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Sekret Machines Book 1: Chasing Shadows

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ISBN 978-1-943272-29-7 (Trade Paperback)

Distributed worldwide by Simon & Schuster

FOREWORD

IN EARLY APRIL 2016, A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, A FORMER senior intelligence officer with a strong interest in Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP), called me and asked if I had ever heard of Tom DeLonge from the punk rock band, Blink-182. I had not, as my musical tastes ceased growing somewhere between Motown and classic rock. Aware of my own lifelong interest in UAP and what is now commonly referred to as the Phenomenon, my friend suggested that I listen to a recent interview Tom had done on *Coast to Coast* radio about his new book, *Sekret Machines: Chasing Shadows*, and remarks on his coterie of former and current U.S. Government advisors who were offering him guidance on what they purportedly knew about the Phenomenon, or at least offering helpful hints on how Tom and his company, To The Stars, Inc., could approach the subject matter in books and films with a degree of veracity. The interview was illuminating, primarily due to Tom's desire to research and disseminate information on the Phenomenon in a more balanced and scientifically

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rigorous fashion than is currently being done in some of the popular literature on the subject. To me, this sounded like a highly innovative and worthwhile endeavor. And as a career civil servant, I found that Tom's intent to portray the U.S. Government in a more positive light was an added plus. Within a few weeks, Tom and I managed to synchronize our schedules and get together for some very long and animated discussions that culminated in an agreement to work together, through Tom's company, To The Stars, Inc., on advancing credible research on the Phenomenon and reporting this research to the general public. I readily agreed to work with Tom because I found him to be a highly innovative, creative artist with a very serious mission to get the message out on this most perplexing, complex and intriguing subject. In his own parlance, he is gnarly.

My own fascination with the Phenomenon started in earnest while I was an undergraduate and later a graduate student majoring in English literature and American Romanticism. Reading the visionary and mystical poetry of William Blake and the transcendental musings of the American Romantics fueled my interest in the "other." It was only a short leap for me to the works of the seventeenth-century Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (who knew Emerson had so many of Swedenborg's works in his library?), Christian Mysticism, Mystery Schools, and then onward to the vast library of metaphysical literature. Those on the journey recognize the path (As for my formal introduction to the Phenomenon, as we know it in today's context, it came suddenly and unexpectedly. I will not

attempt to go into the experience here, but I will say that it was one of life's game changers for both my wife and me. The experience was simultaneously frightening, perplexing, frustrating and absurd. It was also both physical and emotional, although I am undecided as to whether there was any spiritual addendum. Almost thirty years later, I am still not sure what to make of the experience. What I do know, however, is that this event changed my view of what constitutes our collective version of reality.

I joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1983 and had a wonderful twenty-five-year career there, working briefly for the Directorate of Science and Technology and then later transferring to the Directorate of Operations, the clandestine service, for the bulk of my career where I served as an operations officer. I was later promoted into the ranks of CIA's Senior Intelligence Service. I bring this up for two reasons: full disclosure, and as background on how I approach the peculiar nature of the Phenomenon. As an intelligence officer, I was taught that my primary job was to collect information—intelligence—for the president. And that the information I collected had to be well sourced and vetted thoroughly and properly. In other words, the information had to be as accurate and truthful as humanly possible. And this is the same approach I use when discussing the Phenomenon. Speculation is fine in and of itself, and when dealing with something as complex and extraordinary like the Phenomenon, speculation is more often than not all we have to work with. But we must always label speculation as such and not muck up further what is already a vast and

murky body of literature on the subject, much of which is barely intelligible. And I am convinced that this is how Tom also wants to approach research on the Phenomenon. Having said the above, however, I am very much aware, particularly in regard to the Phenomenon, that this measured and linear approach is arguably laughable. How do you make sense of any of it when there does not appear to be any apparent "there" there? The Phenomenon seems to work on another level (consciousness, dimensions?) unknown to our science. A friend once remarked to me that it perhaps the Phenomenon seems to exist at the nexus of quantum mechanics and consciousness. If that is so, and I personally believe this may be a viable way forward, then our science needs to expand its horizons to include things beyond the quantifiable and replicable.

If you work in the Intelligence Community (IC) and follow the Phenomenon, then you are aware that there is no readily identifiable place in the IC that houses a department or unit that works exclusively on UFOs or UAPs or any other type of paranormal phenomena. (Read John B. Alexander's wonderful book, *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities*, for a look at how the inner workings of our military and intelligence communities deal—or do not deal openly—with this issue.) I have worked across the CIA and various elements of the IC throughout my career, and I can state that I have never happened upon a place that looks at this topic, exclusively or otherwise. Does that mean the U.S. Government does not investigate UFOs, UAPs, or other paranormal phenomena? In my opinion,

recommends.

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they probably do. And I also believe what John Alexander has said in his book, that “disclosure has already happened, it is confirmation that we are after.”

UAPs are real. The Phenomenon is real. There is no way to deny or refute all the evidence accumulated over just the last few decades alone. But what is the Phenomenon, exactly? What intruded, uninvited, into my life almost thirty years ago? Well, that is the quest Tom and To The Stars, Inc., are pursuing, pulling together a strong team of scientists, researchers and adventurers willing to venture into the unknowable for answers. We may stumble upon something that we should not have disturbed; then again, we may just fall headlong into a new realm of existence that has been hidden from us and has always been our birthright.

If you are interested in the Phenomenon, get started by reading the many wonderful and informative books by Jacques Vallée and Hal Puthoff on the Phenomenon and its many tributaries.

I hope you will love reading *Sekret Machines: Chasing Shadows* as much as I did. It is a well-written and thoroughly enjoyable work of science fiction with engaging characters, a thrilling plot line and enough real science to spark the imagination. Fare forward.

Jim Semivan
Alexandria, VA
November 2016

Jim Semivan retired in 2007 after a 25-year career in the Central Intelligence Agency's National Clandestine Service. At the time of his retirement he was a member of the CIA's Senior Intelligence Service. Jim served multiple overseas and domestic tours along with senior management positions in CIA headquarters. He is the recipient of the Agency's Career Intelligence Medal.