

INDIGO AWAKES

One woman's journey from abuse to spirituality

Stephanie de Winter

Stephanie de Winter © 2012

All rights reserved

No parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means whatsoever without the prior permission of the publisher.

A record of this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-907203-44-2

Typesetting by Wordzworth Ltd
www.wordzworth.com

Cover design by Titanium Design Ltd
www.titaniumdesign.co.uk

Printed by Lightning Source UK
www.lightningsource.com

Cover image by Anne Sophie Roux



**LOCAL
LEGEND**

Published by Local Legend
www.local-legend.co.uk

Dedication

To my wonderful children Tara and Krystian,
to my mother Kay and to the memory of
my father Frederick and his blue typewriter.

Acknowledgements

Thank you, Kay Johnson, for your encouragement over the years and
for taking so much time to read and edit this book.

I also thank English teachers Liz Witham and Betty Cavendish for
their positive input, Jill Allen and Professor Peter Merchant for
believing in my ability, my cousin and friend Paul Connolly who
inspired me without knowing it, Nigel Peace at Local Legend for his
advice and for believing in me, and Stephane Burton, my Reiki Master
and friend, who saved me during a time of crisis.

About the author

Stephanie de Winter writes from her home in East Lothian where she lives with her two children. She has recently discovered Reiki and is learning the art of spiritual healing.

Indigo Awakes is her debut novel and she is now writing a sequel.

CONTENTS

1	Going Nowhere	.....	page
2	Descending	.....
3	Final Warning	.....
4	The Message	.....
5	The Journey Begins	.....
6	Across the Border	.....
7	Moving Up	.....
8	Initiation	.....
9	The Healing Begins	.....
10	Running On	.....
11	Retreat	.....
12	Casting Out	.....
13	At One	.....
14	A New Life	.....

Chapter One ~ Going Nowhere

Screams of terror ripped through the darkness. Indigo awoke with a start. An icy chill shot through her. The screaming was high-pitched and primitive. Jerking upwards, she attempted to sit up, desperate to awaken fully; but something had hold of her hair, tugging it, pinning her to the bed. The shrill sound intensified. Fear gripped her in its vice-like skeletal clutches, shooting to her bowels. Her ears and throat hurt and suddenly she realised that the dreadful screams were her own. The digits of the clock glowed red in the darkness reading 4 a.m. and, as realisation dawned, the screams ceased.

Sense prevailed. Another nightmare had visited her and she had been lying on her long dark hair. Wriggling from the constraints of her restless sleep, she flicked on the side light, staring manically into the glow. Clammy skin saturated in a cold sweat, her wild hammering heart beating at an explosive speed. Feeling battered and exhausted, she lay back on the soft white plump pillows like a convalescing patient, allowing her mind to drift back to the dream that had terrified her.

It had been night-time and the sky was a dark midnight blue. A smattering of wispy clouds partially blocked the half-moon from time to time. Indigo was running along a path at the side of a field near her home. Dark green leaves rustled to her right and silver prickly barbed wire glinted in the moonlight to the left. The field was full of shadowy black horses and she could feel energy surrounding her. A sensation began to build in her hands, initially the size of a tennis ball, like a huge force swelling, growing larger. It was as though she was cupping something powerful. Frightened, she glanced behind her. Something was following her, chasing her. A presence that she couldn't see but knew was there.

She awoke with a start, or so she thought, but couldn't find her lamp. Leaping out of bed, she rushed to the main light switch on the far wall. Turning, Indigo saw herself lying in bed fast asleep, pale and peaceful but empty of life-force, with long dark hair spread over the white pillowcase. For a moment she felt upset that she'd died and a sinking feeling of disappointment engulfed her. She hadn't done half the things she wanted to do yet. Indigo wasn't ready to die. A practical calmness descended telling her that she was in the wrong place and should return to her body. She tiptoed back to the bed.

She awoke properly this time, screaming. In the dream she had been calm about the out-of-body experience, but her waking consciousness had a different perspective on it.

