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PROLOGUE

Science fiction stories always fascinated me, especially during my teen years. For many decades, I daydreamed and fantasized about the possibilities of revisiting past times, especially those of my youth. Now on the backside of middle age, I understand that my fascination is quite common. Much discussion regarding the possibilities of time travel is regularly seen on TV science programs and related web sites. They are also themes of numerous books and movies.This leads us to the reason for this narrative.

This is a story I have only shared with a trusted few. If it became common knowledge I fear I would become the subject of much unwanted scrutiny. This scrutiny might also involve more than just the idle tongue wagging of the neighborhood gossips. Certainly, it wouldn't improve my quality of life. This is something I have no desire to deal with at my age.

Now the simple truth is this, I have actually been involved in time travel. This is possible because of my introduction to a time portal to a parallel dimension. It would be more accurate to say parallel dimensions, because there are many more than just the one in which we live.

CHAPTER 1

I never dreamed I would be involved in a series of events that if known by the general public, would have landed me in one of those secret government interrogation rooms you'd read about in some thriller novel. In a period of less than four months I experienced more sensory overload than in the past sixty-five years of my life.

Looking back on that short time period, I remember wondering why an over-the-hill guy like me was entrusted with some of the most extraordinary knowledge in the universe. It felt very strange when it was revealed to me, it was like I already had heard it somewhere before, even though I knew I hadn't. None of it surprised me. I felt comfortable with the knowledge. I know now that this first dalliance with time travel was just a primer for my future journeys.

After this first foray to the past, I began to understand why I was chosen. It's akin to those Israelis soldiers who guard the temple mount in Jerusalem. When tensions are running high between the Jews and Muslims, they don't allow anyone under forty to enter the sacred sites. It's hard to understand that rationale when you're young. As we age many of us, but not all, tend to become a little wiser. Life's experiences have taught us many lessons about interpersonal relationships and how to get along with those whom with we don't always agree.

Yes, there is a reason you have to be at least thirty-five years old to be president of the United States. There's also a reason why they send old guys to negotiate peace treaties and young guys to be suicide bombers. It's because most of life's lessons come from experience—jump started with knowledge and tempered by a logical thought process that develops with age.

If I had applied for the job my resume would have included the following: honest, trustworthy, loyal, brave, very mature, flexible, intelligent, well educated, wise, humorous, and slightly humble...kind of like a senior citizen's scout oath.

So, I guess I shouldn't have been surprised at the chain of events in my life that led me to become a "guardian." Whether I wanted to be one or not, it doesn't matter now, it's what I am.

CHAPTER 2

This part of my story begins quite simply. My name is Pete Dyer. I was born in Pasco; a medium size town in eastern Washington State. I retired nine years ago, after thirty-two years as a high school science teacher. My three children having left the nest many years prior had been fruitful; blessing me with ten grandchildren. These progenies, at that time, ranged in age from ten to twenty-two years. Fortunately, they all lived within an hour's drive of my home in the little town of Snohomish in western Washington State. Their company provides me with great joy and companionship.

For quite some time they were nearly my sole reason for existence. Sadly, late in the autumn of 2008, Linda, my dear wife of over forty-five years, died of ovarian cancer. I was devastated. Her death left me nearly incapacitated. It took almost a year to deal with my loss. Finally, after much soul searching and prodding by my children, I felt it was time to move on with my life.

After graduating from high school in 1961 I enlisted in the army. I served in Vietnam with the 82nd Airborne from April of 1964 until the following May. After being discharged I enrolled in Washington State University in Pullman in September 1965.

I have always had a personable nature and I enjoy young people, so teaching seemed a natural major. My first desire was to teach woodshop. Unfortunately, the job market for shop teachers was almost nonexistent at the time. Since I was a natural in science and math, reason dictated that I major in physics.

During my first year at WSU, I met Linda. Not only was she beautiful but she was also smart, fun, and even tempered. Our life was good and we were soon blessed with our first two children. I graduated with honors in June of 1969 and was offered a job right out of school at Snohomish High School.

As an inexperienced teacher new to town, I was quick to latch on to the first friendly face at work. That face belonged to John Young who also happened to be the shop teacher. John had started teaching the year before me. His wife, Pat and my Linda became the best of friends. John and Pat ended up with four children. Their children were all nearly the same ages as ours. They lived just a few blocks from us. Our families' lives were intertwined, especially during the kids' growing years. It was the love of these dear friends that helped me deal with the death of my dear, sweet wife.

As a young married couple Linda and I had dreamed of buying an old Victorian house in Snohomish and restoring it to its original grandeur. Needless to say, it was totally out of our price range, especially on a teacher's salary. Instead, we settled for a modest rambler with a one-car garage on the outskirts of town. Over

the years with frequent add-ons and other improvements with John's help, it appreciated substantially in value. Several years prior to my retirement, we paid off the mortgage. By that time, it was no longer at the edge of town. In years prior it had become surrounded by numerous subdivisions.

Even though Linda had been gone for over a year, I still felt her presence in the house. I knew I needed to make a change in my life that would allow me to focus on the future. I sold the house and used the proceeds to purchase the old Victorian. I knew fixing the old place up would add a greatly needed new chapter to my life. At the time I had no idea how big that new chapter would be!

After I sold the family home I moved in with my oldest daughter, Meghan. My priority was getting the old house livable. This was also a priority for Meghan, a single mom, with whom I was sharing a small house with her and three kids. I enjoyed the company however, even if it was with three teenage girls who seemed to thrive from one hormonal crisis to the next.

Meghan worked as a nurse in the emergency department of Valley General Hospital in the neighboring town of Monroe. She worked three twelve hour shifts a week from seven p.m. to seven a.m. This working arrangement allowed her to make her ample time to raise her children. Her former husband hadn't been seen in years. For all anyone knew he was either dead or holed up in some third world country to avoid paying for child support.