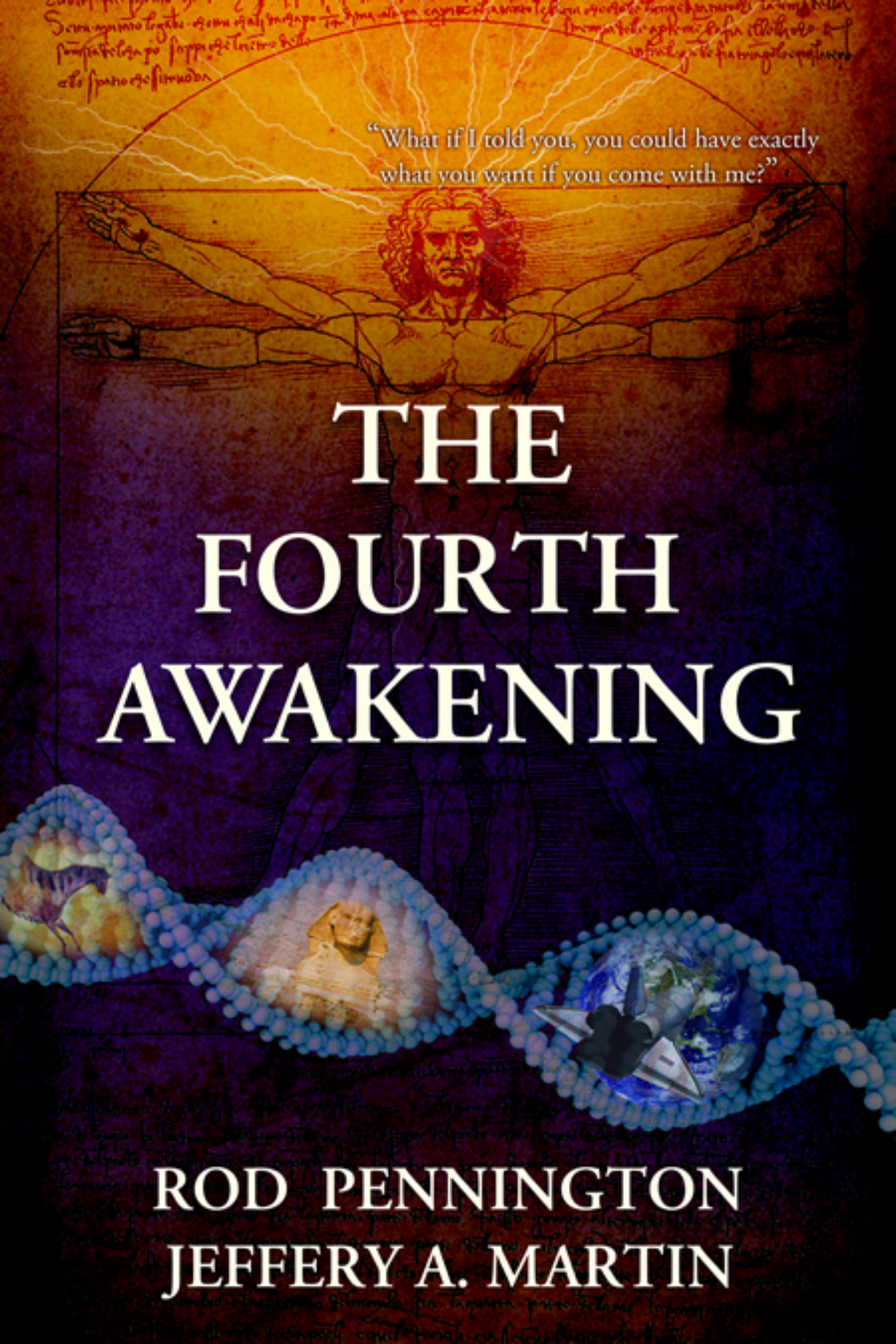


*Scia quanto grande è il potere della mente umana. Se tu capisci la mente, capisci la vita. Se tu capisci la vita, capisci il mondo. Se tu capisci il mondo, capisci il destino.*

"What if I told you, you could have exactly what you want if you come with me?"



# THE FOURTH AWAKENING

ROD PENNINGTON  
JEFFERY A. MARTIN

## THE FOURTH AWAKENING

Copyright © 2009 by Rod Pennington and Jeffery A. Martin

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

Integration Press  
2245 C Ashley Crossing Drive - Suite 102  
Charleston, South Carolina 29414

ISBN: 1-57242-000-6

EAN: 978-1-57242-000-7

Library of Congress Control Number: 2009926636

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Cover Designed by Cathi Stevenson  
Interior Designed by Gwen Gades

# THE FOURTH AWAKENING



Rod Pennington

&

Jeffery A. Martin

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

*"It is not the answer that enlightens, but the question."*

EUGENE IONESCO

"THAT SOUNDS PRETTY ominous."

Walker laughed. "The Fourth Awakening is a natural progression in human development and shouldn't be feared or misunderstood. One of the reasons we sought you out was because you could explain what is going on in language that could be understood by the average person on the street."

"You win, we'll do background first, but I want to establish a few ground rules."

"Such as?"

"No psychobabble or New Age gibberish. I want the five "W's. Who, what, when, where and why."

"I can work with that."

"I'm not done. I need verifiable facts, and not opinions or interpretations based on divine intervention or the reading of tea leaves."

"Fair enough."

