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00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:20,280

UFO cults, a synthesis of mainstream religion and cutting-edge science fiction.

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00:00:20,280 --> 00:00:26,280

The belief in these technological angels comes from a long history of mankind's faith in

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00:00:26,280 --> 00:00:31,080

a divine plan for the universe.

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00:00:31,080 --> 00:00:37,280

The emergence of these UFO-obsessed groups became news around the world when 39 members

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00:00:37,280 --> 00:00:49,480

of the Heaven's Gate cult committed suicide in Rancho Santa Fe, California in 1997.

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00:00:49,480 --> 00:00:55,880

Survivors of Heaven's Gate provide true stories which read like sci-fi novels.

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00:00:55,880 --> 00:00:59,880

A cult leader's daughter tells of her mother's search for UFOs.

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00:00:59,880 --> 00:01:08,880

A mother of a suicide victim describes her son's alien transformation.

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00:01:08,880 --> 00:01:14,880

Members of another group, the Unarius Academy, just down the road from Rancho Santa Fe,

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00:01:14,880 --> 00:01:17,880

drive to a secret UFO landing site.

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00:01:17,880 --> 00:01:29,880

How can we interpret this mania to seek contact with an alien race?

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00:01:29,880 --> 00:01:38,880

When I said that the big surprise could come, that spacecrafts could come in by the thousands,

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00:01:38,880 --> 00:01:40,880

maybe come in shifts.

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00:01:40,880 --> 00:01:46,880

In August 1997, Marshall Apowhite, the leader of Heaven's Gate, told his followers there

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00:01:46,880 --> 00:01:53,880

was a UFO in the tale of the Hale-Bopp comet which orbits the Earth once every 2,000 years.

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00:01:53,880 --> 00:02:02,880

He convinced them that this was their signal to board the flying saucer which would take them into eternity.

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00:02:02,880 --> 00:02:12,880

In order to catch this ride, the 39 cult members committed suicide by a combination of phenobarbital, alcohol, and suffocation.

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00:02:12,880 --> 00:02:18,880

For reasons that still remain unanswered, they wore Nike running shoes, sported buzz haircuts,

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00:02:18,880 --> 00:02:23,880

and carried \$5.00 of quarters in their pockets.

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00:02:23,880 --> 00:02:32,880

This tragedy was the culmination of 22 years of behavior modification under Marshall Apowhite's spell.

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00:02:32,880 --> 00:02:39,880

What once started out as a grassroots Christian sect, evolved into a dark millennial cult

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00:02:39,880 --> 00:02:42,880

with beliefs in aliens and Armageddon.

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00:02:42,880 --> 00:02:52,880

So when they presented the picture of being able to literally leave in a craft, so to speak,

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00:02:52,880 --> 00:02:59,880

which they were saying was similar to what Jesus did, he actually left in a physical body.

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00:02:59,880 --> 00:03:07,880

When they overlaid that with modern-day technological information, like that cloud of light was a UFO,

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00:03:07,880 --> 00:03:09,880

it all lined up for me.

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00:03:10,880 --> 00:03:19,880

Early on, Marshall Apowhite and his co-leader Bonnie Nettles had convinced themselves and their followers that they were God's emissaries,

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00:03:19,880 --> 00:03:23,880

here to lead humanity out of a corrupt world.

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00:03:23,880 --> 00:03:31,880

Apowhite said he and Nettles had come from outer space, taking on human bodies as camouflage.

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00:03:32,880 --> 00:03:41,880

They offered salvation to members who could overcome their attachment to human desires such as sex, money, and drugs.

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00:03:43,880 --> 00:03:50,880

Where did this desperate and bizarre mixture of sci-fi and millennial madness begin?

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00:03:50,880 --> 00:03:56,880

Before Marshall Apowhite and Bonnie Nettles became so-called alien agents,

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00:03:56,880 --> 00:04:00,880

they were living separate lives of quiet desperation.

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00:04:00,880 --> 00:04:05,880

Their twisted partnership began some 25 years earlier in Houston.

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00:04:05,880 --> 00:04:10,880

Bonnie's daughter, Terry Nettles, recalls when she was 14 years old,

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00:04:10,880 --> 00:04:18,880

she and her mother would stand in their backyard, searching the skies for UFOs, hoping they would be transported.

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00:04:19,880 --> 00:04:23,880

It would be really neat if one would come and pick us up and take us away,

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00:04:23,880 --> 00:04:28,880

because neither one of us really felt like we were part of this world, that we were always on the outside looking in,

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00:04:28,880 --> 00:04:32,880

and we used to dream about that a lot. We wanted something different.

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00:04:34,880 --> 00:04:40,880

At the same time, in nearby Corpus Christi, Marshall Apowhite's perfect life began to unravel.

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00:04:40,880 --> 00:04:46,880

His 16-year marriage dissolved, and his career as a college music professor ended,

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00:04:46,880 --> 00:04:50,880

when he was accused of a sexual relationship with a male student.

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00:04:50,880 --> 00:04:57,880

Then, Apowhite met Bonnie Nettles, just as her 23-year marriage was ending as well.

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00:04:57,880 --> 00:05:03,880

They met in 72 of the theater I used to work at. He was teaching music and drama.

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00:05:03,880 --> 00:05:07,880

I started out with my mom doing astrology charts for the mothers,

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00:05:07,880 --> 00:05:12,880

and I remember her telling me, we were in the living room, that there was something about his chart,

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00:05:12,880 --> 00:05:15,880

something there that was a lot different than somebody else's.

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00:05:16,880 --> 00:05:23,880

From the start, her relationship with Marshall Apowhite was based on a spiritual connection that shunned sex.

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00:05:23,880 --> 00:05:30,880

They turned their new age and Christian ideologies into a business and went searching for followers.

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00:05:30,880 --> 00:05:39,880

While Nettles recited the Bible inside and out, Apowhite, also known as Hearth, was the charming front man.

