

# VISION CIRCLE

Shaman Dreamers of the Crystal Cave



*Jeff Farwell*



PASSAGEWAY

To be alive when it all seems about to end  
means to be near the lifting of the veil.

— MICHAEL MEADE

*The World Behind the World:  
Living at the Ends of Time*

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# Introduction

## The Veil Thins

Not so long ago the veil between the worlds was almost impenetrable. Only through heroic and concerted effort was it possible to touch those realms beyond the radius of our senses and return to tell of them. Of course, there have always been thin spots and places of strange power, just as there have always been a few men and women who could reach beyond the visible. Such people have been called prophets, shamans, and insane.

That is no longer the case. We find ourselves in a time of great shifts in which many doors are opening. What was unavailable to most is now becoming accessible to all. Before us is an invitation to join a vast, multidimensional universe whose vistas and inhabitants are as tangible as we consider ourselves. We can directly access spiritual realms, wisdom, and love to experience our own timelessness and truth—if we choose. The first step in that choice is to acknowledge that we too are infinite by nature. The second and much harder is to open the eyes of the heart and trust what it tells us. The brain tells us the heart cannot be understood. Most of us have been content with this conceit and have never considered that the heart might be a potent organ of perception.

The density of the veil has even hidden us from ourselves. It is common to hear that we are powerful beings, but it is not something most of us have allowed ourselves to experience. Instead we attribute states of fear, want, and suffering to God or bad luck, failing to recognize the awesome creative power of human thought and the forms it has created and sustained for millennia. How do we step out of the fearful inertia that seems to blanket the world and the sense of helplessness it perpetuates in us all? By starting to accept our divinity as an actuality rather than a concept. Doing so, you may be surprised to find that the world shifts slightly.

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Many of us feel as if time is somehow speeding up. Such is the pull of the time to come. With this shift comes both invitation and responsibility. The invitation is to glimpse in each other who we really are and who we are becoming. The responsibility is to allow that vision to open and from there to hold space for an even larger vision, one in which we dream into being a new world of beauty, compassion, and grace. We are not at the end but the beginning.

The experiences that follow came to me within my own practice of shamanic journeying and coincided with changes in my life. I did not seek them specifically and would have been happy to continue my way in a comfortable career, troubled only by an occasional feeling that I was doing a good job of skating the surface. Something activated a deeper seed. It is hard to point to a single action, event, or idea, though I can suggest many. Perhaps their effect was cumulative. Perhaps it was time. I nurtured that seed and a path slowly emerged, branching from the momentum I assumed was the course of life. Perhaps the possibility was always present, a question waiting to be asked and finally answered, a choice leading to unimagined choices.

After a few years I found the two paths had diverged enough that it would soon be difficult to keep a foot on both. I chose the one that seemed the juiciest and never looked back. It led directly to a life in which the distinction between inner and outer experience was less apparent, and there would be unfamiliar roles such as healer and teacher. The unknowns were part of the attraction, yet the path soon began to feel natural, familiar, and rich—a place I had always sought without knowing it. In a way, I think it chose me long before I made my choice.

And I had help. My journeying experiences and work with guides, teachers, and spirits in both inner and outer domains were an unfailing source of support, while challenging me to walk in a conscious, living universe filled with magic, witnessing the sacred in the mundane.

A month before I made the leap, a man of power approached me in the inner world with the unexpected invitation I had somehow been expecting. I accepted and found myself in a council of dreamers, a vision circle linked to other circles back through linear time charged with assisting the Earth and her inhabitants in times of transition. With that charge came a task specific to me: the work of the Council and some of

## Introduction

my other encounters would form a book that I was to write and which is now before you.

There are different ways to approach this account. The easiest is to suspend disbelief and simply enjoy the story. Whether you consider it truth or fantastic tale is not really important. What matters is that it speaks to you. Allow it to open your heart and the realm of possibility. Perhaps the telling will activate your own trust in a bright future. May it give you courage to acknowledge and then step through fear to accept what calls more and more insistently.

There are no more prophets. The time of prophecy is over. We are indeed the ones we have been waiting for. The veil grows thin!



I offer this book with honor and respect to the Earth and her inhabitants with the simple intent of highest and best for all. Thanks are due to everyone who has assisted with its publication. I am blessed. And I offer deepest gratitude to my teachers in all worlds with the hope that in a small way this work helps further their own.

# The Traveler

*-January-*

*Waxing Moon in Taurus*

Aquila, the great wolf and steadfast helper who led me to my first guide, told me there was someone in my valley. I got a picture of a man dressed in fur with a wolf's-head hat, moving carefully through the trees and snow.

"He hunts you."

