DORIAN RADU

GOD'S PATIENTS

Anatomy of an Awakening Among Weekend Gurus and Energy Miracles from Dracula's Land



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Author's note. The cases described are real in their essence, but the circumstances have been changed so that the people involved cannot be recognized, and clients and students are not named. Accounts and dialogue are reconstructed from memory and, where possible, checked with those involved. The book describes what I believed and what I did, and it is no substitute for a doctor's advice. If you recognize yourself in the story at the beginning, or if you have symptoms of depression or anxiety, talk to a doctor or a psychologist.

To Claudia,
vocal witness to my culinary, spiritual and existential experiments.

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Introduction

Almost everyone in my close circle who has read this book has asked me the same question, and a perfectly legitimate one: "Why now? Why go back to that episode after more than ten years? I thought it was history for you."

If I had followed my impulse at the time, I would have started writing soon after I left that paradigm. But I was too angry with myself and too disappointed by the experience. Instead of a clear-headed, documented analysis, I would have produced a text with frustration spilling out of it from the first page.

So I chose to let time pass. To give myself room to process, absorb, digest and, above all, make peace with myself. Making peace with yourself means being able to admit a mistake without turning it into a conviction. You own what you did, you fix what can still be fixed, and you move on. When you stop being your own prosecutor and judge, part of your personal hell can quiet down too. You no longer have to acquit yourself every day for the same act. Only then could I begin to write.

At around twenty, I started reading Mircea Eliade's *A History of Religious Ideas*. In communist Romania, getting hold of books like that could be difficult. I remember that simply borrowing it, under the counter, could cost a sum I would put today at the equivalent of two hundred euros.

I wasn't interested in joining a religion. I was drawn to mystery, but above all I wanted to understand how people, in different eras and cultures, had tried to explain it.

What impressed me about Eliade, and what I still appreciate today, was his descriptive approach. I never felt the author was trying to win me over to a belief. He laid out a whole world of beliefs before me and let me think for myself.

Also at around twenty, I had already adopted the hippie style. It wasn't only a matter of music or appearance, although pop-rock and especially rock have remained my music to this day. It was, above all, a form of nonconformism. I didn't get along well with imposed authority, rigid structures or the idea that I had to submit to someone just because they held a certain position. I wasn't the right man for rigid or military structures, and in my professional life I often had a reputation as a rebel. My wife, Claudia, is one of the few exceptions. The second was Siemens.

Much later, when I entered the world of Reiki, I was essentially looking for the same thing: the freedom to explore something unknown without being asked to submit to a doctrine.

I wasn't drawn to Reiki because it was part of New Age culture. In fact, I didn't even know that was where I had landed. The New Age hadn't interested me as a cultural movement, and I hadn't identified with it.

Only toward the end of that experience did I understand that I was in a world that had built its own dogmas, hierarchies and spiritual authorities.

In other words, exactly the kind of structures I had always tried to avoid. And then I saw the irony: I had entered this world looking for freedom and had ended up discovering yet another system that asked me to submit.

The title of this book needs an explanation, which I will give only at the end. Until then, it's worth watching for the pattern that returns, in dozens of forms, in every chapter: someone tells you what is wrong with you, and then the same person offers you the remedy, for a fee. I'm not interested only in whether the energies exist or not. I'm interested in how this circuit is built and how you get out of it.

Along the way, I will ask the same three questions each time. I wish I had asked them myself much earlier.

The first: what would have to happen for me to accept that I was wrong? If the answer is "nothing," the explanation no longer describes reality; it goes around it.

The second: can I check the claim without the person who made it? If not, dependence on the intermediary is not an accident but part of the design.

The third: what independent evidence is there that the phenomenon invoked exists and produces the promised effect? Sincerity, the intensity of an experience, the age of a tradition or a diploma are not evidence.

But how did I come to ask these questions? It all began with an ending.

September 2006: at Munich airport, every screen was announcing the news of the day: BenQ Siemens is going bankrupt. I was on my way to a party.

I was part of the top management team of a large European multinational in the mobile phone industry. Our division had had several successful years and had made history in an industry in which we counted among the four big manufacturers.

I was sales director for Romania. During the Siemens Mobile period, my team and I increased the number of phones sold in Romania by 500%. As far as I remember, in 2003 we had the highest growth in Europe. That same year, Romania also won an internal pan-European sales incentive competition.