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00:05:40,880 --> 00:05:49,880

On New Year's Day, 1973, Apowhite and Nettles set out on what they called a spiritual road trip.

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00:05:49,880 --> 00:05:56,880

Though Bonnie Nettles left her daughter and son behind with her ex-husband, she wrote to Terry regularly.

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00:05:56,880 --> 00:06:02,880

After a year on the road, their unorthodox gospel began to take shape.

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00:06:03,880 --> 00:06:10,880

July 26, 1973, dearest Terry, we have finally come out of the wilderness and know what our mission is.

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00:06:10,880 --> 00:06:16,880

It is definitely a big one. In fact, we have been sent to fulfill the scriptures the same as Jesus and others came to do.

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00:06:16,880 --> 00:06:20,880

This has been revealed in John's revelations, I am not kidding baby, this is for real.

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00:06:20,880 --> 00:06:24,880

I knew it was something very important from the very beginning.

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00:06:25,880 --> 00:06:32,880

Along the way they had financial difficulties and Apowhite was arrested in Kansas for stealing a rental car.

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00:06:32,880 --> 00:06:37,880

During his six month jail sentence, he fine-tuned his doctrine.

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00:06:37,880 --> 00:06:46,880

Upon Apowhite's release, he and Nettles contacted UFO researcher Hayden Hughes in hope of spreading their message.

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00:06:47,880 --> 00:06:56,880

Perf Apowhite said Hayden, you could do our mission a tremendous service by whatever means you have available to you.

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00:06:56,880 --> 00:07:04,880

By simply stating that there are two individuals here to show that death can be overcome like Jesus did 2,000 years ago.

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00:07:04,880 --> 00:07:10,880

And they compared it much like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.

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00:07:10,880 --> 00:07:16,880

That their life here would go through a metamorphosis into a level above humans.

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00:07:16,880 --> 00:07:21,880

They called their group Human Individual Metamorphosis.

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00:07:21,880 --> 00:07:34,880

By the fall of 1975, Apowhite and Nettles gave themselves names like Bo and Peep, Ginny and Pig, or Doe and Tee, notes in the musical scale.

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00:07:34,880 --> 00:07:44,880

They also referred to themselves as the two based on the two witnesses in the book of revelations who were slain and then ascended into heaven.

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00:07:44,880 --> 00:07:53,880

At their recruitment meetings all across the country, they were extremely persuasive with their sci-fi pitch to potential members.

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00:07:54,880 --> 00:08:04,880

That was so intriguing to me as what was it, what combination came together that compelled people literally to, you know, as in the apostolic age.

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00:08:04,880 --> 00:08:11,880

You know, this was Peter and James and John and Matthew suddenly leaving their work and following the teacher.

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00:08:11,880 --> 00:08:16,880

We had the same situation here. They simply said come with us and they did.

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00:08:17,880 --> 00:08:24,880

Apowhite even convinced people he could communicate telepathically through secret codes of thought.

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00:08:24,880 --> 00:08:38,880

He said, Mr. Hughes, if you ever need to get ahold of me, gave me a secret code which was mentally praying to Bonnie and Hearf with the Lord's Prayer.

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00:08:38,880 --> 00:08:48,880

And then about 14, 15 months later there was widespread publicity about some people that disappeared in Oregon after attending a UFO lecture.

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00:08:48,880 --> 00:09:02,880

So I decided to use the code. Then the next morning received a telephone call and when he said you have now asked, I thought, well, maybe these people are, you know, who they say they are.

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00:09:02,880 --> 00:09:09,880

Human individual metamorphosis attracted a number of veterans of the fading hippie counterculture.

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00:09:09,880 --> 00:09:13,880

Most of the members had been involved in other religious endeavors.

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00:09:13,880 --> 00:09:22,880

Est, transcendental meditation, tarot cards, astrology, they were religious seekers for the most part.

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00:09:22,880 --> 00:09:30,880

In order to keep the business going, members sold blood at blood banks and asked for contributions from Christian bookstores.

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00:09:31,880 --> 00:09:34,880

Some wealthy members gave their trust funds to the group.

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00:09:34,880 --> 00:09:42,880

One of the early recruits was 19-year-old David Moore to the utter amazement of his mother, Nancy Brown.

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00:09:42,880 --> 00:09:59,880

When David came to say goodbye, I was observing him very closely to see if he showed any signs of being, you know, a little off balance or being, you know, kind of wild eyed or not making sense.

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00:09:59,880 --> 00:10:10,880

But he seemed very calm and he told me that this was something that spoke to him in a way that nothing that he had come across before had.

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00:10:11,880 --> 00:10:21,880

Applewhite and Nettles hated the attention of reporters, whom they believed asked annoying questions about Applewhite's past and the cult's financial situation.

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00:10:21,880 --> 00:10:32,880

In 1976, the group went underground, living on campgrounds in so-called good energy states like Colorado, California and Arizona.

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00:10:34,880 --> 00:10:42,880

So we isolated ourselves in this small group of 60 or 70 people and we didn't have contact with our families.

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00:10:42,880 --> 00:10:58,880

We were isolated into a circumstance where we could then focus on our change and there was a continual emphasis on the urgency that we make our change over quickly because we wanted to be ready when they came.

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00:10:58,880 --> 00:11:06,880

One woman said to us that when she bought toothpaste, she'd always buy a small tube because she'd expect to be leaving shortly.

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00:11:06,880 --> 00:11:10,880

But then she said wistfully once, well, I'm always buying another tube.

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00:11:12,880 --> 00:11:21,880

As they anxiously awaited their exit, the group struggled to be like angels, denying their sexuality as well as their individuality.

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00:11:23,880 --> 00:11:33,880

Marshall Applewhite was promiscuous in his early life and he saw sexuality as bad, giving him hard time.

