

DEAR DAD...

Thank You



Erin Elizabeth Ellis Ramsey



DEAR DAD...THANK YOU

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Authors	Erin Elizabeth Ellis Ramsey and Robert (Robin) LeRoy Ellis
Address	PO Box 1151, Longmont, CO 80502
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special thank you to Forrest Fenn for encouraging me to publish this book. I, too, can keep my secret where — sprinkled among these pages. The chase will live on evermore.

And a special thank you to Lou Bruno and Susan Caldwell (Bruno Advertising+Design) for your collaboration on the book as well.





DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my father, Robin, and my twins, Brennan Chance and Skyler Robin. Not a day passes without gratitude that you bless my life.

ROBERT (ROBIN) LEROY ELLIS
JUNE 10, 1935 — MARCH 5, 1998

Robin went to the spirit world shortly after midnight on March 5, 1998 following surgeries for a lifelong condition he fought more bravely than anyone really knows. Much loved and enormously respected, Robin was survived by his mother, two sisters, four daughters, one son, and seven grandchildren. He was an extraordinary human being who with grace and tremendous light touched the lives of all he encountered. With his passing, an angel heart was freed.

This book is also dedicated to all current and future generations that will one day walk this earth. With you I share my daily mantra — a prayer of sorts that has kept me safe in faith during life's hard times and let me experience the world through the loving arms and knowing eyes of angels time and time again. With hindsight always seeming so clear and obvious, it is only now with decades since my father's passing that I realize my daily prayer was borne from the lessons and gifts he shared with me so freely.

Thank you, Dad, for helping me find my faith and staying ever-present as a guiding light on my journey to keep it. Namaste.

Whatever comes, let it come.

Whatever stays, let it stay until it needs to go.

Whatever goes, say goodbye to it and thank it for the lessons good and bad.

Be open to them — the lessons of both joy and sorrow.

Now higher power, open my eyes, mind, body, spirit, heart and soul for all that is next to come.

Everything happens exactly when and as it should, this I know.

Hold this truth in my being so that I am fully present in each and every moment.

Let me give, receive and release freely so that I may know a power of healing tomorrow greater than I knew today.

This is my prayer.

Preface

We all learn things from our parents. Some good things; some not so good. The only real question for each of us is whether and how we use what we learn. It is just that simple.

As a parent, my greatest hope is to leave my children with the lessons and faith that I've earned through tremendous effort to guide them as they journey through this rather chaotic world. With those gifts in their bounty, my prayer is that they are able to navigate life's experiences with grace, humility, courage, honesty, empathy, kindness, peace, forgiveness, humor and happiness — in other words, with love.

As I think about it more, I believe all parents may share this same hope and prayer whether or not they articulate it exactly as I have. I know my Dad did.

My Dad's desire to pass on his hard-sought and hard-earned lessons and faith was not limited to just his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren however. He dreamed of leaving the entire world with a map to a hidden treasure that he discovered through great tragedy and triumph. His map and the key to unlock its secrets, dear reader, can be found within his book *Future Shift*. And nestled within the pages of this book, *Dear Dad*, you will find my Dad's gift to the world — *Future Shift*.

Be warned, *Future Shift* is not for the meek of heart and mind. It is a time capsule for the ages filled with deep wisdom from a generation soon to be lost forever. It is an SOS, a beacon of hope, and a wake-up call for humankind. It is wonderfully cynical, brutally honest, frighteningly real, and above all else...lovingly written with humor and compassion. It is provocative at its core in an effort to wake its readers. It brilliantly captures my Dad's humor, empathy, hope and faith in a way that nothing else could.

If you are brave enough to read to the very end of the book, I am positive *Future Shift* will challenge your sense and sensibilities, shock you, and make you question all that you believe to be true. It is a book that gives back as much as you are willing to give in an effort to understand it. It will show you a way that we fragile human beings can work together within nature, physical laws and ever-changing social laws to navigate life's experiences in a more loving and hopeful way.

If you allow this book to wake you, it is not likely you will sleepwalk through life again. More importantly, it is not likely you will be willing to sleepwalk in this world for one moment more.

