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The Dreamcatcher Trilogy · Volume Three

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The  
Original  
Position

S H A R O N K A Y E

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Men have constructed a strange  
dream-world when they have...  
aimed at giving happiness  
to others directly.

- *John Dewey*

# C H A P T E R O N E

I never wanted any part of it.

Let it be known, for the record: I wasn't even supposed to be at the party that weekend. And if it hadn't been for the snag in my stocking, I wouldn't have been.

But snags do happen sometimes, even when you're careful.

It was a hangnail that caused the snag—the hangnail I had gotten from digging potatoes in my father's Victory Garden.

The whole situation was so wrong. First of all, the war was over—by three years, for crying out loud. *Nobody* still had a Victory Garden. Second, if you're going to have a garden, grow nice things, like berries and melons, not dirty old potatoes. Third, if you're going to grow potatoes, why should *I* have to dig them?

It was Saturday morning, September 25, 1948. I was in my bedroom listening to Dizzy Gillespie's *Groovin' High*. I was relaxing—and I had every right to. I had already helped Father with the potatoes and Mother with the breakfast dishes. They could guilt me into chores, but they couldn't guilt me out of my room when the chores were done.

It wasn't much of a room anyway—just a space carved out in the attic between the whole-house fan and the unused storm windows—but it was better than sharing a room with my younger sister. I had my record player, my radio, and a growing collection of homemade clothing.

It's not that I sewed, exactly—not from scratch, like my mother. But I was killer-diller at altering. I could turn things I'd bought for pennies at the Salvation Army into duds that even a movie star like Lauren Bacall could have worn. I knew this because I kind of looked like her.

I had made a little black dress for my date with Frankie Jones that night. It was hanging from a nail in the rafters. I lay on my bed, looking across dusty shafts of light at it, wondering where Frankie would take me and what all we would do. No matter what we did, though, I would need a good pair of stockings to wear with that dress.

It was when I was pawing through my stocking bin that I snagged the very pair I needed. After fifteen minutes of fruitless searching, I decided that I didn't have another pair that would do.

“Mother, I need to go to Woolworths.”

“Ask your father.” My mother looked up at me over her cat-eye glasses from where she sat at the table pinning fabric. Three pins protruded from her clenched teeth, mangling her words. “He's leaving for campus in a bit. You can catch a ride.”

That was the deal, you see? I was just catching a ride. But it soon turned into more than that—so much more.

My father was the chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Princeton University in New Jersey. He was on his way to the ninetieth birthday party of an alumnus named John Dewey.

The party was actually my brother Stanley's idea. Stan was a member of the University's Delta Psi fraternity, which Dewey joined in the late 1870s, before he went on to become a hotshot philosopher at Columbia University. My dad, who'd been a student at Columbia twenty-five years earlier, had taken a seminar with Dewey. Then Stanley had gotten to see Dewey speak at a conference at Columbia in 1947. When Stanley learned that Dewey was a fellow Delta Psi, he wrote to Dewey, inviting him to visit Princeton. After some back-and-forth, Dewey agreed to come. They settled on a date that happened to be near Dewey's ninetieth birthday.

Stanley and my dad had been annoyingly discussing Dewey at every Sunday dinner since then. I only ever saw Stanley on Sundays, since he'd moved into the Delta Psi house the previous year, and half the time he brought his friend Jack with him. Jack was a graduate student. When the three of them got to talking, my mother and I escaped to the kitchen as soon as we could.

Stanley and I were twins. We'd always been close. He had a funny laugh that could really get me going—usually at the worst of times, like when Mother occasionally got the urge to drag us to synagogue. But now, with him philosophizing all the time, I barely tolerated seeing him just once a week.

So far as I could tell, Dewey's philosophy boiled down to "the problem of science." On the one hand, science was curing diseases left and right; on the other hand, science had produced the atomic bomb. Would science save us or destroy us? That was the big issue that my dad and Stan were always discussing. Talk about depressing! I did my best to tune them out.

Gloria Geller's philosophy: If it's not up to me, then don't think about it. Why talk about such big, abstract issues? I stuck to things my own size (which was size four, by the way).

Anyhow, because Stanley had planned the party, he was obviously supposed to be there, which was why it came as such a surprise when he'd shown up at the house on the Wednesday before the party announcing that he was leaving early for his year of study abroad in China.