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00:11:33,880 --> 00:11:37,880

So he had to find a way to reckon with this.

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00:11:38,880 --> 00:11:42,880

Applewhite tried to exert strict control over the members of the group.

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00:11:42,880 --> 00:11:50,880

At the same time, Nancy Brown began to publish a newsletter, creating a network for the Shunned families.

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00:11:50,880 --> 00:12:02,880

One of the group members visited his mother, who was in the network, and saw this newsletter and either took this newsletter with him or at least told Tia and Doe and the group about it.

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00:12:02,880 --> 00:12:08,880

Well, apparently they were really startled and not pleasantly pleased.

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00:12:09,880 --> 00:12:15,880

They looked at her as kind of like a meddler, somebody that was just making trouble.

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00:12:15,880 --> 00:12:23,880

And the way Marshall Applewhite thought was she was an agent of the lower forces.

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00:12:24,880 --> 00:12:39,880

And it's very humorous looking back at it now, but at the time it was like a very serious thing because there was this feeling that we'd get from Marshall Applewhite that somebody was out to get us.

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00:12:39,880 --> 00:12:46,880

Somebody was going to take us down, take us off track, not allow us to complete our mission.

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00:12:47,880 --> 00:12:51,880

Sensing the newsletter might encourage parents to come after their children.

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00:12:51,880 --> 00:12:56,880

Applewhite and Nettles reluctantly allowed members to contact their families.

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00:12:56,880 --> 00:13:04,880

It was carefully controlled. Nancy Brown heard from her son David Moore through messages left on her answering machine.

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00:13:07,880 --> 00:13:15,880

Hello, this is your son David. If you want to know how you can help his parents who want to hear from someone on the trip.

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00:13:15,880 --> 00:13:30,880

I'm sure if you would print in your newsletter the names of those parents who will promise not to kidnap their family members or keep them from doing what they want to do.

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00:13:30,880 --> 00:13:40,880

I promise you that most of these parents will hear from their loved ones pretty quickly and I don't want you to worry about me because there's really nothing to worry about.

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00:13:41,880 --> 00:13:49,880

By the early 80s, cracks were beginning to appear in the walls of the cult, which was now called Heaven's Gate.

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00:13:49,880 --> 00:13:57,880

Many longtime members felt confused and quit. Terry Nettles started to sense her mother's doubts in her letters.

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00:13:58,880 --> 00:14:06,880

The letter in 82 that I got from my mom gave me the impression that I felt like she wanted out or that she no longer believed it.

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00:14:06,880 --> 00:14:11,880

If something did the effect of, you know, be sure and conform to society, follow all the rules.

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00:14:11,880 --> 00:14:18,880

And I thought, why is she saying these things? This isn't what she would have said to me a few years ago.

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00:14:18,880 --> 00:14:31,880

In 1984, Bonnie Lou Nettles was diagnosed with brain cancer. Admitted into a hospital under an assumed name, she died alone in her native state of Texas.

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00:14:31,880 --> 00:14:39,880

Applewhite never informed Bonnie's children of her illness or death until several months later.

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00:14:39,880 --> 00:14:49,880

She was only a few hours away from me, so nobody even bothered to call me to tell me that my mom was dying so that I could be there with her, nothing.

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00:14:49,880 --> 00:15:00,880

My entire insides felt like I'd been ripped out and I spent many nights waking up the next day with my pillow soaking wet because I would just cry through the night.

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00:15:01,880 --> 00:15:10,880

Though Marshall Applewhite carried on without his beloved Bonnie Nettles, Doe, as he was called, was shaken by T. Steph.

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00:15:11,880 --> 00:15:17,880

It put not just Doe to the test, but it put all of us to the test of our commitment to the next level.

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00:15:17,880 --> 00:15:21,880

Do we think this is real or do we think this is just a con game?

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00:15:21,880 --> 00:15:27,880

How could a messenger of God die and her body remain on earth?

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00:15:27,880 --> 00:15:31,880

Marshall Applewhite had to quickly revise his doctrine.

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00:15:31,880 --> 00:15:35,880

He or they needed to kind of account for what happened to her.

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00:15:35,880 --> 00:15:45,880

They contemplated the idea that one could achieve this spiritual transcendence through some other means than just physically going there in UFOs, that suicide was an option.

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00:15:45,880 --> 00:15:54,880

At her work, because it's not the one that she, that the old influences or the old vehicles impulses would respond to.

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00:15:54,880 --> 00:15:56,880

So frequently this is what we do.

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00:15:56,880 --> 00:16:05,880

To maintain his role as the supreme and all-knowing leader, Applewhite enforced strict regulations that would further squelch free choice.

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00:16:07,880 --> 00:16:16,880

Regimentation, daily life, measuring of food, rigid rules when they went out to the external world to work, not to interact with people.

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00:16:16,880 --> 00:16:22,880

It was all to become more and more focused as if they were on a spacecraft leaving.

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00:16:22,880 --> 00:16:25,880

And if you were out in the outer world, you were out of craft.

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00:16:25,880 --> 00:16:28,880

If you were in the house doing routines that was in craft.

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00:16:28,880 --> 00:16:32,880

Applewhite began to question the obedience of his members.

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00:16:32,880 --> 00:16:38,880

In the past, he had distanced himself from other men in the group to avoid his homosexual urges.

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00:16:38,880 --> 00:16:43,880

Now, he asked the men to join him in castration.

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00:16:43,880 --> 00:16:51,880

Marshall Applewhite was talking about how far would you go in order to attain your mission.

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00:16:53,880 --> 00:17:04,880

And so he evidently was entertaining, castrating himself, getting rid of the human need to reproduce.

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00:17:04,880 --> 00:17:11,880

Or that hormonal impulse to be attracted to the opposite sex.

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00:17:11,880 --> 00:17:14,880

Or to be attracted to any sex.