The Journey Within

My Dad, Robin, began writing *Future Shift* in 1986. Nearly 33 years, it is not surprising to me in the least that the messages within the pages of *Future Shift* are as relevant today as they were back then — perhaps even more so today. They are timeless and ageless.

When speaking or writing about it, my father presented *Future Shift* as a book on leadership reviewed through a series of autobiographical experiences. My thought after reading the book is that it is much more than merely a book on leadership. It is a comedy, tragedy, history lesson, love letter, warning, crash course in politics, and even a map complete with the key to a possible way of living and riding the waves of inevitable change without destroying each other and our planet along the way.

To me it is a book of miracles and hope and faith — the likes of which I've never seen published before. Ever.

Future Shift is an epic drama that captures the social and political momentum of the times my father lived in. It is raw, rude, uncivil, cynical, provocative, humorous and “in your face” candid while navigating extremely sensitive and difficult topics. Yet still, it is a book of miracles and hope and faith.

My father's book-project notes from 33 years ago read, in part, as follows:

This is a book on leadership. The story involves a personal and intimate look at much of the political power structure of the nation.

Part Two of the book is the dramatic tale of Hurricane Betsy as it barreled into the City of New Orleans overwhelming the entire political, Civil Defense and rescue organizations of the City. It recounts the never before told story of the complete collapse of civil order by the man who for one crucial night ran the City and restored communications and control between the military, police, Red Cross, Civil Defense and governmental branches.

It is an innovative autobiography told as a myriad of overlapping mosaics, which cut and move with the speed of the latest film technique. It shifts and juxtaposes material in unlikely ways to review startling patterns of a social system in a concomitant state of destruction and rebirth. The same material is sometimes covered in several ways at different stages of the book as the author

describes his different roles in the same event. Thus we learn of Hurricane Betsy through the eyes of a man who experienced its terror and reorganized City rescue operations, and later exposed the unpreparedness of the City despite official denials and was later vindicated in front of his critics at a meeting between Louisiana's political leaders and top officials in Washington DC. It is an unusual autobiography. The reader can start anywhere in the book and read its chapters in any order. It can be excerpted or condensed easily and serialized without loss of impact to the individual segments.

Why Now?

In the past 21 years since my father's death, I've had to ask myself some hard questions about whether or not to publish this book (*you will understand this better after reading it*). Looking around me at the world, its people and the leaders of this nation today, my only question recently has been how soon can I type, edit, design, and publish it. I find compassion within my mantra for both my father's delay and my delay in bringing this work of art to light — everything happens exactly when and as it should, and not a moment before. (*Do not mistake this as an invitation to be passive in life by waiting for things to happen for you.*)

Another reason “*why now*” is that more than 33 years after my Dad wrote *Future Shift*, I too dream of leaving my children and all future generations with a map to a hidden treasure that has the potential to change the future of our world if we let it. As I have aged and matured, the map and the key have been better understood by me. Not only through reading my father's book dozens of times, but also through my own life experiences that have been filled with great tragedy and triumph. I finally get it.

Yet the most critical answer to “*why now*,” dear reader, is the most simple one. I believe that our world and our country and all its people can no longer afford a delay in receiving the hidden treasure trove of love, hope and faith shared within the pages of this book. I cannot stress enough that *Future Shift* is a map and key for people from all walks of life to once again dream a common dream. This is the right moment in time for this book.

Will we heed the wisdom from generations past and learn the lessons contained within these pages to become a truly undivided United States of America and peaceful world? Perhaps, perhaps not. I hold hope and faith we will someday.

In the “Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám” (LXVII) it is written:

*Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.*

Perhaps that passage from the “Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám” is no longer true. Within *Future Shift*, a man who passed through the door of darkness 21 years ago returns to tell us of the road that we must travel and lessons we must learn to experience life with grace, humility, courage honesty, empathy, kindness, peace, forgiveness, humor and happiness — in other words, with love.

Will we embrace the message and messenger? I hope we have the courage to listen. I pray we will.



