

The Butterfly's Apprentice

A Power Spell

by

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INNERCIRCLE PUBLISHING



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ISBN: 1-882918-08-8

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Edition

Page Design by: Chad Lilly
Cover Design by: Chad Lilly

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This book is dedicated with love to...

God

The Martyr, St. Sebastian, The Ascended Masters;
Kuthumi, Maitreya, Jesus, The Count of St. Germain,

Ruben Perez, Sr., Emelda Perez-Ramirez, Claudio L. Perez,
Jose J. Perez, Sandra D. Dermesropian – Perez, Bron Leach

Marco A. “Dirtz” Alfaro, Edward “Chunk” Arroyo,
Jason Presson, David Hanson

Special Thanks To:

Rose Luna Victor Sestega

Letter to the Reader

Dear Reader,

Six months after I left high school in 1990, I moved out of my parents' house to live the life of a drifter. It was the lifestyle I had been attracted to ever since I was a child and it's the lifestyle that continues to this day.

I've supported myself with odd jobs; delivering newspapers, pizzas, wiping down tables, and yes – even as a teacher. Then, a few years ago, I began to write.

I slept in parks, cars, and on any floor, of any home that would open its doors to me. Throughout all of this, I wrote. I wrote during my lunch breaks, in coffee shops, and laundromats.

My life has not been easy, although I recognize that it's been my choice to live like this. I also recognize that my chosen lifestyle has caused the people who I care about the most, pain and suffering.

Although it has been difficult, I have acquired many wonderful experiences that no amount of money in the world could buy.

The story you are about to read is fictional, and at the same time, it is not. Choose to believe only the parts that serve you, and disregard the rest. But, remember, the more receptive that you are, the more you will receive.

Dearest Reader, you and I are kindred spirits looking for the same thing in different ways. And don't believe for one second, that it is an accident or coincidence that this book is in your hands.

Ruben

Chapter 1

*The turning doorknob, the little girl,
the glowing light outside the window, and then the alarm.*

* * *

The earth's revolution delivered magnificent light rays from the glimmering sun. Their alchemist properties transformed the night sky into the brilliant blue every morning agrees to. The other colors that announce the arrival of morning followed.

Saturday was her favorite day of the week because it was the one day she could completely devote to herself, but this morning she was thinking of an old enemy. This morning, she was thinking of brain tumors.

Before the sun had completely risen, Gabrielle was bathed and dressed. With her shower's humidity still on the bathroom mirror, she headed down the mountain. The air was fresh and crisp, and the mountain soil damp. Gabrielle loved classical music, and played it in the car, as Sheba, her Golden Retriever, lay in the back seat.

Brain tumors still lingering in her thoughts, Gabrielle honked her horn as she drove through the stone tunnels like her father did when she was a little girl. This still gave her pleasure and it made her think of him when she did it. Gabrielle had lived in the mountains all of her life.

As she drove into town, the supermarket doors would just be opening. Quickly, Gabrielle would scan the parking lot. Few people begin their grocery shopping at six in the morning, so a good spot was easy to find.

The cold morning embraced her as she opened the car door to step out. Gabrielle enjoyed watching steam emanate from her

mouth when she exhaled. It was the way she played with the universe. People who knew Gabrielle thought she was child like for behaving this way.

Sheba observed Gabrielle as she adjusted her sweat pants and tugged on her jacket. For a moment, the dog and the owner's eyes met, "I wish I could take you in with me, girl."

Sheba put her head down in the 'fall asleep' position. "Be good, and I'll bring you a treat."

Edward was the name of the bagboy who greeted her and other patrons at the door.

"Good morning, Edward,"

"Good morning, Gabrielle,"

"Ready for a busy day?" was Gabrielle's weekly question.

"Always ready for a busy day," was Edward's weekly answer.

The doors automatically opened for her, as she walked through. With three small tugs, Gabrielle released a shopping cart from a train of other carts that were pushed together. Her weekly routine was to first make her way over to the market café.

As she approached the counter, Leslie, the attendant had Gabrielle's usual order ready. "How's your classroom coming along?" Leslie asked.

"I'm getting a new student - brain tumor," Leslie knew the type of children Gabrielle worked with and sympathetically said, "Good luck."

Gabrielle paid for her drink while she sipped from her hot cup, "Thank you, Leslie."

Gabrielle went on to weave in and out of the supermarket aisles. Tea and cookies were a constant. Dog food and trash bags could be seen sticking out of her cart as she passed long shelves filled with canned goods and household items. By the time she was done shopping, a small line had formed at the checkout counter.

Gabrielle flipped through a magazine while she waited.

Normally, she didn't pay any attention to the chit-chat going on around her, but this morning, a conversation caught her attention. Gabrielle was overhearing two elderly women in front of her talking about the house that had just been sold on Wynwood Lane.

Gabrielle took special interest in this conversation, because the house they were referring to was right next door to hers. It was a small town, and some of the houses were vacation homes for people who liked to ski. She wondered if her new neighbor would be an annual resident or, someone who would occupy the home during the winter time.

