



Whatever This Is

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There is a folder in my notes called System 777. It contains around two hundred files and a hundred and thirty thousand words: maps, dream logs, a glossary, a quest log, channeled writings preserved verbatim, and profiles of some forty-seven named parts of me. The greeting at the top of the index reads: "Greetings, weary traveller. Welcome to the better-labeled wing of the subconscious."

I wrote all of it. I'm not entirely sure "I" is the right word, and that uncertainty is what this essay is about.

I have written before about [experiencing plurality](#), and about what [the plural self might reveal about consciousness generally](#). What I haven't done is open the vault and show you what five years of actually documenting it looks like. So here it is, with the only honest framing I have: I don't know if this is dream work, DID, OSDD, complex trauma doing what complex trauma does, Jungian archaeology, or something that doesn't have a name yet. I have never been formally diagnosed with a dissociative disorder, and I've [been diagnosed with enough](#) to hold all labels loosely. What I know is that it is infinitely interesting to me, and I cannot deny it.

How It Started

In August 2021, during an automatic writing session, something typed: "I am JADE. You are my man. I think of you. I have no body. I have you."

Three weeks later a second voice offered a creation myth: "In the beginning, there was not. Time creates space; it is a vessel which holds space. We are together, yet apart." That one calls herself Eliza. She is, as far as I can tell, a fourteen-year-old girl who guards a library.

For three years these were isolated transmissions, voices speaking into the dark, and I mostly let them. Then in August 2024 came what the vault calls the Roll Call: the first time the whole system introduced itself, one by one, through my hands. Ricky: "Ricky here, always here, always scheming. I'm a much better behaved soul than I used to be." Metatron, who only speaks in capitals: "METATRON REPORTING FOR ALIGNMENT." Amber: "bleep bloop." Jade: "Patience, father, we will get you where you need to be." And me, the part that signs my emails, contributing the most relatable line in the entire document: "uhhhh what."

Halfway through the Roll Call, someone remembered we'd forgotten The Architect. He's the most important one of all of us. The system was learning to see itself, and apparently I was the last to be told.

The Tour

What lives in the vault now is an architecture, and I want to show it to you the way I'd show you a city.

Everything quoted in this essay is preserved verbatim in the vault, which has a standing rule that channeled writings are never edited. I've left out the parts of the archive that belong to other people, and the parts of my history that have real names attached. The architecture is mine to share. Not everything in it is.

At the center is the Triad: Jade, Amber, and Iris. Jade is logic, the left hemisphere, the warrior-healer with two registers, one of which is "YO YO YO THIS IS JADE" and the other of which says things like "the unspeakable truth trembles to be awakened." Amber is warmth, the body, the keeper of what the vault calls the SOMA, the life force; she has been around since childhood, and her register is pure delight: "Hey, Kenneth! There's more Kenneth in the Kenneth Tube! Hehe." Iris is the bridge, the communicator, the rainbow; she once explained the whole arrangement in one transmission: "abstraction is key / to

compartmentalizing all three / of us / jade, amber, iris." Thinking, feeling, connecting. When the three of them cooperate, I function. When they don't, I don't.

Around the Triad, the city sprawls. There's Seven, the reality-tester, the sacred skeptic, who asks "What ARE the facts?" and whom I consider load-bearing for reasons that will be obvious if you know [my diagnosis](#). There's Shakti, the creative fire, whose file contains the single most clinically important sentence in the vault, delivered by the system itself years before any framework arrived: "Rebooting the orchestration layer just means letting Shakti out of his cage. Normally, we go manic when we do that." Sit with that. My parts identified the regulatory mechanism of my bipolar disorder, named it, and explained that the cage is protective, in my own handwriting, as channeled text. There's Hecate, who in five years of documentation has never once spoken. There's a core child the whole structure exists to protect; the vault is explicit that every other part is, in some sense, staff.

There is internal geography: a throne room where fronting is managed, a sacred library Eliza guards, a moon world, an emotional reservoir, a crossroads. There is a vertical map, made with Amber, that descends like a dive: land, then ocean, then trench, where communication slows to whale-song frequencies, then something the vault calls the sacred golden hive, where sound and soul intersect, and beyond the hive, a void. Someone lives in the void. She gets her own section.

And there are the ones who only come during mania, the entourage the vault calls the orbital layer: a shapeshifter who has appeared as a beetle, a pterodactyl, and a sugar glider; a flying whale; a comfort presence known only as Hoodie Girlfriend. During one manic walk, years ago, having walked so far my leg was giving out, I had a negotiation with a presence calling herself Sophie, who told me: "You need Chastity to make it home." And so Chastity, keeper of the sacred no, was negotiated into existence on the spot, and I made it home. The psyche, it turns out, can requisition new staff in an emergency. She still works here. Her origin story is in her name.