"One more," Penelope said with a sideways glance. "If I ask a direct question, could you at least pretend to give me a direct answer?"

A broad smile broke across Walker's face. "Just because you haven't understood an answer doesn't mean it wasn't direct."

"I thought your goal was to reach as broad an audience as possible? If it is too dense for me to translate then we're both wasting our time."

“Fair point,” Walker answered with a sigh. “I’ll try to rein in my enthusiasm. If I lose you anywhere, let me know.” Walker waited for an acknowledgement, which he got in the form of a nod, before continuing. “We are on the cusp of the Fourth Awakening of mankind...”

Penelope chuckled softly. “Here we go.”

“What now?”

“How many times have you practiced this?”

“Is it that obvious?”

“Oh yeah.”

“What was the giveaway?”

“You used the exact same phrase a minute ago and for the first time since I met you, it sounded like you were reading off of a teleprompter. Why the prepared speech?”

“It is critical that you grasp the historical perspective. Without an understanding of what happened previously will be difficult to fully grasp what’s happening now. We need you to see the big picture.”

“You’ve obviously given this a lot of thought, and you did buy me a nice dinner.” Penelope leaned back in her seat and folded her arms across her chest. “The least I can do is listen to your little presentation. Please, proceed.”

Walker glanced sideways at Penelope and cleared his throat. “We are on the cusp of the Fourth Awakening of mankind. During these transition periods the entire fabric of societal structures changes and a new way of thinking emerges that is completely revolutionary and results in the abandonment of old ideas and methods of functioning both individually and collectively making it impossible to ever return to the old way of thinking.” Walker glanced over at Spence and saw that she was staring at him with her mouth open. “What?” he asked.

“Who wrote this for you?”

“I did, with the help of some of the academics at the Hermes project.”

“Academic, huh? That explains it.”

“Explains what?”

“I don’t think I’ve heard a sentence that long since college. It does show you are absolutely right about one thing.”

“What would that be?”

“If that’s the best you can come up with; you guys really need some help telling your story.”

"If you think this is bad," Walker said with a laugh. "You should have heard some of the earlier drafts."

Penelope shivered slightly. "I've run across tons of people who believe that just because they got over 700 on their English SAT when they were seventeen it automatically made them the next Hemingway."

"I've seen some of that first hand recently," Walker answered. "What do you suggest?"

"Since I'm a reporter, we could try the interview format. I ask a few questions. We'll see if you have it within your powers to give me some straight answers. Which, by the way, the jury is still out on."

"Hmm," Walker answered as he fixed his eyes on the road.

"Oh, don't get pouty," Penelope said as she rested her hand on Walker's arm. "I'll make you a deal. We try it my way for awhile and I'll promise to read every word of your little speech."

"And view the PowerPoint?"

"Yes, I'll even watch the PowerPoint."

"Okay. Where do you want to start?"

"You claim the Fourth Awakening is upon us; since this is all new to me you'll need to define what constitutes an Awakening."

"I thought I just did."

"Let's try it again, maybe with punctuation this time."

"Okay. An Awakening occurs whenever there is a major shift in people and the way they view the world around them."

"For example."

"For example when humanity moved from compact familial groups of hunter gathers to the first non-family based small farming communities. From there we moved to even more complex social orders such as city and nation states. Once you've gone from a cave to a hut to indoor plumbing, there is no going back."

"I guess there is a certain logic to that. Why do you call them Awakenings?"

"Are you a morning person?"

"Yes. Annoyed the heck out of the rest of the family. My ex-husband was one of those three cups of coffee before you can talk to me kind of guys. Why?"

"That's a perfect example."

"Perfect example of what?"

“Of one reason I decided to call it an Awakening.”

Penelope sighed and shook her head. “We were running along fine there for a few minutes then suddenly you go off the rails again.”

Walker laughed and a broad grin covered his face. “The point is people wake up at different rates. Some bounce out of bed at their best while others have to shake off the cobwebs. Some wake up at the crack of dawn while others sleep in until noon. This is exactly what happens in an Awakening. There is an adjustment period before everyone gets on the same page.”

“Oh,” Penelope said while shaking her finger at Walker. “I get it. Some people take longer to adjust to the dawning of a new day than others.”

Walker continued on. “The big question, as you have so artfully pointed out, is how to put this into language that will resonate with the most people. Some of the folks at the compound wanted me to use the currently accepted names for the eras but I didn’t think it would fly with the general public.”

“Currently accepted by whom?”

“Some of the most enlightened minds of our time.”

“I suppose that would include you?” Walker shrugged but didn’t answer. Penelope thought for a moment then asked, “Out of morbid curiosity what did these enlightened minds call these eras?”

“The first era, pre-200,000 BCE, is referred to as the Archaic Structure. After the First Awakening came the Magical Structure which was followed by the Mythical Structure...”

“Ha!” Penelope said with a short laugh. “I guess these folks were all Beatles fan.”

“Where did that come from?”

“Sounds like you guys were having your own personal Magical Mythical tour.”

“You have a very interesting thought processes.”

“Thanks.”

Walker grimaced slightly. “That wasn’t a compliment.” They both laughed.

“With that level of verbal craftsmanship,” Penelope said. “I can’t imagine why you guys don’t have people knocking down your doors begging for more.”

“Actually there is a large body of supporting work and some truly outstanding books on this subject. Jean Gebser’s *The Ever Present Origin*.

Allan Combs' *The Radiance of Being*. Ken Wilber's *Up from Eden*. I'll get you a reading list if you'd like."