One woman said to the other, "The gentleman who bought the place bid twenty thousand over the asking price immediately beating out all other offers."

The other woman replied, "He must have a lot of money. Stacy, his agent, mentioned he was an older gentleman – about fifty."

Gabrielle didn't raise an eye from the magazine that she was now pretending to read, but she did pay close attention to everything they were saying.

After Gabrielle paid for her goods, she drove by the flower shop. Gabrielle loved flowers. She loved their color and their texture. Most of all, she loved the way they smelled. Gabrielle didn't buy flowers like other people bought them. She once told Ivan, the Russian owner, who wore a white apron and was always happy to see her, that she waited until the flowers chose her. This process sometimes took a while, but Ivan didn't mind, he liked this strangeness about Gabrielle and never charged her full price.

Leaves could be seen whisking around her tires as she drove back up the mountain. With her right hand on the steering wheel and the left hand propping her head up, palm to cheek, elbow near the door lock – Gabrielle drove.

Bits and pieces of the conversation she had overheard in

the checkout line echoed in the forefront of her mind. Turning on Wynwood Lane, she saw a black sedan parked in her new neighbor's driveway.

Did he move in overnight? She wondered to herself. Gabrielle parked the car and unloaded her bags from the trunk. Her driveway was a few feet away from his.

She noticed her neighbor's sedan was unmarked. She couldn't tell the make or model. Gabrielle thought the vehicle might be foreign. It looked like any other car, but some how different. Small details made it look like one she had never seen before.

For a moment, she thought he might be watching her. Discreetly, she glanced inside the car, but could not see through the tinted windows. She was hoping to catch a glimpse of something that might reveal an interest or a hobby.

Gabrielle's curiosity about the man living next door to her began to grow. After Gabrielle put her groceries away, she ran Sheba's water bowl under the faucet, lightly scrubbing it with her hand and refilling it again. She placed it down near Sheba's food and headed toward the back porch.

The wood floors creaked lightly as she walked through the house. It was early and the sun was out. Gabrielle sat in her rocking chair while Sheba lay near her feet. Gabrielle loved to meditate. Her father taught her how to do it at an early age and she fell in love with it. It was the only thing she wanted to do.

Most of her life she was a loner by choice. People gravitated toward her, but if given the option, she preferred to be alone. She wanted to meditate. No one understood this strange relationship she had with silence, but this is how she made love to God.

Gabrielle's eyes would close. She would begin by listening to the sounds around her, birds chirping, leaves rustling in the breeze. Her breathing would slow down, then her heart rate would follow and before she knew it, she was there.

Gabrielle retreated to that quiet place inside herself. That

place she found as a little girl. To her, it was home. There was peace there and it was safe. In that silence, she heard God whisper. There, she was healed. There, she was whole.

Time stood still for Gabrielle when she did this. Hours could pass while she sat in the same position, but it was all momentary for her during this edonic trance. The day's heat lost potency as the evening drew closer.

The change in temperature gently alerted her to the loss of daylight. Slowly, she came out of her meditation. With deliberate breaths and her eyes closed, she stretched her neck from side to side. Gabrielle sat for a few moments. The sun would soon set. Like a ghost haunting an attic, the thought of her new student came back to her mind

Gabrielle rose from her chair and went back into the house. She sat at her desk, looking through papers, sipping from her cup, and listening to the radio. Out of the corner of her eye, she noticed a large, yellow butterfly fluttering outside her window. Hoping not to scare it away, she slowly walked over and gazed at it. It was beautiful.

In these last moments of daylight, a gift from the universe, she thought to herself and smiled.

Gabrielle stood there amused, suddenly as fast as it came, the butterfly was gone. She looked out the window, but could not see which direction it flew in.

Sunday night came and Gabrielle lay asleep. Her cabin was quiet and still, when she slowly awoke to the sound of her bedroom doorknob turning back and forth. Gabrielle sat up, but was not scared. Sheba lay beside her, still asleep. The door opened and a little girl that looked to be about five years old stood at the foot of the bed. The child and Gabrielle looked at each other. Gabrielle got out of bed, walked over, and knelt down to pick her up. They looked at each other, then both turned to see a light growing just outside the window.

With the little girl in her arms, Gabrielle walked over to

investigate. Looking closely, Gabrielle noticed a butterfly in the center of the glow. It looked like the one she had seen the day before. The butterfly was beginning to grow larger with the light. The room became fully illuminated and no sound was made when the window glass broke.

The butterfly had the face of a man. His eyes pierced into Gabrielle's soul. Beautiful angelic music poured out of his mouth like water from running springs. He was serenading them.

Gabrielle awoke from the beeping of her alarm clock. A new week had begun. It was time to go to work. She had the same dream for the third night in a row.

