

**MEMOIR OF A MODERN MYSTIC**

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I never saw the world the same way as others did. Then again neither would have anyone else. From an early age I was always fascinated by the supernatural and spent a lot of time playing in my room by myself. I never actually believed in such supernatural things until after high school when the supernatural world invaded my mind like when butter meets a hot knife. It's been an arduous, frightening and utterly confusing journey of the spirit that will never cease to perpetuate.

According to the critics, the ability that I possess is usually called "aura perception," but I came to it after perusing various other courses of occult practises. My first encounter with the other side was when I bought a set of Viking runes at the age of six. It took me quite a while to realise, exactly what I was tampering with, but I managed proficiency with the runes before leaving high school. I didn't think much of them then and mainly used them for divination purposes.

After high school I moved out of home into an inner city boarding house, and soon became accustomed to the occult. I lived with a crazy man who read Tarot cards, and as I would later find out, was an auric viewer too. In a way he took me under his wing and opened my mind to the possibilities apparent in the universe. I remember the first one of these encounters vividly,

"So do you believe in the supernatural or something?" I asked, "Like vampires and werewolves and so such things?"

“Yeah!” he replied ever so promptly, “I was abducted by a UFO once; three beings of light that were standing over my sister’s bed when we were on holiday told me that it was going to happen!”

His straight forwardness about the whole situation shocked and intrigued me immensely. Over the next nine months our relationship slowly degenerated into that of a symbiotic one. We’re both Cancerians so half as much is expected. Aside from shocking me out of my comfortable little world of a very distant yet omnipresent god, this character had little to do in the way of awakening my sense of Magic at that point in time.

I didn’t call it Magic at first, instead it was announced as a name consisting of many very long and technical nouns, that more or less meant the same thing. Time-space-synchronicity-hyper-consciousness-manipulation; I think it went something like that. The reason for this was largely due to my retention to thinking in terms of underdeveloped scientific theory on the matter, too bad I never became a scientist like I thought I would.

My first encounter with psychic phenomena was with a friend’s housemate who’d baked his brain on too much acid at music festival. I noticed he had a big violet book that extensively covered the subject of Wicca sorcery. When I asked him about it we ended up delving deep into a discussion about the energy of nature. He was the first person to introduce me to the aura. He taught me how to sense it with my hands by hovering them over the houseplants on the table. I felt a magnetic force, like the same sensation that you get when two like ends of a magnet are pressed together, except that it was much, much fainter, and could be broken at any moment from too much physical force being applied.

I was fascinated by my new ability and hence spent whatever available time I had experimenting with all different kinds of energy fields. I tried on crystals, trees, animals and people, and found animals to be the most responsive, as people tended to ignore me or chase me away with sticks. My enthusiasm leaked out of me like a fountain and I tried to show what I felt with my hands to every second person I met. After more scepticism and ridicule than I was prepared to handle coming from other human beings I eventually convinced myself out of believing in its existence altogether.

I descended rapidly into depression, like falling through the levels of hell, it seemed that with the magic of the aura faded from my life, so too did everything else good fade away. I lost my girlfriend; I lost my job; my university marks were dwindling; and I survived on cigarettes, marijuana and vanilla coke. I was not at all happy; I lived in a pot-induced haze clinging desperately to a false sense of alienation that made me think that there was magic in the world.

As soon as the semester ended, I moved back to my home town into a house with some friends of mine. I had no job, and a drug habit that slowly drained away my savings account. I savoured some of this time to rebuild my beliefs concerning the aura, although I refrained from sensing it with my hands. I took up sketching and would practise drawing people and scenes that came vividly to my mind. From what I understood, I had experienced a kind of awakening. I tried my hand at lucid dreaming and astral travel and for the most part I succeeded. My failing grace was that, I couldn't accept it as real to myself, unless someone else believed me.

Before too long, my money ran out and I forced myself into a routine of discipline and meditation to make survival a little easier. I could rarely afford the drugs I used to take, so I simply cut back the dosage. I started reading spiritual texts, such as *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* and *The Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment* and for the first time my life felt like it was all falling into place.