The darkness of the night outside enveloped the safety of her lit cocoon and she lay inside the brilliant white bubble feeling exhausted. These frequent nightmares had left her feeling tired, restless and anxious the next day. However she'd always been able to put them to the back of her mind and carry on with the monotony of daily life. But this experience had been different and it really bothered her. Seeing herself lying there, still fairly young and beautiful, but dead, had disturbed her. Obviously she'd soon realised that she was alive but those few seconds had made an impact.

Mike's side of the bed was cold and empty like their relationship. Mike, her partner of the last four years, had gone to a poker night. The group of friends met every other Thursday in Ashford, playing cards, drinking huge quantities of whisky, before staggering back to the four-bedroom bachelor pad belonging to Jeff, one of the players. But Indigo was relieved by the break from him. She'd moved in with him three months before and regretted the decision almost daily. During that time she learned that Mike was not an easy man to live with. He drank heavily in the evenings which made him argumentative and he often fell asleep in front of the television. He was moody, either grumpy or abstracted but seldom cheerful. His feelings of jealousy had increased with frequent and unreasonable accusations. However, there was an adjustment period for couples moving in together for the first time. Indigo was determined at least to try and adjust.

Her mobile `phone beeped as she rushed up the steps of the tall impersonal grey office building where she had worked for the past year. Situated down a side road just off Canterbury town centre, it was a convenient location. Umbrella and handbag in one hand, she rummaged through the hidden depths of her leather bag searching for her `phone. The sky darkened and rain began to pelt onto her umbrella, ricocheting off the ground and soaking her ankles and feet.

"Hi Babe. Meeting friends down from Yorks tonight in town for dinner. Fancy it?"

"Good God," Indigo said out loud.

They rarely socialised with his friends, especially the ones from his home town in Yorkshire. He said he preferred to spend time alone with her. Indigo re-

read the text. Yes, she had read it correctly. Apprehension gripped her. What if she had nothing to say to anyone, or they thought that she was dull or ugly? She had been desperate to be integrated into his circle of friends, but now that it was finally happening she wasn't sure if it was what she wanted. Indigo's mind scanned the contents of her wardrobe. She'd wear something sexy but sophisticated. Her little black dress with black platform shoes and her ruby fake fur jacket.

On the upside, her volatile employer Jeremy Clifford-Amos was away for a week on holiday, sunning himself in Spain with his latest girlfriend. Therefore there would only be the two of them in the office. Jeremy would be expecting an email from her at 8.55 a.m. wishing him good morning. It was already three minutes late. Running up the stairs, she burst into the office. Janey, the quantity surveyor, was at her desk pouring over architectural plans, pencil in one hand and ruler in the other.

"Hi, Janey."

Rushing to her desk she flicked on the computer, tapping the desk impatiently waiting for it to start.

"You shouldn't let Clifford-Amos bully you." Janey re-tied her long blonde hair back into a pony tail.

"I know how to deal with the likes of Jeremy Clifford-Amos."

"So I see." Janey smiled. "I'll make you a nice cup of coffee while you send morning greetings to our lovely chairman."

"Thanks, you're an angel." Indigo slumped behind the computer screen.

Opening her email account, a message screamed out from Jeremy Clifford-Amos.

"You're late Indigo. If this happens again you will receive a written warning. I'll be talking to you upon my return. Not bloody good enough!"

She deleted it.

Indigo took a sip of her coffee and re-read the message from Mike. He would be expecting an answer. Images of the dream kept flashing through her mind. It had left her with mixed feelings. Nightmares were the norm for her. Her nights had been full of them as a child. The sensation of energy in her hands wasn't new either. But the feeling of being hunted by an evil presence had been petrifying. She felt battle-worn; even her nights were full of struggle. A light of realisation flashed for a split second, as a thought flitted through her brain. It was a sense of

enlightenment relating to Mike. She tried to grab hold of it but the next second it was gone. The phone rang and the thought fled.

