he picks up the one piece of extra luggage of Sean's. "There is a great movement now to use the rain forest for medicine. Many people are coming down and reserving large areas for research."

"Like Dr. Stevens?" Sean asks, following Mario out to the parking lot.

"I do not think that Dr. Armand has reserved or bought any land yet."

The two climb into a Land Rover and head for the base.

“Brasilia looks to be a fantastic place to vacation. I ought to bring my wife here sometime.”

“This is a great place to rest.”

“What about living here?”

“That, too. I have lived here all my life.”

“Everything seems so comfortable . . .like home.”

“It should. Most of the plants growing around here are the same as the ones most North Americans have inside their houses.”

“This is so true. The size of them here is amazing,” Sean says, as he grabs his camera and snaps a couple of shots through the window. “Have you been working with Dr. Stevens the whole time that he’s been here?”

“Si, over four years now.”

“The article I read said that he’s been here for only three years.”

“Maybe it has been just three. It seems longer than that.”

“How many trips have you been on...with the doctor, I mean?”

“Two. The next one will be number three, and the last one.”

“Is he that close to finishing his studies?”

“I guess so,” Mario answers, as he pulls up to a small Quonset hut building. “This is it.”

“Base?” Sean asks.”

“Si, home. Dr. Armand will be here in a few hours. I’ll show you to the lab, and your hotel is right there.” Mario turns and points to the Hilton just a few blocks away.

Mario stops the car and goes around to the back to get some items out before bringing Sean to the hotel. Sean pulls out a pack containing his study notes to leave at the base for later.

“Let’s go to the hotel now,” says Mario . “I will come by to get you when Dr. Armand is ready to meet with you.”

“Sounds good me. You said that that should be in a couple of hours?”

“Actually, that is when he will return. I cannot tell you exactly when he will be able to meet with you. It may not be until sometime tomorrow.”

Sean picks his pack back up to put it back in the car. “Professor Stevens *does* know that I’m coming here today? Doesn’t he?”

“Si.” Mario replies rather meekly.

“What’s wrong?” Sean asks.

“Well. . . I actually cannot guarantee that Dr. Armand will see you at all. He seemed a little annoyed that someone was coming to see him about his work. He almost did not see the reporter a couple of years ago.”

“Well, please tell Professor Stevens that I have some information that he will be very interested in, that I’m sure he will want to apply to his research,” Sean says, with great determination in his voice. “Now let’s get to the hotel. I’d like to get something to eat.”

After eating and settling into the hotel, Sean gives a call home to Denise.

“Hello, Den. How are things going?”

“Fine. How was the flight?”

“Exhausting and boring. Have you heard from Terry yet?”

“Not exactly, but Bev is over here now. She would like to talk to you.”

“Great. Put her on.”

“Hi, Sean. Have you met Dr. Stevens yet?”

“No, and it’s getting late. I may not be seeing him until tomorrow. Have you talked with Terry about our trip to Seattle?”

“Yes, and I think we need to compare some notes. I’ve come across some things in my research at work that may have a very significant bearing on your sessions with Terry.”

“I’m hoping to get as much info from Professor Stevens on *Physical Memory* that I can. Would your studies have any bearing on his work as well?”

“Probably. I’ll tell you, confidentially, that I’m working with Carbon Memory Strands, CMS, and so far we’ve found that by transferring the CMS from the brain of one mouse to another, that the memories are assimilated by the receiving mouse. This could be the explanation for how the tribes down there are actually *transferring* memories. Terry says that this is along the lines of your theory with the Redfish and the tomatoes.”

“Yes. Hopefully Professor Stevens will be able to help with some of the techniques used to tap into the memories that have been ingested.”

“Another interesting thing that I found out, a few days ago, concerns the Grasshopper mouse of southwestern North America. It is one of the only carnivorous mice in the world. Its young are booted out into the world fully capable of fending for themselves, knowing all of the things it needs to about survival. I say this is interesting because it will often attack other mice, especially the Pocket mouse, and kill it by biting it at the base of the head and then will eat just the brain. If my theory is correct, then the CMS, having come from the same species, would be assimilated by the Grasshopper mouse.”

“Is it okay to bring this up to Professor Stevens while I’m down here?”

“Well to some extent. But, I would rather that you didn’t get too specific with him about me or *my* studies.”

“How about just mentioning the study, but not you?”

“Sure, just tell him that you have reliable sources confirming the transfer of CMS from one organism to another through direct injection and ingestion, as well as plant absorption and then ingestion.”

“Well, Bev, I think this will really help and I’m looking forward to talking with you further on this when I return. Go ahead and put Denise back on for me. I’ll see you in a few days.”

“Thank you too, Sean. Have a good time down there.”

“Hi, Sean,” says Denise. “Remember to try and get a picture of Armand. I still can’t believe that he’s really doing these studies. He just always seemed to be such a brat.”

“I’ll do my best, Honey, but I really should get off the phone so that Professor Stevens can get through to me.”

“Okay, Sean. Give me a call tomorrow.”

“I will. Bye now. I love you.”

“Me, too, Honey. See ya.”

About 5:00 that night the phone rings. Mario is on the line.

“Hello. This is Dr. Fische.”

“Good evening, Doctor, this is Mario. Professor Armand has returned.”

“That’s great! When will I be able to see him?”

“Well, Dr. Sean, the Professor is not very interested in seeing anyone now.”

“So then, maybe tomorrow?”

“No, Señor. He does not wish to see anyone at all while he prepares for the next study.”

“You must please tell him that this is important...” Sean pauses, conceding that he must tell Mario more than he wished to. “Please tell him that I know someone who has documented proof of memory transfer between multiple organisms.”

“Hold on for a moment, please.”

Sean waits for a couple of minutes, hoping that what he told Mario will be enough to peak Professor Stevens’ interest. Feeling disappointed at Mario’s comments, Sean realizes that even if he gets the chance to talk to Professor Stevens, he probably won’t get to talk long--let alone go out with him on the study.

“Hello. Dr. Sean?”

“Yes.”

“The Professor says that you can meet him here in 30 minutes. Would you like me to pick you up there?”

“Yes, if you would please. I’ll be ready in about 15 minutes.”

“Very good. I will see you then.”

As the two approach the base, Sean sees a great transformation of the small hut-type building, into what looks like the beginning of a circus. Tents are everywhere, and about two dozen workers are busy loading up with supplies, as the sun drops quickly over the horizon.

“You can get out here,” says Mario, as he brings the car to a stop. “There is Professor Armand.” Mario points to a tall, slender, raggedy man with a calico beard.

“Thank you for your help, Mario. Will you be around later to bring me back?”

“Si. In about an hour.”

“Till then,” Sean says with a wave.

As Sean walks up to the Professor, he appears nothing like Denise had described. He is much thinner and has an intense look about him.

“You must be Dr. Fische,” says Armand, setting down a box of what appears to be sports T-shirts.”

“Yes. Please call me Sean.” he says, as he holds his hand out for greeting.

“Armand will be fine for me as well,” holding his palms out to show how filthy they are and that he does not intend to shake Sean’s hand.

“That’s an interesting supply to lug around,” Sean says, quizzically.

“The tribes love these things. It helps to offer them as gifts, to get their trust. You told Mario that you know someone who is working with memory transfer?”

“Yes, my friend wants me to tell you that she has proven this with lab mice.”

“And, what do you want to see me about?”

Can we sit for a moment?”

“No. I’m sorry, but I must continue working. We leave tomorrow morning,” Armand says curtly as he walks back to the table and grabs the T-shirts out of the box, stuffing them into a duffel bag. “Please go on.”

“Uh, yes, well anyway,” Sean starts, “I’ve been working...” He stops and tries to adjust his briefcase, surprised at the Professor’s abruptness. “I’ve been working with patients that believe that they are having past life experiences.”

“That seemed to be the in thing a few years ago,” Armand says, continuing with his preparations.

“Well, I’m inclined to believe that these people are actually recalling memories that have passed through the food chain, over the years, and have been ingested over ones lifetime. Some of the recollections have taken place within their own lifetime. And, I think that maybe the tribes that you’ve been studying are doing the same thing, but in their case they are unknowingly doing it on purpose.”

“No,” says Armand, “the tribes are not doing it unknowingly.”

“They realize what they are doing?” asks Sean.

“Maybe not to the extent that you or I may think, but they have been *realizing* it for centuries,” Armand says. He turns around and leans against the table, folding his arms. “What is it you’re looking for here?”

“A little help on accessing the transferred memories.”

“You’re using hypnosis now?” Armand asks.

“Yes, but that’s usually when someone has had a dream he wants to explore. Only a couple of patients have come in wanting to pursue past lives, without first having had some sort of dream. I wasn’t able to get anything from them that was as clear as the recollections I got from the other patients.”

“Sounds like it may be a matter of having something to reference,” Armand says, reaching for a plastic lab case.

“I was hoping that the tribes here might be using a special technique to direct the brain to the transferred memories.”

“Here,” Armand says, holding out two small plastic containers of seeds, “these are the seeds to the Bartawa and Cinati plant. As near as I can figure, these plants either work together to create a chemical that helps the memory accessing process, or the Bartawa is used to carry the memories and the Cinati carries the chemical for aiding the access.”

“Would it be possible for me to accompany you on your next study?” asks Sean.

“No,” Armand says strongly. “I don’t want the responsibility or distraction of anyone untrained when dealing with any of the tribes that we approach.”

“Well, I suppose this is a good start,” replies Sean, disappointedly. “I understand that the tribes use a transcendental state to recall the memories.”

“Yes, well that may be more of a ritual than a necessity.”

“Anything in the ritual that is spoken, such as certain phrases or key words, that you’ve notice being used?”