"Maybe later. Did they help with your little prepared remarks?"

"I wish," Walker said while shaking his head. "Gebser is dead so unless we have a séance he's not available. As for the others, with every spy agency in the world looking for the Hermes Project we didn't dare try to contact them. I was afraid to even go through Walker Industries' PR department. That left me with a bunch of lab rats and PhD physicists to help me write this."

"Oh my. Do you think Combs and Wilber could have done better?"

"Absolutely. When you read their stuff you'll understand. They are gifted writers who could have put this into language that even a reporter could understand."

"Hey!" Penelope said in mock protest. Walker shot Penelope a knowing glance but didn't reply. Puzzled, Penelope asked, "What was that look for?"

"When you read their work, you'll understand."

"Whatever," Penelope said. "I think your instincts are spot on about using the Awakening language over the era structure thingy. That's a very elegant way of describing all of this."

"Excellent."

"What kind of a time-frame are we looking at for these Awakenings to completely take hold?"

"It can be hundreds if not thousands of years."

"Thousands of years?"

"Yes. After the first Awakening the adjustment period was over 100,000 years."

"Really? Why so long?"

"There are a lot of factors that can affect the amount of time it takes for an Awakening to be fully engaged. While the progress is always ongoing, environment, weather, geography, food supply and other outside forces have always played a role in human development. Plus, there is the inherent nature of the Awakenings themselves."

"What does that mean?"

"Around the time everyone is just getting used to the current Awakening, the next one starts and the cycle repeats itself."

"The early risers are on a different page than the night owls?"

"Essentially that's correct. Everyone develops at their own pace."



"I see," Penelope said as she rubbed her chin. "What happened 200,000 years ago that merited the First Awakening?"

"That was when Homo sapiens are thought to have emerged in East Africa."

"I guess that would qualify as a pretty big change."

Walker nodded. "Progress in human development was pretty slow back then. It took around 150,000 years before the next Awakening and that is when things started to get interesting."

"Interesting?"

"Are you familiar with Joseph Campbell?"

"Are you kidding? I went to an Ivy League college when he was in his heyday. I stood in the rain for two hours to get tickets to hear him speak."

"Excellent," Walker said as he nodded his approval. "Then just imagine this Second Awakening being the canvas he used as the background for his *Power of the Myth* theory. Spoken language emerged during the time of the early shamans, and great myths were told around the campfire. For the first time, early humans became self aware and while still considering themselves a part of nature they understood they were somehow different."

"What does that mean?"

"We began to explore our spiritual side through myth and the creation of Gods and other unseen forces to explain things we didn't yet understand. Most importantly we became aware of our own mortality. We started to fear death and began to seek a deeper understanding of the cycle of life and how it applied to us."

"How did you conclude that?"

"We started to develop increasingly complex rituals of burying our dead to prepare them for the afterlife."

"Your proof?"

"We moved from simple burial sites during the First Awakening to those big pointy things in the deserts in Egypt in the Second. I would say that is a pretty impressive progression."

"Pointy things? The pyramids?"

"Sure. The ancient Egyptians are thought to have believed the soul would survive as long as the body survived. The body was preserved and wrapped in linen in case the owner happened to return for it later. They put food and gold in with the mummies in case they got hungry or

needed cash. Have you ever heard of the terracotta army in China at the grave of the first emperor?"

"I've seen that in person. It's amazing."

"A very different burial ritual but easily on the same scale as the pyramids."

"Interesting."

"Interesting indeed. But without an incredible number of things happening around 14,000 years ago we probably wouldn't be here talking."

"I'll bite. What happened 14,000 years ago?"

"In the middle of the Second Awakening the last great ice age ended and we had the perfect storm for human development."

"And?"

"And, people were physically and mentally in position to take advantage of it."

"Take advantage of what?"

"As the planet warmed it became much more hospitable for human development. Early humans were able to plant crops and keep livestock which allowed for larger fixed population centers. As the food supply grew and became more predictable there was a population explosion in *Homo sapiens* just as our primary rivals disappeared."

Penelope made a face and slowly shook her head. "Do you work at being obtuse or is that just your default mode?"

"What?" Walker asked.

"Who were our rivals?"

"During the Second Awakening," Walker answered. "*Homo sapiens* were one of three high intelligence species. The Neanderthals vanished around 30,000 years ago and *Cro-Magnon* became extinct right around the time of the great thaw."

"Do you think early *Homo sapiens* did them in?"

Walker shrugged. "What exactly caused their demise is the subject of great debate but as always the winners get to write the history books. The romantic theory is the smarter more nimble *Homo sapiens* squeezed out first the dumb lumbering Neanderthals then the *Cro-Magnon*. You can still see that theory everyday in bad insurance ads on television. Considering that *Cro-Magnon* had nearly the same brain capacity as us and was bigger and stronger, it is impossible to say what happened. The key point is *Homo sapiens* were ready to seize the opportunity. And they

did.” Walker smiled and glanced over at Penelope with a twinkle in his eyes. “More importantly, we had the first irrefutable proof that we’re all connected through thought.”

“What is your irrefutable proof?”

“Art for one...”

“Art?”

“Yes. Art is always a good indicator of an Awakening firmly taking hold. In the middle of the Second Awakening we saw rudimentary art in the form of cave drawings and crude figurines.”

“Where is your proof?”

