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The Deep Water Leaf Society

Since childhood, dreams have filled and shaped my life. Sometimes the dreamspace feels more real than waking life and often waking life feels like a dream. Or a nightmare. Where does dreaming leave off and waking begin? What does it mean to wake up, really? How often do we sleepwalk our way through life, missing the extraordinary meaning enfolded in each ordinary moment? It may be that we are more truly awake when we can sense, during our waking hours, the creative magic of the dreamspace all around us.

This is a story about dreaming and about waking up. It is a story about how thin the veil really is between waking and dreaming, between living and dying, between loving and everything else that only masquerades as love. It is a story about letting go and the fullness that comes from doing so.

This is the story of losing my son and finding myself. It begins with a dream. . . .

November 2, 1997
Deep Water Leaf Society

My four-month-old baby has died. I am filled with grief, utterly devastated.

At the funeral, I come to a decision. I will create the "Deep Water Leaf Society" so that others won't have to go through this same grief. For some reason, that comforts me.

Later, there is something to do with the number seven, and I wake wondering if numbers equal people in my dreams. Seven equals my sister because she was born in July.

At the time, I had little idea what the dream might be telling me. I only knew that it shook me to my core and left me profoundly sad and profoundly hopeful all at once.

The name, Deep Water Leaf Society, was quite clear in the dream. It puzzled me; it was such an odd phrase. What kind of a club would

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that be? How could creating it help me to feel better? Why had the number seven come up? And why had I assumed that numbers were people?

After recording the dream in my journal, I reread it and noted that if seven represented my sister, maybe the four-month-old baby represented my eldest son, Cameron (no longer a baby, but a young man of 19) since he was born in April. It gave me an uneasy feeling. Was I destined to lose him?

Lord knows, he'd had a troubled life. He was always doing stupid and dangerous things. He'd been going down a bad path and hanging out with the wrong kind of kids during high school. He'd finally managed to graduate, though, and earlier in the year he'd joined the Marines. While I hoped it would be good for him, I worried about him, too.

As it would turn out, the number seven was both the clue to the identity of the four-month-old and the timeframe in which the dream story would play out in my waking life.

Today I know that this dream was planting the seeds of transformation and healing a full seven years before I would undergo the most tremendously difficult passage in my life: Cameron's death by drug overdose on May 3, 2004.