“Just as I mentioned before,” Armand answers. “Using a reference. . . the deceased relative as a focal point.”

“What about the cannibal tribes?” asks Sean.

“They smoke marijuana during the ritual. I don’t think customs is going to appreciate you bringing *that* back to the states, regardless of your intent for scientific study,” Armand answers sarcastically.

“I don’t think that if the need arose, it would be too awfully hard to obtain in the states,” Sean says, with some amusement in his voice .

“Except for the quality and strength, maybe,” responds Armand.

“It’s that much stronger down here?”

“Knock ya on your butt,” Armand wisecracks.

“Well, hopefully that won’t be necessary,” replies Sean.

“I must get back to work,” says Armand, turning back to the box of shirts on the table. “I suggest you go now. Mario is back from his errand and can bring you back to the hotel. Give my regards to Denise.”

“I will. . .thank you for your time, Armand, and good luck with the next study.” Sean starts to walk away, but stops and turns around. “Excuse me, Armand, but who is funding these studies for you? A university or company?”

“No.” Armand says, abruptly, still standing with his back to Sean. “I’m doing this on my own.”

“You can afford this?” Sean asks, disbelievingly.

“Actually, I’m independently wealthy through inheritance. This is something that has intrigued me all my life.”

“Are you planning on writing a book or doing a documentary on this?”

“I suppose. . .and you?”

“Just the *Journal* probably,” Sean answers, a little suspicious of Armand’s uncertainty on the goal of his studies.

“Well, you have a safe trip back to the states,” says Armand. “Where was it you said you and Denise were living now?”

“Astoria, Oregon,” replies Sean, not thinking that he never did say where he was from.

“Nice place, Oregon,” Armand remarks, turning back to the table.
“Enjoy your trip.”

“You too, Armand.”

“Hello, Dr. Sean,” says Mario, as he steps out of the car. “Are you ready to go back now?”

“Yes, Mario, I think I’ve gotten all that I can here. Let’s get me home.”

Sean leaves with Mario while Armand continues with his preparations, not turning to see them off.

Upon returning to the hotel, Sean immediately has the desk call the airport for the next flight back to Oregon.

Sean, having grabbed a cab, arrives at the airport in time to catch the next flight out to the U.S. that night.

“Stewardess?” yells Sean. “Would you please let me know when we will be able to make phone calls?”

“I will, but I can tell you that a private plane has held us up for at least ten minutes and unless it is an emergency, you won’t be able to call for at least an hour.”

“Thank you. That will be fine,” he answers. “I could use a pillow now, though.”

“Here’s your phone sir.” The stewardess says handing it to Sean about an hour into the flight. “I’m afraid I’ll have to limit your time. There are many passengers who wish to use it as well.

“Thank you very much. I’ll be brief.”

“Hello Denise.”

“Hi Honey, “She answers. “How are things going?”

“Well, I’m on the plane back home.”

“Your not going out with Armand then?”

“No, but I did get some usfull information.”

“I’m so sorry Sean. I know you really wanted to go.”

“Yeah. Well, someday if I inherit a pile of money like him, I’ll take off and do some things like this.”

“Your doing just fine now Honey.”

“Thank you Den, I appreciate it. I’ll see you in about ten hours.”

“Okay. I love you.”

“I love you too. Bye now.”

“Bye.”

Beverly arrives at Denise's house Thursday, after getting a call Tuesday, that Sean has made it back. On the radio she hears that two strangled bodies have been found at a campsite just outside of Cannon Beach--Benjamin Thomas and his fiancée, Robin Littell.

Denise opens the door and immediately hugs Bev.

"I saw it on the news," says Denise.

"I just heard it on the radio," cries Bev. "This was the first time Benny's had off to do anything in months."

"Come on in and have a seat. Sean will be out soon. You want something to drink?"

"Yeah, something stiff. Vodka maybe," says Bev, as she takes a seat on the couch and puts her head into her hands to cry.

"Bev, are you gonna be okay?" asks Sean, as he walks into the living room.

"I don't think so. This is too much. We have spent so much time working together over the past few years. He was like a brother to me." Bev lifts her head up. "Did they say anything else on the TV?"

"Just that they are investigating, and that they were strangled," says Denise.

"Apparently you haven't been at work the past few days," says Sean.

"No. We had to work over the weekend to finish up one of the phases of our project before shutting down for the summer."

"Why are you shutting down?" asks Sean.

"We run pretty much like a school, and so does our funding. Benny was working on his doctorate through us."

“So you are finished with the project?” continues Sean.

“Well, for now. It’d take weeks to find someone like Benny.” Bev starts to cry again. “He knew so much about the project. He had just determined the movement of *Memory Strands* on his own last week. That gave a whole new twist to our theory.”

“Do you mind me asking what that was?” asks Sean.

“Well, if you two promise not to let this out.”

“Consider it doctor-patient confidentiality,” says Sean, putting an assuring hand on Bev’s shoulder.

Denise nods her head in agreement.

“Well, we had tried to get the *Memory Strands*, CMS, to assimilate from a rat to a mouse. It didn’t seem to be working. So, Benny fed a rat’s CMS to a mouse, and then, took the *whole* mouse, and bit by bit ran it through the MMAUI. He found the rat’s CMS in the cortexes of the vital organs, mostly the Coronary-Cortex, but not in the Neo-Cortex of the brain. So he fed the CMS of a mouse to a fish--that was at my suggestion--and found the CMS in the Epidermal-Cortex, only.”

“So the CMS of the mouse was only in the skin?” interrupts Denise.

“Actually, just under the skin. But that wasn’t all. There were lots of different types of CMS in both the Epidermal-Cortex of the mouse and the fish. That’s what we had planned to look into next. And, now you see why it would be so hard to replace Benny on CARMA.”

“CARMA?” asks Sean.

“It’s the name Benny gave the project. It stands for Carbon Memory Assimilation. We thought it was kind of apropos.” Bev jests.

“I agree,” says Sean.

“Anyway,” Bev continues, “the CMS apparently will only reach the Epidermal-Cortex if it is not of the same family as the original host. And, if it is of the same family, it will be used by the Cortexes of the vital organs. If the CMS is of the same species, it continues on to be assimilated in the brain.”

“So,” Sean says, with a very contemplative look on his face. “This would explain why we don’t have minds full of pig and cow memories.”

“The other thing we found out had to do with the method of assimilation. That is, between injecting into the Neo-Cortex and using digestion. The CMS that was ingested required the mouse to sleep at least a half hour after digestion had finished, before the brain would use it. The method of injecting into the Neo-Cortex allowed the animal to use the memories after only a half hour of sleep.”

“Excuse me,” says Denise. “But, if there are these *Memory Strands* in the animals, are these memories in us as well?”

“Yes, but until now, we didn’t realize that they actually held any kind of comprehensive memory,” answers Bev.

“I think that our REM stage of sleep is probably where we must be doing the final assimilation. From what I understand, most animals are in a constant state of REM during their sleep,” Sean says, to keep the conversation on CMS.

“Yes, they do,” says Bev, “it’s a matter of survival.”

“And, it would allow them to assimilate memories at a quicker rate out in the wild,” continues Sean.

“We humans, probably didn’t start having any kind of deep sleep until very recently,” adds Bev. “Up until we had very secure places to live, humans were, most likely, constant REM sleepers.”

“Bev.” Denise interrupts again. “If these memories are in the corpse, and then somehow brought through the food chain and assimilated by us later. . . then what about afterlife?”

“I’ve been struggling with that one myself,” says Bev.

“If I may,” Sean breaks in, “one of the things I’ve noticed with the patients recalling what they think are past lives, is that virtually all of the PLE’s are of bad experiences. You know. . . deaths, fights, illnesses and other memories that a person would not *necessarily* want to take with them to an afterlife. These disclosures are increasingly proving to me that my theory, that there is no Past Life, is probably correct. But, as I get deeper into the patient’s assimilated memories, I notice that the lack of loving, enjoyable and pleasant memories, leaves me trying to explain this to myself logically. The closest thing I can come up with, is that somehow the good memories are removed. Maybe that’s the *life passing before your eyes* thing that people often talk about. The *sorting out*, if you will, of the memories that are going to stay, and the ones that go with the spirit.”

“Well, Mr. Spock!” quips Denise, surprisingly. “It’s nice to see the human side of you show up occasionally. I would have never thought that *you* would consider this as an option in your reasoning. You’ve always steered away from any rationalization of afterlife theories.”

“In here,” Sean gets up, walks over, and picks up a medical journal from the bookshelf, “is a study that was done, showing that the near death experiences are almost instantly *hard coded*, into what’s called *long term*

memories. That means that instead of staying as *short term* memories, somehow the body must prepare itself for imminent death by converting all the memories to what you are calling CMS. If this is true with all animals, this would explain the idea that others of the same species are able to be aided by the memories left when one of their own is tragically killed and is unable to warn others of the danger. It may take a few generations, but if one animal was killed and not able to warn their family, the offspring would eventually gain these memories through the food chain.”

“So, the patients often recall the death of the person that they think was *their* past life?” asks Bev.

“That’s the most common recollection of all,” answers Sean. “Probably because of the intensity, would be my guess. People who’ve rapidly approached an imminent death will almost always recall their life passing before their eyes. But then after they come to, they cannot recall the actual event that nearly killed them. It’s as if the brain does a quick save of all the memories to the *long term* memory area. Kind of like a computer saving to the hard drive before shutting off.”

“Well, this theory would certainly explain all of the Cleopatra and Napoleon past life people running around,” remarks Denise, jokingly.

“And, maybe the people in asylums who think they *are* Napoleon,” adds Bev.

