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Whispers from the Shadow: Confronting the Call of Suicide

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Author's note:

This is a work of creative nonfiction, except for the final chapter. It is based on the author's lived experience and reflects the author's recollection of experiences over time. Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the people involved and any resemblance to persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental. This book talks about suicide, and while the author is an expert and doctor of psychology, this book is not meant to be used, nor should it be used, to diagnose or treat any medical or psychological condition. Readers are advised to consult their own medical professionals. North America Suicide Crisis Hotline: 988

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Whispers from the Shadow

*Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.*

William Shakespeare
The Merchant of Venice

Preface

Lying on the couch, watching a fly on the ceiling, I'm realizing my mediocrity. Having wandered through life with neither power nor money and having failed to achieve my life's ultimate goal, which is to fill the void that has inhabited me since early childhood, my thoughts turn to the back door of life—the “Quick Exit” door that short-circuits the duration determined by my destiny.

Many people of all ages choose this path. In this very office, how many times have I walked the path of life's meaning with these people, encouraging them to stand firm and maintain the courage of the valiant fighter?

Yet they didn't know what was going on in my head and heart during those moments. When I had to be there for others on the path of existential trial, I gave myself entirely as an instrument of life and meaning to dissuade them from this option. But for me, the battle was virulent and aggressive in my own despair. No one, except my wife on a few occasions, could see that I had to fight the Good Fight. It's easy when it's for others but very difficult when it applies to oneself.

You may say that this was not apparent to those who knew me for many years. On the other hand, few people dared to rub this survivor's carapace for fear that it was an illusion that would lead them to despair. So, it was better to believe that he lived above the suffering of existence. It was better to rely on this illusion than to face up to it. It was better to value my halo acquired over the years than to look at the deep wound inscribed on the fabric of my incarnated soul.

Yet, I managed to overcome every challenge that came my way. With the courage of a survivor, I patiently conquered them one by one. At first glance, many would say that my love life, fulfilling career, vibrant spirituality and healthy environment would be the envy of many. Everyone would say it's perfect happiness with health, love, joy and peace. Even I've said it to anyone who'd listen.

I've never been so fulfilled in my entire existence, yet this inner cry that comes from existential nothingness was always present, seeking to baffle me at the most unexpected moments.

This book affirms the inexplicable cries of all those who see suicide as an option. Readers will hear the unbearable cries of the Mozarts, Hemingways and Dalis of this world. It will be a glimpse into the window of what has been inside me all my life and that of so many others I've known: Charles, Robert, Susan, Donald and so on.

Many people don't really understand the meaning of the suicidal act. They prefer to bury their heads in the sand so as not to understand it. In the following pages, I'll try to make you aware of the phenomenon many people try to study and correct in their own way, without much success. Finally, it's time to express it through the pen of someone who lived it...

The pain of living is what we know today as **“the soul’s shadow.”**