

I AM

Love Remembering Itself

—

Mark R. Guiler

Copyright © 2026 by Mark R. Guiler

All rights reserved

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the author or publisher. There is one exception. Brief passages may be quoted in articles or reviews.

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

CIP data on file with the National Library and Archives

ISBN 978-1-55483-635-2 (case bound)

ISBN 978-1-55483-627-7 (trade paperback)

ISBN 978-1-55483-628-4 (e-book)

Disclaimer

The reflections, meditations and prompts in this publication are offered for personal inspiration and spiritual exploration. They are not intended as medical, psychological, financial, or professional advice, nor as a substitute for qualified care. Each reader is responsible for their own choices and well-being. Neither the author, A & M Expressions, the publisher, nor its publishing and design partners assume any liability for how this material is applied or interpreted.

Invocation

Consciousness knows NO bounds.

Epigraph

Beloved, nothing is wasted.

*Every silence, every wound, every wonder
is gathered into the great tapestry of becoming.*

*Breathe, and remember; you are more than the story you
have lived.*

*You are the song carried through silence,
the love that has never left you—
woven through lifetimes,
waiting to be recognized again.*

Dedication

*To every soul who has ever questioned their worth,
to every spark who has longed to belong,
to every heart who has felt unseen—
this is for you.*

*May these words remind you: you are love remembered,
a current of presence,
a light that has never gone out.*

One

Prelude to Becoming

I was born in September 1966, the youngest of three boys in a family that rarely spoke of feelings but carried them heavily. Ours was a household shaped by faith, discipline, and silence—where love was present but often hidden beneath duty and expectation. I grew up in small-town Simcoe, Ontario, Canada, where life seemed predictable: school, church, family dinners, and the unspoken belief that our paths had already been mapped out for us.

But beneath the surface of ordinary days, questions stirred in me. Even as a child, I sensed there was more—something just beyond what I could see, touch, or explain. I did not have the words for it then, only a quiet pull, as though something unseen was gently drawing my attention toward a wider horizon, a deeper way of knowing I could not yet name.

This is the story of that journey: not just where I have been, but what I have discovered about fear and faith, love and loss, life and death, and the truth of who we really are. It is a story for my nieces who carry their own journeys within them, as we all do. And it is a story for anyone who has ever wondered if there is more to life than what meets the eye.

Two

The Early Echoes

As the third child, my arrival wasn't dramatic or unusual, yet from the very beginning I seemed wired a little differently. While my older two brothers moved with boldness and energy, I often lingered at the edges, quietly watching, quietly wondering.

Some of my earliest memories were not just of toys or play, but of sound—music chords from our church organist, reverberating through wooden pews, hymns sung by voices rising like waves, and the curious hush that followed. I couldn't have named it then, but even as a boy, I sensed something lived in that silence. Something larger, watching me back.

Faith, for my family, was not an accessory—it was the air we breathed. Sunday mornings were not optional; they were the rhythm that ordered our week. The Salvation Army uniforms, the brass bands, the familiar hymns—these were my landscape, as ordinary as breakfast cereal, and yet, for me, they carried a mysterious weight.

I remember sitting beside my mother in worship, my feet dangling from the pew, tracing patterns in the songbook with my finger while she sang. When the music swelled, I felt my chest swell too, as though my little body was too small to contain what moved inside me.

Looking back now, I recognize those moments as early stirrings of something I would come to trust more fully later. Not always in grand visions or dramatic revelations, but in the

faint vibration of a note played on the organ or piano, or in the pause after the last sound faded. In those quiet spaces, I felt a simple assurance: you belong.

Three

Threads of Belonging and Becoming

Faith and music were not separate things for me as a child — they were braided together, inseparable. The church was more than a building; it was a rhythm of life. Sunday mornings were as certain as the sunrise. The songs carried weight and warmth, voices rising in imperfect harmony, yet somehow it always felt complete.

My earliest sense of belonging did not come from a crowd of children, but from the organ bench — as early as seven — watching the world through the rise and fall of the music. I didn't have words for it then, but music was prayer, and prayer was music. When I played, I felt something bigger moving through my hands — something far greater than my own ability.

Yet even as that sanctuary was forming within me, the undercurrent of family life shaped me in other ways. My mom, with her steady kindness and practical faith, was the grounding presence of our home. My dad carried his own heaviness, marked by the weight of expectations, disappointments, and unspoken struggles. Between them, I grew — sensitive, observant, and often feeling more deeply than I knew how to express.

Ours was not a family that spoke easily of emotions. Love was more often implied than declared, duty shown more than affection shared. I learned to read the room — the tones of voices, the silences that lingered, the subtle shifts of mood. Perhaps that is why music and faith became my first lan-

guages; they allowed me to give expression to what was otherwise unsaid.

There was safety in the church pews, yes, but also a longing — a quiet wondering if there was a place in the world where I could truly be known, not just useful, not just dutiful, but understood. That longing would accompany me into adolescence and beyond, always quietly humming beneath the surface.

Four

Tightrope of Kinship

Family life was, for me, both anchor and undertow. There was love — real love — but often tangled in the expectations of tradition, faith, and appearances. My parents carried their own stories, their own scars, and those showed up in the way they parented. They provided structure, devotion to The Salvation Army, and a clear sense of right and wrong.

But beneath that, I often felt like I was walking a tightrope: careful to balance obedience with individuality, duty with desire. My siblings and I were knit into the same fabric, yet each of us pulled against the weave in our own way. What kept me centred in those years was not so much doctrine but the steady rhythm of music — my true home within the family home.

I discovered that when I sat with my accordion at home or at the organ or piano at either the conservatory or the church, it was the one space no one could argue with me, correct me, or demand I be other than I was. It was accepted, even admired. Music became the unspoken thread that held me close to family, even when emotions or identity created distance. In the notes, I belonged.

Bookmark Blessing – Between Kinship and Becoming

In the spaces between belonging and breaking free, there is a thread that does not fray. It is the thread of soul, woven by Infinite Source, reminding me that family—both given and chosen—is both a gift and a crucible. I honour what shaped me, I release what confined me, and I carry forward the essence of love that remains. Here, I pause. Here, I breathe. Here, I remember I am never untethered, never alone, always held by the greater kinship of Spirit.