

Chapter Sixteen

For the first time during his illustrious career, Clarence Vigo, MD, was perplexed. Mick was clearly not the first Dissociative Identity Disorder that he had dealt with but the self arousal issue had presented a new twist. As Mick's alternate personality, Ralph, sat before him gazing about the room, Vigo nervously wrote on his legal pad:

Patient, in the course of switching, has apparently initiated self arousal. This state of consciousness does not lend itself to suggestive intervention. Question, do I allow the alter, Ralph, to leave the office, attempt the use of injectable sedation for the purpose of facilitating a switch to the host personality or do I call the authorities?

As Vigo sat motionless, contemplating his options, a familiar voice asked, "Well, how'd I do today?"

Startled by the sudden return of Mick's normal voice, Vigo moved abruptly back in his chair, sat upright and assumed an air of normality. "How do you feel, Mick?" he asked.

"Very tired."

"Do you recall any part of today's discussion or anything else unusual?"

"I'm not sure ... wait, I remember you telling me to float back to the time of the Ramirez thing."

"Think carefully, was there anything else?"

"Yeah, as I felt myself approaching that time, I heard a voice say somethin' I couldn't understand."

"Nothing else?"

"No, the rest is blank."

"Could you tell where the voice was coming from?"

"Sounded like it was comin' from inside my head."

"Was it familiar?"

Mick scratched his head and hesitated for a moment. "I think so," he said.

"Was it my voice?"

"No, it was different; deeper, with a funny accent."

"Had you heard that voice before?"

"I think so."

"Why have you not mentioned it?"

"I've heard what happens when you start talkin' about hearin' voices."

"And what might that be?"

"Straight off to the nuthouse."

Vigo shook his head in disbelief. "Have you ever clearly understood the voice," he asked, "assuming that it's always the same voice?"

"I'm not sure because I usually can't remember what happens afterwards. Anyway, what does it mean?"

"When did you first start hearing the voice?"

"Back when I was a kid, in school."

"C'mon, doc, help me out here, what's goin' on?"

"Well, Mick, sometimes when people, especially children, are faced with intolerable situations, a new protective personality tends to emerge."

"Protective personality?" Mick exclaimed, while moving to the edge of his chair, "what does that mean?"

"It means, that at times, you transform into another completely different person."

"Ugh, you're scarin' me, doc ... like, you think that the voice is another me?"

"Possibly."

"What makes you think so?" he asked, with a tone of disbelief.

"I do not think that you are ready for the whole truth."

"Hey, doc, wasn't it you who said that my insurance would only cover for a short period? Let me hear it."

"I believe that there may be a solution to the insurance problem."

"What do you mean?"

"The Sands Foundation has earmarked funds for the research and treatment of problems like yours."

"The Sands Foundation?" he repeated, with puzzlement.

"Yes, I thought you knew about them."

"No, tell me about it."

"I receive a stipend from the foundation for some of my work. I assumed that your friend Melanie would have told you about her family's philanthropic endeavors."

"I knew that her parents had bought it in a plane crash and that they had some bucks, but nothin' like this. Hey, wait a minute, did she give me your card because she thought I had this frickin' problem?" he asked, angrily.

"No, nothing like that but she is aware of my relationship with the foundation and most likely felt comfortable sending you here."

"OK, so I get to spend more time with you but I still need to know the truth and I need it now!"

"I think it's best that we deal with this problem in a gradual fashion. Too much information at one time could prove stressful and only serve to further aggravate your problem."

"Well, at least you can tell me about this other person."

"As I indicated, it is not another person but rather a second incarnation of yourself."

"You gotta give me more than that."

"Alright. It seems that your scraped knuckles are the result of an altercation that occurred while your other personality, which we will call your alter, was in control."

"Who'd I hit?"

"You will not like the answer."

"Who, tell me?"

"Melanie's boyfriend."

"Shit, I don't remember a thing," Mick whispered, remorsefully, "does she know?"

"No, now pay attention."

"OK, doc, I'm listenin'."

"Some individuals, that is, with your problem, may experience a complete loss of knowledge for the time during which the alter is in control. On the other hand, there are occasions when the host, that would be you, and the alter or alters ..."

"Wait a frickin' minute," he interrupted, "you mean there could be more than one?"

"Yes, at times there may be several but as I was saying, in some situations, the host and alter may be well aware of each other's existence, however, it would not be unusual for only one to know about the other."

"But what have the voices got to do with this alter stuff?"

"The voice that seems to come from within may, in actuality, be that of your alter signaling his pending appearance."

"OK, so this alter got into a fight?"

"I'm afraid so."

"This sucks," he said, with obvious despair, "he can get me into a lot of trouble and I won't even know why."

"Yes, of course, that is true but if we can find the trigger that prompts his appearance we may be able to stop him."