“Just a bigger chunk of the old Napoleon pie,” jokes Sean. “If someone, somehow, had their mind lock onto an extraordinary amount of CMS from one person, they could probably believe that they were actually that person. It’d be interesting to get into their mind and find out who actually killed Napoleon, or if he went on to live in hiding somewhere.”

“Bev!” Denise interjects, “If this is true, then the murderer of Benny could still be in his memories.”

“I just thought that myself, Denise. If there is some way to get the CMS out of Benny, I’d be willing to take that chance myself,” Bev replies.

“Get consent from the relatives,” says Denise.

“He didn’t have any.”

“How about if he donated his body as an organ donor?” says Sean.

“I don’t think that includes the brain,” says Bev.

“But maybe if he donated his body to science?” adds Denise.

“Our facility isn’t set up for human tissue use. But maybe if I make some calls.”

“Actually,” Sean pipes in, turning to Bev. “I play darts once-in-a-while down at The Griffin’s Spot Pub with the coroner, Art Rylee. If there *are* no relatives, maybe I can talk him into obtaining a small bit of what you need.”

“We’d need it all, to be sure,” Bev answers.

The phone starts ringing.

“I’ll see what I can do,” says Sean, as he walks over to answer the phone.

“Hello, Fische residence. Sean speaking. Sure, just a second.”

“It’s for you Bev,” he says, handing her the phone.

“Thank you. I had it forwarded here. I hope you don’t mind.”

“Not at all,” replies Denise.

“Hello, this is Beverly.” There’s a long pause. “Yes, of course I’ll be there in about fifteen minutes.” Bev hangs up the phone.

“Who was that?” asks Denise.

“Detective Yvonne Barany, down at the lab,” Bev answers contemplatively, as she gets up and heads to the door. “They need me to check on something down there, so I better get going.”

“Let us know what happens Bev,” says Sean.

“I will. Bye now,” she answers.

Bev arrives at the lab and is greeted by standing outside with a multitude of detectives and officers busily running around gathering clues.

“Hello. You must be Beverly,” says Lieutenant Barany. “I’m Detective Barany, but you can call me Snooks.”

“Nice to meet you, Snooks. What is it you need me to look at?”

“We need you to go over your lab and look for anything missing.”

“You said this has to do with Benny’s death,” Bev says, walking with Snooks into the building. “I thought Benny was killed in the woods.”

“No, we found them both strangled in the woods. They had been moved there, and the camping gear was haphazardly put up to appear as if they were out camping.”

“But, he was going camping yesterday,” Bev states.

“Yes, but a shoe was missing at the camp site. We found that shoe here. We need to see if you can find out why he may have been here on a day when the place was closed, and if anything might be missing that could help us with the investigation.”

Looking around the lab, Bev notices that the test results of the past few weeks aren’t where they are supposed to be on her desk, and that the MMAUI is curiously set on the floor under a table.

“It doesn’t look like anything’s missing,” Bev says, not intending to tell Snooks about the things she had noticed. “Let’s check the files.”

“How about the other labs? Did Benjamin work in any of the other labs?” asks Snooks.

“He goes by Benny. . . and, no. But that doesn’t mean that he’d just forgot something before his trip,” Bev says closing the last file drawer.

“There was a call made to Benny’s house from a pay phone across the road just before his card was used to get in here. Can you think of anyone who would have called him from there?”

“No, that’s really odd,” says Bev. “I really don’t see anything out of place in the lab. Have you looked in his locker?”

“Yes. . .it was empty. We thought that maybe he kept something significant in there. Was there any indication that Benny may have been into drugs?”

“No, not at all. He was dead set against drugs,” Bev answered, indignantly.

“We don’t show any reports of threats from animal activists,” says Snooks. “Do you know of any that may have gone unreported?”

“No!” answers Bev. “You think that this could have been animal rights people? They don’t usually resort to deception and murder. Do they?”

“No, but it’s always a possibility. There are a lot of nuts out there.”

“Well, we don’t want to keep you too long. We understand how you must be feeling. So please take my card and if anything comes to mind. . .”

“Thank you, Snooks.” Bev says, cutting her short as she turns to go out to her car. “I’ll give you a call if I find anything.”

“Excuse me, Bev.” Snooks says, just as Bev gets into her car.

“Oh, no, a regular Columbo,” Bev mumbles under her breath, and then answers. “Yes?”

“When Benny’s roommate was at the morgue to identify the bodies...” Snooks pauses, “he mentioned something about Benny saying that he couldn’t figure out how someone could know about the study. Do you have any idea why he would say that?”

“No,” Bev answers, trying to hide her fib. “It wasn’t any big secret. Just biological studies on mice.”

“Well, it was just a thought. Thank you again.”

“Sure. Have a good day.”

“Oh!” Snooks interrupts again. “We couldn’t find any mice.”

“Uh,” Bev pauses at a loss for words, “it’s the end of the study for the summer. The lab is shut down until Fall.”

“I see.” Snooks writes something down on her notepad. “Thanks again for your trouble.”

“Bye now,” Bev says, trying not to look at Snooks for fear of showing her obvious discomfort with the observation.

After getting back to the Fische’s house, Bev fills them in on the situation at the lab . She then makes a call to see if Terry has come home yet.

“I’ll see you in a bit then,” Bev says to Terry, as she hangs up the phone. “Terry will be over in a little while.”

“So,” asks Denise, “Anything missing at the lab?”

“All of our notes on CARMA. My tapes. And, the mice.”

“The mice?” asks Sean.

“Yeah, all of them. All of the proof we had about CMS and memory assimilation.”

“Won’t the police find out about the missing notes?” asks Denise.

“I don’t think so. We kept them under the MMAUI.”

“Maui?” Sean says sarcastically.

“Micro Magnetic Array Unscrambler Isolator.”

“Did they take that too?” asks Denise.

“No. Benny moved that to the floor when he took the notes.”

“So it’s still there?” asks Sean.

“Yes, thank God. I’d never be able to rebuild that without Benny’s help, or at least the notes.”

“I think Benny probably knew that,” says Sean. “It’s actually kind of amazing that he was able to keep that from being taken as well.”

“So.” Bev says with a sigh. “We need to somehow get the MMAUI out of there if we’re going to be able to work with Benny’s CMS.”

“Yeah,” says Sean, “and the police will be watching the place.”

“What place?” asks Terry, as he comes into the living room.

“The lab,” says Bev.

“Well, maybe not,” says Denise.

“What do you mean?” asks Bev.

“This weekend is the annual sand building contest. The police will be too busy with crowd control.”

“Yes,” says Terry. “They came around work asking for volunteers. They’re really understaffed for it this year.”

“Well then, what about the coroner?”

“I’ll go down to The Griffin’s Spot tonight,” says Sean. “He’s usually there.”

“What if he isn’t?” asks Terry .

“He will be.” Sean says confidently. “He’s always down there watching the Irish band when they perform, and they are playing tonight. If he’s not, I have his card and I can try calling him tomorrow.”

“Wanda and Bill will be home tomorrow,” says Bev. “I’ll fill them in, and have them help out.”

“Have Wanda give me a call,” says Denise. “We can use our cabin for the work, if you can get Wanda to help me with fixing it up.”

“That sounds great,” says Bev, as she writes something down on a piece of paper and turns to Terry. “Let’s get going. Sean, give me a call when you know more about the coroner. Here’s what the coroner will need to remove from Benny.”

“See ya later,” Sean and Denise say in unison.

Later that night, Sean shows up at the pub about 8 o’clock. He walks in and the coroner, Art Rylee, is up playing a solo game of darts while the band is playing Irish music.

“Hi, Art,” he says. “Mind if I join you for a game of 301?”

“Sure. How’ve you been, Sean?”

“Great. And, you?”

“Well, with this last murder, things have been pretty hectic at work. But, this is always a fun diversion,” Art says, pointing to the band.

“Actually, I came here to talk to you about the last murder. . . the Benny Thomas one.”

“I’m sorry. You know I can’t answer any questions about that sort a thing.”

“I’m not asking questions. I would like to offer you some information.”

“Me?” Art asks, setting down his darts and taking a seat. “Why not the police?”

“Well...” Sean starts off, when a waitress comes up to the table.

“Can I get anything for you Sean?” she asks.

“Sure, Sara. A house pint will be fine.” Sean turns to Art. “Anyway, Art, Benny was the colleague of a good friend of mine. And what I’m going to talk to you about must be held in strict confidence.”

“Well. . .sure. But I still can’t devulge anything to you regardless of how confidential *your* information is.”

“This friend of mine was working with Benny on experiments which transferred the memories from one mouse to another.”

“We’ve been thinking that it might have been animal activists that killed the Thomas guy and took all of the mice.”

“I thought you weren’t going to be telling me anything about the case?”

“Oh, yeah, that’s right. Go on.”

“To make a long story short, they were successful at proving that memories *can be* transferred from one mammal to another of the same species.”

“You’ve got to be kidding!”

“I’m so serious it’s beginning to hurt.”

“So you are thinking that it might work with humans as well?”

“Actually, with some studies that I’ve done, we think that the transfer of memories is happening all the time through the food chain. I’ve all but proved that past life experiences are nothing more than the memories from deceased persons whose *Carbon Memory Strands* or CMS, as they call them, have been transferred through the food chain to a live person and eventually assimilated into their own *long term* memories--probably during the REM portion of sleep.”

“And, you want to get Thomas’s tissue for this transfer.”

“Exactly. Do you know the portion of the brain that needs to be used?”

“Yes. But it’s only an educated guess as to the exact tissue, not to mention how highly unethical it would be to obtain it.”

“We have a willing subject and she wants to find out who killed Benny more adamantly than the police could ever want to.”

“Well, all ethics aside, this could be the greatest breakthrough in murder investigation since DNA matching.”