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00:17:14,880 --> 00:17:22,880

I started going, whoa, I don't know, I can't really go for this.

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00:17:23,880 --> 00:17:26,880

Michael Conyers did not undergo the procedure.

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00:17:26,880 --> 00:17:33,880

But Applewhite and six other men in the cult flew to Mexico City and were surgically castrated.

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00:17:33,880 --> 00:17:40,880

In the early 90s, Marshall Applewhite used the internet to spread his gospel to the outside world.

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00:17:40,880 --> 00:17:45,880

He began designing personal websites, calling the company a higher source.

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00:17:45,880 --> 00:17:50,880

Eventually, they were earning nearly \$400,000 a year.

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00:17:50,880 --> 00:17:57,880

With this income, they recruited new members by placing a full page ad in USA Today and other newspapers.

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00:17:57,880 --> 00:18:06,880

Doe got instruction to relate to the world again and go out and collect any of the so-called second wave

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00:18:06,880 --> 00:18:13,880

or anyone who was ready for this transition that didn't come aboard the first time around.

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00:18:13,880 --> 00:18:18,880

Now, everything was interpreted as a warning signal from above.

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00:18:18,880 --> 00:18:25,880

At a campground in California, the cult thought the sky offered a message of impending doom.

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00:18:25,880 --> 00:18:32,880

The forest fires in the area had created this kind of blood red sky and the sun set and the sun was bright red.

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00:18:32,880 --> 00:18:37,880

So they interpreted that through a biblical passage that said the end times are near.

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00:18:37,880 --> 00:18:46,880

In March of 1997, the Comet Hale Bop was nearing Earth's orbit for its first visit in 2000 years.

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00:18:46,880 --> 00:18:51,880

Applewhite prophesied a UFO was following in the tale of the comet.

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00:18:51,880 --> 00:19:04,880

He said, it's the marker we've been waiting for, the spacecraft from the level above human, to take us home to the literal heavens.

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00:19:04,880 --> 00:19:12,880

I know that Doe and the class felt like that the comet itself was significant,

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00:19:12,880 --> 00:19:18,880

that this was the next level's way of saying, OK, let's wrap it up here.

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00:19:18,880 --> 00:19:25,880

The Higher Source website posted a cryptic red alert message on the Internet.

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00:19:25,880 --> 00:19:32,880

The cult had sent letters and videotaped messages via FedEx to several old friends.

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00:19:32,880 --> 00:19:40,880

Let me say that our mission here at this time is about to come to a close in the next few days.

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00:19:41,880 --> 00:19:52,880

We came from distant space and even what some might call somewhat of another dimension.

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00:19:52,880 --> 00:19:57,880

And we're about to return from whence we came.

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00:19:59,880 --> 00:20:04,880

On March 26th, 39 bodies were found in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

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00:20:04,880 --> 00:20:15,880

You can follow us, but you cannot stay here and follow us.

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00:20:15,880 --> 00:20:26,880

You would have to follow quickly by also leaving this world before the conclusion of our leaving this atmosphere in preparation for its recycling.

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00:20:26,880 --> 00:20:32,880

They had exited their vehicles in much the same way that they had entered them.

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00:20:32,880 --> 00:20:39,880

I was so happy to hear that they were finally off this planet, that they finally got out of those vehicles.

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00:20:39,880 --> 00:20:43,880

And I just wished that I was with them at that moment.

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00:20:43,880 --> 00:20:47,880

A friend of mine called me at work and told me, you know, this is just another cult.

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00:20:47,880 --> 00:20:49,880

She says, no, you gotta understand.

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00:20:49,880 --> 00:20:53,880

She says, there's this guy named Father Doe and there's a spaceship on that hellbop comet.

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00:20:53,880 --> 00:20:55,880

And I totally lost it.

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00:20:55,880 --> 00:21:01,880

This has been part of your life, you know, and her has died with all the answers to the questions you've had.

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00:21:01,880 --> 00:21:15,880

When my phone rang, up till that point, I had left open every hope that David was involved because the media still didn't have the factual information that would confirm it.

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00:21:15,880 --> 00:21:22,880

But as soon as I heard that first sentence, I knew all was lost.

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00:21:23,880 --> 00:21:34,880

Six weeks later, Heaven's Gate member Chuck Humphrey tried to take his life, but police managed to save him.

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00:21:34,880 --> 00:21:38,880

I wished that I was with them.

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00:21:38,880 --> 00:21:45,880

It's not really a regret in the sense that, gee, I lost my chance at a million dollar lotto because I lost the ticket or I didn't play today.

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00:21:45,880 --> 00:21:52,880

It's more of a kicking myself for not having done enough of my own homework.

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00:21:52,880 --> 00:22:01,880

As long as I'm still here, I can't do anything but share what I know about the next level and about Heaven's Gate.

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00:22:01,880 --> 00:22:09,880

What is it about human nature that causes some people to literally put their lives in the hands of another?

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00:22:09,880 --> 00:22:15,880

Thirteen-year member Michael Conyers recalls the first time he met Applewhite.

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00:22:15,880 --> 00:22:34,880

The energy that I felt from him put me into a state of almost fear and awe because when somebody says and starts owning that he may be or kind of is a representative of the Kingdom of Heaven,

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00:22:34,880 --> 00:22:41,880

there's kind of an energy that's exchanged between the two people. It's like there's a charge that goes on.

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00:22:41,880 --> 00:22:49,880

Hank Hanna-Graft of the Christian Research Institute consults cult members and their families.

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00:22:49,880 --> 00:22:55,880

He sees Heaven's Gate as the latest example of spiritual con men at work.

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00:22:55,880 --> 00:23:03,880

So often they follow a leader who is presenting them the skin of the truth stuffed with a deadly lie.

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00:23:03,880 --> 00:23:08,880

I don't think that there's a more classic current case of that than Herf Applewhite.