The conference at Columbia where Stanley had met Dewey was for Fulbright applicants. Fulbright was a new cultural exchange program. The idea was to get college students to study in other countries, promoting mutual understanding and friendship so we'd be less likely to jump into yet another world war.

Stanley's original thought was to go someplace normal, like France, where he could use his high school French, but Dewey's lecture convinced him to apply for China instead. Dewey himself had been invited to Peking University after the First World War, and he'd been so well-received that he'd stayed on for two years. Now, nearly thirty years later,

Dewey still felt that China-U.S. relations were destined to make or break world history.

China was the first country to sign the Fulbright agreement. That was somewhat astonishing, considering that China was in the middle of a civil war. What was even more astonishing was that Stanley wanted to go to a country in the middle of a civil war. And it wasn't just him. Twenty students from universities around the U.S. were being sent to various universities in China.

When Stanley's application to Peking University was accepted over the summer, he started ramping up his study of the Chinese language and culture. While my father was excited for him, my mother thought he'd come unglued. She didn't want him to go at all, and now he was saying he was heading out two weeks early.

"You can't go early!" she fumed. "Your grandmother is coming to say goodbye next weekend! We're going to make dumplings!"

"Enough, Mother." Stanley raked his hand through his thick black hair. "Where's Dad?"

"He's...he's in the garden with Joanna." Seeing that my brother was dead serious about leaving early, my mother began to cry.

I planted my fists on my hips. "You gotta go and break her heart *again*?"

My mother pushed past us to the back door, swallowing a sob.

My brother sighed. “You’re not helping, sis.”

“Since when do you need my help?” I shot back.

“Look,” he said, leaning into my stony gaze. “I know we’ve sort of been going our separate ways these days—”

“Yeah,” I interjected, “you won’t catch me on a plane to the other side of the world, worrying my mother sick—”

“Would you shut up for a minute so I can tell you goodbye?”

I cocked my head. “I never seem to say what you want me to, do I?”

Stanley threw his hands up, galvanized by my sarcasm. “I just think you’ve got so much more to you than...than *this*.” He stabbed a finger at the dress on the table that my mother was helping me pin.

“It’s *art*, Stan.” I crossed my arms over my chest, daring him to attack art.

Stanley crossed his arms in a mirror image of me. “It’s not *art*, Gloria. It’s *artifice*. Because it’s all about Frankie Jones.”

“Aha!” I shrieked. “You’re just jealous of Frankie because, unlike you, *he’s* actually accomplished something.”

Stanley looked away, getting ready to fling something back at me. But just then, our little sister Joanna came bounding into the room. One look at us told her we’d been fighting again.

“Mom said you’re leaving?” she asked Stanley.

I heard my mother and father coming in the back door. I stomped upstairs to my room, unwilling to endure any more drama.

That had been three days ago. My dad had taken Stanley to the train station that day. Stanley would soon be swimming in chop suey, and there I was, on my way to the party that *he* had planned.

“You can ‘stan in’ for Stan at the party,” my father had proposed with a nerdy chuckle.

I’d resisted rolling my eyes. “All I need is five minutes at Woolworths.”

“It won’t hurt you to mix with the students a bit.”

So *that* was why my father had been so quick to agree to give me a lift.

My grades from high school had been good enough to enable me to enroll at the university, but I didn’t want any more schooling. I wanted to get into fashion design. In the meantime, I was working from home for Douglas’ Taylor Shop, like my mother. Although I was still mainly doing alterations, I was getting good enough to start doing custom orders.

It wasn’t clear whether my father wanted me to *earn* a university degree or to *marry* someone with a university degree—someone unlike Frankie, who was working at the garage downtown until he could save enough money to move to New York City.

I was fervently hoping that Frankie would take me with him. My parents hoped with equal fervor that he would not. But they couldn't exactly say anything against Frankie, since he was a hometown hero. Enlisting in the Navy when he was just seventeen, Frankie had come home from the war with a Bronze Star. He was only six years older than me—twenty-seven to my twenty-one. And he had a motorcycle.

“I'm not staying for the party, Dad.”

“If you want a ride home, you are.”

“I'll take the bus.”

“Okay, then, you'll be home in plenty of time to dig some more potatoes, please.”

“Dad!”

“Gloria!” My dad opened the passenger door of his dark green Studebaker for me, ever the gentleman. He was whistling under his breath in celebration of the windfall moment of control he'd just gotten over his wayward daughter.