Now...before you turn to the next page and begin...remember...it has been 33 years since this work of art was written. I'm sure you will be dizzy and dazzled upon reflection of that fact once you are done reading it.

I leave you with this as you journey within *Future Shift* — I promise parts of this book will inspire and entertain you, even if only for a moment.

BUCKLE UP. DON'T BE AFRAID TO PUT YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR. ENJOY THE READ.

Hope you ~~are~~ enjoying reading it.
If not, stop.
much love
Robin Kelley

FUTURE () SHIFT

“

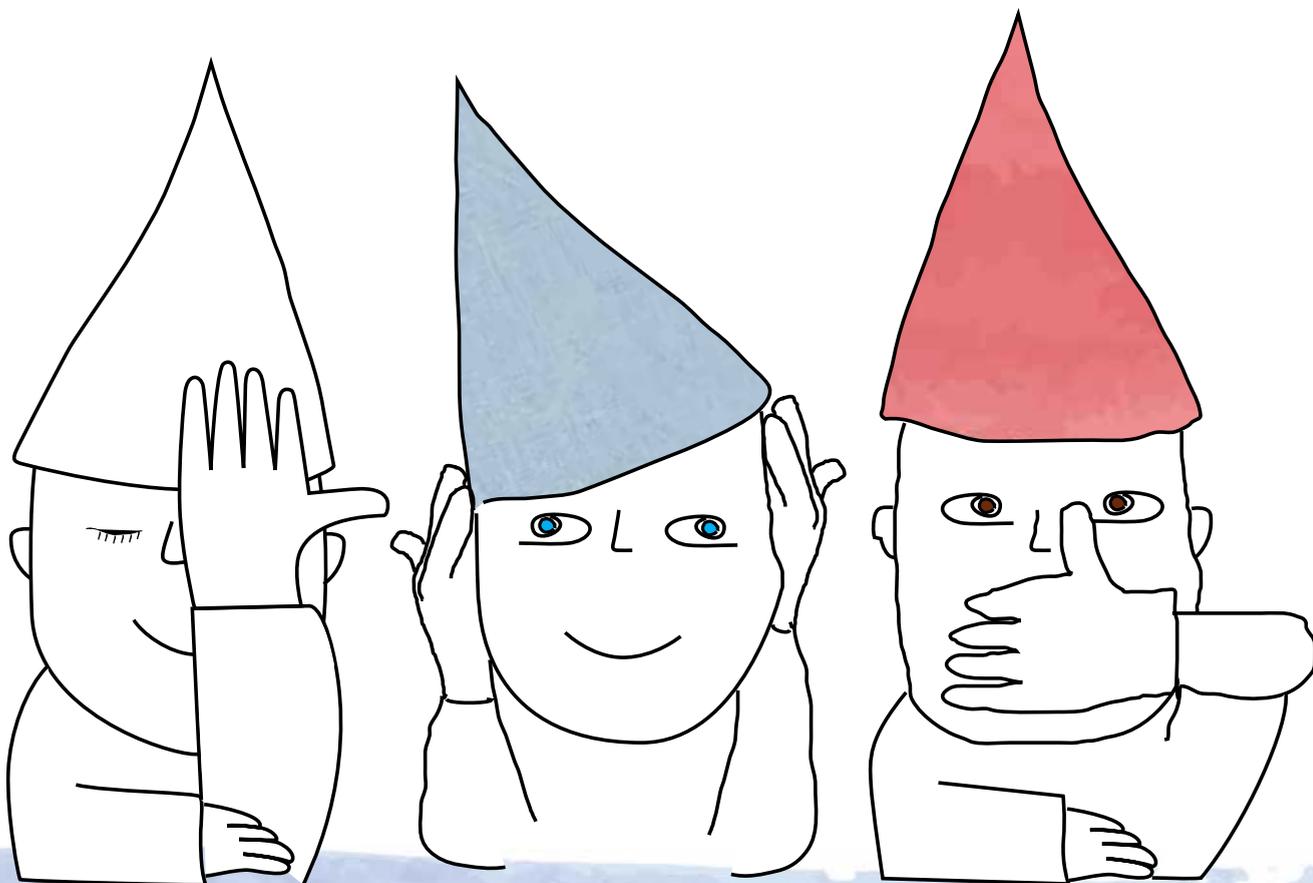
True leaders not only inhabit
an advanced paradigm,
but also serve as a present paradigm
of what the future is to become...
a guide to the impending future shift.

