

Kyle wakes being in the past running from his murderer, only to learn that he is actually thirty years in the future. His quest is to solve his own murder and seek justice.

The Awakening

By Cheryl Shoquist

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The Awakening

CHERYL SHOQUIST

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The Awakening

Chapter One

The year is 2020. Kevin started stirring, he was coming out of the coma that he had been in for 3 days. The heat and the light from the rays of the sun slipping through the cracks of the window shades landed on his face and began disturbing his inertia. He could feel the light and the heat radiating off his face as it became warmer and warmer. His reflexes and external senses were waking him up, but his mind was still hovering in the stupor of unconsciousness. He overheard a muffled woman's voice that seemed far away saying, "Doctor, he's coming to." He stirred more but didn't feel threatened or unsafe. He was still too far out of it to realize anything. Internally, he became more cognizant and began a fight with his body to come to.

Suddenly, he felt the presence of a person leaning over him with a breath that smelled of tobacco and coffee, which was strong enough to catapult Kevin into semi-consciousness as the man began pulling his eyelids up and flashing a small flashlight into his eyes. "Mr. Castern, how are you feeling? Do you know where you are?" The voice was deafening. Kevin opened his eyes slightly and saw this man leaning into him. He had dark hair and a very bushy mustache. As he talked, he could see that his teeth were stained, and the scent of coffee and tobacco was quite vile to be so close to and not a figment from his oblivion. Kevin's eyes were blinking, trying to adjust to his surroundings, yet still the gaze was weak and shadowy.

Kevin was still groggy and having a little trouble coming to. His vision was blurry, his senses were vague, and for a few moments, he couldn't speak. His eyes jumped back and forth around the room,

wondering where exactly he was, with nothing recognizable. The man leaning over him had a white lab coat on and a stethoscope around his neck. Kevin was feeling delirious and confused, and he didn't remember what happened to him right away.

"Mr. Castern. I am Dr Anton Esmer. You are in the hospital. Do you remember what happened to you?" He asked loudly, still staring right into his face, watching his reactions.

Memories were muddled but becoming clearer, and his mind began racing as pieces of what happened to him began to blanket his memory with visions dancing back and forth in his mind at first nonsensical, and then it was as though the clouds in his mental pictures dissipated, and visions were becoming clearer.

Moments later, he was fully awake and searching the room with his eyes to tell him where he was. A woman was standing at the end of the bed, staring at him and saying nothing. She was a tall woman wearing dark blue scrubs, and she had a stethoscope around her neck, too. She wore a scowl on her face that made it seem as though she wasn't a very happy person. Maybe she was just overworked, like most nurses seem to do more than the doctors and end up with way less respect. Her job was to keep an eye on Kevin, monitor him closely, and let the Doctor know when he was coming to. As he was coming out of his coma, she was right there and had alerted the Doctor.

He reacted with fear, not knowing what was happening to him or what was going to happen to him. His instincts were fight or flight, and all he wanted to do was flee to a place where he felt safe without people staring at him, pulling on his eyelids, and asking if he was ok. His mind began stirring up more visions from his memory. He was being attacked. He was running away from someone. The ferocity of his

visions caused him to become very upset and squirm in his bed, trying to escape.

Dr Anton was trying to calm him, and they began wrestling to control and calm him. Dr Anton was a scrawny and small man, aged beyond his years, possibly from the job that kept him overworked and without the proper rest. Kevin was flailing about powerfully, his muscles tense, his self-protective fight instincts were in full gear, and Dr Anton was no match for him as the memories invading Kevin's mind encompassed his fear for his life. His face showed intense panic, and he was gasping for breath; his breathing was raspy and heavy. He started throwing the blankets off himself, maneuvering about, kicking and flailing his arms, trying to get out of bed.

He began screaming as more and more memories came flooding back to his memory, and he was becoming more awake and lucid; "They're after me. They're going to find me. They're trying to kill me." Kevin was frantic and serious as he continued to get out of the blankets and try to remove the IV from his arm. As he continued to scream and fight for his life. Dr Anton, with the help of a couple of male aids, two big, brawny, muscular men who had been with the hospital for a few years, overheard the commotion and came into the room, overpowered Kyle, and kept him in the bed as Dr Anton yelled for the nurse.