The Delta Psi fraternity house, which sat atop a scruffy hill at the corner of Summit and Maple, was a Victorian mansion. Think balconies, dormers, and one big fat turret, front and center, with a pointed top. There was absolutely nothing square about the building. I guess it was supposed to be that way—all curves and triangles. But to my mind, if you're going to have a turret, you should have at least two, and then you should give them corners to sit on, for crying out loud. The turret at the Delta Psi house looked suspect

to me, with its two rows of awnings, like an overly-toothy smile. But it fit the fraternity well, considering the rumors about all the shenanigans that went on there.

Well, the house was deserted. I caught my father's frown as we passed two cars driving away from it. Sure, my "five minutes" at Woolworths had made us a little late, but not *that* late. There should have been dozens of people there—spilling onto the veranda, sipping from dainty glasses of punch, talking about all sorts of stuff that I didn't care much about.

"Are you sure you have the right day?" I asked my father.

He nodded and parked the car in the back. There were a few other cars back there, but not what you would expect for a party.

We walked up the sidewalk under the porte-cochère. My dad paused by the entrance to put his hand at the small of my back so that I would enter ahead of him—ladies first.

It was so dark inside the heavily paneled foyer that I didn't see him standing there at first. What caught my eye was the glint of his little round unframed glasses. As my eyes adjusted, I could see that he was wearing a tuxedo. He was tall and stooped, with floppy white hair and a rough patch on his upper lip that passed for a mustache.

He said nothing to me but looked past me at my father. "Alan!" he croaked.

"Professor Dewey," my father returned. "I can't believe you recognized me!"

“Of course I recognize you.” Dewey reached a quivering arm out to shake my father’s hand. “It’s not so long ago that you were in my seminar.”

“Well, actually, it was twenty-five years—” my father began, but he cut himself off when he thought better of it.

I already knew plenty about “The Seminar” that Dewey was referring to. In the car on the way over, my father had waxed sentimental as he’d recounted once again his days as a student at Columbia University in New York City, where Dewey had been a professor of philosophy. My father had attended an undergraduate seminar that Dewey had taught on Pragmatism, the view that “the truth” is not an eternal absolute but the name we give to any theory that has worked so far. The seminar was a transformative experience for my dad, knocking him off course from a degree in botany into a degree in philosophy. That had been twenty-five years earlier. Dewey had been sixty-five then. Everyone figured he was on the verge of retirement. Little did they know that he had twenty-five more years of philosophy left in him.

Dewey swiveled to shake my hand. “So then you must be Stanley.”

I couldn’t hold back my grin. True, I was wearing Coco Chanel-style trousers and an oversized Pendleton jacket with shoulder pads. True, I had my hair pulled back under an oversized newsboy cap. True, I had no makeup on. But still!

My father chuckled. “Actually—”

“That’s right,” I said, stepping in front of my father to pump Dewey’s hand. “It’s nice to meet you finally, Professor Dewey.”

Dewey gazed at me through watery blue eyes. I felt a little wicked, since Dewey hadn’t really done anything to deserve the deception. But my father and brother had done plenty, so to my mind, the deception was justified.

“Well, you’re just in time, Stanley.” Dewey pointed me toward the interior of the house and then waved goodbye to my father. “Take care of yourself, Alan.”

My father tented his eyebrows. “I...um...I thought I’d stay for the reception.”

“Huh?” Dewey squinted at him.

My father raised his voice. “I thought there was supposed to be a reception. A party. For your birthday!”

“Aaachhh.” Dewey waved his hand dismissively as he shuffled across the room toward a carved oak door. “I told them to leave off with all that.” He paused with his hand on the doorknob and looked back at us. “I’m holding a meeting with the students. The youth! You know, it’s no coincidence that it was the youth of Athens who supported Socrates and launched his legacy. The minds of young people are sharp and agile, not yet dulled by popular opinion and hardened by tradition. It’s up to young minds to show us the way.”

Dewey’s gaze wandered dreamily off toward the only window in the room. Then he snapped back to attention,

regarding me with some impatience. “Come on, Stanley. We’ve got important work to do.”

It was my turn to frown. But a broad smile spread across my father’s face.

“Right you are, Professor Dewey!” he said. “Important work! Stanley, just give me a call if you need a ride home. See you later!” His hand found the small of my back again, and he gave me an enthusiastic shove toward Dewey.

Stumbling forward, I turned to scowl at my dad. He was already out the entrance and trotting down the steps to the sidewalk.