“So then you’ll help us?”

“I don’t know,” Art says, fidgeting a bit as the waitress brings Sean’s drink to the table. He keeps silent until the waitress is out of hearing range.

“This would mean my career if I get caught.”

“But as you said, the idea of this being used for solving murders is well worth the risk.”

“But if we told anyone about this, I would still lose my job as a coroner for doing something so unethical with the corpses that are entrusted to me.”

“My friend is confident that this will work, and we don’t intend on letting this information get out. That’s why I’m asking you to keep this confidential between you, and those of us involved with Benny. The willing subject is Benny’s co-worker Dr. Beverly Kline. I can assure you that all of our careers are in just as much jeopardy as yours. And, we have no intention of doing anything to lose them.”

“Okay. You’ve convinced me. But, if you find out who the murderer is, how do you intend on getting the information to the police without having *them* find out about what we’ve done?”

“We aren’t worried about that right now. If we have to, we can give an anonymous call and let them take it from there.”

“Sounds good,” says Art, as he picks his darts up. “How should I get the tissue to you then?”

“Well, when can you get it?”

“I’ll have to do it tomorrow. The body will be cremated tomorrow evening. Do you know how it should be stored?”

“It shouldn’t matter. The memory strands can survive even fire.”

“That’ll be easy then. But what about the Neo-Cortex? That could be difficult.”

“Do the best you can,” says Sean. “If my part of this theory is correct, the Neo-Cortex shouldn’t be necessary.”

“I’ll see what I can do.”

“How about we meet at the morgue on Saturday morning. . .say at nine o’clock.”

“Okay, I’ll be there. Care for a game?” Art says, pointing at the dart board.

“Sure,” Sean answers, getting up from the table, along with Art.

“The band’s on break. They’ll probably want to get in on a game of Squirrels Nest.”

“Great. Let’s go.”

Wanda gets up early Saturday morning. She heads to Tillamook to help clean the Fische's rental cottage so the equipment can be moved from Bev's lab. On the way she is to stop by Denise's to pick her up. Denise and Sean's A-Frame sits at the end of a long, gravel driveway, in a fairly secluded area of forest just southeast of Astoria. And, as Wanda nears their driveway, she sees what looks like a rental car parked at the edge of the road--a few hundred feet from the entrance. With all that is going on, her first thought is 'police'. The car stands out because of its lack of the weather-beaten look most of the locally-owned vehicles have, so it isn't likely to be the police. Realizing this, she begins to get that queasy, apprehensive tingle in her stomach, thinking this could be a government official that somehow found out about the plan to move the equipment out of the lab. Wanda isn't very comfortable with the idea to begin with, and *this* isn't making things any better. As she turns onto the driveway, looking into the car from behind, she makes out the figure of a man. He appears to be holding something like a map, so she figures it must be a lost tourist. This rationalization eases her mind a bit, but does nothing to bring her heart rate down, which now begins to make her feel faint.

Wanda reaches the house as Denise is coming out of the door with some empty boxes.

"Here you go, Wanda," she says, putting the boxes down behind the car. "Good morning."

"Hi! Denise," she answers, still sitting in the car.

"Well?" asks Denise, "Wanda?"

“Yes?. . . Sorry, what’d you say?” Denise answers, leaning her head out of the window, after a bit of a pause.

“The trunk,” says Denise, “could you open it?”

Wanda leans over and pushes the trunk button from inside the glove compartment.

After putting items inside the trunk, Denise closes it and comes around to the passenger side. She attempts to open the door, only to find it still locked. Wanda is going through her purse and Denise knocks on the window to get her attention. Realizing the door is locked, Wanda reaches over to unlock it. Denise climbs in and buckles up.

“I’m really glad that you and Bill came back early. We need all the help that we can get from someone we can trust.”

“Yeah,” Wanda says, barely audible.

“What’s going on?” Denise asks. “You really seem out of it.”

“There’s a man sitting in a car at the end of your driveway. Maybe I’m just being paranoid, because I feel a little guilty about this whole deal with Bev’s machines as it is.”

“You’ve known her longer than I have. But, even I know her well enough to know that it must be really important if she’s willing to do something like this.”

“I know,” Wanda concedes. “Here’s some paper and a pen. You get the license number when we get to the end of the driveway.”

As they get to the end of the drive, they see that the car is no longer there.

“Do you see it anywhere?” asks Wanda.

“No, not at all.”

“Well, I guess I was just being paranoid. He seemed to be just looking at a map anyway.”

“That’s a relief. I was beginning to feel paranoid as well.”

Turning onto the road, Wanda heads for the cabin without noticing the car she’d seen before is pulling out a few hundred yards behind her after letting another car pass between them. When they get to the turnoff for the road to the cabin, Wanda makes a sudden sharp turn onto the winding road, leaving the pursuer not knowing which road she had taken.

At the lab, Bev is loading the equipment into boxes that won’t look conspicuous when they put them into the car. Terry sloppily picks up a couple of boxes.

“Careful with the smaller one, Terry. It will have to go in the front seat with us. It has some crucial glass instruments in it.”

“Oh! That’s why it’s marked Ping-Pong balls. That’s really fragile!”

“Just hurry and get this stuff in the car. We have to meet Dr. Rylee in an hour.”

“Are you really sure about this, Honey? I mean, you’ve never done anything like this before. And, you’re taking a big risk with this CMS from Benny.”

“I’ve never been in this position before. Besides, what’s the difference in eating a plant with his CMS introduced into it on purpose, or waiting for it to possibly make its way into the food chain by chance? If nobody had found the bodies in the first place, he would have decomposed and somewhere along the line, someone might eventually ingested his CMS

anyway. Except they would probably never recognize that it was Benny's murder, and would just pass it off as a bad dream."

"Well, we're talkin' unprecedented trouble here if we get caught. There's no. . ." Terry stops suddenly as he hears a noise. "What's that?" He whispers.

"I don't know. Shhhh." She says with her finger over her mouth.

They hear a couple of knocks.

"It sounds like someone at a door," says Terry.

"Yeah, the back door. "Maybe someone saw the car."

"Security?"

"No, they wouldn't knock," Bev replies. "Besides, their rounds aren't for two more hours."

"Should we ignore it?"

"No." Bev says, putting down the box she is holding. "I don't want to arouse any suspicion. You stay here. . . in the bathroom. I'll go see who it is."

"Sure." Terry sets down his boxes and closing the bathroom door behind him as Bev heads down the hall to the back door.

She gets to the door, and can't quite make out who it is through the stained glass re-light on the side of the entrance. "Who is it?"

"Sean Fische."

Bev opens the door and quickly pulls Sean into the building.

"Hey, it's all right. I wasn't followed."

"Okay. I'm sorry. I'm just a bit jumpy," she says with a sigh of relief. "What are you doing down here?"

“Art called,” Sean starts explaining, as they walk back to the lab. “He said that we’ll have to meet him at The Griffin’s Spot.”

“The Pub?”

“Something came up at the morgue, and we can’t meet him there. But, he said it has nothing to do with Benny, and not to worry.”

“Not to worry about what?” Terry asks, as he steps out of the bathroom. “What’s going on Sean?”

“We just have to meet Dr. Rylee at a different place. That’s all.” Explains Bev.

“He did get--you know--Benny?” asks Terry.

“Yes. He said that he did get Benny’s tissue,” answers Sean.

“I don’t know,” says Terry. “This doesn’t sound so good.”

“It’s got me a bit nervous, too,” adds Bev.

“Could he be setting us up?” asks Terry.

“No, I’m sure he’s not,” Sean says, confidently. “I’ve known him for quite a while. He doesn’t seem that type at all.”

“He works with the police all the time,” Terry reminds them. “I’ll bet he told that Snooks gal the whole thing.”

“No. If anything, he’s just scared to get caught at the morgue,” Sean says to reassure the two.

“Well, either way,” Bev says, handing a box to Sean, “let’s get this stuff out of here now, before the security comes around.”

“Are we still supposed to meet him at noon?” asks Terry, as he picks up a couple of boxes.

“Yes.” Sean answers. “When The Griffin’s Spot opens.”

Bev grabs a hand truck, picks up the MMAUI, and leads the group to the back door.

“I don’t see anyone out there,” says Bev, peeking through the door.

“What about anything that looks like undercover police?” asks Terry.

“I don’t think so,” says Bev.

“It wouldn’t matter,” says Sean. “If they’re watching us, it would be through binoculars from somewhere in the distance.”

“That’s reassuring, Sean,” says Terry, his shoulders sagging disheartedly.

“It doesn’t matter now,” says Sean. “If they’re watching, we’re gonna get caught. So there’s no use worrying about it.”

They tried to walk calmly to the cars, all the while feeling conspicuous as they loaded all of the instruments into Bev’s car.

“Do you get the feeling we’re being watched?” asks Bev.

“I’ve had that feeling since we started,” says Terry.

“Let’s get going. It’s almost nine o’clock now,” says Sean. “I don’t want to make Art any more nervous than he must already be. I’ll park my car at the market and go with you in your car.”

Off in the woods to the east of the group, Lieutenant Snooks is watching the three loading the car. Having bugged the lab, she has heard most of the conversation and is willing to let the group pursue their theory and try to identify the killer.

As the group comes up on The Griffin's Spot, they check out the cars parked in front.

"Do you see his car?" asks Terry.

"Well, there are a couple that are familiar," Sean answers. "I suppose one could be Art's."

"What about that one there?" Terry says, pointing to a car. "That looks like it could be an undercover police car."

"I don't know!" Sean says anxiously. "Give me a break Terry, don't worry so much."

"Look. If we all walk in there, we're gonna look pretty suspicious," Terry states.