"Nurse, let's give him a sedative." The doctor told her, and as soon as she put it into his IV, he started settling down, and then he was out again. "I'm going to have the police come in." Dr Anton said to the nurse as he stood up and took a deep breath, and ran his hands through his hair. It was quite a struggle, and he was relieved that the patient was sedated and calm.

It was quite a struggle even with the aids helping to keep Kevin from hurting himself or anyone else with his thrashing. As soon as the

sedative took effect, the aids left the room, knowing the situation was now calm and subdued.

The hospital in Chicago had recently added a new wing. It was for a children's center to take care of all of the needs of the area's children, from small, insignificant colds to cancer, other diseases, and disabilities. Because of all of the unique situations, the hospital would see some dangerous situations with patients and friends or family whose emotions and heartache would get the most of them and cause disruptions that could have been harmful to staff and patients if it wasn't handled correctly. It helped to have people to defuse certain situations. These two men were always ready to handle anything that came along and had proved their worth to the hospital, the staff, and to patients. They were always close by, keeping everything safe.

Dr Anton went to the nearest phone and called for security to contact the police and have someone come over, and then he went into the waiting room to find Kevin's parents, who had been there for some time waiting for word on their son's condition. They were an older couple in their sixties, and as soon as they got word that Kevin was in the hospital, scared and worried, they came to support their son and find out what had happened to him.

He was their only child, and they hadn't seen him for a few days. Getting that call rattled their whole world with confusion, fear, and the threat of the possibility of losing him, the thoughts of every parent without the control to change the circumstances surrounding their child.

They had been waiting as patiently as they could, pacing back and forth one minute and sitting back down in the chair the next, as any parents would be able to as they worried about their son, and wondered if he would be ok. The information they received upon their arrival was

minimal, and they were told to have a seat, and the Doctor would be with them soon. It was a terrible way to greet the panicked and distraught parents, who sat in the waiting room hand in hand, waiting for the condition of their son.

Mr. and Mrs. Castern were generally quiet and unemotional people. They lived their life by the regulations set forth by the church that they regularly attended. They were kind, neighborly, Christian people who held themselves together in public and in private. They were never the life of the party, they were the quiet ones who sat in the corner.

They were both in their sixties. They married in their early twenties and hoped to start a large family. That never happened for them until they hit their early thirties, and miraculously, Kevin was born and that would be the extent of their family. They took the heartbreak well and devoted a family's worth of love and attention to Kevin.

There was never a question in Kevin's mind growing up as to whether or not he was loved and wanted, because his parents continuously proved that he was, and that was without spoiling him or giving him whatever he wanted. They were smarter parents than that, and knew when to say yes and when to say no to him. Kevin grew up to be a well-rounded and decent young man.

Mr. Castern, was a small man, with dark hair that was graying and falling, and he wore black rimmed eye glasses and a fisherman hat, without all the hooks and lures attached. He had his hands in his pants pockets all the time, jingling his coins as though he had a nervous tic. He was a man that did not feel as though he had to prove himself by arguing or debating every conversation. He was an agreeable man and allowed people to have their own opinions, and if they were contrary to his own, he gave them the grace of their convictions.

Mrs. Castern was a kind and generous woman who was always the first one to help those she heard were in need. She was a small woman with short curly salt and pepper graying hair and she wore silver rimmed eye glasses with a chain attached as she was always taking them off. She was nearsighted and used her glasses for far-sighted vision. She carried around a smaller purse that always matched the jacket that she was wearing. She was a proud woman of dignity and respect, and her most treasured blessings were her husband and son.

She was not a woman who collected inanimate objects to decorate her home with, her show pieces were pictures of her family that graced almost every available spot in the house. She was a quiet woman who only lashed out when she was afraid or when someone was in danger. Then there was a side to her that took everyone who knew her aback with shock and dismay.

When it came to her son, her only child, she could be a fierce and protective Mother bear. As time went on and Kevin grew she had to rein herself in, after she was reminded by her husband that Kevin would need to know how to defend himself in times where she was not there to do it for him. Today, however, she was having a hard time sitting still, wondering what was happening with her son, and internally, she felt as though she was about to explode with worry.