Gabrielle taught a medically fragile pre-school class. Today she awaited the arrival of her new pupil. Because of a brain tumor, the student had not been given long to live by her doctors. Gabrielle was familiar with this situation because her father had died from the same diagnosis a semester before she graduated from college.

Holding hands with a child, Amy, the school nurse, showed up at the classroom. Gabrielle was in the process of teaching when she looked up to see two figures near the door. She was shocked to find the little girl from her re-occurring dream standing in front of her, holding hands with the school nurse.

Gabrielle asked her assistant to take over the calendar lesson so she could walk over to greet them.

Amy said, "The bus driver apologized for being late. A new student added to the route always throws the timing off on the first day, but he won't be late tomorrow. This is your new student. Her name is Michelle."

Gabrielle knelt down and slowly picked up the little girl like she had done in her dreams.

She whispered to her, "You are going to be very happy here." Michelle looked at Gabrielle and smiled.

"Thank you Amy, thank you very much. I'll take it from here."

Amy knew Michelle would be in good hands.

Her voice could be overheard saying, "Call me if you need anything," as she walked back down the hall to her office.

The class was mostly composed of children who wore helmets, and used wheelchairs or walkers for mobility. Michelle joined the group in their daily activities. Without making it obvious, Gabrielle observed the little girl throughout the day, trying to intuitively tap into her potential, attempting to discover what she could and could not do.

Michelle fit right in with the rest of the students; by the time the day was over, she was exhausted, and so was everyone else. Everyone except Gabrielle, she never seemed to get tired.

As Gabrielle approached her car to go home, a thought popped into her mind, 'library.' She soon dismissed it. A few moments later, the thought came back again, 'library.' Moments later, she thought of it again. She noticed that this thought was coming differently from other thoughts. It was more like a quiet whisper in her mind.

As she drove up the main street in town, Gabrielle pulled into the back lot of the public library. She parked the car, closed the door, and made her way into the building.

Gabrielle wasn't completely sure what she was doing there, but decided to inquire about butterflies. She asked the librarian where to find the natural science section. The two women walked down the corridor and disappeared up a flight of stairs. On the second floor, the librarian directed Gabrielle over to the appropriate section.

After choosing a few books off the shelf, she walked back down the aisle and sat at the first available table. It was still and quiet and Gabrielle realized she was the only one in the room.

She sat for a few minutes thumbing through one of the books she had chosen, when her next turn found a two-page spread of the big yellow butterfly that danced outside her window two days earlier.

While her face was buried deep inside the book, she heard someone say, "Change."

Gabrielle looked up to see an older man standing in front of her whose face looked oddly familiar. It took her a moment to recognize it, but when she did, it hit her like a bolt of lightning.

This man's face was the one she had seen on the butterfly in her reoccurring dream. The little hairs on her arm stood on end.

She quickly composed herself and politely said, "Excuse me?"

"The butterfly — it represents change or a transformation."

Gabrielle sat perplexed at his statement and the moment itself.

"Chris Herman – I'm your new neighbor." He extended his hand.

"The pleasure is all mine – may I sit?"

For a second Gabrielle stared at him, dumb-founded. Smiling, he gestured with his face, as if asking for permission once again.

Noticing this, and at the same time becoming aware of her unconscious hesitation, she said, "Please - please do," in an apologetic, but inviting manner.

He pulled out the chair that his hand was already resting on and sat directly across from her. Gabrielle stared at him, still not believing her eyes. Chris stared back at Gabrielle, smiling as if he knew something she didn't – as if he had a secret.

After a few moments of this, he asked, "So, what brings you here today?"

Chapter 2

Chris and Gabrielle spoke that afternoon. Chris entertained her with funny stories from his many travels around the world. Gabrielle laughed that day. They were healthy laughs, laughs that massaged her soul. She, in turn, spoke a little about herself and the children she worked with.

An hour-and-a-half went by, when Chris abruptly thanked Gabrielle for her company and her attention, and in a gracious manner excused himself. Chris' sudden exit confused Gabrielle, and left her not knowing what to do next.

She went back to looking at the butterfly book she was originally viewing, but didn't feel like she could continue to read. She returned to her cabin, and chopped fresh vegetables and herbs on the kitchen island.

Gabrielle took a break from her dinner preparations to look out of her window. She noticed Chris' car was still not in the driveway. Gabrielle thought about their conversation in the library. She snickered, remembering one of Chris' stories. Gabrielle wondered to herself, how a man near fifty could still hold on to such child-like qualities. He seemed not to be hardened by life.

How could that be? She thought to herself. By fifty, a person must have suffered through terrible trials and tribulations, even if they were born with a silver spoon in their mouth.

Gabrielle then came to a realization. Chris never revealed anything personal about himself throughout their conversation. He told her stories about being in other countries but, never mentioned why he was there. The next morning, she woke up an hour earlier feeling extremely energized.

Gabrielle decided to take Sheba for a walk. At that hour, night's darkness is cracked by dawn's early blue sky. She thought it unusual that she would feel so good with an hour less sleep.