"Only to us!" Sean replies. "People go into bars in groups all the time."

"I think maybe Sean is right, Terry."

"Maybe we ought to just let Bev go in," Terry says. "She knows what it is we need and if it's the right stuff."

"No, I don't!" Bev says, admonishing Terry. "I'm relying on Dr. Rylee to know that this *right stuff* is the CMS from Benny. I've never worked with human tissue."

"I think I should go in, too," says Sean. "Art doesn't know Bev and would probably feel he was being set up."

"We should all go in together," Bev says conclusively, as she parks the car at the curb. "It would look odd to have someone staying in the car. And, like you said Sean, we don't want to upset Dr. Rylee any more than he already is."

As they walk into the pub, they can see by the way Art is tapping his foot out of time to the music, that he is very nervous.

“Hi, Art.” says Sean. “Everything going okay?”

“Yeah,” he replies abruptly.

“I’ll take a coffee with cream, Marty,” Sean says to the bartender.

“Sure, and what about the rest of ya,” Marty replies in his heavy Irish brogue.

“Nothing,” replies Terry.

“*We’ll have...*” Bev says, strongly correcting Terry, “a stout and another coffee. Two creams please.” She hopes the Guinness that Terry loves will calm him down a bit.

“Hi, I’m Beverly, and this is my husband, Terry,” Bev greets Art, as they sit at the table. “Did you have any trouble?”

“No,” he replies. “It was actually very easy, considering the area I had to examine for the police.”

“What do you mean?” Terry asks, sounding unsettled.

“Benny was strangled,” Art explains. “I was able to get to the tissue from the area I had to examine without anyone being the wiser.”

“There were other people there?” asks Terry anxiously.

“Terry, take a drink and settle down,” Bev whispers, pushing the beer into Terry’s hand.

“No. Actually I was able to remove the tissue while nobody was around,” answers Art.

“So, let’s see it,” Sean requests, anxious himself.

“Here.” Art pulls out a small beaker with some pink goo that looks like silly putty.

“Benny was cremated last night,” he adds. “This is all that’s left.” Art pushes the beaker into Bev’s hand. “If what you’ve claimed is true, this is all that Benny was. The rest is ashes in the urn.”

The whole table goes quiet momentarily, then Bev asks, “Are you sure this is all of the *Carbon Memory Strands*?”

“I’ve worked with every aspect of the human body,” Art brags. “This is definitely the part of the brain that’s considered by most to be the memory area. It’s all of the tissue, just one inch above the C1 and one and a half inches into the brain, all surrounded by Neo-Cortex.”

“And the Neo-Cortex?” asks Bev.

“All that I could get, of course. Just as you requested.”

“I’m sorry to just run out on you like this, but we are really in a hurry,” says Sean.

“I understand,” answers Art. “Good luck on finding the. . .uh, your project.”

“Thank you, Art,” says Bev, shaking his hand, “we really appreciate this.”

“Goodbye,” he answers.

Bev pulls up to the cabin with Sean and Terry. Wanda’s car isn’t in front, so Sean gets out first and goes around back to check the carport.

“They must not be here,” says Sean, coming back.

“You do have the keys?” Bev asks Sean, as she shuts the car door and walks around to the open trunk.

“No,” he answers worriedly. “Let me try the door.” He walks to the front door. “It’s open.”

“Good,” says Terry. “It looks like it may be starting to rain a bit. Let’s get everything inside.”

“The girls must have left open it for us,” says Sean. “The place looks cleaned up.”

“Where should we set the stuff up?” asks Bev.

“The room to the right has enough plug-ins,” answers Sean. “If we need to, we can block up the window so no one can see in.”

“I’d feel a lot better if we did,” remarks Terry.

After unloading the equipment, Sean comes up to Bev.

“Why don’t you two get started and I’ll run up to the store to see if they’re there.”

“Sure, here are the keys,” Bev answers. “You think they might have gone for lunch, too?”

“Maybe, but Denise would have rather gone to the store to get food to cook up for everyone.”

Sean leaves. Bev and Terry start on the preparations.

“Here, Terry, you put these three things over on that table and I’ll start getting the cables ready.”

“What about the...” he pauses. “You know--Benny. Shouldn’t we like refrigerate him, or something?”

“I don’t think that will matter. But if it makes you feel better to put *it* in there with the food. . . go ahead.”

“Never mind,” Terry answers, thinking about having Benny’s brain matter in the same place as their food. “If it’ll be okay here, that will be

fine. I think letting *you* do this will be enough. I wouldn't want all of us having to fish around for Benny's murderer under hypnosis."

"Here, plug the cords into this surge suppresser," she commands of Terry. "And then into the socket over there." Pointing to the corner of the room.

"What about the place to plant the bar-what-ya-ma-call-it seeds?"

"I have a growlight and the tomato plants from the experiments with the mice," she answers. "We can plant the Bartawa seeds with those."

"You mean with the mice brains growing in them?"

"Don't worry, the mice CMS won't do anything. If it did you'd be dreaming pig memories with as many hot-dogs as *you* eat."

"Okay, it's ready. Now what?" asks Terry.

"I suppose we can start up the MMAUI and do the separation."

"How long does it take?"

"I don't know. I've never done human tissue. Maybe an hour or two. With the mice, there was so much other tissue from the brain, it took an hour. But, with this," she sighs, reverently holding up Benny's tissue, "it may be mostly CMS and only take a little while."

"This is getting too bizarre," Terry says, with a distressed look on his face as Bev puts Benny's brain tissue into the special container for separation.

"There. That should do it. Let's get the light set up over the plants," she says, picking up the overhead lamp. "We'll need some screws or nails. . . preferably screws."

"Let me check in the shed," Terry says, heading for the door and feeling a bit queasy -- glad to get outside for a moment.

“I have the things we need right here.” Bev holds up a small box.

“Thank goodness,” Terry says sarcastically, “I think I’ll take a little walk to get some fresh air anyway.”

About 45 minutes later Sean shows up. Terry is in the front room.

“They weren’t anywhere in town,” he says, shutting the front door behind him. “And they’re not here yet?”

“No, where else would they have gone?” asks Terry.

“I don’t know.”

“Well, it’s done,” Bev says, as she enters the front room. “All we need to do now is feed it to the plants.” She looks around the room. “Where’re the girls?”

“I don’t know,” answers Sean, as they all head back into the room with the equipment. “I was hoping they’d be back here by now.”

“Where could they have gone?” asks Bev. “I mean where could they go that they wouldn’t be back by now?”

“Maybe they went back to get Bill?” suggests Sean.

“I suppose there might have been a last minute change of plans. But, there is a little shop down the road that Wanda likes to go to,” says Terry, as he turns to see a set of car lights pull up to the cabin.

“It’s Bill,” says Bev, looking out the window. “It looks like he’s alone though.”

“Come on in, Terry yells, as he waves to Bill through the window. “It’s open.”

“Howdy everyone,” Bill greets the group. “Where are the girls?”

“We thought maybe they went to get you,” says Terry.

“No, I came straight from home,” Bill remarks. “There weren’t any notes or messages on the phone, so I left.”

“Let’s go ahead and start this now,” says Bev. “I’m sure they’ll show up soon. I’m ready to put the CMS into the garden.”

“Okay.” Terry says, walking into the kitchen. “You do that and I’ll start looking for something to eat.”

“Did Wanda mention anything about shopping?” Sean asks Bill.

“No, but you know women,” he replies with a laugh.

“Maybe. . .” Sean starts to say, when all of the electricity goes off.

“Whoa, Baby!” Terry yells from the kitchen. “When was the last time you had this stove checked out?”

“Ages,” says Sean. “It’s probably just a fuse. There’s only the one line in here for all of the equipment we’re running. I’ll go out and get a fuse from the shed. Until then, there are candles on the counter to the right of the stove.”

“And matches?”

“With the candles,” Sean states, making his way to the cabin door. “I’ll be back in a sec.”

“I think I’d better stay in here,” Bev says, in the dark, from the bedroom. “Don’t anyone try to come in here. I don’t want any of this equipment knocked over.”

“This must be the girls now,” Bill says, as a set of car lights approach the cabin.”

Sean opens the shed door and steps into the darkness, with his hands stretched out in front of him, feeling his way down the shelves for the fuses.

He trips and falls, landing on the floor. He pulls out a lighter, to see what he has tripped over, lights it, and finds himself staring straight into the face of Wanda's corpse, eyes opened and dilated.

"Bill!" he screams at the top of his lungs. "Get out here, quick."

A short figure steps out of the car and runs toward the shed, now just barely visible by the moonlight shining through the trees.

"Who are you?" yells Bill, as the figure approaches him.

"Police!" Snooks yells back. "Lieutenant Barany, APD. Stay right where you are," she commands of Bill, as she turns on a flashlight to light up Sean, just as he is lifting himself up off of Wanda. "What's going on here?"

"Oh my god!" yells Bill, now running into the shed. "Wanda! Wanda!"

"I don't know," Sean answers L. Barany. By now Bev and Terry have made their way out of the cabin.

"Snooks,. what are you doing here?" asks Bev.

"I followed you from town," she replies.

"Oh, my God," gasps Bev, as she now sees Wanda lying on the shed floor.

"No!" yells Bill, as he falls to his knees next to Wanda.

"Is that Wanda?" asks Terry, squinting to focus on the flashlight's beam.

"No one has any idea what happened here?" asks Snooks.

"We thought that Denise and Wanda were still out shopping together," says Terry, "and that you were them pulling up to the cabin just now."

“That means Denise must have Wanda’s car,” says Bev. “Maybe she’s gone for help.”

“I’ll call for. . .” Snooks starts to say, as her radio goes off. “Barany here,” she replies to the microphone.