Dr Esmer sat down on the bench next to Mr. and Mrs. Castern, and he breathed heavily, which immediately frightened and worried the Castern's. They had been sitting there in the waiting room, assuming the worst and hoping for the best as they gripped each other's hands nervously, comforting each other, waiting for news on their son.

"Mr. and Mrs. Castern?" He said as he started very slowly not sure, if he had the comforting words that he knew that they were hoping to hear. "Your son is resting comfortably now. We had to give him a

sedative. When he woke, he became very upset, saying that people were after him, trying to kill him. Do you have any idea what happened to him?" He asked, searching for answers and hoping that they could shed some light on the history of his patient.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Castern's faces went pale, and they both seemed to be in shock at the news. "Dr Esmer, we haven't seen our son in about a week. The last that we saw him, he was fine, and there were no problems that he talked to us about. He seemed fine. Do you know what happened to him? Why is he here?" Mr. Castern asked.

"All we know, Mr. and Mrs. Castern, is that he was brought in by the ambulance after two police officers found him in the park. He was unconscious when they found him, and there was no one around who saw anything. The police checked the area out thoroughly and saw nothing. Do you know of any trouble that your son may have been involved in?"

"No." Mrs. Castern said quickly. "He is a good son, very likable, a good man, and he has never been in any trouble." She said very quickly with a high-pitched tone that even frightened her when she heard herself speak.

"He said that people are trying to kill him?" Mr. Castern asked. Their faces went white, and Dr Esmer thought that they were both going to faint.

"You must be calm right now. Breathe. We don't know anything at this point. I was just hoping that you could shed some light on this."

"But our son thinks someone is trying to kill him? How can this be?" Mrs. Castern asked nervously, shaking and grabbing her husband's hand.

"We don't know anything for certain."

"When can we see him?" Mr. Castern asked.

"Is he going to be alright?" Mrs. Castern asked.

"At this moment, I don't see any long-term effects, but we need to see how things go after he wakes up. We are hoping that he will let us know what happened to him. He did sustain a pretty big bump on the back of his head, and we'll have to wait and see if that will cause him any more issues. You should be able to see him soon. The sedative will keep him asleep for a few hours. Why don't you go home and come back in the morning? He should be a lot more lucid than and hopefully be able to fill us in on the events that transpired to put him here." Dr Esmer suggested.

"Thank you, Doctor." Mr. Castern mumbled quietly, and Dr Esmer could see the disappointment written on their faces.

"I completely understand how you feel, and I know that you are worried, but please go home. There is nothing that can be done here, and I am sure you will be more comfortable at home. We are doing everything that we can do for him. I'll call you if there are any changes, I promise." He told them as they nodded their heads in agreement. "He really will be fine." Dr. Esmer told them.

Two police officers came over to Dr Esmer. One was a female who stood 5 feet 11 inches tall, and she seemed even taller than that with her boots on. She was a pretty woman with her hair pulled back in a bun. She was very athletic-looking, and she resembled a warrior with her uniform on, with all the equipment strapped to her. The other was a male officer who was about 4 inches shorter than his partner, and he was muscular and looked like a force to be reckoned with. "Officers, are you by chance the two officers that brought Mr. Kevin Castern in, three days ago?" Dr Esmer asked them as they approached.

"Yes, we are." The male officer answered.

"We are his parents. What happened to him?" Mrs. Castern jumped up, quickly butting into the conversation to find out what they knew about her son. She was not ready or willing to just walk away until tomorrow. She wanted answers, and she wanted them now. It was very difficult for her to just walk away from her son when she felt that he needed her now the most.

"We don't know much." The female officer told them. "The station got a call that a man was lying in the park, seeming to be unconscious. We went to the scene and found him just lying there on the ground. We checked him out and then called the ambulance that brought him here. There was no sign of a struggle, and no other people were around. We don't think it was a robbery because he still had his wallet and money in his pocket. We looked for witnesses after the ambulance took over, and the park was deserted. We are still investigating." They explained.