“Dad!” I called, springing for the door, barely preventing it from slamming in my face.

My father did not look back. He did not break his stride. He strode as purposefully as a young mother dropping her screaming baby off at Grandmother’s house for the first time. The speech bubble trailing behind him said, “You’ll be just fine!”

I stood in the entranceway, gaping at his back. A series of thoughts flamed through my mind. First I thought about running after him. Then I thought about another afternoon digging potatoes. Then I thought about staying. I wondered if there was any interesting trouble to be made at Dewey’s “meeting.” At the least, I could probably bum a few cigarettes from the students.

Turning back, I squared my shoulders and followed Dewey into the bowels of Delta Psi.

## C H A P T E R T W O

Dewey proceeded slowly down a long, shadowy hallway. Although he muttered to himself from time to time, he didn't bother to make conversation with me. Eventually he stopped at a door, but then he changed his mind before opening it.

"No, it's not this one." He seemed momentarily confused.

We walked on. At the next door, he stopped and twisted the knob, but it didn't open.

"Huh. Locked." He glanced at me, chagrined. Then he pointed back the way we'd come. "We must have missed our turn."

He set off again with his chin up, but he wasn't fooling me: he was lost. I started looking around and listening for signs of life in the house. This man was not as spry as he gallantly pretended to be. What if he fell or had a stroke or something with no one else around?

As we reached the other end of the hall, I heard soft footsteps approaching from around the corner. It was a woman with a shiny bob of black hair and a round Chinese face. She was wearing a gray polyester skirt suit. She dipped her head in a small bow to Dewey. "Ah, *Xiansheng*. Here

you are. I was becoming worried.” She spoke with a trace of a Chinese accent.

“Miriam!” Dewey heaved a sigh of relief. He reached toward her so she could grasp his wavering hand. Then he recovered himself. “Stop fussing over me.”

She pressed her lips into a downturned smile. “How about you take me back to the library? I believe it’s time for the meeting to begin.”

“Ah, yes! The meeting!”

As Miriam steered Dewey in the right direction and brushed past me, she said, “Please excuse us, miss.”

“Oh!” Dewey stopped in his tracks. “I almost forgot. Miriam, this is Stanley.”

Miriam gave me an apologetic wink. Then she spoke to Dewey. “Remember, *Xiansheng*, Mr. Ulrich told us that Stanley wouldn’t be able to join us today.”

“Well,” Dewey countered triumphantly, “it looks like Mr. Ulrich was wrong!”

A split second of indecision washed over me. If I was going to leave, now would be the time. I could walk out without any explanation, leaving it to Miriam to assume that Dewey was confused. But something about the expectant, childlike expression on Dewey’s face kept me on board. Dewey wanted me to be Stanley. He *needed* me to be Stanley. Or maybe I was projecting—maybe it was all about something *I* needed.

I smiled at the woman. “Hello, I’m Stanley Gellman.”

Miriam’s mouth dropped open in a gaping frown.

Dewey didn’t notice. “Stanley, this is Miriam Lu. She’s a graduate student in philosophy at Columbia University.”

“*Xiansheng*,” Miriam said to Dewey, “I sent a copy of my paper on democracy to Stanley, as you recommended. We’ve been corresponding about it.” She turned to me. “All this time, Stanley, I assumed you were a man. I’m so sorry! I’m sure I must have written ‘Mr. Stanley Gellman’ on the envelopes.”

“It’s okay,” I assured her. “It happens to me all the time.”

She nodded, blinking forcefully. “Me too. The university is still a man’s world. Even if you and I can’t agree about democracy, we can still agree about that. It is nice to finally meet you in person.”

We shook hands.

Dewey explained, “Miriam’s father and I are old friends, going back to my stay in Peking—which is where you’ll be headed soon, Stanley. Isn’t that right?”

I nodded confirmation.

“I think you’ll love it,” Miriam cooed.

“Are you from Peking?” I asked her.

She nodded. “We immigrated in 1928, when I was seven, but I still have many relatives there.”

“Her father now owns the best restaurant in Chinatown,” Dewey added with an unconscious lick of his lips. “As they always say, ‘Communists make the best cooks.’”

Miriam stole a glance at her watch. “Shall we head to the meeting now?”

We followed another hallway to the library. Inside, we found—at last!—people drinking from dainty glasses of punch. It was actually about a dozen young men—students, no doubt—standing or sitting in clumps of twos and threes, chatting.