”

ROBERT (ROBIN) LEROY ELLIS



“ We do not get in life what we do not deserve...
we get what we resemble. ”



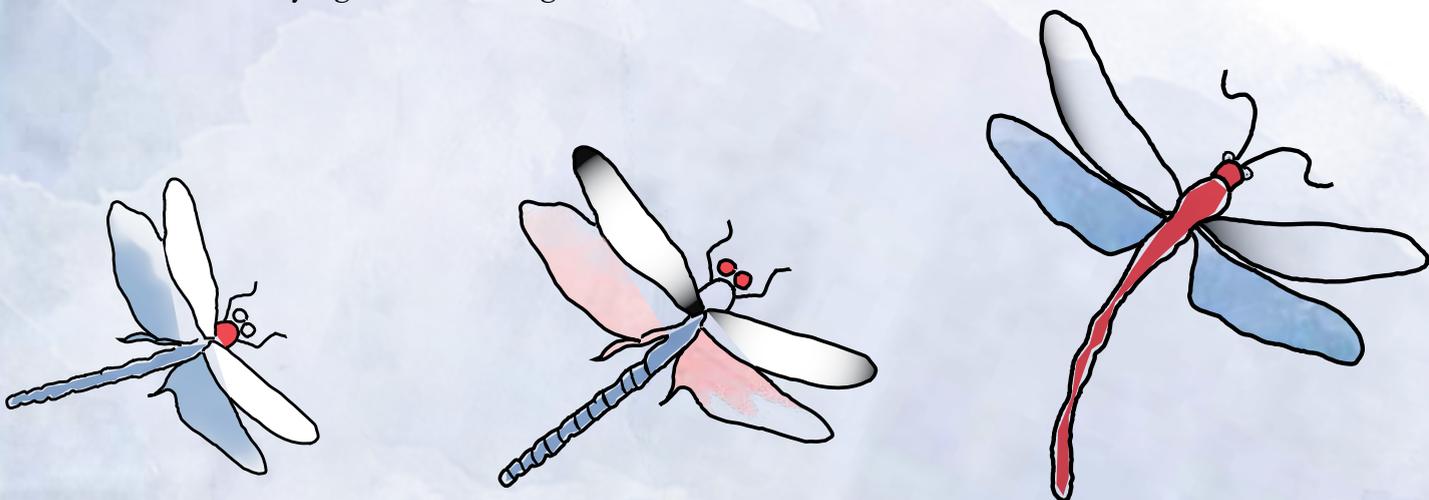


Cosmos had taken the pyramid of the city's administration and turned it upside down. The point of the pyramid then rested on Cosmos with its enormous weight. Now, the multitude of followers who represented the massive base of the pyramid were inexorably pulled by the forces of gravity, downward into the leadership levels of the inverted pyramid. There, planning and implementation had become integrated and ordered. Purpose, direction and intentionality were reasserted in the life of the city. The struggle, as well as the composition of the pyramid, had shifted. Chaos was slowly pushed, precinct by precinct and trench by trench, from a position of dominance.

And there had been a price. The other Twin was exhausted. Cosmos had been running his leadership act under the greatest stress for the whole night. Through sheer force of will and highly articulated vision, he had brought the whole machinery of the city to a halt and then redirected it into new and effective channels. The strain of both the masquerade and the redirection effort had extracted its price and was wearing down even the mighty Cosmos.