"Let's talk over here." Dr Esmer said to the officers as he pulled them away for a private talk, and then he looked over his shoulder at the Casterns watching to see if they would be eavesdropping. Mr. and Mrs. Castern stood there horrified as the Doctor directed the police officers into a corner for a private conversation. When they were out of earshot of Mr. and Mrs. Castern, the doctor spoke. "I think that we may have a situation here with this patient, Kevin Castern." He said quickly, with his face wrenched up with worry.

"What kind of situation?" The male officer asked.

"When he was coming to, he suddenly became very upset and was screaming about people being after him, and they were trying to kill him." Dr Esmer told them. "He was thrashing about so much that we had to sedate him. We would like him to be under police protection, for his sake and all other patients in the hospital. Since we don't know

anything about this man or what situation he was in, we need the extra security. How soon can we get that going?"

"Right away. I'll go call the station and we'll have a guard here within the hour, and we'll stay close until that officer arrives." The male officer told him.

"Thank you, I feel much better about this situation now." Dr Esmer responded.

"Is everything alright with my son?" Mrs. Castern yells towards Dr Esmer and the police.

"Yes, Mrs. Castern. Everything is fine as I told you. Please go home and relax. We will take very good care of your son, and we will call you as soon as there is something to tell you." Dr Esmer told her.

Mr. and Mrs. Castern, took each other by the hand and walked down the hall, leaving the hospital. Sad, forlorn faces covered the worry and stress that they were feeling, without any control to change the situation.

A few hours later, the nurse attending to her rounds went into Kevin's room to check his vitals. She was very quiet entering his room, and seeing he was still asleep. Sleep was the most important thing for him right now, and she tried not to disturb him, but she needed those vitals. As she looked at the machines and saw that all was ok there. She then needed his blood pressure. As she wrapped the cuff around his arm, he stirred, and as she pumped air into the sleeve and he felt the tightening on his arm, and he woke. His vision was clearer, his mind was still a little fuzzy as he gazed about the room, wondering where he was and paying close attention to his surroundings to determine what was going on. He became paranoid when the nurse was touching him.

"What are you doing? What are you doing?" He asked shrieking at her and trying to pull away from her. She struggled with him a little, trying to accomplish her goal, but as he fought back, even as weak as he was, it was more than she wanted to deal with.

"I'm just checking your vitals. You're ok. I am not trying to hurt you." She said calmly.

"Where am I?" Kevin screamed in a frightened tone.

"You're in the hospital. How are you feeling?" She asked calmly.

The look of fear flooded his face, followed by agitation, and she noticed that immediately. As he became more and more unsettled, the nurse quickly went to the door, opened it, and called for Dr Esmer, who came running into the room.

"You're awake!" Dr Esmer said as he went over to the patient and again flashed a light in his eyes and checking for lucidity. "How are you feeling?" He asked.

"Who are you?" Kevin asked, snapping at him, and sweating with fear that was written all over his face.

"I am Dr Esmer. You are in Trinity General Hospital. How are you feeling?" He asked him again.

"How did I get here?" His voice snapped as he asked and then tried to get out of bed.

"Hold on. Just calm down." Dr Esmer said to him and patted his arm to calm him. "Let's talk for a bit. As I asked before, how are you feeling? Are you in any pain? Are you experiencing any nausea?"

"You don't understand. People are after me. They're going to find me and kill me." He shrieked as he tried to get out of bed, throwing the covers off himself and trying to sit up.

"Wait. Just calm down and we'll talk. There are police outside your door right now. You are safe. You're very safe here. No one is after you here. Calm down, and we'll talk about this." Dr Esmer said, trying to console him. It would be futile to try and get any information out of him when he was so scared and agitated.

Kevin was shaking and started to calm down. His eyes were flashing back and forth, checking out the room, eyeing everything that moved.

"Let's just talk." Dr Esmer said. "You are just fine here. Don't worry. Let's talk for a few minutes."

"What about?" Kevin asked.

"Mr. Castern, what happened to you? What do you remember?" The Doctor asked him.

"Why are you calling me that?" Kevin snapped at him.

"What? Why am I calling you what? Mr. Castern?"

"That's not my name." He said, snapping his voice.

"It's not? What is your name?" The doctor asked him.