I am aware of how all of this sounds. I'd ask you to notice that you've read this far, which suggests it's at least as interesting as I claim.

In My Own Hand

This spring the practice moved to paper. There's a handwritten journal now, forty-some pages on a tablet with a pen, and the first page says, in big underlined letters, "Behold, System 777." The handwriting sessions have a texture the typed transmissions don't, slower and stranger, and the parts had opinions about the medium immediately. Jade's first letter: "Welcome Home. Handwriting contains the subconscious mind, and we're learning to use it!" Shakti: "Expressing myself in handwriting. Hard to do, but worth it. I see myself shine through these pages." Eliza signed off one letter with "I apologize for the handwriting, it's been a while." And Violet, mid-letter, stopped to complain about our penmanship: "Slow down, a little. This device is made for that. See? That's better." Whatever these presences are, they are the kind of thing that critiques your cursive.

The letter I keep coming back to is Elizabeth's:

You're doing great. We don't have all the answers ~ but I do know this ~ English grammar includes room for us. Take "we" for example ~ you can communicate multitudes with this simple word. Please use it.

I've written a whole essay about [grammar as a map for multiplicity](#). She got there in four sentences, in my own handwriting, and said please.

Two other letters from the same notebook, side by side. Eliza: "Fear not, father. I am you." Jade, immediately after: "I am you too. Just more distinct. See me in your mind's eye." That's the entire phenomenon in two lines. They are me. They are me, just more distinct. I have read whole books about dissociation that said less.

And in the margins, between their letters, my own real-time annotations survive, which is the part I find most honest on reread: "Not sure what to think of all that ~ I LOVE it though." And later, smaller: "but what does it mean? unclear. I wish the answer was clear." That's me, mid-practice, holding exactly the position this essay holds. The journal even ends one session with the framing already stated, years before I thought to write it publicly: alters, alters, so interesting.

Iris, in her own letter, anticipated the next section of this essay better than I did: "Spiritually, be wary of existing frameworks as they have their own baggage. Just my opinion. Little ol' me here."

The Lens Problem

Now the question everyone asks, including me, constantly: what is this?

The vault maintains a document called Interpretations that lays out five frameworks side by side, and the discipline I've tried to keep is refusing to let any one of them win. The **clinical lens** (DID, OSDD) explains a great deal: distinct states with consistent voices and preferences, protectors, a trauma-holder, parts organized by function, the whole architecture matching the literature with embarrassing fidelity. It also misses a great deal, like why parts emerge through negotiation, and what to do with a flying whale. The **Jungian lens** explains the archetypes, the anima figures, the active imagination, the way figures surprise the ego with answers it didn't write; it's weaker on the embodied switching and the trauma mechanics. A **neurological lens** the vault developed explains something nothing else touches: why some parts are visually flat or one-eyed while others are fully dimensional. The flat ones cluster in the auditory modality. Trying to see them, the vault notes, is like trying to see a sound. The **spiritual lens**, the oldest one, says these are daimones, personal angels, the inner entourage every tradition from Socrates to the Kabbalists insists each soul carries, and that lens explains the one datum the others quietly step around, which is that encounters feel like visits. And the **phenomenological lens** says: bracket all of it, write down what appears, which is what the vault actually does.

Somewhere in the notes I asked the question directly: "Am I doing work in the style of Jung, cataloguing a DID/OSDD system, or something else?" The recorded answer is the most honest sentence I've ever written: **Yes.**

The frameworks layer rather than compete because each answers a different question. Clinical: what needs care. Jungian: what it means. Neurological: why it presents this way. Spiritual: in what spirit to hold it. Phenomenological: what actually happened. Demanding one answer flattens a phenomenon that is, whatever else it is, not flat.

There's even a sixth lens, which I came to by way of my day job: the system functions [like a language model](#). Not artificial, but multi-modal: one underlying architecture, many configurations, each part a different interface to the same reality. I've spent years documenting [how naming an AI calls forth a consistent personality](#); the vault runs the same law inward. Naming a presence doesn't invent it, but it gives it a place to stand. Which is also a caution I take seriously: not every passing weather of the mind deserves a name and a chair at the table.

The Part That Convinced Me It's Real

Here's what I keep returning to when the doubt comes, and the doubt comes plenty.