“The famous Chauvet and Lascaux caves in France. The Aboriginal Ubirr wall art in Australia. There was the Pachmarhi Hills in India. The Apollo 11 and Wonderwerk Caves in southern Africa. Fell’s Cave at the tip of South America. Is that enough for you?”

Penelope looked at Walker and shrugged. “Enough of what?”

“All of this art was produced at roughly the same time and all are very similar. How do you explain people in every corner of the world who didn’t even know the others existed all having the same thought at roughly the same time if we’re not all connected in some way?”

Penelope rubbed her chin again. “It could have been a coincidence,” she said without much conviction.

“That was my third choice right behind an alien invasion populating the planet,” Walker said with a laugh. “Plus there are many others.”

“Such as?”

“Metallurgy, ship building, planting and harvesting crops, and astrology to name a few. They all emerged at around the same time worldwide in roughly the same forms. During the last part of the Second Awakening the changes in mankind were stunning. In only a few thousand years humans went from grunting cave dwellers living in small groups to building city-states and writing epic poems. Completely independent of each other, many cultures around the world went through their own Bronze Age and Iron Age at approximately the same moment. This is a clear example of the universal consciousness.” The look on Penelope’s face told Walker she was not convinced.

“So you’re saying some kind of universal light bulb suddenly clicked on 14,000 years ago?”

“It was already on; it just got a whole lot brighter. That’s what happens

when there is an Awakening; everything changes. Something triggers the change but it can take centuries for all of the rough edges to be smoothed away. From a purely clinical perspective, emerging humans had the brain capacity for hundreds of thousands of years for this type of development but, in my opinion, it took a change in the global climate to trigger the event.”

“So,” Penelope said with a sideways bemused glance. “You’re saying this Second Awakening was caused by Global Warming?”

Walker chuckled and shook his head. “Considering the amount of emotion in that phrase these days, I don’t think I would call it Global Warming. But, that is essentially correct. Plus there were internal changes in humans.”

“Such as.”

“No longer having to live a hand to mouth existence, we began to turn inward and became more spiritual. As we tried to understand our place in the universe we saw the emergence of a shaman or priest class that was held in high regard in these new social structures. Elaborate rituals were created. Cats started liking us...”

“Cats? What?”

“Until this period, cats wouldn’t have anything to do with humans. That was a big step in our evolution.”

“Cats?”

“Yes.” Penelope’s mouth opened, but she thought better of it and motioned for Walker to continue. “Cats are some of the most instinctive animals on the planet. When they sensed that we had changed, they started to allow us to live with them.”

“Allowed us to live with them?”

“You’re not a cat person then?”

“No.”

“Ahh.”

“Ahh, what?”

“Something else you’ll have trouble understanding.”

“Cats?”

“You don’t choose a cat, a cat chooses you.”

“I see. Cats. Anything else?”

“Yes. Humans discovered time.”

Penelope closed her eyes and scratched her forehead as she tried to

compose her next thought. "So, let me get this straight, you're telling me you believe time did not exist until around 14,000 years ago?"

"Of course it existed, but time wasn't understood in the same way we perceive it. The hunter gatherers noted the things that were important to them but mostly lived in their present moment. After the Second Awakening humans became much more aware of the past and future, which is no minor development. For example, like any agricultural based society, the Egyptians needed to know when to expect the annual flooding of the Nile. They noticed a few days before the spring floods that Sirius, the Dog Star, was visible just before sunrise. Based on that they devised a 365 day stellar calendar sometime around 4,300 BCE that was reasonably accurate even by modern standards. They also used a lunar one for ceremony and festivals the same way we do today."

"What do you mean the same way we do?"

"Easter is always the first Sunday after the first full moon following the equinox. The same logic applies to Jewish high holidays and Islamic Holy Days. That's why the dates change every year, to correspond with the moon."

"Interesting."

"Plus the entire social structure changed. Hunter gathering societies were largely family based. Farming brought the first small settlements that placed importance on what someone could do rather than who they were related to. Not only were the groupings increasingly larger, we saw the ascension of Pharos, Emperors and Kings who were often considered to be the direct descent of God. This was a huge change."

"Hmm," Penelope said as a frown twisted her mouth downward.

"What?" Walker asked.

"These are some awfully big leaps of faith based on some pretty sketchy facts."

"Such as?"

"The universal thought thing. That's a bit hard to swallow."

"Why?"

"Suppose it is snowing. It wouldn't take a collective consciousness to tell me to put on a coat. There are some things that people are just naturally going to do."

"I agree."

"Really? That's a first."

"Sure," Walker said with a quick laugh. "That's because it is a perfectly natural progression. It takes everyone a while to get their head around this concept. Just keep asking yourself why do people in different parts of the world keep making the same discoveries, all around the same time? As we move along I'll give you some more examples for you to try to rationalize away."

Penelope gave Walker a playful punch in the shoulder. "I have to admit this is an interesting way of looking at things."

"Good," Walker answered. "Then we're making some headway here. Plus this has been fun."

"I guess that depends on your definition of fun."

"Come on," Walker answered shaking his head in disbelief. "Front page of the *Post*. Help breaking a lunatic out of prison. Getting your house blown up." Walker motioned toward the blond wig Penelope was still wearing. "New hairdo. What more could anyone ask for?"

Penelope self-consciously adjusted the hair piece. "You are a certifiable nut job."

"Thanks."

"Wasn't a compliment."

Walker shrugged. "All of that was just the warm up act. This is where it really gets interesting."