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00:23:08,880 --> 00:23:17,880

And when he told them that they had been impregnated with an alien spirit and that's why his message resonated with them,

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00:23:17,880 --> 00:23:27,880

they were immediately willing to follow the seductive siren call of the cult leader and in this case follow it right to their deaths.

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00:23:27,880 --> 00:23:32,880

The lure of Heaven's Gate was not just the security of belonging to a group.

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00:23:32,880 --> 00:23:37,880

It was the promise of a UFO taking that group to a better world.

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00:23:37,880 --> 00:23:48,880

For people that have a particularly strong case of alienation, this can become a very powerful segment of your life.

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00:23:48,880 --> 00:23:56,880

There is a vision of another kind of world in which we could live a lot better and maybe the UFO can take us there.

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00:23:56,880 --> 00:24:03,880

Applewhite had led his followers here and there, changing their course as his own personal demons dictated.

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00:24:03,880 --> 00:24:07,880

Finally, time ran out on him.

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00:24:07,880 --> 00:24:13,880

In the case of Heaven's Gate, originally the shift was to awaiting mode.

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00:24:13,880 --> 00:24:17,880

We are waiting and during this time of waiting we will prepare ourselves.

196

00:24:17,880 --> 00:24:25,880

We'll purify ourselves, we'll cleanse ourselves, we'll make ourselves beings fit for the spaceship when it finally arrives.

197

00:24:25,880 --> 00:24:32,880

That's a dangerous mode because eventually you have to give up the waiting.

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00:24:32,880 --> 00:24:38,880

For Marshal Applewhite, the exotic comet gave him an opportunity to take his life.

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00:24:38,880 --> 00:24:48,880

For his deluded and estranged followers, it was the end of their journey.

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00:24:48,880 --> 00:24:53,880

A few miles from Rancho Santa Fe and the Heaven's Gate mansion,

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00:24:53,880 --> 00:24:58,880

the students of the Unarius Academy attend classes in past life therapy,

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00:24:58,880 --> 00:25:03,880

interdimensional physics and the psychology of consciousness.

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00:25:03,880 --> 00:25:11,880

In 1954, Ernest and Ruth Norman founded Unarius in Glendale, California.

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00:25:11,880 --> 00:25:19,880

Ruth prophesied that so-called space brothers were coming to Earth in the year 2001 to build a university

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00:25:19,880 --> 00:25:23,880

where solutions to world problems would be discovered.

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00:25:23,880 --> 00:25:29,880

After Ernest died, Ruth claimed that he told her to purchase land in nearby Humboldt, California,

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00:25:29,880 --> 00:25:33,880

which would be the UFO landing site.

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00:25:33,880 --> 00:25:37,880

They are coming to Earth and will land here.

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00:25:37,880 --> 00:25:40,880

I bought this acreage for that purpose.

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00:25:40,880 --> 00:25:49,880

In 1994, when Ruth Norman died, 25-year member Charles Spiegel became director of the Unarius Academy.

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00:25:49,880 --> 00:25:57,880

Back in 1949, he had a vision in a post office in Los Angeles that would change the course of his life.

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00:25:57,880 --> 00:26:01,880

I was walking through a dim-lit corridor to pick up some mail.

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00:26:01,880 --> 00:26:07,880

Right in front of me, a picture appeared out of the so-called blue.

214

00:26:07,880 --> 00:26:16,880

It's just like a TV picture opened up and it was a life-size picture of a woman smiling down at me.

215

00:26:16,880 --> 00:26:21,880

This experience prompted Spiegel to study metaphysics and Eastern philosophy.

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00:26:21,880 --> 00:26:27,880

His research led him to a book written by Unarius Academy co-founder Ernest Norman.

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00:26:27,880 --> 00:26:33,880

Norman wrote about past lives, psychic travel to other dimensions, and UFOs.

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00:26:33,880 --> 00:26:38,880

Charles Spiegel contacted the Normans and asked for a meeting.

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00:26:38,880 --> 00:26:44,880

When the doorbell rang and the door opened, Ruth Norman stood there at the threshold.

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00:26:44,880 --> 00:26:55,880

And she was the exact likeness of the vision that I had in the U.S. post office in 1949.

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00:26:55,880 --> 00:27:02,880

The Normans used their supposed clairvoyant powers to receive readings about Spiegel's past lives.

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00:27:02,880 --> 00:27:06,880

Information, they said, came from the Space Brothers.

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00:27:06,880 --> 00:27:11,880

They told him he had been Pontius Pilate and they reenacted his life as the governor of Rome,

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00:27:11,880 --> 00:27:16,880

who had condemned Jesus of Nazareth to be crucified.

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00:27:16,880 --> 00:27:28,880

That was my first introduction to the reality of learning about one's other self or the existence in previous lifetimes.

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00:27:28,880 --> 00:27:35,880

It's the same person what one has done before. It still is a part of your persona.

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00:27:35,880 --> 00:27:45,880

Spiegel says over 20,000 members purchased books, visit the website, or the Southern California Center itself.

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00:27:45,880 --> 00:27:52,880

One of his students, Marion Kimus, claims to have had her own vision before she came to Unarius.

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00:27:52,880 --> 00:27:58,880

We were out looking at the stars, just enjoying the night, and suddenly we looked behind us

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00:27:58,880 --> 00:28:01,880

and they're hovering on the ground next to us was a UFO.

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00:28:01,880 --> 00:28:07,880

It was the most incredible light show. It had all the colors of the rainbow.

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00:28:07,880 --> 00:28:15,880

And they went around the perimeter of the craft and they were all just like scintillating or dancing,

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00:28:15,880 --> 00:28:17,880

just like vibrating. It was just incredible.

234

00:28:17,880 --> 00:28:22,880

It just hovered there and was completely silent and they'd been coming around for a long time.