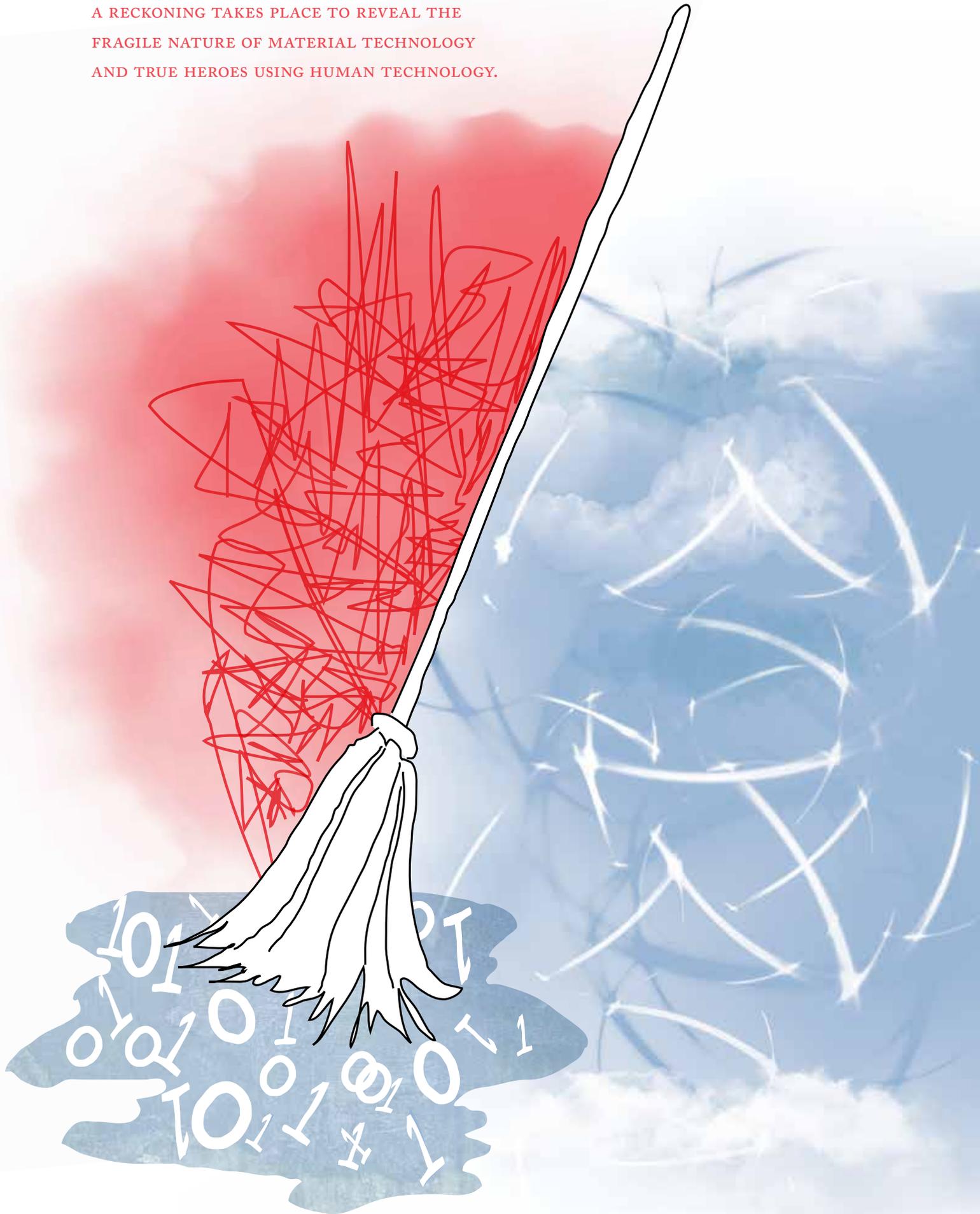
Leadership, like love, is a river that drowns its keeper gradually. Leadership, like love, is a two-edged sword that brings its bearer to bleed. Even for valiant Cosmos, the role of leader had been too lonely and the road through the harrowing night had been too long. The leader, like the lover, can never completely fill the vacuum of the follower's endless, aching need. Leadership, like love, is only for the eternally lucky and endlessly strong.