But the innovative power of the South Korean companies was starting to be felt, and the established brands were losing market share. In this context, the Siemens mobile phone division had been taken over by the Taiwanese manufacturer BenQ, and the new handsets reached the market under the BenQ-Siemens brand.

A year later, the company had organized an exclusive event in Palma de Mallorca to celebrate the partnership between Siemens and BenQ. The top management teams of Europe's mobile operators had been invited.

I had a layover in Munich. That's where I learned what had happened, from the airport screens. I received confirmation that, as far as the event was concerned, nothing had changed. I flew on, and the event went ahead.

We were completely disoriented. The customers were in total confusion. For them, the urgent question was what would happen to the thousands of phones already sold and still under warranty. Who was responsible for them now? For us, the question was what would happen to our own future.

The higher you climb, the harder you hit the ground when you fall. And this fall came before the 2008 crisis and the restructurings that would change the job market.

After the legal procedure for closing the Romanian subsidiary was completed, two more jobs followed, again in multinationals, again in top positions. But neither company had the scale of the one I had left.

The level of professionalism at Siemens remains, for me, the highest I have encountered in all the organizations I have worked for, before or since. Financially, I hadn't lost anything. In some respects, I had even gained. But the difference between the working environments began to make itself felt and, gradually, to wear down my motivation.

I was asked to implement Siemens models in organizations with a different mentality, with budgets that couldn't support the ambitions and with teams insufficiently prepared for what was being asked of them. The expectations were high; the means, not so much.

Frustration came, then lack of motivation and the wish to start something of my own. Depression came in the same period. At first, the change wasn't very visible. Gradually, the signs became obvious, even to me. Until one day Claudia took the bull by the horns and sent me to find a psychologist.

I was looking for someone with references, in a market that was still in its early days. But things were about to take a completely unexpected turn. And that's where the rain dance began.

Chapter 1 — Autopsy of a Miracle

Almost twenty years ago, I starred in a real-life movie. One of those where life outdoes the script. In a very short time I had gone from corporate executive to initiate in what was presented to me as the great secrets of existence, then to healer and, very quickly, to master.

At the time, I was looking for help. My original intention could not have been more ordinary: to find a psychologist. But a friend told me there was "something better, more powerful," and took me to a Reiki master. I walk into his consulting room and, naturally, the setting makes an impression. The smell of incense sticks, soft lighting, Kitaro playing in the background, that atmosphere that tells you straight away you've entered a different kind of place. I sit down. The first words he says to me are: "So you've finally found your way to me. I knew you were coming." My eyes go wide. He looks at me and continues: "I know you don't understand. Tell me what happened."

I tell him, in a few words, what I'd been through, that I was aware I was in a depressive state and that I needed therapy. His answer would change the way I understood my life for years to come. What he told me, in essence, was: "Good. So as not to keep you in needless suspense: the reason you're giving has nothing to do with the depression you think has set in." Then he explained that what was happening to me was happening to a lot of people at that time: people had begun to awaken, but they needed help to find out who they really were.

With a grave air, he picked up a dowsing rod from his desk. He took a few measurements, put it down and gave me a long look. "Exactly as I sensed." He told me I was an "old soul," almost as old as this "uncivilized" planet that many of us had come to "in order to bring knowledge." And then: "I am honored to meet you."

The Earth's vibration had finally begun to rise, he explained, and with it the vibration of our bodies. We had begun to remember who we really were, and the turmoil I was feeling was, in this story, a natural consequence of awakening, which could also show up as depression. And then came the sentence that shifted everything: "Forget about what you went through. You have a great mission on Earth, and the time has come to fulfill it."

Think about what had happened in those few minutes. I had come looking for help with a problem I understood to be psychological, and I was being given a cosmic explanation of my identity. Within minutes, my problem had moved from depression to cosmology. I was no longer simply a man who had a problem and needed help. I was an old soul beginning to awaken, and I had a mission.

Next came the introduction to Reiki and, along with it, the explanation of how I was to carry out this mission. First, I had to be initiated. Then I had to help people heal and, later on, teach others as well. And I, in turn, would help them Awaken.

I had come looking for therapy. I was being offered a planetary mission. And that's how I entered the system. I didn't go in just because I was drawn to mystery, or because I dreamed of becoming a master or a healer. I went in because I had a real problem and I was looking for a solution.

And I think this matters, because a lot of people end up in worlds like this in exactly the same way: not out of a passion for the mysterious, but at a moment when suffering, fear, illness, loss or plain disorientation makes them far more receptive to the promise of an answer. When life gives way somewhere important, an explanation that tells you nothing is accidental, and that someone out there understands the hidden mechanism, can be extraordinarily seductive.