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00:28:22,880 --> 00:28:24,880

I'm just lucky I've got to see them.

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00:28:24,880 --> 00:28:30,880

Marion Kimus interpreted the UFO sighting as a visit from friendly space brothers,

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00:28:30,880 --> 00:28:36,880

the same ones from whom Ernest and Ruth Norman claimed to be receiving transmissions.

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00:28:36,880 --> 00:28:41,880

Marion believes that Ernest Norman once mentally traveled to Mars

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00:28:41,880 --> 00:28:45,880

and brought back important information about the Red Planet.

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00:28:46,880 --> 00:28:52,880

He psychically visited the planet Mars underground where the civilization of the Martians reside.

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00:28:52,880 --> 00:28:56,880

A supernova came and they had warning of that and it was coming and burned the top of their planet.

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00:28:56,880 --> 00:29:01,880

It was totally burned. I don't know if you've ever seen pictures of Mars where you've seen kind of canals.

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00:29:01,880 --> 00:29:05,880

Those are the underground huge tubes where the Martians are living.

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00:29:06,880 --> 00:29:15,880

The 19th century notion that there are so-called canals on the surface of Mars has been thoroughly and definitively debunked.

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00:29:15,880 --> 00:29:17,880

But Unarians remain convinced.

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00:29:17,880 --> 00:29:24,880

Like many UFO believers, the Unarians claim to have information which has been revealed to them alone.

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00:29:24,880 --> 00:29:27,880

Through messages from the space brothers,

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00:29:27,880 --> 00:29:33,880

Marion Kimus claims to have discovered information about a dark past would still haunt her.

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00:29:35,880 --> 00:29:45,880

In my last lifetime, I lived during World War II and I was a French prostitute that had taken up with a German officer just to protect my butt.

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00:29:45,880 --> 00:29:50,880

The French resistance found out about me and they threw me and all my belongings out in the street.

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00:29:50,880 --> 00:29:57,880

And the mob, that mob me and shaved my head there is the reason why I'm so afraid of crowds now.

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00:29:58,880 --> 00:30:04,880

Another student, William Proctor, also experienced visions connecting him to World War II.

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00:30:05,880 --> 00:30:09,880

When I came into this life, I had leg problems.

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00:30:09,880 --> 00:30:14,880

My mom would take me to the doctor over and over and over again.

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00:30:14,880 --> 00:30:17,880

The doctor could never figure out why my legs hurt.

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00:30:17,880 --> 00:30:21,880

But the picture that dropped into my consciousness, I had been shot down.

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00:30:21,880 --> 00:30:26,880

I was an officer, a colonel in the Luftwaffe Air Force.

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00:30:26,880 --> 00:30:30,880

And I survived, but my legs were crushed in this crash.

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00:30:30,880 --> 00:30:32,880

That's what was causing the pain.

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00:30:33,880 --> 00:30:38,880

Proctor found himself attracted to the UFO philosophy of Unarius.

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00:30:39,880 --> 00:30:42,880

I've always had an interest in UFOs.

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00:30:42,880 --> 00:30:45,880

That isn't what brought me to Unarius.

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00:30:45,880 --> 00:30:50,880

But I've always had the interest that there were life on other worlds.

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00:30:50,880 --> 00:30:56,880

And as far as the Unarius Academy of Science, that opened the door for me.

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00:30:56,880 --> 00:31:00,880

These, what we call space brothers, are human beings.

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00:31:00,880 --> 00:31:03,880

And they're like us, except they're more advanced.

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00:31:03,880 --> 00:31:09,880

And in the year 2001, we're going to meet these people.

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00:31:14,880 --> 00:31:20,880

Because of its UFO beliefs, the Unarius Academy received a great deal of publicity

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00:31:20,880 --> 00:31:24,880

following the Heaven's Gate suicides in March 1997.

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00:31:25,880 --> 00:31:32,880

Would Charles Spiegel, the director of Unarius, eventually lead his cult on a doomsday suicide mission?

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00:31:33,880 --> 00:31:41,880

That goes against the basic principles of physics, the physics of energy, you see.

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00:31:41,880 --> 00:31:47,880

That's not what Unarius teaches, and that is to be responsible for yourself and for your actions.

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00:31:49,880 --> 00:31:52,880

We are normal. I mean, we go out, we live everyday lives.

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00:31:52,880 --> 00:31:58,880

We work, we have good jobs. We don't cut ourselves off from our family and friends.

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00:31:58,880 --> 00:32:01,880

Taking one's life is a negative experience.

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00:32:01,880 --> 00:32:06,880

Why would these people commit suicide over a so-called UFO following a comet?

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00:32:06,880 --> 00:32:12,880

The only thing that was following that comet was those people's past, and it caught up with them.

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00:32:13,880 --> 00:32:20,880

Spiegel claims the Heaven's Gate suicides were a futile act that goes against all of the Unarius teachings.

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00:32:21,880 --> 00:32:27,880

When I was asked by the media at the time, what do you think of Marshall Appelwhite and Heaven's Gate?

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00:32:27,880 --> 00:32:33,880

My remark was they got off at the wrong exit, and they had a head-on collision.

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00:32:36,880 --> 00:32:40,880

The Unarians' main focus is on the year 2001.

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00:32:40,880 --> 00:32:46,880

Co-founder Ruth Norman prophesied that the first spacecraft will land in the Bermuda Triangle,

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00:32:46,880 --> 00:32:55,880

followed by 32 others in Humboldt, California, on 68 acres of land high above the Unarius Academy of Science.

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00:32:56,880 --> 00:33:06,880

One of the brothers actually spoke to Ruth Norman, and he described that there would be 33 spacecraft of varying sizes

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00:33:06,880 --> 00:33:13,880

that had been specially built that would land one on top of each other and lock in.

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00:33:17,880 --> 00:33:22,880

Welcome, welcome to the future landing fight.