)

There was one other time when I encountered someone in my inner domain. I knew he also walked in the Middle World, the small part of the Universe most people are satisfied to call real. Then, he too sought me but in a nonspecific way. I saw him across a stream, far from the places I usually frequented, where I had ventured while working with the protector being who has no name.

For a few days I observed that earlier intruder, knowing he could not see me though he was aware of being observed. He kept piling rocks in a heap that never amounted to much. Perhaps he considered himself a great sorcerer, entering what he imagined was the heart of someone's inner world. Curiosity finally got the better of me. With the protector close at hand I crossed the water and approached his back.

"What is your name?" I asked.

As usual he was half-heartedly trying to make the same round rocks into a structure. He wore a great, black fur coat that went well below his knees, despite the day's apparent warmth.

"Anton," he replied, without wanting to, and turned toward me.

"What are you doing here?"

“Trying to attract you.”

“Here I am. What are you building?”

“A school, perhaps,” he said without real conviction.

In these realms it is difficult to lie, but he attempted to keep the whole truth from me. I sensed that his larger plan was to attract people to his own purposes and that in daily life he was often a manipulator and a liar—no doubt for worthy causes. I visited him again shortly thereafter to confirm my initial impression and then abandoned him to his devices. Later I chanced to learn his earthly identity, but that is another story.

And once something strange and unbidden found its way to my inner world. It was night. I was standing on the rim of the valley when the protector, who rarely spoke, suddenly said, “Duck! Hide! Do not look up!” I immediately went small and invisible and felt a darkness full of intent fly over like a great, silent bird. It went up the valley, circled at the end, and passed over again. Then it was gone and the protector removed his cloak of shadow from me. I later asked my guide, Amun, about it.

“Sometimes things can enter,” he said, unconcerned.

Perhaps he was trying not to alarm me. Whatever it was, it had malice.



So when Aquila, the wolf, told me I was being stalked in my own place of relative safety, I was intrigued but wary and kept my distance. I saw from the picture he gave me that this fellow was masterful. Still I was secure in the knowledge that I had numerous means of protection and refuges that remained inviolate.

The intruder made camp near the head of the valley and there he stayed. Some days I forgot all about him until I journeyed to that realm, which I had to do to see Amun. Together we observed him from our meeting place, but Amun simply said, “Watch a little longer. Proceed carefully.”

Finally I ventured toward his place with Aquila and the protector. We stayed on the far side of the little stream that flows from the sheltering mountain jutting overhead, much as I had done with the previous

## The Traveler

intruder in a different place. Mirroring the seasons in my outer world, it was winter there, midmorning. The stream was frozen and snow covered. The sky was slightly overcast. I had the protector envelop me in shadow and observed this man more closely. He was dressed in white furs streaked with brown. A shaman. I knew he was aware of my presence though not my location. Unlike the earlier trespasser, he sat quietly before a small fire, open to my scrutiny, hiding nothing, alert, powerful.

Still in shadow, I crossed the stream yet he saw me coming. I released the shadow, keeping the protector close on my right. He seemed relieved and stood immediately. His face was open.

“Who are you, and what are you doing here?” I asked brusquely.

He smiled. “I am the Traveler. I am seeking you.” He shifted his fur-booted feet and the snow squeaked in the deep cold.

“Why?”

“I bring an invitation. There is a cave in the Middle World high on a mountain face. It has a great crystal. Come to it.” He sent me a picture: a cave in a sheer rock wall, high above a narrow valley choked with boulders and stone shards.

I liked him and could feel my insubordinate heart opening. I was in the presence of someone strong in the path and connected to Spirit. He seemed amused by my thoughts but said nothing more. I thanked him and moved back across the river into what I hoped was disappearance. When I looked down from my vantage point with Amun, the Traveler was still there, but he seemed to be fading.

Knowing my question, Amun said, “Be very careful. Use all your invisibility — if you accept.”

I had been hunted successfully. There was bait. Was there a trap?



I planned to take my time visiting that cave. A leisurely approach would be a statement of indifference. But the next morning I knew it was the only thing I could possibly do. It felt big, and my curiosity was extreme. A little vanity contributed to the mix.

I asked Red Feather, the spirit who is connected to me in outer life and who walks on my left, if he wanted to join.

“I think it may be what I’m here for,” he answered.

Beginning at my valley, we flew through the Middle World with the protector and all the invisibility I could command. Soon I was floating outside the cave mouth whose picture I saw the day before. All seemed dark within, though I could see a big, double-terminated crystal about eighteen inches long and perhaps twelve wide, one point almost buried in an alcove at the back of the cave. Then I realized there were several men and women seated along the sides. Another man sat directly beneath the crystal, which emitted a soft glow. He had seen me well before I noticed him, as did one or two more.