She must make every effort to save her relationship. It was important to live life to the full. This included going out with Mike and his friends when she didn't feel like it. Indigo sighed at the thought of it. She felt tired but restless. Thinking ahead to the evening, she would rather curl up alone in her own house with a glass of wine and a good film. The heavy clutching feeling of foreboding lay in the pit of her stomach. She wasn't sure if she loved Mike or not. He was highly critical of her. Nothing she did was good enough, and her confidence and self-esteem were decreasing by the day. Deep within her, she knew their relationship was flawed, but she was in denial.

They had met on an Internet dating site and emailed each other several times over the Christmas break. He had spent Christmas in Mexico, alone. She should have known then that he was different to other men. Upon his return they met in a coffee shop in Canterbury High Street. She remembered the meeting well.

She had been sitting waiting, pretending to be cool and confident when really her insides were churning with nerves. Mike had been forty-nine at the time, twelve years older than her. Several older men had walked into the café, and she had sat there thinking 'No, not him,' and 'Phew, not him'. Suddenly a very attractive fit man with light brown hair walked in, exuding charisma and confidence. He walked straight up to her, put his arm around her shoulder and kissed her on the cheek.

"Hi, Indigo, I'm Mike. How are you? Can I get you anything, another coffee?"

Indigo remembered feeling both relieved and thrilled as she looked up into his twinkly blue eyes. She noticed how he chatted to everyone as he queued up for his drink, making a special effort to make the elderly ladies in the line laugh. She also saw how other women looked at him. He was full of charm and energy.

They agreed to meet for dinner the following weekend. They were intellectually matched, and the sexual chemistry between them was quite overpowering. The relationship was new and exciting for the first month until Mike's fiftieth birthday loomed. It soon became apparent that his ex-girlfriend was heavily involved in the arrangements for his party and it was also obvious that Indigo was not invited.

"Chrissie's involved with the family. I was with her for seven years, and they've been planning this for ages."

The party was to be held in the north of England, in Yorkshire, near to where his mother lived.

“So I’m not invited?” Indigo had finally summoned the courage to ask.

“I can’t just turn up with some mystery woman I’ve only known for five minutes. I’ll not expose you to that crowd.”

Indigo recoiled with hurt, especially as they’d just finished making love in her bed. In addition, when they woke up the following morning, Mike received a phone call from Chrissie asking what time he was picking her up.

“Yes, I’m giving her a lift. Look I didn’t want to do this sort of thing anymore but she’s travelling up with me, that’s all. What’s the problem?”

Indigo believed what she wanted to at the time. They split up shortly afterwards, but time is a healer. When enough time passed for her to forget how hurt she’d been, Mike got back in touch. He persuaded her to meet him for dinner and plied her with charm, wine and sex and this was the pattern for their future.

Chapter Two ~ Descending

Indigo had made a special effort that evening to impress Mike and his friends from Yorkshire. Applying another layer of mascara, she sprayed herself with perfume and brushed her hair. She looked good. Slipping on her black high heels she walked out of the dressing room.

“Wow, you look nice,” he said, smiling. He was standing in the bedroom putting on his Rolex. “Really nice. Hmm...” he growled softly. Stroking her bottom he pushed her back onto the bed.

“I’ve just done my hair,” Indigo protested.

Mike's face darkened.

"You're usually not bothered about your hair? Why tonight?"

Indigo couldn't face a row. If she didn't have sex with him he would cause a scene and then the evening would be spoilt.

"Just wanted to look nice for you, that's all,"

"Did you now..." he murmured seductively.

Kissing her, he pulled up her dress. A few moments later he had finished and she was back in the dressing room wiping off smeared lipstick and re-applying make-up. Her hair was dishevelled despite brushing it but it suited her.

Indigo climbed into his silver Aston Martin and he ran his hand up the length of her leg.

"Cheeky," Indigo slapped his hand playfully.

"See, your hair's not mucked up. You look like the little one from that programme with the women, you know, in America." He was in a good mood now.

"Desperate Housewives?"

"Yes, what's her name?"

"Eva Longoria. Surprised you watch that?" Mike was more of a football or politics type of man.

"Watched a bit the other night, after you'd gone to bed... There was nothing else on. Except that you have different eyes. What colour are yours?"