It was time for Cosmos to die, to surrender. His mighty heart had to break and his heroic dream had to awake. Dissolution was about to take the tightly coiled, generating determination of the poor, spent Cosmos. But it is the fearful heart that cannot continue the cosmic dance. It is the heroic dreamer afraid to wake that cannot continue to dare, risk and chance. It is the leader too afraid to surrender who cannot continue to give. Above all, it is the leader afraid of dying who has no right to live.



CHAPTER SEVEN

AFTER THE IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY IS OVER,
A RECKONING TAKES PLACE TO REVEAL THE
FRAGILE NATURE OF MATERIAL TECHNOLOGY
AND TRUE HEROES USING HUMAN TECHNOLOGY.



MOPPING UP

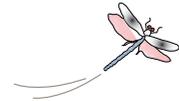
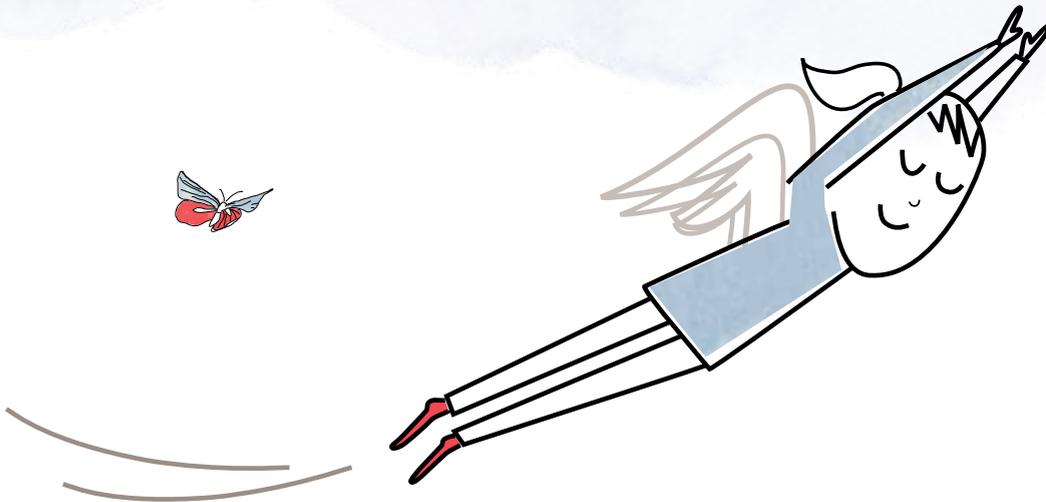
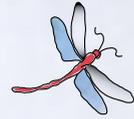
The job was done. The city was fully in communications and control. With the sunrise would come that great human ritual in folly, the shift change. Just as it had worked for me the night before, it now might unravel all our accomplishments which had been so dramatically won. Further, this was not a normal shift change. The “authorities” would be coming back from their first much deserved break since the hurricane had first threatened the city. Once they were back on the scene, the work of the angels would be indecipherable unless a careful transfer of power were to ensue.

This maneuver can be tricky. The task is to return power to a group of powerful individuals who never agreed to the transfer of power in the first place. With ordinary people this is difficult enough. With people who are used to being in charge, the problem multiplies. When you add the military aspect to the bureaucratic aspect, the concern for “proper channels” and “legitimacy of decision making processes” comes trotting out. In short, if the soon arriving leadership were not made aware that the city had been saved while they were absent, they would be totally within their rights to throw me in jail. That’s the good news. The bad news is that if they did become aware of the valiant efforts of General Cosmos and the Hawkes and were mightily impressed with the extraordinary performance, they could still throw me in the brig.

