



An aura of protection

I stared at the guy in disbelief. Never had I heard such a thing before. Was he winding me up? *“Hold on, did I hear you right? You’re saying I’m protected in some way?” “Yes, definitely.”* he replied. *“I was watching yesterday, as you walked around the hotel grounds. An aura appears to surround you. I could see that quite clearly.”*



We were sitting on his terrace, looking over lawns to white sands and a cobalt sea. It was an arresting response to my searching question, about why my existence seemed to prowl forward like a cat with nine lives. I had told him about a clutch of alarming incidents – most



recently grappling with *terrorists* in Nairobi, - the common denominator being escapes from the jaws of death by increasingly narrow margins. For some reason I trusted this new acquaintance of just one day, as if we had eloped from the cradle together.

I could tell he wasn't joking. He was – to pardon the pun – deadly serious!

My newfound friend was an artist of some renown, and owner of a rather sumptuous hotel-cum-art gallery, near *Malindi* on Kenya's coast. A little older than me, and perhaps a few degrees wiser in understanding the meaning of life, this man of Italian heritage had achieved almost cult status in his younger days, as a



swashbuckling *Hemingway* type. I had arrived the previous day, and now we sat chatting over coffee in his lavishly appointed home, which doubled as a vast art studio: an elegant, whitewashed two-story affair, reminiscent of *Andalucía*.

I pondered his statement. If what he said was true, then the inquiry moved forward to what, or who was protecting me. A question with a certain un-earthly ring to it: God-like, you might say. And if that *was* true, then it began to overturn pebbles on the beach which I much preferred to leave to the waves: undisturbed by human hands ... especially my own human hands.

Like most people I'm perplexed by those overbearing questions: '*Who are we, and where do we come from?*' I tend to side with the *Big-Bang* theory from the scientific fraternity. But then, even they cannot escape the question: '*Where did the Big-Bang come from?*'

Yet it's not an easy leap from, '*Does something or someone control us?*' to, '*Is our short time on Earth pre-planned, and therefore, in essence, beyond our control?*' To extrapolate a little further, it might be possible for an Earthling – me, you, anyone - to be protected, thus to live out a pre-planned existence. But how do we fit war and famine into this theory?

However, the ultimate questions for my own peace of mind, become: '*If there is a personal protective shield, to what degree and for how long will it remain effective? Could the next disaster be less protected? A broken leg perhaps, or cancerous lung; and the following*

event even more so, with two useless legs or non-functioning liver. Does the protective layer slowly peel away, until it becomes completely ineffective? And then?

So, has it simply been pure luck? ...

Or perhaps (as he said) my ***Aura of Protection*** dedicated to performing its prearranged role? One day, clarity may emerge from the mist!



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Duncan Gregory

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