In my case, the story took hold. I began to believe in the energy that flows through the palms, I performed initiations, I taught courses, I used symbols, crystals and dowsing rods, and I watched people leave sessions deeply moved.

I had entered a world I'd mostly heard about from books and documentaries. It had the feel of an initiatory society: degrees, rituals, lineages, knowledge reserved for those who had passed through certain stages, and things we were told should not be explained to the uninitiated. A world sitting somewhere on the border of modern occultism, yet presenting itself as free of the dogmas of traditional religions.

Except it was a very interesting kind of freedom. Religion was rejected as an institution, but its symbols were everywhere. In the same world you could meet Christian angels and archangels, Buddhist and Hindu concepts, Tibetan masters, chakras, karma, shamans, Reiki symbols and all sorts of spiritual presences.

God hadn't disappeared; he had just changed his name. Depending on the system, he could become Universal Energy, Cosmic Consciousness, the Source or simply the Universe. Jesus hadn't disappeared either. In certain New Age currents, and in the teachings about the so-called Ascended Masters, Jesus was no longer presented primarily as the central figure of Christianity, but as a great spiritual master, one of several figures standing very high up in a cosmic hierarchy. In some of these systems he even appears under a different name: Sananda.

The spirit said to have been incarnated some two thousand years ago as Jesus of Nazareth—Yeshua—is described here as a presence of extremely high vibration, involved in the spiritual evolution of the planet and in what these currents call "humanity's awakening of consciousness."

Remember that phrase: "awakening of consciousness." We'll come across it again. And not always where we might expect it.

In some New Age currents, even the Holy Spirit can be reinterpreted in terms of a Universal Energy or a life force. The difference matters. In Christian theology, the Holy Spirit is a personal divine presence, acting according to his own will.

In the energy-based reinterpretations, the emphasis shifts toward a subtle force, impersonal or semi-impersonal, that can be accessed, channeled and directed through certain techniques. In other words, the sacred becomes, in a way… usable.

The archangels are also very popular in these circles. Michael, Gabriel or Raphael no longer necessarily appear only as spiritual presences of the Christian tradition; they can become guides, protectors or even forms of energy that a person invokes directly through meditation, channeling or various therapeutic practices.

At one seminar, a Reiki master explained to us, very seriously, that archangels could be called on for all kinds of practical tasks. He even gave us a personal example.

He lived in an apartment block, and parking was a problem. So he had started invoking the Archangel Gabriel, asking him to keep his spot free until he got home. And, he said, ever since he'd been doing this, he found his parking space free every evening.

I don't know whether Gabriel worked an eight-hour day, did shifts or got paid extra at rush hour. But the image of an archangel assigned to guard a rectangle of asphalt has stayed with me. The man has since given up Reiki. I don't know who's in charge of the parking now.

Beyond the comedy, the episode says something about the way we had come to look at the divine. We were no longer content to believe in a higher power. We had started assigning it tasks, setting out its responsibilities and judging its performance by the results.

We were no longer just trying to understand the divine will. We had started drawing up its work schedule.

And the deeper you go into these systems, the more the universe acquires a proper org chart. Enter the so-called Ascended Masters: figures drawn from different religious traditions, from

esotericism or from reinterpreted mythologies—Saint Germain, El Morya, Serapis Bey, Quan Yin, Melchior and many others.

In heaven as it is on earth: hierarchies everywhere. In certain esoteric traditions, these masters are grouped into a hierarchy known as the Great White Brotherhood. I could go on with examples for a long time. But if I went through them all, I'd overload your memory before the story had even started.

Initiation — From the Shaman to the Weekend Master

Before we go any further, I need to explain what an initiation actually is. I'll be using the word a lot.

Initiation was not invented by Reiki, or by the New Age. It is an ancient ritual, found in different forms in many cultures. In essence, through an initiation a person passes from one status to another, takes on a new role or is admitted into a group that guards certain knowledge and practices.

Let's start with shamanism, one of the oldest known forms of religious practice and ritual healing. In *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Mircea Eliade describes how the future shaman was called, chosen or prepared for the role. In some traditions he went through difficult ordeals, periods of isolation, ecstatic experiences and training alongside an experienced shaman. Only after this preparation could the community recognize him as a shaman, a man credited with the ability to communicate with spirits and given the role of healer.