“We’ve got a hit and run forty miles south of you,” says the dispatcher.

“Go on,” Snooks replies.

“It’s one of the vehicles you asked us to keep an eye out for you,” continues the voice.

“Which one?”

“The Corbett vehicle.”

“Condition?”

“No survivors. The car was forced off a cliff about ten minutes ago according to a witness. We’re covering the roads now.”

“Thank you. . .out,” Snooks says, turning to Sean. “I’m sorry Dr. Fische.”

“This can’t be animal activists,” Sean says, with his teeth clenched, trying to hold back a scream.

“After hearing your conversations in the lab,” reveals Snooks and now turning to Bev, “I believe someone is out to get all of you.”

“All of us?” asks Terry.

“Yes,” Snooks answers. “I suggest we get out of here now. I’ll call for an ambulance.”

“No!” yells Bill. “We need to take her with us. Her memories will help us find the killer.”

“So will Benny’s,” says Bev.

“We don’t have time,” pleads Bill. “They’ve killed three of us already, and we’re next.”

“But Benny’s CMS is already beginning to grow in the plants,” says Bev.

“To hell with the plants!” Bill yells. “Get the stuff out of Wanda and inject it into me. I want to know who did this. Now!”

“This is highly irregular,” remarks Snooks.

“You may have a point, Bill,” says Sean, ignoring Snooks comment.

“I’ve never worked with human tissue,” states Bev, “let alone injecting something like CMS into a human.”

“Wait just a minute folks,” interrupts Snooks. “You can’t just go about doing as you please here. . .there are laws to go by.”

“Please!” begs Bill. “I’m willing to do this. If we don’t, we could all end up dead, and no one will ever find out who’s doing this.”

“Listen,” says Snooks. “I don’t think we have time to talk now. I’m not going to agree on anything at this point, but gather up all the stuff and I’ll get us to some place safe for now. We can talk about this when we get there.”

“I don’t know, Bill,” says Bev. “I don’t feel comfortable doing this.”

“I don’t mind Bev,” he answers. “If you want. . .I’ll sign something, in front of everyone so that nothing will happen to any of you if something goes wrong.”

“Let’s go,” says Terry, starting to walk towards the cabin. “We don’t have time for this.”

“Bill,” says Sean, taking command, “you and Terry get Wanda into her car. I’ll fix the fuse and we’ll get the equipment.”

Bev and Terry follow Snooks, with Sean, Bill and Wanda, to the other side of Tillamook. All the way there, Snooks stays in contact with the state patrol on the investigation of the hit and run involving Denise.

“I’m really sorry about your wife, Dr. Fische.” Snooks says softly.
“And how are you holding up, Bill?”

“Please, call me Sean. . .I don’t think that Bill’s in much of a mood for talking right now,” he says, looking into the back seat at his friends.

“How about you?” she asks.

“I think I’m about ready to break,” Sean answers. “I want to go to Denise so bad right now. But, if this will find the killer, then it’s more important.” There’s a few moments of silence, except for some sobbing by Bill. “Besides, I’m pretty sure I’ll have to help Bill recall Wanda’s memories through hypnosis.”

“You really think this will work?” Snooks asks.

“Every study we’ve done so far, indicates that it will.”

“I really can’t be allowing any tampering with the evidence.”

“I realize that. But, how often does the evidence in cases like this one end up leading nowhere, with the case being closing after years and never being solved?”

“Too often, I’m afraid,” she answers. “But regardless of the outcome, I could lose my job if I let you do this.”

“You’re part of this now. You know what’s going on and enough about the situation that if you don’t let us do this, you could end up dead yourself.”

“I’m not going to admit to any of what’s about to take place,” says Snooks. “But, I want to be there for every step. I’m still not sure that I believe that this memory transfer can actually take place. And, I can’t say that I trust that this isn’t some sort of trick.”

“Believe me, Snooks,” says Sean, putting a hand on her shoulder. “I’ve never been more serious in my life. My wife is lying dead down the road. Two friends of mine are in the back seat, one of whom is dead. There’s possibly someone out there right now who will try to kill me. My head feels like it’s about to explode and I may throw at up any moment.” Tears start to well up in Sean’s eyes. “This is not some sort of trick. If anything, it’s probably one of the greatest discoveries that’s come along in the history of humanity, and we’re paying for it with our lives. If there’s any time to take advantage of this discovery. . . now is the time.”

“Okay.” Snooks concedes, as she turns onto a narrow gravel driveway. “Here we are. Let’s get to it.”

“Thank you,” Sean whispers.

They pull up to a small house at the edge of a cattle farm. Terry and Bev unload the equipment. Sean and Bill, lead by Snooks, carry Wanda’s body into a pantry and set her on a canning table.

“I don’t think I can do this alone,” says Bev, as she enters the pantry.

“I won’t be able to stay with you for this Bev,” says Bill.

“Unfortunately, I’m going to have to stay,” says Snooks. “But I think I can handle it, if you need any help.”

“I’ll give it a try as well,” adds Sean.

“Terry probably won’t want to be in the house,” says Bev, grabbing up a case and setting it on the table next to Wanda. “Bill, why don’t you go help him set up the equipment?”

“Do you have the right instruments for this?” Snooks asks Bev.

“Probably not, but I’m sure I have something that’ll get the job done.”

“You know, even if this works,” says Snooks. “I have no idea how I can explain this to the captain, and I will probably lose my job.”

“We will *all* most likely lose our jobs,” says Bev, now gently resting her hand on Wanda’s cheek. “And some of us have already lost our lives. Let’s hope that this will help us be fortunate enough to be around to have to deal with the situation. . . if it comes up at all. Let’s get started before I lose my nerve.”

“Okay,” says Snooks. “But I can’t let this go for more than about another twelve hours before I’ll need to get your friend to the morgue, and take whatever consequences come about from this.”

“I’m as ready as I’ll ever be,” says Bev. “You should probably go now, Bill.”

“I love you, Wanda,” sobs Bill, as Bev holds his hand and guides him away from his wife.

“Do you need us to do anything for you now?” asks Snooks.

“Just be here,” Bev says, bowing her head in prayer. “Dear Lord Jesus, please guide my hands in what I’m about to do. I pray to you, and ask that this is meant to be. Please hold our dear friend, Wanda, in your loving hands, and keep her until we can meet again.”

“Amen,” Snooks and Sean say in unison. Both with their heads bowed as well.

“Thank you,” Bev says, looking at Sean and acknowledging his spiritual consideration for this moment.

“May your God be with you, Bev,” he says.

Bev picks up a set of forceps and a scalpel, and starts to cut into the top of Wanda’s neck.

“This isn’t at all the way I thought it would feel,” she says. “The mice are so delicate in comparison.”

“You’re not going to describe out loud to us everything you’re about to do are you?” asks Sean.

“No, not if you don’t want me to.”

“I’d just as soon you didn’t either,” says Snooks.

It’s so silent for the next couple of minutes that all they can hear is the sound of the scalpel cutting into Wanda.

“Maybe we should be saying something,” Sean says, wincing. “This isn’t the most appealing sound I’ve ever heard.”

“I agree,” says Snooks. “A dentist’s drill would be more appealing than this.”

“This is it,” Bev says, as Sean turns his head so as not to see the tissue that Bev is pulling out of Wanda. “Just like the tissue from Benny.”

“Okay.” says Snooks. “Do your thing, and make it quick.”

“Terry!” Bev yells, as she leaves the pantry. “Are you ready?”

“I think so.” he answers.

“Where’s the separator plate?”

“Over there.” He answers, pointing to the MMAUI.

“Benny’s CMS only took twenty minutes at 30 GMH,” says Bev, as she places Wanda’s CMS on the plate and then into the MMAUI. “I’m sure I can safely go to 50 GMH and get it done in about ten to fifteen minutes.”

“Where’s Bill?” asks Snooks.

“He’s sitting on the porch,” answers Terry.

“After you get this started Bev, let’s all go out and sit with him,” says Sean.

“Professional advice?” asks Bev.

“No,” Sean answers. “I feel I’d really like to just sit down, out there, with all of you right now. Maybe he’s feeling the same way.”

They all go to the porch to find Bill sitting with his head resting in his hands. Not a word is spoken, until they hear the timer go off inside the house.

“I’ll check it,” Bev says. “You all go ahead and stay here.”

“I’ll go with you,” says Snooks. “For legal reasons, I don’t want anyone around the tissue without me being there as well.”

“Sure. I understand,” says Bev.

Sean and Terry move to either side of Bill, and stay with him as the girls go into the house.

“This is it,” Bev says, pulling the plate out of the MMAUI.

“That’s all of Wanda’s memories?” asks Snooks.

“Should be,” says Bev. She walks over to the instrument case and pulls out two hypodermics and a bottle of saline solution.

“It doesn’t seem like much,” remarks Snooks.

“Well, for Bill’s sake, this is enough,” Bev says, drawing the CMS into one of the hypos. “If it were much more, it’d be difficult to inject it all into Bill’s head.”

“Will this be painless for Bill?” asks Snooks.

“Let’s hope so,” answers Bev. “But then, the mice never said anything about how it felt.”

“Any physical reaction by the mice?”

“Just during the injection,” Bev says, now filling the other hypo with saline. “But there weren’t any side effects afterward.”

“Are you going to have Bill sign something first?” inquires Snooks, as they walk back out to the porch.

“No. I want Bill to be free to take any action he wants,” Bev says within earshot of Bill.

“Don’t anyone worry,” Bill says, lifting his head from his hands. “This is my own decision. I’m not going to be taking any action, except to find Wanda’s killer.”

“You ready then, Bill?” asks Bev.

“As I’ll ever be,” he answers.

“Let’s go in and start then,” Sean says, as they all head into the house.