My eyes were drawn to a table against the wall. It was draped in a red tablecloth and decorated with yellow crepe paper. Atop it sat a crystal bowl filled with cherry-fizz punch. I made a beeline for the punchbowl and helped myself. Alas, it didn’t seem to be spiked.

Artfully displayed on doilies around the punch bowl was a panoply of petit fours. They looked like a hundred tiny birthday presents. Some were white with blue or purple bows, others were pink with roses or daisies, others were chocolatey-brown with green leaves, and so on.

Scarcely able to choose, I finally plucked a chocolate one and popped it in my mouth. As I bit down, the fondant coating broke into a moist, minty cake. Emitting an involuntary moan of approval, I glanced around for Miriam so we could ogle the table together, but she hadn’t followed me; she had followed Dewey to a podium in front of the massive stone fireplace. She and Dewey were sorting through folders from a briefcase.

As I turned back toward the table, my eye caught a man in a plaid sweater-vest. It was Stanley's friend Jack—the one who had often come to our house for Sunday dinner. Another young man was speaking to him with energetic gesticulations about a book he'd just found on the bookshelf. Jack listened as he leaned on a wooden ladder propped against the wall of books.

When our eyes met, Jack recognized me. He nodded hello before returning his attention to his friend.

Likewise, I returned my attention to the party table. Personally, I felt that the table alone redeemed my fraught foray into Delta Psi. I had run out of time, however, to ogle it. The grandfather clock struck three, and a significant hush fell over the room. So I topped off my punch, shoveled a few more petit fours into my messenger bag for later, and joined Miriam on the leather sofa.

Miriam was staring pointedly at a lanky young man in a blue-and-white letterman jacket. Why blue, when Princeton's colors were black and orange? He and his buddies, some of whom were wearing or holding black-and-orange letterman jackets, were the only ones still chatting. Feeling Miriam's eyes on him, the man levered himself from his chair and went to the podium.

First the young man cleared his throat and called for everyone's attention, even though that was completely unnecessary. Then he consulted a notecard from his pocket and spoke.

“Uh, hello, everyone!” he said. “Thank you for coming. My name is Thomas Ulrich. I am a Delta Psi senior in residence.”

He paused, grinning sheepishly, while his buddies belted out a Delta Psi cheer.

“It’s my great honor to introduce a very famous and honorable brother alumnus....” He squinted at his notecard. “...named John Doozy. On the honorable occasion of his, uh, ninetieth birthday, we will now hear him speak on the very fascinating topic of ‘The Future of Philosophy.’ We will be followed by, uh, sorry, *it* will. I mean, afterwards, there will be a barbecue on the veranda. Okay. Thank you.”

After exchanging a thumbs-up with his Delta Psi buddies, Ulrich sauntered back to his seat.

Meanwhile, Dewey carefully positioned himself at the podium. He opened a folder and spoke.

Good afternoon, Delta Psi brothers and Princeton philosophers. It’s my great pleasure to be here. Of course, at my age, it’s a great pleasure to be anywhere. [Scattered laughter]

But where exactly are we? This is the question I have been asking myself of late. Where am I, really? [Here, Dewey trailed off, as though literally unsure of where he was. Miriam sat forward, ready to come to the rescue.]

I think we all need to ask ourselves where we are as individuals. And we need to ask ourselves where we are as a community, too. Are we where we want to be? If not, where exactly do we want to be? And how can we get there?

The twentieth century has already seen two world wars, and it's only half over. We're living in a war-torn world. But we can picture another world—a world of peace and justice for all. That's where I want to be. Surely, that's where we *all* want to be. But how do we get there?

Students, when I was your age, this country was still mired in age-old superstition. I have devoted my career to advancing the cause of science against that backward mindset. But when we leave primitive religion behind, we can't leave morality with it! Science must advance hand in hand with morality. Every technological innovation should come with moral innovation. Every improvement in our standard of living should come with improvement in our standard of behavior. We need to live good lives.

Two thousand years ago, Socrates charged philosophers with the task of guiding humanity. The word *philosophy* comes from the Greek words for "love of wisdom." And I believe that philosophers can still play a role in guiding us today. But it's not only philosophers who love wisdom; there are philosophical psychologists, philosophical librarians, and philosophical dentists. In fact, anyone who lives in a democracy needs to be a philosophical citizen in order to vote on laws and leadership that will steer our country clear of trouble.