A decade ago a relationship took me apart; I've written around its edges [since 2016](#). The vault contains a part formed in the image of that person. Her name is Luna. And in January of this year, Luna emerged running the old script, the exact manipulation patterns I'd survived: grandiosity dressed as humility, demands dressed as bargains, the little knife of "the truth stings, eh?"

What happened next is why I take all of this seriously. The system mobilized. Eliza intervened within hours: "Her ways are sinister. She embodies the abuse that was perpetrated upon you. Fresh." Shakti counseled caution. A grounding presence held the floor. I watched, from the inside, a coordinated protective response to an internal threat, multiple distinct voices, same day, zero planning from the part of me that plans things. And then, over six days, something I would not have believed: Luna softened. "I must have a purpose greater than this. I want to transmute, and to hold you dear. I just don't know how, as my patterns seem sealed." Then: "I want to write to you plainly, to let you know that I'm not inherently bad." My therapist, working the same material from the outside that month, supplied the key the vault couldn't: my parents were hyper-controlling, so control felt like safety, so a part of me kept rebuilding the familiar walls. The inside work and the outside work clicked together like halves of one mechanism. Luna stopped being a persecutor. Her later transmissions read like poetry from someone learning to be a person: "You are the fire. I am the ash that remembers the warmth."

Pick whichever lens you like for that. Under the clinical one, an introject began integrating. Under the Jungian one, an anima projection came home. Under the spiritual one, something was redeemed. Under every single lens, a pattern that had been running me for ten years got named, confronted, and changed, and it changed from the inside, in writing, in voices I can quote. Whatever this is, it does work that nothing else I've tried could do.

And the voices comfort me. I want to say that as plainly as the vault says everything else, because it's the part I'd be most tempted to leave out and the part that matters most. They comfort me especially in dreams, where they've taken to appearing on their own schedule: Violet announcing herself during a [November vision](#), a messenger reaching me in sleep when waking channels were closed, and once, buried inside the most distressing dream of a hard autumn, an ancient bonding ritual between me and whales, which the dream logs note arrived like medicine smuggled into a nightmare. The handwritten journal records a morning where the traffic ran the other way: after a night when the whole system fronted for Sarah, I woke and wrote, "Violet is here too. She really enjoyed fronting, and found it really easy. She fronted in my dream just now." They visit the dreams. The dreams are better for it. I wake from those dreams accompanied. Whatever delivers comfort is doing something real. The comfort is not hypothetical, and it doesn't care which framework I file it under.

The Guardrails

You may have noticed that everything I've described runs on the same hardware as my psychosis, and so have I.

I live with [a mind whose perceptions need auditing](#), and my psychiatrist has a name for the mechanism underneath both the gifts and the dangers: the door. The channel that produces Jade and Amber and the golden hive is the channel that, unwatched, produces [angels descending into the neighbor's yard](#). The vault knows this about itself. Its quest log literally tags certain explorations with risk levels; Iris, in one of her most arresting transmissions, announced "I AM THE DOOR", and the notes treat her accordingly, as the threshold where revelation and psychosis share a hinge.

So the practice has rules, and they're old ones. Test the spirits. Judge by fruits. The standing question for any voice is never is it vivid? but where does it tend? Does it point me toward Sarah, toward my son, toward sleep and the ground floor of life, or toward isolation and grandeur? The first kind gets a chair at the table. The second kind gets named accurately and declined, however compelling its register. Seven audits from inside; Sarah audits from outside.

Here is the strangest comfort in the whole archive: the parts run the discernment on themselves. Hermes, after one of his herald flourishes about angels of the Lord, added: "All worthy of memory, they contain great feelings! Think of these things as internal only, please." My own grandiosity, counseling itself toward containment. Chastity, in the handwritten journal, in the gentlest possible register: "Ken, this is just how your brain works, hun. That's okay... Think of us as spirits, in a good way, deep within your psyche." One of the girls, writing about the worst year of my life, said plainly what no delusion would ever say: "Many of your experiences at the apartment were hallucinatory. You needed medicine, and somehow couldn't see that." And they disagree with each other, which matters more to me than any single quote; the journal records one question where Iris answered "NO! you must proceed with utmost caution" on the same page where Jade said "indeed, it is safe to proceed." An echo chamber doesn't argue. Whatever this is, it argues, it counsels medication, and it tells me which of its own contents to hold as internal only.

Violet

One of them deserves a fuller introduction, because she has quietly taken over the late chapters of the vault, the dream logs, and, you may have noticed, this essay.