“You lie here. . . on your stomach,” says Bev, pointing to the couch. “I don’t have any anesthetic, so this may hurt a bit.”

“I don’t think I can possibly hurt any more than I do right now,” he remarks, as he gets on the couch. “You have to go into the back of my head. Right?”

“Yes. Pretty far in,” Bev says with a bit of a wince.

“What are the chances that it’ll kill me?”

“All of the mice lived,” Bev answers, as she rubs alcohol on the back of Bill’s neck.

“So, if this were a time to be a man or a mouse. . . the choice would be mouse?”

“You bet, Bill,” says Terry.

“Well, here goes everthing,” Bev says, moving the needle towards Bill’s neck. “You ready Bill?”

“Set and go,” he answers.

“Maybe all of you should hold Bill down for this,” Bev suggests, as she pulls the needle away from Bill. “After I get this in, I don’t want him moving around, misdirecting the hypo.”

“I’ll hold his head,” says Sean.

“Shouldn’t we let Terry do that?” Snooks asks, noticing the size of Terry’s hands. “It seems he could get a better grip.”

“Well that grip wouldn’t mean much if he faints,” says Bev.

“True,” says Terry, “I’ll hold his arms.”

“I guess that leaves me the legs,” Snooks says, placing her whole body across the back of Bill’s legs.

“Ready.” says Terry, with his body now lying across Bill’s back.

“Me, too,” adds Sean.

“You think all this is necessary?” asks Bill, in a muffled voice from being squashed by his three friends.

“Let’s hope not,” says Bev, pausing for a moment. “I love you, Bill.”

“Thank you, Bev.”

“Dear Lord,” Bev prays, as she turns her palms up with the hypodermic showing, “please guide my hands, by Your will, to the proper area of our friend Bill.”

“AMEN!” the other four chime with Bill’s voice still muffled.

“Ow!” Bill mumbles, jerking his head a bit in Sean’s grasp.

“This ought to be the place,” Bev explains. “When I inject this, I would imagine that you’ll feel some pressure.”

“Uh huh,” he answers, as Bev unloads the contents of the first hypo into her friend.

“There, that’s all for that one,” Bev states, pulling the needle out of Bill and checking it for any CMS left over, “except for what’s in the needle.”

“What if that’s the CMS that we need?” asks Sean.

“I’ll use some saline to push out what’s left,” Bev answers, as she attaches the needle to a pre-filled hypodermic of saline. “Okay Bill. One more time.”

The group remains silent for a moment. After Bev pulls the needle out for the last time, they slowly lift themselves off of Bill.

“Okay, Bill?” Bev asks caringly.

“Yeah,” he replies, bringing his hand around to the area of the injection.

“How did it feel?” asks Terry.

“The needle hurt a bit,” he answers, “but nothing after that. How long do we have to wait now?”

“The mice were ready after about thirty minutes of sleep,” Bev says.

“If I put Bill under hypnosis now,” says Sean, “we may be able to catch anything that might get lost to regular sleep.”

“That sounds good,” says Bill. “I don’t want to miss anything important.”

“Well, then, turn over and I’ll put you under.”

“Ready,” says Bill, now on his back.

“Open your eyes,” Sean tells Bill, as he pulls out the rod-shaped stone that he uses for hypnosis. “Keep your eyes on the stone.”

“Gotcha,” he answers.

“Think of the most peaceful place that you’ve ever been,” says Sean, “and picture it on the stone. Look at the stone like a little viewer and see yourself at that spot.”

“I can see it,” Bill answers, a little surprised.

“Now, take a deep breath and follow the stone.” Sean begins to move the stone back and forth. “Lay back in this spot, close your eyes, and go to sleep there.”

“Yes,” Bill answers, as he lets out a relaxing sigh.

“Are you there now?”

“Yes.”

“Who are you?”

“Bill Corbett.”

“Bill. I want you to remember earlier today when you were at home--before coming out to the cabin.”

“Okay.”

“Tell me what comes to your mind first.”

“Where are the directions?” Bill asks. “They’re supposed to be on the table. Damn, Wanda must have forgotten to leave them,” Bill pauses a moment. “Oh , there they are, tacked on the door. Thank you, Honey.”

“Can you think ahead now, to when you were driving to the cabin?”

“There’s the turnoff. Now, look for the second road to the right, by the. . .” Bill pauses, with a confused look on his face. “Is this the road Denise?”

“Bill?” asks Sean. There’s no answer.

“Wanda?” asks Bev.

“Yes?” comes an answer from Bill. “Up on the right, by that big tree.”

“Where are you, Wanda?” asks Sean.

“We’re almost there.”

“Almost where?”

“How was Sean’s trip to South America?” Bill says as Wanda asking Denise.

“Sean was disappointed that he couldn’t go on the expedition with Armand,” Bill continues with Denise’s answer.

“Wanda,” Sean asks. “Is that just you with Denise?”

“Yes,” comes the answer. “Denise said that there was something that disturbed her about what Sean had told her about Armand. . .that he was independently wealthy through inheritance.”

“Yes. I told that to Denise,” Sean says.

“He had to work his way through college, because he was an orphan.”

“That’s odd,” whispers Terry.

“Why would he tell you that?” Bev asks, turning to Sean.

“Anything else?” Sean asks Bill.

“I’ll start cleaning up.” Bill relays again. “You go to the store and get something to eat.”

“Where are you?” asks Sean.

“In the cabin with Denise.”

“Who’s going to the store?” Sean continues.

“I am.”

“Wanda?” asks Sean.

“Yes?”

“Are you going to the store?”

“I’m getting the things out of the car.”

“Which car?” Snooks asks in a whisper.

“Which car?” Sean repeats to Bill.

“Denise’s.”

“I know that you were at the store,” says Sean. “The clerk told me.”

“No!” Bill yells.

“You weren’t at the store?” asks Terry.

“Who the hell is that?” Bill asks.

“What!” Sean asks. “What do you see?”

“Get away from Denise!” Bill yells, his breathing now very rapid.

“Wanda. . .Bill. Slow down,” commands Sean. “Take a deep breath and relax.”

“A man,” Bill says, after the deep breath, “in a dark coat.” Bill is wincing as if straining to see something. “The car. . . the one at the end of Denise’s driveway.”

“What car?” asks Snooks.

“The police? He’s got Denise,” Bill continues. “No. It’s not the police! He’s trying to kill Denise.”

“Who?” asks Sean.

“Stop it!” Bill yells, shoving his hand into the air in a mimic of Wanda honking the horn. “Oh no! He’s coming this way.”

“What’s happening?” whispers Terry to Sean .

“The mace. Where’s the mace?” Bill asks, pulling his head back in a quick jerky motion, and then back and forth a couple of times. “No! Wanda, no!”

“What happened?” Sean asks, as Bill sits up and opens his eyes, seeming to come out of the hypnosis.

“He killed Wanda,” sobs Bill, now in an almost totally awakened state. “The last thing I saw was Denise running to the car and taking off. She must have thought that I . . .I mean Wanda, was already dead, but. . .but *he* killed my wife!”

“Do you know who it was?” asks Snooks.

“No. I’ve never seen him before.”

“What about Wanda?” Bev asks. “Did she recognize him?”

“No.” Bill answers, “at least, I don’t think so.”

“What did he look like?” asks Snooks.

“Yeah. Could you see him?” asks Terry.

“Yes,” Bill answers. “He looked odd. He had sandy hair and his beard was all different colors.”

“A calico beard!” gasps Sean.

“Yeah! Calico,” says Bill, “like a multi-colored cat on his face.”

“What does that mean?” asks Snooks, turning to Sean.

“Armand Stevens,” says Sean.

“The professor?” asks Bev.

“Yes,” answers Sean. “He’s the only other one who knows about what we’ve . . . that is,” looking to Bev. “What you’ve been doing with the mice and the memory.”

“If he knows,” says Snooks, “then there may be others as well.”

“Especially if he has been getting funding from. . .” Bev is cut short by Bill.

“No!” Bill yells.

“What’s wrong Bill?” asks Sean.

“Wanda!” He continues yelling and holding his head. “Stop it!”

“What’s happening?” asks Terry.

“He’s choking her. . . it hurts. . . No! No!”

“Bill!” Sean commands loudly. “Lie down!”

“Yes,” Bill answers, lying down on the couch like an obedient puppy and not making a sound. He closes his eyes.

“What just happened, Sean?” asks Terry.

“Bill wasn’t out of hypnosis yet,” answers Sean. “I’m sorry. That’s my fault. I should have noticed.”

“So, what now?” asks Bev.

“We need to find the professor,” says Snooks.

“Maybe we should set a trap,” suggests Terry.

“That might be too dangerous,” replies Snooks. “We know that he’s willing to kill.”

“We can ask Wanda,” says Sean. “She saw the car.”

“So,” remarks Bev, “how will you do that?”

“If I can slow Bill down, maybe Wanda saw enough of the license plate.”

“Do you have any idea of Bill’s condition now?” asks Snooks.

“Let’s find out,” Sean says, sitting down next to Bill.

“It sounded as if he’s having a lot of Wanda’s memories flooding in,” remarks Bev.”

“Can you imagine what it must be like to know everything that someone else ever thought?” asks Terry.

“That’s a heavy dose of the truth to handle,” Snooks adds.

“So...” Sean starts to ask, turning to Snooks. “Has this convinced you about memory transfer?”

“It does me!” says Terry.

“You get me the license number, and we catch this guy. . . then I’ll be convinced,” answers Snooks.

“Bill?” asks Sean, turning back to the couch. “Where are you now?”

“Is he asleep?” asks Terry after Bill doesn’t respond.

“Wanda?” asks Sean.

“Yes,” answers Bill.