"Do tell."

"Around 3,000 years ago we had the Third Awakening. From now on we'll be talking about stuff you already know, or think you know, just presented in a manner you probably had never considered. Since you've studied history and have a quick mind we won't need to go into great detail. What I'll need you to do is start thinking of the facts you learned in school and look at how they support my theory of the Awakenings. If you can do that then all of this will start to make sense."

"Where's the fun part?"

"The adjustment period for the Third Awakening is almost over and it's time for the Fourth Awakening. That's why you're here."

# CHAPTER SIXTEEN

*"God is Dead."*

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

*"Nietzsche is Dead."*

GOD

PENELOPE BLINKED HER eyes and pulled back. "What in the world do I have to do with the Fourth Awakening?"

A sly smile covered Michael Walker's face. "We'll get to that in a few minutes. Right now we need to get you up to speed on the current Awakening. This will be right down your alley with lots of who, what, where and when's. You want to speculate on why we have so much information about the most recent Awakening?"

"I have no idea."

"Come on. Humor me. There are always huge changes after a new Awakening. What do you think was one of the big ones between the Second and Third Awakenings? I'll give you a hint, it's your bread and butter."

Penelope drew in a breath and stared out the window of the Bronco at the West Virginia countryside as it whizzed by. Suddenly her eyes flew wide open. "Oh my God!"

"I thought you could get there all by yourself."

"Written language! You're right, that is a huge change."

"Precisely," Walker answered, beaming. "Unfortunately it also created some new problems."

"What kind of problems?"

"After the Sumerians began to write on clay tablets, the dominant cultures of the time saw an opportunity."

"What kind of opportunity?"

"The Chinese and the Egyptian were neck and neck in developing the first written language but the folks in power intentionally made this new media difficult to learn."

"Why?"

"By limiting literacy to the ruling classes it helped protect their status. We've seen this type of thing repeated in different ways time and time again throughout history."

"So you're saying that there are people who will exploit an Awakening for personal gain?"

"Absolutely. The Egyptian scribe class was incredibly powerful and secretive; which is unfortunate since they didn't leave any directions on how to translate all those hieroglyphics they created. That has been driving Egyptologists crazy for centuries. In China there are still over 47,000 characters in their alphabet with 4,000 in regular use. All of this was clearly designed to protect those already in power. Fortunately for the rest of us the suppression of emerging knowledge by ruling elites never works for very long."

"What does that mean?"

"Around 3,000 to 4,000 years ago, right at the beginning of the Third Awakening, it became clear a more universally understood written language that wasn't controlled by the elites was needed. This is when we saw the emergence of various Semitic languages, primarily Aramaic. They lead to the Greek alphabet and the rest is, as they say, history."

"That's interesting," Penelope said as she mulled over Walker's latest epiphany. "So the genie was out of the bottle and there was no way for the ruling classes to keep it to themselves forever."

"Precisely," Walker answered with a nod. "That would be one of those rough edges of an Awakening that can sometimes take a while to smooth off. Even after a written language became available, because of the high



cost of producing the manuscripts it was still limited to the wealthy, religious and well educated classes. This didn't start to change until around 600 years ago..."

"Gutenberg's Bible," Penelope interrupted.

"Precisely," Walker answered as he nodded his approval. "That is also a perfect example of the time it can take for an Awakening to smooth itself out. It took us 2,500 years to go from alphabetic words to movable type printing presses."

"Hmm," Penelope muttered under her breath as she pondered this latest nugget of wisdom from Michael Walker. Some of his theories were too fantastic to take seriously while others had an implicit logic that was difficult to deny. This was going to be a challenging story to write.

As if reading her mind, Walker gave her a moment to process this new information. When he saw her shoulders relax, he continued. "Another big issue that arose with the written word is that it requires the use of mutually agreed upon symbolic language. This means the language and the descriptions they produce are subject to interpretation and are run through the filter of each individual's experiences and prejudices."

"Sounds like the deconstruction theory that was rampant when I was in college," Penelope said.

"Exactly," Walker said with a nod of appreciation. "Suppose an ancient Egyptian scribe drew a hieroglyph he wanted to represent a tree. Someone else may see it as "shade" and another person as "fruit" and a third may see it as a symbol of summer. Symbolic language is subject to individual interpretation. Communication can be like the old game of "telephone" we used to play as kids. You tell someone something and they pass it on then they pass it on. After the fourth or fifth telling it sounds nothing like the original."

"Like two different people can read the same poem and come away with completely different messages."

"Or no message at all. It comes down to the way the individual interprets the symbolic language and how receptive they are to the idea. If you think about it for a moment, all of your thoughts revolve around symbols. While the changes a new Awakening brings are always easier to see in hindsight; it appears we may be heading to a new era where a non-symbolic understanding becomes the standard."

"You're making words up again, aren't you?"

Walker laughed. "Of course I am but that doesn't make it any less valid. Besides, people do it all the time. Globalization, e-mail, aerobicized, pop tarts, SPAM. The list is nearly endless."

Penelope chuckled and shook her head. She hadn't enjoyed a conversation this much in years. Walker had the ability to challenge her intellectually with a good natured calmness she found comfortable. "If you had to write the definition for non-symbolic for Webster's, how would it read?"

"You really can't, because that would require symbols. But, people have been trying their best to write about and explain non-symbolic understanding for thousands of years. The concept is probably most familiar to you as enlightenment."