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00:33:23,880 --> 00:33:32,880

These advanced teachers, 1,000 teachers per ship, have technology from their worlds that they want to share with us.

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00:33:32,880 --> 00:33:38,880

Problems such as economical, pollution, the ozone problem.

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00:33:38,880 --> 00:33:44,880

They have the problems that we have on this planet. They have gone through every one of these problems.

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00:33:44,880 --> 00:33:54,880

And they have advanced knowledge that will help us in resolving problems here that will be the future, positive future for the Earth world.

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00:33:55,880 --> 00:34:01,880

Hamul is also the site of an annual Unarius psychodrama called the Conclave of Light.

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00:34:01,880 --> 00:34:07,880

In the performance, Unarians work through their supposed past life experiences.

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00:34:07,880 --> 00:34:13,880

Many Unarians fear that this secluded location may become a battleground,

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00:34:13,880 --> 00:34:18,880

if hostile government troops attack the peaceful brothers from another world.

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00:34:18,880 --> 00:34:26,880

You know, are we, as in the past, in movies going to get out all the armed forces and train our guns on them, chase them down,

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00:34:26,880 --> 00:34:34,880

or have we advanced a little bit farther and are open to the fact that there is more intelligent life in the universe than ourselves?

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00:34:34,880 --> 00:34:40,880

There's going to be a tremendous, instantaneous global change.

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00:34:40,880 --> 00:34:47,880

I don't mean people are going to throw away all their material goods and want to climb on board.

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00:34:47,880 --> 00:34:55,880

What I mean is they're going to have a totally different way of looking at life than on,

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00:34:55,880 --> 00:35:01,880

because the unanswered question is their life out there.

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00:35:01,880 --> 00:35:05,880

Is there intelligent life out there? Are we alone?

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00:35:05,880 --> 00:35:10,880

Will finally be answered.

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00:35:10,880 --> 00:35:16,880

And that's why it is very important that this information starts to get out now,

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00:35:16,880 --> 00:35:22,880

that man can prepare himself for a landing that is really our future.

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00:35:22,880 --> 00:35:30,880

Though the students appear certain of the space brother's arrival, Charles Spiegel has prepared a response if the prediction doesn't come to pass.

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00:35:30,880 --> 00:35:36,880

His answer is a convenient one. The world is simply not ready.

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00:35:36,880 --> 00:35:45,880

If the spaceships don't land, I'm not going to, you know, have any great anxiety and go in a dither.

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00:35:45,880 --> 00:35:49,880

There'll be a reason for it. You see, everything comes down to it.

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00:35:49,880 --> 00:35:55,880

There's logic and reason in life. It's great organization in the cosmos,

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00:35:56,880 --> 00:36:02,880

because we're disorganized and have, it might say, gotten off the highway.

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00:36:02,880 --> 00:36:09,880

That doesn't mean that the highway doesn't exist. You didn't pay attention to the traffic signals.

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00:36:11,880 --> 00:36:16,880

Research suggests that 20% of Americans believe in UFOs.

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00:36:16,880 --> 00:36:23,880

Is this why some of these people are joining UFO cults instead of mainstream religions?

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00:36:23,880 --> 00:36:28,880

People are looking for God in all the wrong places. People are spiritually hungry,

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00:36:28,880 --> 00:36:31,880

and they feel like Christianity has failed them.

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00:36:31,880 --> 00:36:41,880

So we've replaced God's enduring word with a UFO or an extraterrestrial that's going to tell us what a new paradigm of truth is.

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00:36:41,880 --> 00:36:47,880

And if you look, for example, at the Unarius Academy, what is the new construct of truth?

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00:36:47,880 --> 00:36:54,880

You'll find whole civilizations, they have mastered their life.

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00:36:54,880 --> 00:37:06,880

All too many people have uncritically bought into the story, not because the evidence is there, but they want to believe it's true.

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00:37:06,880 --> 00:37:12,880

Some experts do see differences between the Unarians and other UFO cults.

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00:37:12,880 --> 00:37:19,880

When you first look at Unarius, you wonder why would people stay? It's just a little UFO thing.

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00:37:19,880 --> 00:37:29,880

But there's a very substantial theology that basically draws from traditional cult and eastern theology that really holds people.

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00:37:29,880 --> 00:37:36,880

All of this is trying to recover a sense of cosmic connectedness rather than of alienation.

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00:37:36,880 --> 00:37:44,880

The idea that we humans are some kind of oddball that's stuck here in the midst of an inert cosmos.

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00:37:44,880 --> 00:37:52,880

We're going to have an apocalyptic event. We're going to have a convergence, a spacecraft from various galaxies around the universe.

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00:37:52,880 --> 00:37:55,880

And they're going to bring us some new esoteric revelation.

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00:37:55,880 --> 00:38:01,880

And through that, we're going to have a utopian society where everything is pristine and perfect.

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00:38:01,880 --> 00:38:07,880

And of course, as P.T. Barnum said, there's a sucker born every minute.

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00:38:07,880 --> 00:38:16,880

Next, a retired Methodist minister also celebrates UFOs and claims biblical proof of their existence.

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00:38:16,880 --> 00:38:23,880

Like the Unarians, he sees magnificent changes in the future for mankind.

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00:38:23,880 --> 00:38:26,880

The Space Brothers were a no-show in 2001.

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00:38:26,880 --> 00:38:37,880

Unarius students believe that the landing will happen when the majority of Earth's people become open to the idea of contact with interplanetary beings.

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00:38:37,880 --> 00:38:47,880

In the mountains of Sedona, Arizona, Milton Notedurfed, an 85-year-old retired Methodist pastor, embraces traditional Christian beliefs,

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00:38:47,880 --> 00:38:52,880

as well as ideas shared by many UFO cults.

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00:38:52,880 --> 00:39:01,880

Reverend Notedurf's awakening came when he saw what he believed were UFOs in the skies just outside New York City.