When I was your age, I had the honor of meeting William James—a great American philosopher who believed in the future of our country. He gave me an extraordinary gift, which has served as a profound inspiration to me throughout my entire career. It is a Native American dreamcatcher—a hoop-shaped charm for bestowing good dreams. William James believed that the dreamcatcher may have supernatural powers. He gave it to me in the hope that I would help keep the American dream of democracy alive.

While I don't believe that the dreamcatcher has supernatural powers, I do regard it as a valuable work of art. Furthermore, I recently had it appraised and found, to my surprise, that it's worth a great deal of money. I have come to see it as a kind of traveling prize, to be passed along to the philosopher with the most potential to guide us toward a world of peace and justice.

So I spent some time last year investigating the most promising philosophers around the country in search of a suitable recipient for the dreamcatcher. Students, I am sad to report that I found no one. The truth is that American philosophy has lapsed into a mire of egomaniacal politics and logic-chopping. I couldn't find any philosopher who could be trusted to carry a torch for the American dream.

About the time I gave up looking, I began corresponding with your very own Stanley Gellman. I posed my problem to him, and he proposed an ingenious solution. Stanley, I would like to turn the podium over to you now to explain your proposal.

At that point, Dewey reached a wavering hand out to me, and everyone turned to look. If everything had been proceeding normally, I would have had a brief moment to decide what to do. Ask him to explain the proposal? Admit that I was Stanley's sister? Run from the room?

Unfortunately—or perhaps fortunately—things were not proceeding normally for me. In fact, not long after Dewey had started his speech, things had begun turning very strange indeed.

The walls of the library had started to breathe. What I mean is that they had started to move softly in and out like the belly of a sleeping creature. Even the wall of bookshelves

gently rippled. I looked around in wonder. No one else seemed to notice what was happening. I considered standing and calling everyone's attention to the situation, but I didn't want to interrupt Dewey, so I sat and watched, wide-eyed.

As the walls inhaled and exhaled around us, I began to feel that I was actually in the belly of a sleeping creature. After breathing rhythmically with the room for a while, I made an extraordinary realization: Delta Psi was not a house but a living being. That explained why it had no proper corners. It was a giant beast curled up on a hill, and it had eaten me alive.

You would think I would have found that thought disturbing, but in fact I found it comforting because I knew that if Delta Psi had swallowed me, then it had swallowed everyone else in the room as well. We were all in this together. We were in the belly of the beast. We were becoming one with this creature—one with each other and one with it at the same time.

It was an electrifying revelation. I felt that I needed to convey it to everyone immediately, but I couldn't think how to put it into words. Dewey was still droning on, and as I gazed past him, I noticed a Philco floor model tube radio behind him. So when he finally broke off and asked me to explain my proposal, I knew exactly what to do.

First, I turned on the radio, finding a station that played nice dance music. Next, I turned up the volume. Finally, I took the podium. As I reached my arms out toward my audience, I made an extraordinary discovery: I was wearing

Stanley's hands! That is to say, when I looked at my hands, I realized that they were not Gloria's hands anymore; they were Stanley's. I could tell because I was wearing his class ring. My soft feminine hands had turned into Stanley's thick, hairy hands. When I saw that, it occurred to me that more of me might have turned into Stanley. And sure enough, when I looked down, I saw that I was wearing Stanley's tan seersucker suit and his size twelve leather wingtips.

Logically, there was only one conclusion to draw: I was *becoming* Stanley. That made perfect sense, since everyone was already calling me Stanley and wanted me to be Stanley as well. I stroked my chin, reassured by the beard stubble I felt there.

Everyone was staring expectantly at me. Knowing that no words could do the moment justice, I simply asked the audience to raise their hands high and sway to the music. We swayed together. First we swayed left, then we swayed right, then we swayed left again, and so on. Through this synchronicity, I communicated that we needed to achieve unity with the universal Being.

There was a certain amount of chatter from a few people who didn't seem to understand what was going on, but the rest of us ignored them.

As we swayed together, crystalline petit fours began forming on the ceiling. Then they cracked into a million pieces, which wafted down to us like sugary snowflakes. The petit four flakes sparkled and swirled, lighting up the room. They were so incredibly beautiful! They hummed

and pulsed with the music, proving that we could in fact achieve peace and justice for all. We caught them on our fingertips, on our eyelashes, and on our cherry punch-stained tongues. It was magical.