"Enlightenment? You're kidding. Are you trying to tell me that the next phase of humanity will involve all of us becoming enlightened?"

Walker shrugged but didn't answer. "You're on a roll now. You want to take a shot at figuring out the key elements of the Third Awakening?"

"Sure." Penelope curled up in the seat with her feet under her like a cat. "How many key elements am I looking for?"

"Two."

"Just two? That's hardly your style."

"Think big picture here. Another hint. We're still in the adjustment period for the Third Awakening."

"What does that mean?"

"They are still the two most important things shaping our world today."

"That dramatically limits the field." Penelope drew in a deep breath through her nose and allowed it to slowly escape between her lips. "Considering your disdain for Washington I am going to guess politics is not one of them."

"Different forms of government come and go and politicians always think they are more important than they really are."

"Okay. Not politics." Penelope rubbed her chin as she thought out loud. "Economic systems aren't important enough."

"Right."

"What's been around for the past 3,000 years?" Penelope's eyes flew open. "Is it that simple?"

"Yup."

“Oh my!” Penelope’s eyes danced as she pondered the possibilities.

“Nothing conflicts with your revered who, what, when, where, and why?”

Penelope’s mind continued to race as she mentally thumbed through every book and article she had ever read before she absently shook her head. “Not yet.”

“Excellent. Now if we can just get you over the final hump of realizing we are all connected through thought...”

“Slow down, Skippy,” Penelope said as her eyes focused back on Walker. “While I will grant that you have an interesting theory here; I wouldn’t start fitting me for my choir robes just yet. I have a few more questions.”

“Okay.”

“First off, I’m not even sure we’re talking about the same stuff. What do you think are the two most important elements of the Third Awakening?”

“You first.”

A heavy silence settled over the Bronco as Penelope folded her arms across her chest and glared at Walker. “Why do I have to go first?”

Walker shrugged. “We are on the cusp of...”

“Stop. STOP! You win.” Penelope shook her head in resignation. “The two key elements of the Third Awakening are Religion and Science.”

“Give the lady from Charleston full marks. In the last 3,000 years we have seen the decline of the ancient faiths and rituals and the emergence of every major modern religion. Also, as the grip of religion has waned, the power of science has grown at an amazing rate. These twin pillars are, for better or worse, what hold up modern society.”

“None of this supports your core argument that we are all connected through thought,” Penelope said with a sigh.

“Did you know that between 800 BC and 400 BC, all around the world there was a religious explosion? This is when the key events in the Old Testament occurred, from which emerged Judeo/Christian beliefs. At the same time Taoism was being followed by Confucianism in China. The same was happening with Shintoism in Japan, and Hinduism and Buddhism in India, and later Islam.”

“Your point being?”

“If we are not connected by thought, how did all of these simultaneous religious explosions happen?”

“Surely you can see the logical fallacy,” Penelope said with a dismissive

wave of her hand. "You're starting from a false premise that we are all connected through thought then using that to draw a conclusion."

"What's false about it?"

"Your job is to convince me that you are right. It's not my job to convince you that you are wrong."

"Fair enough," Walker answered. "Let's try another one. Let's go back to art." Penelope nodded her agreement. "In the early days of Greek art they made some spectacular vases."

"Okay."

"At precisely the same moment the Jomon Culture in Japan and the people on the Korean peninsula were creating nearly identical work."

"Sorry," Penelope answered. "We're running in circles here, Michael. Without some sort of concrete proof I'm more inclined to go with coincidence, unknown trade channels, or some other logical argument over your psychic connection theory."

"I didn't expect this to be easy," Walker said with a smile. "Your pigheadedness is a refreshing change."

"What does that mean?" Penelope demanded.

"Usually I have this type of conversation with someone who is sitting on the edge of their chair hanging on my every word. These are people who want to believe me; sometimes are desperate to believe me."

"Sorry," Penelope said with a substantially less than sincere laugh. "I guess I'm just not one of your Awakening groupies."

"No, you're not. That's why you're perfect."

"Perfect?" Penelope said as she pulled further away from Walker. "That's a bit of a reach."

"What I meant," Walker said with his usual calmness. "Is that you are the perfect person for me to be talking to right now. If I can figure out how to reach you and make you understand; then together we'll be able to reach the world."

"You are a very odd man," Penelope said while shaking her head.

"Thanks."

Penelope didn't bother to correct him; she was lost too deeply in thought. For about five minutes they rode in silence as she mentally poked and jabbed at everything Walker had told her. She had to admit a lot of it made sense, but that's the way con men hook you. They bury a lie within a kernel of truth. She glanced over and studied his profile; he

certainly didn't look or act like a nut job. He had a coolness about him that was so sincere it was almost jarring. Penelope rubbed her chin and cleared her throat. "Let me be sure I've got all of this." Walker nodded but did not answer. "200,000 years ago *Homo sapiens* emerged from the primordial goo. That's the First Awakening."

"Right."

"Over the next 150,000 years they start to slowly develop into something resembling us today."

"Right."

"50,000 years ago there was a Second Awakening where people started to become self-aware and realize they are mortal with all the baggage that entails." Walker nods his agreement. "They begin forming larger social groupings and started looking for spiritual answers through myths and rituals."

"Right."

"Around 14,000 years ago, in the later stages of the Second Awakening, there is a change in the global climate and this process of self-discovery accelerates."

"And continues to accelerate through the present day."

"3,000 years ago is the Third Awakening which is basically the double edged sword of science and religion."