The phenomenon of initiation has crossed the millennia and has appeared, in different forms, in religious traditions, military orders, brotherhoods and initiatory societies. We find it in orders of knighthood, in Freemasonry and in countless communities with their own ceremonies of admission and rules of membership. Not all of these rituals had the same origin or meaning, but they shared a common idea: after the ceremony, a person acquired a status he hadn't had before.

Even the ordination of a priest is a form of religious initiation, in the broad sense of the term. In the Orthodox Church, the bishop lays his hands on the man who is to become a priest and says the prayers appointed for the moment. According to Christian belief, through this ritual the new priest receives the grace of the Holy Spirit he needs for his ministry.

We can already see two dimensions of initiation: a social one, through which a person receives a status recognized by the community, and a spiritual one, through which the tradition holds that he receives something that cannot be directly observed.

In the New Age world I had entered, initiation had taken on a very concrete meaning. The master claimed he could open energy channels, activate latent abilities, raise your vibration or connect the student to a particular universal energy.

In Reiki, this procedure was called an *attunement*: an energetic tuning. Through a ritual of gestures and symbols, the master would supposedly pass on to the student the ability to channel Reiki energy. After that, the student could practice at the level for which he had been initiated.

At the time, I believed the initiation produced exactly the energetic transformation the master promised.

At one point, on an autumn weekend, I was sitting on a chair with my eyes closed in the living room of an apartment, while someone blew on the back of my neck and drew invisible symbols in the air, claiming to be opening my "energy channels." At the end, I received the title of Master, written on a sheet of A4 card that served as a diploma and was handed to me

with all the solemnity the moment required. Think for a moment about the absurdity of it. Universal Energy—the force we were told runs through the whole of existence—needed a course fee, a ritual in a living room and an A4 diploma before it could flow through my palms? I had made it into the official registrar's office of the Universe.

In the world of spiritual initiations, the sacred and the profane coexist in almost perfect harmony.

The sacred is eternal. The profane gets invoiced.

In my first months in the esoteric world, I took part in a workshop on initiations through meditation. It was different from anything I'd learned until then. There was no flesh-and-blood master drawing symbols in the air or blowing on your neck. You received your initiation directly from the Source, according to what an Ascended Master judged you needed. A kind of "next level." The intermediary standing by your chair was gone, but the facilitator leading the meditation remained.

The first theme was meeting our own guide of light and our Ascended Master. To do this, we were to travel to the planet Sirius, to a great temple. The facilitator's voice led us into a hall where we were to meet various entities. We were to wait for someone to approach us, tell us something or give us an initiation.

It was my first experience of guided meditation. I imagined I had arrived at a temple, but apart from a large, cold hall I saw nothing. The instructions said clearly that we shouldn't imagine anything in particular, but let the images and sounds come naturally, because what we were about to do was "channeling." Just what I needed on a Sunday morning: wandering around deserted planets like a lunatic while the sun was shining outside.

The facilitator had a clear, warm voice, and I fell asleep to it fairly quickly. Luckily, I didn't snore back then. When I woke up, the journey was nearly over. We were being invited to give thanks for the gifts we'd received and to come back into the room. In an orderly fashion, by jersey number. Then came the part where everyone shared their experience. This is where my jaw dropped.

Some described in lavish detail a planet with several suns—some saw two, others three, presumably depending on their meridian—each at a different point on the horizon, along with the northern lights and encounters with figures I was only just beginning to learn about. One had received an initiation from Jesus, another from El Morya, someone else from Serapis Bey, Hilarion or the goddess Athena. They had received so many spiritual gifts they could barely carry them all back to Earth.

When one participant talked about the three suns, I wondered why she hadn't gone looking for a beach or a pool. I sat there looking at them, bewildered and bedraggled. I had come back empty-handed and felt like I was at the bottom of the pecking order. I remember seriously wondering who had a screw loose: me or everyone else? There were about fifteen of us, and since all the others spoke the same language so coherently, I decided the problem was me.

Meanwhile, the moment I dreaded was getting closer: I would have to tell them what I'd done on Sirius. I felt like a slacker schoolboy who hadn't done his homework and was about to be called up to the blackboard. When my turn came, I told them exactly what I'd experienced: an empty, cold place, a large, deserted hall. I even tried a joke. I'd looked for a café, so I wouldn't have to stand, or at least a souvenir shop with some cheap made-in-China trinkets, so I wouldn't come back empty-handed. I did, however, thank the facilitator for the short but welcome nap her voice had given me. The people in the room looked at me with the same astonishment I'd looked at them with. A break followed, and it came at just the right moment. I made up an emergency and went home.