So you can see that I had three very clear choices:

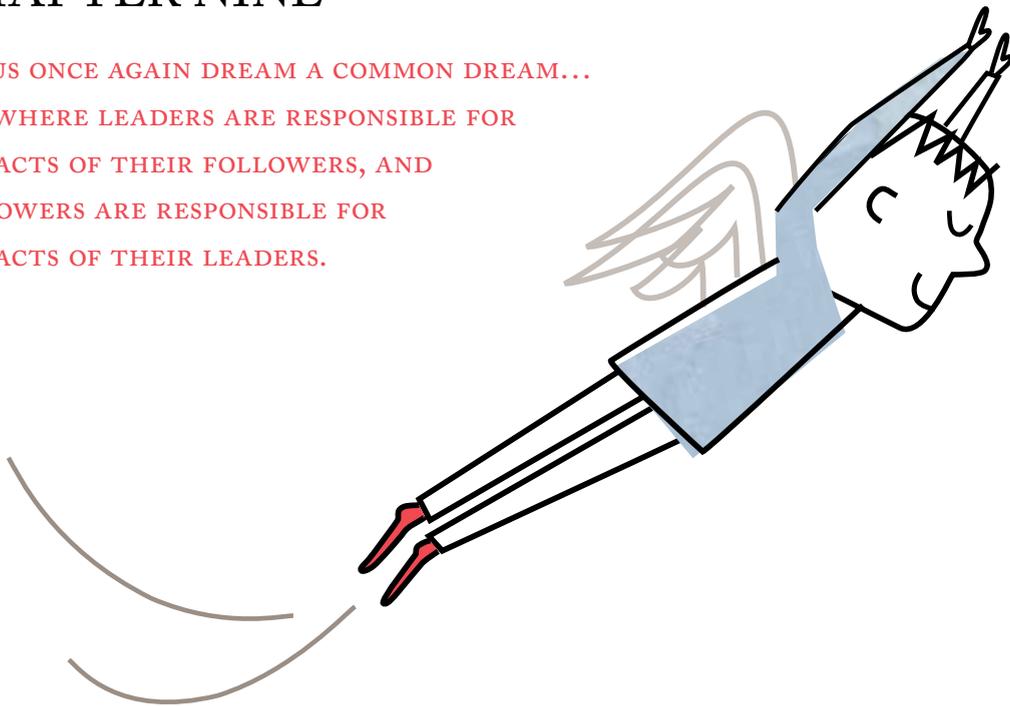
- 1 | Slide out the back, Jack. Hope one of the secretaries who had helped post the wall lists could convey the details to the returning brass. Highly unlikely, of course, but keep in mind that we are talking serious criminal charges for simultaneously impersonating a city, state and federal official.
- 2 | Own up fully to the masquerade. Point out the absolute benefits of the deception while slyly reminding the big shots that if this story hit the media, they would become leading characters in a long running series called “Cosmos Captures City Hall.”
- 3 | Remain in charge until an orderly transfer of power was achieved. This, of course, would be total insanity.

By now you know me well enough to predict the outcome. There was never any doubt. Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!



CHAPTER NINE

LET US ONCE AGAIN DREAM A COMMON DREAM...
ONE WHERE LEADERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE ACTS OF THEIR FOLLOWERS, AND
FOLLOWERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE ACTS OF THEIR LEADERS.



That long night of the hurricane, the people of the city trusted the leadership to be in charge, in control and in communication. They were not. No *one* was in control in a situation beyond planning. Yet *everyone* was in control, amazingly enough. The job got done. Ordinary people became extraordinary. Think about that word. Extra and ordinary. The followers-turned-leaders became so ordinary and so common that their combined leadership became extraordinarily compelling and uncommonly skillful. They became uniformly courageous, responsible, brilliant, resourceful and, above all ... human. It was not just a night for General Cosmos and the Hawkes. All across that great city, angels were everywhere.

For one night in the history of that great American city, everyone acted out of a common purpose, common agreement and out of a blazing vision, vitality and purpose unknown in common hours. For a brief, shining time, we were all the product of the same dreaming. That inseparable dream pulsed in every vein and coursed through every heart. It repeated a unitary desire...an irresistible demand...an ineluctable responsibility...an unwavering and utterly steadfast intrepidity...an unrelenting perseverance...and an unshakable determination to keep the city and its people from harm's way. We will...we will...we will keep this city and its people from harm.

It was a time that never was and always will be.