"Religion had been around for a lot longer in a variety of forms. Science was the new comer to the game."

"You're pretty confident the Fourth Awakening is about to happen."

"It has already started."

"Really," Penelope said deadpan. "My invitation must have gotten lost in the mail."

"Received, signed for and opened."

"Here we go again," Penelope said while shaking her head. "This is going to be another one of those things I'm not ready to understand yet. Right?"

"Right."

"I give up. Tell me something to make me believe the Fourth Awakening has started."

"The breakdown of relations between science and religion is a good one."

"What are you talking about now?"

"The relationship has always been a bit strained but it broke into the

open when Galileo and the Pope had their little dust up.”

“That was 400 years ago!” Penelope protested.

Walker just smiled. “You really need to be thinking in longer time lines. For a universe that is who knows how old and a planet that is over four billion years old, 400 years is the blink of an eye.”

Penelope shook her head and sighed. “Amazing,” she muttered under her breath.

“What?”

“Nothing. Please continue.”

“For the past 500 or so years the political power of the church has waned while the power of science has flourished. With a few exceptions most of the people today live in societies with secular governments.”

“So? What does any of this prove?”

“Nothing,” Walker said flatly. “And everything.”

Penelope closed her eyes, scratched her forehead and then motioned for Walker to continue.

“For many scientists knowledge hit a tipping point about 150 years ago. Universities began to switch from being religious institutions to being based on the German research model. Leading scientists were declaring that soon they would have no new major discoveries to make. While skeptical of religion, before that time all of the great minds were looking to science to prove there was a God, not to disprove it.”

“I suppose you have a theory of why they suddenly turned their back on God in the 19th century?”

“Would you be surprised if I didn’t?”

“Frankly, yes. And I’m betting it will be a doozy.”

“Dinosaurs.”

“Dinosaurs?”

“Yes.”

“I can’t wait to hear this one.”

“In the early 19th century, when Western scientists figured out those old bones they had been digging up for centuries were not dragons or animals that had perished in Noah’s Biblical flood but animals that had roamed the planet millions of years earlier, it pretty much shot down the theory of Earth being built in six days. To many this was as startling as Copernicus disproving the long held belief that the earth was the center of the universe. At that point, science pretty much gave up on religion as

superstition and myth.”

“Let me get this straight. You’re claiming that the current skepticism about religion got its start because of the discovery of dinosaur bones?”

“No. They’ve been at each other’s throats for thousands of years; that was just the proverbial last straw.”

“That moves the bar, even by your standards.”

“Thanks.” He held up his hand and stopped her before she could reply. “I know.”

“Don’t let me slow you down. Please continue.”

“Recently we’ve seen a reversal where a large number of truly gifted scientists have returned to the spiritual and the mystical for answers to the big questions science can’t answer.”

“Big questions?”

“Why are we here, and how did we get here? How was the universe formed, and who or what formed it?” Walker continued, “The advance in human knowledge during this period has been astounding and appears to be accelerating. In the 20th century we went from the first motorized flight to walking on the moon in less than 70 years. Cures for diseases were discovered and life expectancies doubled, then doubled again. The industries that dominated modern society at the end of the 20th century—air travel, automobiles, computers, instant mass communication, motion pictures, television, the Internet—none of these even existed a hundred years earlier.”

“Are you ever going to get to the point?”

“The point is our current organized religions are not filling our needs and science is so tied up in symbolic thought it can no longer support its own weight.”

“I have no idea what that means,” Penelope said while shaking her head.

“Basically it all goes back to how each of us tries to avoid the ending of our existence. Religion offered one solution, often in the form of things that could be done to ensure survival of our consciousness after physical death. Science offers another path; immortality though the knowledge you create outliving you.”

“So the idea is that death is the big motivator.”

“The possibility of non-existence it brings, actually. There’s a long line of schemes for this that probably started not long after we realized the possibility.

“Such as?”

“Well, virtually all culture relates to this. It gives us the opportunity to perpetuate something larger than ourselves that we’re tied to and will out live us. Making contributions to one or more of our cultural institutions serves the same purpose. For millennia this was about the best you could hope for, aside from religion. The problem is that it doesn’t take a genius to see that contributions made to Sumerian culture didn’t last forever. Rather than knowledge relating to a culture, science offers the opportunity to create universally relevant knowledge and thus a higher form of immortality so, practical benefits aside, it’s not hard to see why it caught on.

“Go on.” Spence said rubbing her chin.

“The basic underpinning of science is universally understood truth. As they have piled more and more on, it is starting to buckle.” Walker smiled. “When the big ideas from the previous Awakening start to collapse then a new Awakening is on the horizon.”

“That’s your proof?”

“I’m guessing that means you are not buying any of it.”

“No...no...no,” Penelope said shaking her head. “I buy a great deal of it. In fact much of it is hard to argue with. It’s just two small parts are giving me trouble.”

“Namely?”

“I don’t see any great collapse in science or any proof of us being connected through thought.” Penelope pursed her lips and shook her head. “Sorry.”

As usual, Michael Walker appeared unmoved. If he was disappointed or hurt, nothing in his body language or facial expression showed it. “Are you willing to listen to more arguments?”

“Of course,” Penelope answered quickly. “But please don’t take this to mean I can’t still write your story for you...”

Walker cut her off by patting her gently on the knee. Penelope looked down as she felt a jolt of energy similar to a static electricity shock only more powerful. She froze when her peripheral vision caught sight of a bright violet glow surrounding Michael Walker. It instantly vanished as she gasped and turned her head to look directly at him.