This wasn't the movie I'd started getting used to. I wanted a manual, instructions in black and white, a symbol and a procedure. To know what I was supposed to do. There, everyone came back with different encounters and different initiations, and I couldn't find any point of reference at all. I didn't doubt the initiations yet. What bothered me was that I hadn't been given clear instructions.

And here I have to say something that will matter in every chapter that follows: I was sincere. I wasn't putting on an act. I didn't know I was "selling a story." I believed in what I was doing. I believed in the system so much that I brought it into my family. Claudia found it interesting too and, in her turn, became a Reiki master. I say this to make clear how deeply I believed in that world. For me, it was real.

And I was wrong. This is one of the central ideas of the book: sincerity does not prove that an explanation is true. You can mean well, you can have powerful experiences, you can see real effects in the people in front of you and still be wrong about the cause. And this is where the autopsy of the miracle really begins.

When Experience Becomes Proof

When someone came to a session and left more relaxed, the explanation, for me, was simple: the energy had worked. At the time I had no reason to doubt it, because I could see the effect with my own eyes. But there was a problem I would only understand much later: the fact that a person felt better did not show why they felt better.

People don't go to a doctor or a therapist when they feel fine. They come when the pain, the anxiety or the despair is close to its peak, and many symptoms fluctuate naturally. A migraine, back pain, insomnia or anxiety can have better periods and worse ones. Returning toward a more usual state after a peak is a very ordinary phenomenon.

If you had a session at exactly that peak and your symptoms eased afterward, it is very easy to link the two: "I felt better after that, so that's what made me better." Add to this the setting. You're lying down in a quiet space. Someone is giving you their time, listening to you, speaking to you calmly and telling you they're taking care of your problem. There may be music, pleasant lighting, touch, or simply the feeling that, for a while, someone is there just for you. All of this can change the subjective experience without any need to assume an invisible energy. Placebo doesn't mean a person is "imagining" what they feel. Expectation, setting and relationship can produce real effects on how pain, anxiety or general well-being are perceived. But a real effect does not automatically prove the metaphysical explanation we've laid over it.

The Theory That Can't Lose

The problem becomes even more visible when things don't work. When the person felt better, we said the energy had worked. When they didn't, there were always ready-made explanations: a karmic block, inner resistance, a deeper cleansing, a lesson not yet learned. In this way, the system could never lose. If it worked, it was confirmed. If it didn't work, it was confirmed all the same; the reason for the failure simply became invisible.

This is where the question comes in that I wish I had asked myself sooner: What would have to happen for you to accept that you were wrong? If the answer is "nothing," then we no longer have an explanation of reality, but a system protected against every possible outcome.

The White Dove

There is, however, another mechanism that, at the time, seemed just as convincing to me: validation through coincidence and through the reaction of the group. I remember very clearly a whole day spent giving various attunements to a group of about thirty people. By the end

we were tired, emotionally charged and completely absorbed in the atmosphere that had built up in the room. At one point, people burst into cheers and applause. I didn't even understand what was going on. Then I saw that a white dove had landed on the windowsill. For the group, the moment was instantly read as a sign. It was no longer just a bird landing at a window after an intense day. It had become confirmation that what we had done was true, that the initiations had been "received," and that there was validation coming from outside ourselves.

I'm not saying people were faking their reaction; quite the opposite. It was precisely the sincerity of the reaction that made it so powerful. When thirty people around you see a sign, it becomes very hard to look at the same scene as a mere coincidence. This is how subjective validation is built: not only from what you see, but from the way the group tells you what you've just seen. Like many people in such systems, I had come to live in a state of constant attention to coincidences. A repeated number, an unexpected encounter or an object turning up at the right moment could become a message.

When you start looking for signs everywhere, you will inevitably find coincidences. The Universe doesn't have to be writing your script personally.

Experience and Explanation

I don't dispute that people have powerful experiences; I've had them too. What I dispute is the leap from "I felt something" to "I know what caused it."

You can feel warmth in your palms without that proving the existence of a universal energy. You can cry during a ritual without the ritual having opened a spiritual plane. You can experience an extraordinary coincidence without it being a message sent especially for you. The experience is real as an experience. The explanation remains a hypothesis, and that is exactly where verification has to begin.

This book does not start from the idea that people are naive or unintelligent. If it were that simple, I of all people wouldn't have much of a story to tell.