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00:39:01,880 --> 00:39:13,880

We saw a UFO. Well, it looked like a radio tower or something. So I paid no attention, drove right on by.

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00:39:13,880 --> 00:39:17,880

About three, four miles down the road, there was another one.

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00:39:17,880 --> 00:39:24,880

There were finally four of them, blinking green and orange and red and white.

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00:39:24,880 --> 00:39:32,880

And I thought, well, it must be putting on a show for me. So that was my introduction physically.

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00:39:32,880 --> 00:39:41,880

Though Reverend Notedurfed believes in UFOs, he found mainstream clergy and churchgoers don't share his views.

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00:39:41,880 --> 00:39:47,880

He discovered this when he talked about his UFO experiences with his congregation.

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00:39:47,880 --> 00:39:58,880

I don't talk about him in sermons. I did once, and that was a mistake, because I thought this was going to change the world in a week or two.

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00:39:58,880 --> 00:40:06,880

It didn't. No matter how interesting or frightening they may be, things change slowly.

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00:40:06,880 --> 00:40:15,880

After the UFO sighting, Reverend Notedurfd began a spiritual search for clues that might acknowledge the existence of what he witnessed.

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00:40:15,880 --> 00:40:21,880

He believes the Bible has many passages which document extraterrestrial life.

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00:40:21,880 --> 00:40:28,880

Notedurfd cites the star of Bethlehem, which led the wise men to Jesus of Nazareth.

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00:40:28,880 --> 00:40:42,880

And the Bible tells us that the star that they had seen went before them until it came and stood over the place where the young child was.

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00:40:42,880 --> 00:40:52,880

Comets don't act like that, planets don't act like that, asteroids don't act like that. It has to be something else.

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00:40:53,880 --> 00:41:06,880

Milton Notedurfed is also a believer in reincarnation. This age-old belief is shared by some Buddhists, Hindus, Native Americans, and many UFO cults.

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00:41:06,880 --> 00:41:12,880

Notedurfed claims reincarnation explains many of life's mysteries.

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00:41:13,880 --> 00:41:25,880

That was not a part of my Christian belief at all. People say, I don't want to go through this life again, I've had enough of it. That isn't a point. It isn't this life you're going through again.

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00:41:25,880 --> 00:41:32,880

It's a new one that is going to teach you some different things than the last one did.

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00:41:33,880 --> 00:41:43,880

Notedurfd predicts that a shift in planets will bring changes with the new millennium. The acceptance of UFOs would mean a new way of life on Earth.

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00:41:45,880 --> 00:41:58,880

The first thing that will be affected is economics. If we could get free energy for all time to come, what will happen to your electric stock?

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00:41:59,880 --> 00:42:11,880

Secondly, is religion. If you think religion hasn't separated us, just think of the thousands of denominations and cults that there are in the world.

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00:42:11,880 --> 00:42:16,880

So obviously something's wrong with our ideas of religion.

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00:42:18,880 --> 00:42:23,880

Has mainstream religion ever acknowledged the possibility of UFOs?

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00:42:23,880 --> 00:42:33,880

So I would say from a Christian standpoint that the Bible doesn't preclude the possibility of UFOs. Science doesn't preclude the possibility of UFOs.

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00:42:33,880 --> 00:42:45,880

I would just say that there's no real, tangible evidence for them. So I think that many people believe what they believe because they want to believe it.

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00:42:46,880 --> 00:42:58,880

UFOs reflect a deep human need to connect with the heavens. A spiritual quest expressed in ancient text, Greek mythology, and now in modern science fiction.

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00:42:58,880 --> 00:43:12,880

I think that one can understand UFOs religiously in the term that Carl Jung, the great psychologist used, that they function as technological angels in a technological society.

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00:43:12,880 --> 00:43:25,880

So what this is saying is that the same kind of entities that we might once have thought of as angels, gods, and so on coming down from heaven in a supernatural way now come in spaceships.

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00:43:27,880 --> 00:43:37,880

Throughout history, man has looked to space in the stars for answers. Could it be that the heavens offer an order and harmony that our unstable world lacks?

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00:43:38,880 --> 00:43:47,880

We associate that which is in the heavens with ultimate meanings in life or powers over us and this sort of thing.

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00:43:47,880 --> 00:43:57,880

So something like a bright comet like comet Halebop, it just seems to be human nature that we try to make it more than a 25 mile across rock that's throwing out a 15 million mile tail.

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00:43:57,880 --> 00:44:02,880

That's very beautiful and gorgeous in itself, but we want to try to make more than that.

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00:44:02,880 --> 00:44:09,880

All of us, we look up at the stars at night. The very building blocks of who we are came from the stars.

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00:44:09,880 --> 00:44:16,880

We may have this nostalgia for the stars on one level of consciousness because we know we did literally come from the stars.

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00:44:16,880 --> 00:44:23,880

And all cultures through all time have looked at the stars and felt that either the stars were benevolent beings or they were angels.

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00:44:23,880 --> 00:44:31,880

It is part of the human transcendental experience to look up at the sky and to feel that oneness with the universe.

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00:44:31,880 --> 00:44:40,880

And most of the groups in my opinion, UFO groups are doing exactly that. They are experiencing a sense of oneness with the cosmos.

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00:44:42,880 --> 00:44:52,880

As UFO cults look to the stars for a spiritual connection with the cosmos, the question remains, is there life out there and will we ever make contact?

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00:44:52,880 --> 00:44:57,880

10 Rippeting Films

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00:44:57,880 --> 00:45:01,880

10 award winning filmmakers

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00:45:01,880 --> 00:45:04,880

One unprecedented event

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00:45:04,880 --> 00:45:08,880

10 days that unexpectedly changed America

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00:45:08,880 --> 00:45:12,880

All this week at 9 only on the History Channel