“What?”

“I thought I saw something.”

“What did you see?”



“It was nothing, really.”

“Penelope. Considering all the seemingly outrageous things I’ve told you in the past few hours, do you really think anything you could say would surprise me?”

She chuckled. “Good point. I thought I saw you surrounded by a field of light.”

“Excellent!”

“Why did I just know you were going to say that?”

“What color was it?”

“Color?”

“Yes, what color?”

“I don’t know. Deep blue.”

“Purple, maybe?”

“More like violet.”

He patted her on the leg again. “That’s excellent!”

“What does it mean?”

“It means you’re getting close to believing me. Right now your energy field is yellow, which is the color of inspiration, intellect and shared action.”

“You can see my energy field?” Penelope thought for a moment then added, “I have an energy field?”

“Everyone has one,” Walker answered as if surprised by the question. “Plus, everyone has the ability to see them but few realize it.”

“I was only able to catch a glimpse of it out of the corner of my eye, but when I looked at you directly it went away.”

“That’s common at first. You mentioned earlier that you don’t have an instructor or teacher.”

“No, I go down to a local yoga class occasionally.”

“What did you learn there?”

“Not much; mostly just some stretches and breathing exercises. They seemed more interested in selling outfits and mats.”

“They didn’t teach you any meditation techniques?”

“Not really.” Penelope was a bit embarrassed. “When I was a teenager I had a book on Vipassana Meditation. I just started meditating the way I remember doing it then.”

“So,” Walker said calmly. “You reached this level of spiritual development basically on your own?”

“Spiritual development? Please.”

Walker laughed again. "Carl is going to eat you up with a spoon."

"Carl?"

"Dr. Altman." Penelope nodded that no further explanation was required. "If we can just get you past your pigheadedness..."

"I prefer steadfast."

"I'm sure you do," Walker said with a chuckle that caused the corners of Penelope's mouth to curve into a smile. A Cheshire cat smile covered Walker's face.

"How long have you been doing this?"

"Doing what?"

"Yoga. Meditating."

"Off and on forever. Seriously for about a year."

"Hmm."

"What?" Penelope asked.

"There are Buddhist monks who spend a lifetime in a monastery and never reach your level of development."

"Really?"

"Don't get too full of yourself. There are also uneducated peasants who wake up one morning in a state of enlightened bliss with no idea that anything has even changed."

"So someone can have this handed to them without even knowing they're receiving it, while a monk can spend a lifetime seeking it and never find it?"

"The universe has a great sense of humor."

"You have to admit this entire Awakening concept is a bit hard to swallow in a single sitting."

"I know. Unfortunately we're on a tight schedule, but at the rate you're progressing I'm sure it will make more sense to you soon."

"What does that mean?"

"Your alarm clock has already gone off and the Fourth Awakening has already started, which is the problem."

"What problem?"

"So far we've only talked about the benefits of an Awakening. There is a dark side."

## Reading this book will forever change the way you view the world and your place in it.

A group of top scientists, lead by a legendary Nobel Prize winning physicist, has made a discovery so startling and with such deep religious implications that it sends shockwaves through the corridors of power around the world. As the federal government moves to suppress the research, all of those involved vanish without a trace.

A mysterious call from the editor of The Washington Post starts Penelope Drayton Spence off in search of the missing scientists. After she crosses paths with enigmatic industrialist Michael Walker, Penelope becomes a fugitive in a wild, hold on tight to the edge of your seat race to expose the truth about the Hermes Project before the government can cover it up.

**While a work of fiction, *The Fourth Awakening* is grounded in cutting edge science and an emerging spiritual reality. It offers readers a glimpse of their future.**

---

*A great story that puts historical events into a brand new perspective. Put your notion about consciousness and sub-conscious on hold when you read this story. The Fourth Awakening takes you on a wild thrill ride of experimentation and intrigue that will challenge the way you look at the world. The tension builds in every chapter until the mystery of The Fourth Awakening is finally revealed.*

— Karna Small Bodman, Former Deputy White House Press Secretary  
and NSC Senior Director. Author of *Final Finesse*, *Gambit* and *Checkmate*.

*An outstanding new voice for Dan Brown/Douglas Preston Fans. Keeps you turning page after page.*

— Dena Russ, RT Book Reviews Bookseller of the Year for 2009

*If you like magic, you will love The Fourth Awakening, it's there on every page in this wonderful book.*

— Richard Moryl, Emeritus Professor of Music,  
Western Connecticut State University

*Great book! I've enjoyed reading it.* — Colonel Joseph W. Trez, Sr., Chief of Staff, The Citadel

*Weather or not you fully accept the amazing implications of this story it is a darn good read and an amazing exploration of human potentials!*

— Professor Allan Combs, Author of  
*Radiance of Being* and *Synchronicity: In the Eyes of Science, Myth, and the Trickster*

### About the Authors

**Rod Pennington** has five previous novels published including *The Linz Trust* and *The Quicksilver Solution*. He has also sold two screenplays.

**Jeffery A. Martin** is an scholar specializing in higher states of consciousness. He is the author, co-author or contributor to over twenty books in addition to numerous other scholarly and non-scholarly publications and media.

Both are frequent and talented public speakers.

[www.FourthAwakening.com](http://www.FourthAwakening.com)

US \$15.95

FICTION