“Come in!” he said, startling the others who were staring at the cave floor or lost in meditation. “The Traveler found you.”

I saw that the Traveler himself was seated a little to the man’s right. Balanced at the lip with a thousand feet of stone face below my heels, alert for danger, yet sensing nothing but welcome and gladness from those in the chamber, I recognized a pivotal moment. Suddenly the cave seemed warmer, suffused with a rosy, golden light. Still I hesitated. Lines of possibility stretched in every direction, though there was only one choice.

“Come in,” he said again. “Sit here on my left. This will be your place.”

I entered. Approaching him, I saw a well-built man with golden-brown skin, a broad, unlined face open to my scrutiny, and graying hair hanging in two braids just below his shoulders. He seemed to be bare-chested, and his large turquoise aura added to the glow in the cave.

With Red Feather close behind me, I sat where the man indicated. The others watched intently. What had Amun seen to make him urge so much caution?

“Who is the Traveler?” I asked, looking at them both.

“He is helping us gather all our members. When we are complete there will be twelve, plus myself. He will not be one of us, though he will help us on occasion. All of us here are currently living lives on Earth. You may encounter some of the members in life. Others you will only meet here. My name is Arrow.” He laughed as I tried to be certain he didn’t have a half-dozen other names that sounded similar.

I studied the cave and those who were in it. There were three people against the left wall, three on the right, and with the Traveler, Arrow,

## The Traveler

and me, three at the back. The cave did not seem to have any exit other than the front.

“With your arrival there are now seven members, five to come, six female, six male altogether,” he continued. “The Traveler is contacting the other five.” As he said that, the Traveler got up, moved to the cave mouth, and disappeared into the air.

I considered the number twelve: twelve solar months, twelve astrological signs, twelve Christian apostles, twelve stones in my medicine bundle, and so on.

“All that,” Arrow said dismissively. I felt myself smile. I liked very much that the symbolic was simply assumed rather than the primary object of attention here.

I had another question. “What about thirteen?”

“The thirteenth connects you with a lineage, as with the stones in your medicine bundle. That is my function. I will lead.” He gave a great laugh, and I could see the lineage stretching out in time behind him for an instant.

“You are the next shamans and will each carry this lineage eventually. You are the Council. Your purpose is to dream the world into being. There may be other councils, perhaps many, but that is not our concern. One reason you are all here is your skill at manifestation.”

I thought about how I’d like to manifest a few things more directly in my own life, but I understood him. Gathering courage, I looked at each person in the cave starting on my left. There sat two women and a man between. I looked at each carefully, tried to get their names and look into their eyes. With each I sensed nothing but welcome and joy at my presence. It was hard to keep them in memory. On the right side sat two men with a woman between. The man nearest the cave mouth was short, slightly stocky, with brown skin and perhaps a pencil mustache. He seemed somewhat less open than the others, and I suddenly thought “Loki” and flashed on the idea that Loki might be a necessary part of creation as well. But then I thought, “Paqo!” and a voice seemed to say, “Or someone like him.” He nodded and smiled, returning my recognition. I knew this man.

The woman in the middle was African and very large. “I have to be large to hold all this joy and energy,” she said, reading my thoughts and laughing.

The last man was Alfred, a tall, older man, whom I knew from some of my training. Again I heard, “Or someone like him.” I felt another wave of recognition and happiness, which he returned.

“But I can think of many who are more qualified than I to be sitting here,” I said to Arrow.

“Those people are engaged in other tasks of equal importance for which they are best suited. Teaching, for instance. We will soon be at thirteen, but until then we will not join hands or conduct our formal duties. To begin we will meet at each new moon. Later we may add something at the time of the full moon or as necessary, but for our immediate purposes new moons are better.”

I had forgotten about Red Feather, still sitting very quietly a little back and to my left.

“What about my friend?”

“Another one of the reasons you are here. He is not currently one of those with a physical presence on Earth and cannot participate directly, but as he is directly attached to you and shares your path he may stay where he is. We welcome him. As for the rest, guides, power animals, helping spirits, and so on, all of it stays outside the cave.”

Everyone laughed.

It all seemed good and very right. A few months before, I could not have imagined such a thing, let alone the idea of participating in it. I felt honored and excited but awed by the responsibility.

Only ten days ago—New Year’s Eve to be exact—I dreamed I stood on a hill with God looking on the City of Life. Among other things, I stated a loose intent to write a book of one kind or another. Now it seemed one was about to write me.