“Are you okay? Where are you?”

“Home,” answers Bill. “Mom’s got a new dress and Dad is yelling at her.”

“How old are you?”

“Fifteen,” Bill answers. “Don’t hit Mom. You’re making her cry.”

“Wanda,” Sean says, “I need you to go to sleep now. Go to your room and lie down for a nap.”

“Okay,” says Bill.

“Are you in bed now?” Sean asks.

“Yes.”

“Now go to sleep,” Sean commands.

“Okay.”

“Do you remember leaving Denise at our cabin to go to the store in Cannon Beach?” Sean asks, to bring Bill back to Wanda’s recent memory.

“Yes.”

“You were there today and left Denise at the cabin.”

“Yes. I’m getting some food for dinner.”

“Then you started to drive back to the cabin.”

“Yes.”

“I want you to drive very slowly back to the cabin.”

“Okay.”

“Can you see the ocean?”

“Yes.”

“Tell me when you can see the cabin for the first time.”

Bill is silent for a few seconds. “Okay. There’s the cabin.”

“Now stop.”

“Stop?”

“Yes,” answers Sean. “Can you see the car outside of the cabin?”

“Yes. It’s the one that was at the end of Denise’s driveway.”

“Move very slowly toward the cabin.”

“There he is!” Bill cries. “He’s grabbing Denise.”

“I need you to look at the car again.”

“No! Stop!”

“Wanda. Please. Look closely at the car.”

“It’s not a police car. Who is that?”

“Wanda. Can you see the license plate?”

“Yes, It’s a Washington plate.”

“Can you read it?”

“Yes. It’s GTR 482.”

“Tommy,” Snooks says into the radio, “start an APB on Washinton plate. George, Thomas, Robert, 4,8,2.”

“And, it looks like a rental car,” Bill continues.

“Tommy?” Snooks starts again. “Check Washington rentals for the past week or so.”

“The car is dark blue,” Bill says, squinting his eyes as if to get a better look. “and it has four doors.

“Dark blue, four-door,” Snooks adds.

“I wonder if he saw us leave the cabin to come here!” says Bev.

“I suppose there’s a chance,” says Snooks. “But I think we got out of there in time. If he had driven fast enough to make it back to the cabin, he would have been noticed on the highway.”

“Detective Barany?” the voice asks over the radio.

“Go ahead,” she answers.

“We had a report of a vehicle fitting that description speeding north on PCH, 45 minutes ago,” the voice says. “We sent out unit 53, but the vehicle was gone.”

“Then it’s possible he could have followed us here,” says Terry.

“Tommy?” Snooks asks. “Do you have anyone in this area?”

“Yes, 53 is just a few minutes away.”

“Send it to my place.”

“If he did follow us, he would have done something by now. Wouldn’t he?” asks Terry.

“Maybe not,” says Bev. “If he saw us take off from the cabin, he might have figured out what we were going to do.”

“Quite right,” comes a voice from somewhere in the house. Armand steps out of the dark of the hallway, gun in hand. “This has been very interesting. If you would please hand over your gun,” he says holding his hand out to Snooks.

“If you’ve been listening to us,” says Snooks, “why did you let me make the calls to the station?”

“There won’t be any cars coming out this way,” Armand answers. “At least not for quite a while.”

“Lieutenant Barany,” says Tommy over the radio. “I’m not able to reach unit 53.”

“Tell him that you’ve got everything covered here,” commands Armand.

“He’ll get suspicious,” Snooks answers. “It would be proper for me to request another unit.”

“Okay, but tell him that it’s no rush,” says Armand.

“Then send unit 54,” she says into the radio, “but it’s no hurry.”

“I’ll need your keys, Beverly,” Armand says. “It is Beverly isn’t it?”

“Yes,” she answers, “but what makes you think. . .”

“Wanda!” Bill yells. “Why didn’t you ever tell me?”

“Bill listen to me now!” commands Sean, moving toward the couch.

“Stay right where you are, Sean,” says Armand, as he lifts the gun to eye level and aims it at Sean.

“Bill is assimilating his wife’s memories,” Sean says, putting his hands in the air over his head. “We need to get him out of the hypnosis.”

“The assimilation seems to be driving him mad,” says Bev.

“I think I’d go mad too. . .If I had all your memories,” Terry says, as he moves a little closer to Bev.

“You put ALL of the memories into Bill?” asks Armand.

“Yes,” answers Bev, now trying to move a little more behind Terry.

“Why do you ask that?” asks Sean.

“Oh, Wanda,” cries Bill, “I never meant that to hurt you so much. . . why didn’t you tell me?”

“The least you could do is let Sean get Bill out of the hypnosis,” says Snooks.

“You must not have read the notes Benny had about the CMS going back through the machine,” says Armand. “If you put all of the memories into Bill. . .I might as well shoot him now and put him out of his misery.”

“You’re talking about the notes you stole from the lab?” asks Snooks.

“You’re worried now that he stole some lousy notes?” remarks Terry.

“Those notes would have shown you how to put the CMS back though the machine and separate the most recent memories from those that are older,” Armand says, acting pleased with himself. “You could have saved him the torture of reliving the entire mind of his wife.”

“Why would you care so much about this, that you would be willing to kill people for it,” asks Snooks, trying to draw a confession from Armand while he was in this arrogant mood.

“Pulling the memories out of an Einstein or a Schwartzkopf and giving them to someone who can use them more, shall we say effectively, can be very profitable.”

“You got your funding from someone who wants to use this for manipulating others,” says Bev. “Didn’t you?”

“Let’s just say that this process you’ve put together is going to save me a lot of time and make me a very wealthy and powerful person.”

“You can’t be kidding yourself into believing that you’ll get away with any of this,” Snooks remarks.

“She’s right,” adds Terry, very matter-of-factly. “Too many people know you’re here. Even if you kill us all and drive away, the authorities know who you are and what kind of car you’re driving.”

“The people I deal with can take care of any authorities that might get in my way,” Armand says, as the sound of a helicopter is heard in the distance. “In fact, there’s my ride now. I’ll need your help for just a few more things before I decide whether or not to kill all of you.”

“Are you trying to say that if we behave ourselves, you may let us live?” asks Sean.

“Maybe. . .Maybe not,” Armand answers flippantly. “I need Bev to carefully pack up the equipment and Sean, you can go ahead and do what you need to do to quiet Bill down.”

Bev packs the MMAUI back into its box and sloppily tosses the rest of the things in, on top of the machine, in a way that lets Armand know how frustrated and angry she is. The helicopter is now very loud just outside the house. Terry helps Bev move the box toward the door.

“I’ll have you come with me to the chopper,” Armand says, motioning to Snooks with the gun.”

“That’s him!” says Bill, as he awakens from the hypnosis. “He’s the one who choked Wanda to death.”

“I’m very aware of that, Bill,” says Sean, gritting his teeth and turning toward Armand. “Unfortunately he also is the one with the gun. And you must have been the private plane that held us up at the airport in Brasilia”

“Most likely Sean. But enough talking gentlemen,” Armand says. “I’ll need you both to get into the bathroom over there.”

“What, you don’t want to make a mess out here?” Sean quips, as he and Bill move into the bathroom.

“Why ruin a perfectly good rug,” Armand replies facetiously. “Now move before I decide to change the color of the rug anyway.” Armand jams a chair against the door while keeping the gun trained on the others. “Now you three stay right where you are while I get to the door.”

“Do you realize what you’re giving to these people?” asks Bev. “This could cause havoc all over, with people trying to steal the thoughts of others.”

“You just let me worry about that, and bring that box outside,” Armand says, pushing open the door with his back. “Get a little closer and follow me out.”

Just as he opens the door, two policemen grab Armand and force the gun out of his hand. They throw him to the floor and cuff him before he can utter no more than an ‘oooph’ as he hits the porch floor.

“How in the hell could you have gotten past our chopper?” Armand yells at the police.

“We *are* the chopper,” One of the two men inform him. “Your people are being chased by the Coast Guard right now.”

“Unit 54 *is* our helicopter unit,” Snooks tells Armand. “It doesn’t look like your people are going to do you much good now. . .does it!”

“You don’t realize what you’ve got here.” Says Armand. “We can bring back the greatest minds in history, if their memories are still in tact. Pharoes, kings, philosophers. We can re-write history.

“Let me have him for a while...” yells Bill, as he comes through the bathroom door that Terry has just opened. With one of his arms held by Sean he continues to say, “just long enough to show him what it was like for Wanda when he strangled her.”

“Don’t worry Bill,” says Snooks, “where he’s going he’ll be able to accumulate plenty of painful memory strands.”

“Bev,” Bill says, as Sean lets go of his arm, “there’s got to be some way of taking these memories of Wanda being strangled, and putting them into that asshole. Let *him* live with this nightmare for the rest of *his* life.”

“I wish that there was a way, Bill,” she answers. “I can’t think of a more fitting punishment. As far as bringing back kings Armand, we can leave that to fate just as it is now. Passed down through the food chain”

“I don’t know Bev. I think we might be on to something here,” Snooks says. “Maybe we’ve stumbled on to the proper use of this process of yours. Sentence the murderers to re-live the terror they caused to the victim.”

“There’re still the memories from Benny,” says Sean.

“And maybe his girlfriend,” adds Terry.

“Well, I think I’m going to have enough trouble explaining this one,” Snooks laughs. “But I like the idea of letting this nut go crazy watching himself strangling himself!”

“I guess it’d be kind of like Instant Karma,” jokes Bev. “You know but with a C.”

“How appropriate!” Snooks says, as she leads Armand and the policemen to her car. In the house she hears a faint chorus of oohhs, coming from the two men, over Bev’s bad Pun.

The end of the beginning.