I first started to *see* auras under the influence of drugs. I'd smoke some pot, sit in my kitchen and stare at my housemates as enormous cocoons of colourful light danced around their forms. I'd try to read it but I was just amazed by the phenomenon to say anything or think too much about it. Much like a child watching his father play with a train set, it was amusing but pointless.

The New Year came around and I needed to move out and get my life back on track. At this time of house hunting, I jumped on the band wagon with two of my housemates. We had aid from a psychic friend who was also moving to the same city. The night before our last day of house hunting she called we told her about a house that had a really creepy room out the back, and that we still had another to look at the next day. I remember she told us specifically, "Make sure that you apply for that house tomorrow. I'm getting a really bad vibe from that first one with the creepy room." We were a little perplexed at this at first, there was no way we thought that we could get the house, there were more people at the inspection than we thought we had a chance of succeeding against. "If you get it," she continued, "then it's proven that I am psychic." I was confident in her abilities before we ended up with the house, but now, things were starting to get a little weird. I had always believed that anyone who attempted a prediction was doomed to failure and now I live in a house that is apparently destined for me.

She still visits our house; she's become a spiritual mentor and cognitive therapist for us. She'll stop by to clear out any negative energy that coagulates in the corners of the house. I practised viewing disembodied auras by looking into said corners to judge whether or not there was too much of a negativity build up. If there was I'd neutralise it with a smudging technique using sage smoke.

At the beginning of it all, it seemed just too unreal to believe, it was like we were all just acting out parts in a live big brother show. Before too long words like chakra, entities, attachments and smudging were all integral parts of our vocabularies.

I thought little of it at first, and instead developed my ability to open up and close down certain chakras on command. This had taken me fairly far and I found my physical strength compounded upon itself, I started lifting my body from lotus position into a handstand and practising vertical push ups. Suffice to say, I was rather proud of myself.

Then came one fateful day when I decided to attempt auric viewing on people in the streets. I was in the middle of the city square right next to the speakers' corner where all the raving evangelists attempt to convert the masses. Bear in mind the city I live in was originally founded by a Tyrant and is apparently the most haunted city in Australia. I sat listening to him speak, smoking a cigarette meanwhile Gothic kids snuck up behind him and attempted back-door penetration with pool noodles for phalluses. I used to be vaguely Christian and somewhat gothic myself, so I could empathise with both sides of the coin but I was really impressed by the preacher's conviction and tolerance toward those little shits of kids.

I remember putting myself in his shoes, actually consciously reaching out to him to try and grasp what it was that gave him the strength to stand before a stage of ignorant masses and ridiculous heathens and still try to save these people's souls in the only way he knew. I thought about it for a moment. Then it hit me and I understood the scope of compassion that this man had, I looked up at him and surrounding his body, emanating from the ground up was a shimmering field of bright purple. Around his throat descending over and down his chest was a smear of blue. The colours were clear as day but I had no idea what it meant. I panicked and ran away home, my gaze fixed on my shoes for the whole journey. I was overjoyed yet intensely anxious all at once. I didn't know how to break the news or who would even believe me. So for a while I just stayed silent.

I read many books about the aura, desperate to hone my ability further. During my university lectures, I gave up on taking notes, instead opting to just watch my lecturer's aura and attempt to decipher their lesson from their personal perspective of them that I witnessed in their aura. I found that the more my skill grew, the deeper I understood the real meaning behind 'old wife's tales' with phrases like: "beside yourself with compassion," I see a white misty silhouette of the person in question that is literally standing beside them.

My housemate introduced me to a series of books about Native American Indian Shamanism, written by Carlos Castaneda which I devoured like a hungry wolf. It seemed that my ability was also described in these books by referring to people as 'luminous beings'. They went on to describe the different layers of light that surround a person like concentric cocoons. I identified the description as what I was eye witness to and recognised as the aura.

These days I've become more comfortable with my abilities although I still keep to myself about it. Most people aren't at all comfortable with the idea of thoughts flying around them that can be read. All I have to say about that is, 'you can see them too if you weren't so damn paranoid about it that you force yourself into disbelief'. I've realised that seeing the aura is but the first step down a path of mysticism that, it seems, I'm destined to practise in this lifetime. I'm still learning but the universe is unravelling in a way that I never thought possible. I've been thrown into Narnia and someone's locked the cupboard door from the outside.