# First Meeting

*-January-*

*New Moon in Aquarius*

Between my initial visit to the cave and our first formal meeting, I returned several times. Additional members continued to arrive, some on their own, some accompanied by the Traveler. I tried to keep them straight, yet it was as if only part of their energy was there as a placeholder. I wasn't sure exactly when we would meet at the new moon, but Arrow had said to me, "You will know." On the day of the exact new moon, I noticed that the moon calendar had come off the wall. I took it as a sign.

That evening I journeyed to the place where I had met the Traveler. I knew I could go directly to the cave but chose to begin from a deeper place as a means of heightening my focus. I continued to do so thereafter. Red Feather accompanied me. Normally the valley was a place he chose not to go, as he felt it would be an honorable thing to leave one place in my life that was mine alone. He had met Amun and was deeply moved, but I never asked whether he had a guide. Once he told me the flicker was his primary power animal. That probably explained the sudden and continuing presence of red-shafted flickers announcing their presence near my house. One thing I did ask was whether he remembered dying. He didn't. This has remained a mystery for us both. I will tell more of this matter soon.

From the valley we made our way to the cave. It was dark, but we could see the cave mouth lit by firelight from within, hundreds of feet above the foot of the mountain cliff and hundreds more below the cliff crag. We entered and the men and women already present greeted us warmly. Two more soon followed, and we were twelve, plus Arrow. Those closest to the cave mouth at each side moved toward each other

to complete a circle. We shared a quiet excitement. Personally I felt that by virtue of being there I was competent of the work before us—at least as I understood it—and had no sense of trepidation or inadequacy. The cave was just big enough to hold us all without crowding. A small fire burned before Arrow. Behind him the large crystal stood in its alcove.

He welcomed us with a few words and got right to business.

“Take as much time as you need to see and remember each of the others here. It is very important for our work.”

I still sat at Arrow’s left, but others had shifted as newcomers arrived. Except for Arrow and me, male and female alternated. I began with the person on my left, a small, olive-skinned woman with streaks of silver in her thick, dark hair. She wore a purple or black dress. Next was a rather tall man of Chinese appearance, dressed in plain trousers and a short-sleeve shirt as if he had just gotten off his bicycle in Shanghai. On his left was a white-haired woman wearing what appeared to be a white buckskin dress with beaded symbols. Next to her was a short, somewhat stocky man with dark skin and black hair in a bowl cut, an Amazonian shaman. He had red paint in lines across both cheeks and around his right upper arm. And then a surprise—at least Arrow had told me it might be a surprise during one of my intervening visits. I do believe it was Alice, a large woman with short, dark hair, wearing a long dress of blue or purple. Her back was most directly to the cave entrance; something I realized was not by circumstance.

Continuing around was Paqo, “or someone like him,” a Peruvian shaman I had met several times and who was probably the youngest person there. Then came the large African lady with the beautiful face, then Alfred. After him sat a tall, thin, northern European woman with high cheekbones, gray eyes, and long blonde hair streaked with gray. She wore a white shirt and black pants. On her left sat an African man, tall, strong in every sense, so black he was almost blue. He wore a flowing robe printed with unique geometric symbols and a matching cap. And finally there was someone I had difficulty making out, partly because Arrow sat between us, but perhaps because I was reluctant to recognize someone I knew. At length, she seemed to resolve into a tall woman, dressed in radiant white with a white headband and some kind of medallion on the front. Her hair seemed short and might have been ash blonde.

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Me? It is always hard for me to discern my own form and appearance while journeying, but I believe I was wearing the white buckskin medicine shirt given to me a little earlier by a group of Paleolithichunters I had met at a “thin place.”

As I engaged each person, I felt my attention mirrored. In every case we looked within each other’s eyes and recognized something common that manifested simultaneously in a warm smile.

I do not know if Arrow was waiting for me, but at that point he said, “Good. We have work to do. You are all currently living on Earth, as am I. You are here because of your abilities at manifestation and because it is your self-chosen destiny. There may be other groups engaged in the same work, but for us this is the only one that matters. If you notice the results of our work and say, ‘I did this,’ it diminishes everything we do here. I should not need to remind anyone that this is not a matter of you and your personal power.

“This circle will exist as long as you are all living. When one passes on, the Council is dissolved and you will go your ways as destined. I am from a previous council, and I bring continuity and the greetings of a great lineage.”

I suddenly sensed extreme age in him, despite his prime-of-life appearance.

“As long as humans have lived on Earth, there has been a Council. It is possible that one or all of you will serve in my role after this one is dissolved. It is also possible that some of you will meet each other in daily life. Some of you are conscious of your presence here. Others are here in their dreaming. It does not matter. Some of you also have specific duties beyond those we all currently share. The scribe here, for example,” he said, turning suddenly in my direction. “It has been determined that some of this work should be known.