"Kyle. What is going on?" He said, screaming. His confusion and delusion were making him even more paranoid. His face was turning red, sweat was dripping from his head and running down his face as he tried wiping it away, as it permeated into his eyes, and the sting of sweat caused him to shake his head and violently wipe the moisture away.

"Kyle, you were found at the park, unconscious, and the police and the ambulance picked you up and brought you here. You have a huge bump on your head. You've been here for three days. What do you remember? Did you fall? Were you attacked?" Dr Esmer asked him.

"I've been here for three days?" He screamed, and his face went red and then pale, and his eyes widened with shock. Suddenly, he jumped, and the look on his face showed he was remembering something. "They're after me. They're trying to kill me. Wait a minute. Wait a minute." He said as he grabbed the blankets and tore them off his chest and grabbed at his chest. "She shot me. She shot me many times." He screamed as he continued to hold his chest and check for gunshot wounds. "I was running, and she shot me, and I fell, and then she caught up to me and looked me right in the face and started shooting me. Am I dead? Where are the bullet holes?" He asked. His voice was shrieked and panicked, as he was continued to check himself for gun shots and wounds.

Dr Esmer looked at the nurse, and she looked at Dr Esmer, and they both raised their eyebrows, wondering what was going on in the mind of this patient. Was he mentally unstable? Was he a drug addict feeling the effects of withdrawal? What was going on in his mind, and how would they safely and adequately treat him?

"You weren't shot." Dr Esmer said. "There are no gunshot wounds on your body. The shooter missed." He told him quite loudly, trying to get his attention and at the same time calm him down.

"She did not miss!" He screamed emphatically. "She stood over me and pointed the gun right at me and fired many times. I remember feeling the bullets shatter through my body." He said hysterically. When are these people going to understand what he is saying and take him seriously? He wondered. He was getting quite aggravated with

trying to convince them that he knew what he was talking about. He was telling the truth, and they looked at him like he was crazy. He knew he wasn't, but how was he going to convince them?

"I'm going to bring in the police. Would you like to talk to them?" Dr Esmer asked him.

"Absolutely! These people are still after me, and if they haven't killed me, they want to and they will try again." He said hysterically.

Dr Esmer went out of the room. "Officer, this patient wants to give you a report. He is claiming that he was shot many times, but there are no gunshot wounds anywhere on his body. He is in a panic, and he is frightened and thinks that people are still after him. I can attribute some of his delusions to his traumatic brain injury, the head wound proves that. Traumatic Brain injuries such as his are a contributory factor in delusions, amnesia, forgetfulness, and that brings about feelings of paranoia, anxiety, and stress. He is probably the worst that I have ever seen. So good luck with him, maybe you can get some real answers out of him."

"Ok. I will take his statement." He said as he went into the room following Dr Esmer.

"Mr. Castern, this is Officer Ben Standford." Dr Esmer said, introducing him.

"Why do you keep calling me Mr. Castern? That is not my name." He said bluntly, sighing and rolling his eyes.

"What is your name, then?" Officer Stanford asked him, wondering if this patient was going to give him a fake name. It wouldn't be the first time that someone wanted to hide their identity by producing a fraudulent name. He had the small pad of paper that he kept in his breast pocket, and his pen, and he began taking notes.

"My name is Kyle. Kyle Weatherly." He snapped.

"Kyle, we found a wallet on you, with a picture that looks like you, and the name on the driver's license says Kevin Castern. Is this your wallet?" The officer asked as he showed it to him.

"I don't remember that being mine." He said as he fumbled through it and looked at the picture. "Yeah, the man looks like me, but I am telling you that my name is Kyle Weatherly." He said as he tossed the wallet back towards the officer. His affect resembled someone who was honestly looking and sounding truthful. There was no sudden hard swallowing, and no color change to his face. No hesitation, no looking away when he talked. He looked straight into Officer Ben's face without blinking. It certainly seemed that he was being truthful.

"Do you have a brother who looks like you?" The officer asked.

"No. I have no family." He answered.

"No family?" Dr Esmer asked in a shocked voice as he stared at him. "Your parents were here waiting for you to wake up so that they could see you. They are very worried about you." He told him, still wearing the look of shock over his face. Officer Ben's affect never changed. He was a professional in his field, and he had been a police officer for over ten years. He knew how people reacted to his investigative questions, and his skills were honed by watching the reactions of the people that he was investigating. This patient here gave the impression that he was either telling the truth or he was an expert at malingering.