"Indigo. Or black, depending on my mood!"

You can hardly miss them, she thought crossly. Her eyes were vivid indigo, and her best feature. She couldn't believe he'd had to ask her after all the times they'd made love and he'd hovered over her staring into her eyes. How could he do that and not even notice what colour they were? Mike was dressed in black trousers and a purple shirt that complemented his colouring.

"Your shirt brings out the colour in your lovely blue eyes," she said pointedly. He smiled, but clearly missed the point.

"You won't say anything that embarrasses me, will you?"

"What do you mean?"

“Well, Lynn’s always disapproved of me. You know that. She thinks everyone should be married with kids. Just don’t want you telling her anything personal about me or us.”

“Why would I? No, of course I won’t,” replied Indigo. A flush rose to her cheeks. That was insulting.

“I’m going to leave the car in the car park,” he said abstractly. “Then I can have a drink. Pick it up tomorrow.”

Entering the Moroccan restaurant, the smell of incense and exotic spices hung in the air stimulating the appetites of the hungry diners. It was open plan with dark wooden floors. Red textured wallpaper and colourful patterned rugs hung from the walls. Lanterns and candles illuminated the surroundings. The eating areas contained low tables with cushioned benches packed full of diners of all ages from teenagers to business people. Belly dance music strummed in the background. Two couples waved to Mike.

“Over here.”

Both girls looked surprised by Indigo’s appearance but in that slightly taken aback way that women have when faced with an attractive woman. Indigo had never seen a photograph of Mike’s ex-girlfriend and their reaction made her wonder what she had looked like.

“Sorry we’re late. We had a few last minute things to do...” said Mike, winking. “Indigo, this is Sarah and Tom. Meet Indigo, everyone.”

“Hi,” they chorused.

Sarah was about thirty-five and attractive with green eyes and long brown hair. Her partner Tom was about the same age as Mike, a little overweight with bad skin but a kind face. He was a fireman and she was a single mum.

The other couple were Glen and Lynn. He ran a successful scrap business and she didn’t work. Glen was very friendly and natural, with clear blue eyes and grey hair. Lynn was in her late forties. She shook Indigo’s hand weakly, and although she smiled Indigo could tell by her eyes that she had taken an instant dislike to her.

Mike whispered in Indigo’s ear.

“Sarah’s wearing a little dress too. Looks like you wore the right thing.”

Indigo looked at him incredulously. What on earth did he think of her to make such strange comments? Did he think of her as a tramp or was he just chronically insecure? Not bothering to answer, she took a gulp of red wine.

“So, have you got any children?” Sarah asked as the main dishes arrived. Mike topped up their wine glasses.

“Yes, two. They’re nineteen and twenty-one. Both at Leeds University actually.”

“Oh really? What do they do there?”

“Charlie’s doing Theatre and Lily English.”

“Oh, that’s good.”

“Cor... she’s nice,” Mike murmured to Glen across the table.

Glen looked startled and embarrassed. Glancing at Indigo he said to Mike quietly:

“Mate, look who you’re with.”

“Just saying that she’s extremely good-looking.”

Mike was referring to one of the waitresses, a tall and slim, pretty girl aged about twenty. Indigo raised her eyes to heaven and took another slug of wine. The next moment the volume of the music increased and a belly dancer of about thirty glided over to their table and began swaying to the music, circling her hips and waving her arms in the air. She was very sensual with a good covering of flesh.

“Indigo can belly dance,” Mike offered.

“I don’t think it’s me that she wants to dance with, do you?” Indigo said loudly with a wicked gleam in her eye.

“Yeah, come on mate, up you get.” His friends entered into the spirit.

Mike got up and moved his hips stiffly in front of the belly dancer, putting his arms up as if he’d danced like this on his travels when he’d been a younger man. Everyone clapped when he sat down and she moved on to the next table.

“Put your napkin on your lap dear,” said Indigo.

“Her? You must be joking. Too fat. You on the other hand...” Under the table, he ran his hand up her thigh. The evening might yet be pleasant.