“Now we begin. As long as humans have walked here, Earth has been in what might be called crisis. What happens when we are gone? All I can say is that part of our work is to sustain her. But at this point, she is in even greater crisis. Greater action is called for. She *will* be saved, if you want to put it that way, but it will be because of your work. Such is the nature of time and destiny.” He smiled but then frowned slightly. “You will find this responsibility a joy and a burden.” And then he was silent, gazing into the fire.

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We looked inward, considering everything he had told us.

“Let us join hands,” he said, lifting his gaze abruptly. “Just feel the energy. Feel the hands in yours.”

We did so and focused on the sensation. I was familiar with this from working with archetypal energies, forming circles of hands in the inner world for harmonizing, and could feel our combined energy gathering, coalescing, and then flowing. Unlike archetype work, this felt warmer, human, material. And unlike the archetypes it seemed more unformed, potential rather than cool and focused, fire more than electricity.

After a bit, we broke the circle. Arrow continued. “We will form a vision circle to help manifest a different future; dream it into existence. What would that future look like?”

The cork was out of the bottle. Everyone spoke at once. I remember the African woman saying forcefully, “A world in which no child lives in fear.” I said, “A reconnection with Spirit. A world in which our leaders consider the effect their choices will have on seven generations to come. A world in which the water is fit to drink.” I’m sure I went on.

“How can we arrive at this?” Arrow finally asked above the voices.

We considered. Where to start? The longer we looked, the more it seemed that most of the turmoil and struggle affecting the Earth began with us. Arrow led us deeper.

“The proper relation of humans to the Earth is reciprocity. We hold her in honor and express our gratitude. She sustains us. When that is forgotten, things begin to fall apart ever so slowly. In the end, the Earth does not react to the ungrateful plundering but to the accumulation of heavy thought forms humans are so good at creating. It is an old cycle. At this first meeting, we will begin simply. Join hands and understand to your core that reciprocity is the ground on which all our work is based.”

As we did so, I saw how this purest and most ancient of heart songs energizes anything that draws upon it. It was a deep lesson.

“Now consider the Earth as a planet. Step away and what do you see?”

Still holding hands, we saw our beautiful home shrouded in layers of dark, greasy fog. Space, on the other hand, was filled with living

## First Meeting

light, and the nearby planets were singing with joy. The shifting fog prevented most of that light from penetrating.

“This is the accretion of centuries of unenlightened thought and action, which organized religion has played a large part in sustaining,” said Arrow. “Our work tonight is simply to visualize starlight sifting through that black mist into the Earth and all human hearts.”

We focused on the image until Arrow finally broke the circle.

“Enough!” And the energy subsided. “Now you also realize that your work will continue each day with these images. This is your homework,” he said grinning and leaning forward. “We meet again at the next new moon!”

With that the Council broke. Several people departed immediately. Others lingered, mostly in silence, enjoying the fire and each other’s company.

I asked a question. “What is the orientation of this cave?”

Arrow laughed, “You can tell that.”

True, I was being lazy. I opened to it and felt that north was about between Paqo and the African lady, which meant I was sort of in the south and the cave entrance was somewhat northwest.

“That’s about right,” said Arrow. I found it interesting that the cardinal directions didn’t seem very significant here. What seemed more important was the crystal in the alcove behind Arrow. It wasn’t a separate piece, as I had thought earlier. Rather, the entire mountain was a crystal, or at least it was crystal on the interior.

Arrow smiled. “An ancient place, used continuously for many thousands of years. It serves to amplify our efforts.”

It was time to go. Almost an hour had passed and my physical legs were cramping from sitting cross-legged. I stepped into the space outside the cave and hung there. Several others were also there, moving slightly up and down. It was cool but not cold. Summer. South America, then, for I was sure the journeying took place entirely in the Middle World. I looked down valley to the southwest and could see scattered lights in the far distance. The sight was unexpected but somehow comforting. While the people there might not know of our presence or the cave, it reminded me of our human connection.

Red Feather had sat quietly behind me without joining hands,

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though he was aware of everything, including my thoughts. It must have been overwhelming. We journeyed back the way we had come. I opened my eyes in my room and heard him say only, "Very powerful."

Next morning I sought to discuss the event with my guide, Amun. He had little to say about it other than to urge me to accept it without reservation. It was a Monday, and I was depressed most of the day. That surprised me. Perhaps it was a realization of the burden Arrow had mentioned, or possibly that my career and the work I enjoyed doing well suddenly had less meaning.