"Maybe they're the people that are after me! Did you see them? What did they look like? How did they know that I was here?" Kevin asked and suddenly looked terrified. "You can't let them in here. You

can't tell anyone that I am here. You don't understand, they want to kill me." He said fearfully.

"These two people are older, a man and a woman, and they claimed to be your parents. I seriously doubt that these two people that I spoke to are the same people that you are talking about." Dr Esmer said to him. Nothing was making sense.

"That's impossible! I've never known my parents. My birth parents dumped me off at an orphanage when I was a baby. I never knew them. I went from foster family to foster family until I aged out of the system, and then I was on my own. I was told that I was living with my uncle when I was very young, but I have no memory of that, and he dumped me off, too. I'm telling you, I have no family." He said emphatically.

Dr Esmer breathed deeply and rubbed his head as though a migraine had suddenly struck him. "There is a lot of confusion here. We've got to get this straightened out." He stared at Kevin or Kyle as he wasn't sure what the patient's name was, and then looked at the officer. He looked at Kyle again, checking his affect to see if he could tell if he was lying. Could he be lying, and why would he be? They have his wallet, but he sounds so convincing. Could he maybe just be confused?

"Ok, Kyle. What do you remember? What happened to you?" The officer asked.

Kyle took a deep breath due to frustration and the possibility that these people would never believe him. He lay back down in his bed. "It's a long story, a very long story." He sighed. Kyle took a deep breath. He was feeling like he was in court on the stand, fighting for his life, trying to get people to believe him. With everyone in the room gawking at him, waiting to see what he would do next. He was uncomfortable, his head was hurting, and he wasn't sure if anyone would believe him.

"We have nothing but time." The officer said as he pulled up a chair and sat down. Something told him this would take a while. As confused as the situation was, how much crazier inconsistency were they going to hear?

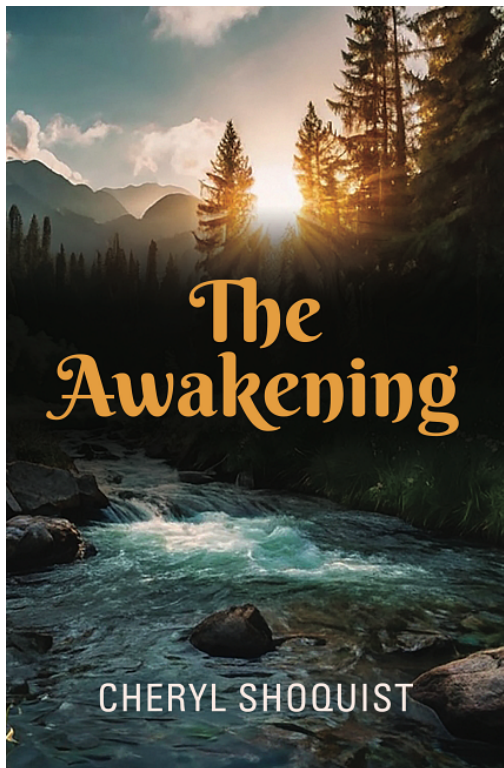
"The last thing I remember is that I went out to my cabin. I bought this cabin a few weeks ago as a recreational place, you know, to go camping, fishing, you know. I had just gotten the keys for it a few days before, and I was going out there to get it ready for the weekend. I invited a few of my buddies out there for a weekend fishing trip. When I drove up, I saw all these people there. I recognized Kyreah, but no one else." He told them.

"Who is Kyreah?" Officer Ben asked.

"She was the girl I was dating for a couple of weeks. You know, I am confused. I don't know how she knew where the cabin was. I hadn't taken her there, and you know, I never talked to her about the cabin, so I don't know how she knew about it." He looked puzzled.

"Just tell me what you remember, and we can straighten out the details later, if there's confusion." Officer Ben told him.

"Ok, well, this is what I remember." He started to tell the officer his story. Dr Esmer had also pulled a chair and was listening as the story played out.



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