“So, how did you and Mike meet?” asked Sarah, whilst powdering their noses in the ladies’ bathroom. Indigo had been waiting for this question.

“Oh, we’ve been friends for years. He’s been really supportive. I met him when I’d just come out of a divorce.” A politician’s answer was all she would get.

Sarah looked surprised. She confided that she was mad about Tom, and that they'd been together on and off for years. Last year, he'd slept with an Italian woman and they'd split up, but now they were really trying to make it work. She wanted to marry him.

"Well if he mucks you about he's an idiot," said Indigo, her generous spirit fuelled by a large quantity of red wine. "You're lovely and he should appreciate you."

"Aw thanks, really? I'm so unsure of myself after our last break-up."

"Well if he doesn't treat you properly dump him, you can do better," Indigo continued. 'Listen to you giving out advice', said a small voice in the back of her head.

As Mike and Indigo walked to the taxi rank later, she chattered about the evening, holding on to his arm.

"Will you stop talking for five seconds and shut up? You're giving me earache."

Indigo reeled back in shock. She'd thought they were having a good time, and were on the same wavelength.

"Don't look at me like that." He looked uncomfortable under her hurt gaze. "I've just eaten far too much and feel a bit uncomfortable."

"Well, you did have a third helping of that chicken dish," chided Indigo, "and you ate my pudding as well as yours."

In the taxi on the way home Mike was quiet, his face a mask of bad temper. Arriving home, he headed for the whisky decanter.

"Get yourself a glass of wine." It was an order. "Sit down." He pointed to the leather sofa. Indigo sat down nervously. He stood with his back to the fireplace. "What did I say to you in the car?" He drained his glass and poured another.

"Um... I'm not sure?" Indigo started fiddling with her hair.

He swore angrily.

"I asked you not to embarrass me, didn't I? You made a fool of me. My oldest friends come to meet my girlfriend, and she spends the night flashing her legs and boobs at them..." He took another gulp.

Indigo was dumbfounded.

"What? You said my dress was ok. Appropriate."

“I share my house with you. Give you a chance, and you act like a tart and argue with me, trying to make me look stupid. Flirting and chatting them up!”

“I think you’re the one who was flirting, Mike,” said Indigo, her voice shaking. “What was it? ‘Cor, she’s nice.””

“Well she was. Can’t blame a guy for looking.”

“Thanks.”

“What does that mean?”

“Well, it doesn’t make me feel good, does it? And then you accuse me...”

Mike’s bad temper bubbling beneath the surface erupted in a climax of swearing and hysteria. Indigo stood up.

“I’m going to bed. There’s no...” She screamed as his crystal glass came hurtling towards her, catching her on the cheekbone before soaking her in whisky. A thousand shiny glass fragments exploded onto the gleaming wooden floor.

“You can clean up the mess.” He shoved her roughly backwards onto the sofa. “I’m sleeping in the spare room. You’re an embarrassment. Don’t come crawling in.”

Indigo went to the downstairs toilet. There was an angry red mark on her cheekbone and a bruise already forming. Tomorrow she’d have a black eye. It stung and throbbed. Pouring herself another glass of wine, she sat on the sofa numb with shock. The jealousy, insults and put-downs had been going on for a while now, and he’d shoved her a few times. Now for the first time he’d actually bruised her.

And now there was the same sick heavy feeling in her stomach that she’d experienced the night before in the dream. The tiny fleeting thought from earlier developed a voice. Mike was the dark force that pursued her. He had become something to be feared.

He said nothing about the incident the following day and Indigo was too nervous and weary to mention it. They were polite to each other and he returned to the bedroom. However, she managed to deflect his sexual advances by lying that her period had come early. In the past she had pushed his aggressive or unreasonable behaviour out of her mind, because she wanted the relationship to work. However, the mental cruelty coupled with his physical assault had damaged their relationship irreparably. His drinking and aggression was both unattractive and weak. She wished that she’d quizzed Sarah at the dinner about his past relationship with Chrissie. Why had that ended?