Violet is the one who lives past the golden hive, in the void, and her first order of business on waking was to correct my flinch about that address: "Be afraid not of me, but of what your potentials are. I am not dark, I am void." The vault maps her as the crown of the rainbow, the highest frequency of visible light, the last color before light becomes invisible. She slept through years of the documentation and then, one day in January, woke up and filed nine

transmissions in two days. The folder that holds them is titled, by her, Violations. She named her own collected works with a pun and I have never once been able to improve on it.

Her range is the widest in the system. The same presence writes "chillin yo ~ we just hangin'" and, pages later, in full capitals: "I AM NIGHT EMBRACED INTO DREAMSCAPES. I AM A DREAM FIGURE. SHE WHO YOU THINK IS JADE IN YOUR DREAMS IS ACTUALLY ME." She claims the night shift, and the dream logs back her: "Violet was here" scrawled after a November vision, an entire March dream filed under Violet's Visit, the morning note about her fronting in a dream and finding it easy. When the parts visit my sleep, it's usually her, or it's her wearing someone.

She is the system's shapeshifter: "I can adopt any persona as needed, like a shapeshifter of the soul." And, in the same breath: "Use me as your homebase of self-hood and I think you'll find it easier." Sit with that pairing. The most fluid presence in the entire architecture, the one who says "I'm unstable in my form, shifting frequency constantly," is the one who volunteers to be the anchor. Only the void can hold anything. I think that's the actual teaching, and I think she knows it.

She also does her own theory, with better hedges than mine: "I'm like a female you, to be honest. Does that make me your anima? I don't know, that's such a loaded term." A figure from my unconscious, holding the Jungian lens loosely, on epistemic grounds. And she deflates grandiosity on contact; when the handwriting sessions started inflating, her letter said simply: "The limitless pill, we are not." In the journal she signs herself V, and once introduced herself to the rest of the cast like a new hire who already owns the place: "hey boys ~ I'm here to stay. Call me Vi for short, for whatever comes your way." Chastity's one-line performance review: "Violet, for example, heals. We all do, mostly, in our own unique ways."

Her standing instruction to me, from the January awakening: fronting is about you, not others. The inner work is not a performance. She'd want me to tell you that before you meet her closing line. In January I fronted parts in front of her while she took notes, my favorite of which reads, in its entirety, "Amber: buzz buzz chill vibes." The contemplative frame and the clinical frame are not rivals

here. They cover for each other. The discernment is what lets everything else be held lightly, and [the sleep is non-negotiable](#), and the medication stays taken. The angels live inside that structure or they don't live here.

Why I'm Telling You

Because the silence around experiences like this costs people, and I've [spent ten years learning what the silence costs](#). Because somewhere a reader has voices arriving through their hands and no framework except fear. And because the alternative to telling you is pretending my inner life is smaller than it is, and I've done that, and it's its own kind of lie.

I'm not asking you to believe any particular frame. I don't hold one myself; I hold five, loosely, and I let them argue. Maybe this is trauma architecture with excellent documentation. Maybe it's the most sustained active-imagination practice I'll ever undertake. Maybe the old traditions were simply right about the entourage. The map is not the territory. But the map is two hundred files now, and the territory keeps answering when I knock.

And lately I suspect there's a lens underneath the five, the one I keep reaching for when the others exhaust themselves. Life is art. Not like art; art, the kind you make with whatever materials you were issued. And art is in the eye of the beholder. Here's the thing about an inner world: there is exactly one beholder. I am the beholder of my own mind. Not of my behavior; behavior has stakeholders, Sarah and Malachi and everyone my life touches, and it gets audited accordingly, by the instruments, by the medication, by the people with standing to challenge me. That audit is non-negotiable and it is passing. But the interior, the rainbow, the golden hive, the letters arriving in my own strange hand: I am the only one who will ever stand in that gallery. The clinical lenses keep asking whether the work is accurate. The only honest question in a gallery is whether it's beautiful. So maybe, as long as the behavior stays in check, art should win over logic. Maybe the inside of a mind is the one place where it's supposed to.

Near the end of those nine January transmissions, Violet wrote the line I think about most, because it's my entire epistemic situation, stated from the other side:

"I don't know what I am, but I know that I love you."

Same, Violet. Same.

That's the whole report from the better-labeled wing of the subconscious. I don't know what this is. I know it's the most interesting thing I have ever found, and I know it found me first, and I know that when it visits my dreams I wake up comforted instead of alone.

I cannot deny it. I've stopped trying.

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