

DEATH AND I

by Luisa Vazquez

I had my NDE on April 30, 1992. A marriage in which I was not heard, or respected, but was beaten to a degree where my college classmates asked about the marks on my body, led me to take an overdose of painkillers. At the hospital, I vaguely remember a nurse yelling, "The lungs have collapsed, Dr. Cramer!" And then I went blank. My next awareness was being on my back, several feet below my body, shocked. Above me I could see my physical hands struggling to take the tube out of my mouth while the nurses tried to restrain my wrists. Where I was, I seemed to be transparent, as though I was the outline of myself. I tried to move, and couldn't! Somehow, I had lost that right. I don't know why I use that word "right," but it feels appropriate. I went blank again. Awareness returned and my physical body was further above me, though it was darker around where I was. Then blank again. When awareness returned I could no longer see my body, just a dim light above. Then I entered a place of total darkness, where I had no sensations for what seemed like a very long time.

The next thing I noticed was that I was vertical, climbing a stone wall, my heart beating rapidly, but I was slipping. Where I was, the light was quite dim, and the rocks were a kind of dark slimy green/yellow, different from any colors I've ever seen. The stones I was climbing felt as though they were arranged like a brick wall, but without the clean edges of brick, and they were difficult to hold onto. Oddly, one of the first things I did was glance for my watch, which wasn't there. But I noticed that I could see my arm and fingernails! I also noticed that I didn't have any shoes. A strong gravity-like pull drew me down the wall. To keep from falling, I grasped the stones, which slid under my fingers. I don't recall feeling any pain in my hands, however. As I was drawn deeper, I felt pressure, similar to what one experiences when scuba diving. The downward pull didn't come steadily. Rather it came in stages. I would climb a bit, then be drawn down quite a way, though I have no idea how far. There would be a pause. I'd climb. Then I'd be drawn down again, boom. Then stop. As I got deeper, there were fewer pauses between the drops. And as I approached the bottom, it was just boom, boom, boom, one drop after another, the pressure increasing all the time. I hit the bottom and it was dark.

Then in this low light, I was aware of a greenish, grayish being, in front of me and below me. I would not say that he was wearing clothes, as we know them. Yet, he and all the other beings I encountered here I would call "dressed," as though out of one piece of clothing. The being in front of me moved his arms roughly, as a man might, gesturing toward the left. Looking in that direction I saw another being, whose outline appeared to be my father's. My father had died seven years earlier. We had been very close. Next to him stood another being, who appeared taller, and whom I didn't recognize. Both beings were different from the others in this "dimension," since their skin was whitish in color, and it looked as though they might have stood in a kind of spot light.

I was tremendously puzzled about being there, and I had no idea what to do next! I think that it was because of my puzzlement that the greenish being gestured towards my father. From him I could feel a disappointment for what I had done. But he immediately communicated to me "Are you a quitter?" This was done non-verbally, and very rapidly. It seemed several times faster than the speed of sound.

Perhaps guided by my father's words I looked up, and it was almost as if he was saying, "Because if you're a quitter, this is what will happen." Then I saw them lowering my coffin into a grave, which they filled with dirt! And that terrified me! I didn't want that at all! That's when I realized I had a choice. I could stay, or I could return. Then my father communicated, "You're not a quitter!" Those words gave me the courage and strength to go back. Then several things appeared to happen simultaneously. My father communicating to me that I was running out of time. My thinking, "How do I go back?" My father answering instantaneously that I should follow what was familiar to me from my own world. I thought, "How?" "Listen, hear, look!" he answered. Somehow, immediately as he said that, I was hearing, looking and listening.

Now, what I was standing on was almost like a small table top. I know it was small because there was barely enough room for my feet. Then some hands grabbed one of my ankles. I looked out, and saw more clearly an amphitheater-like-realm, as large as an indoor stadium, filled with greenish/grayish beings. They were all talking at once, trying to convince me to stay. "You wanted this!" "Come down!" "This is a new dimension, a new world. Join us!" They were pulling me down, and I started kicking. I got the one foot free. Then someone grabbed the other ankle, and I tried to pull free of that. Then I felt the palm of a hand pushing me up! Somehow, I don't know how, I could feel through the palm that it was my father. The push from the hand was quite powerful, because after that I was on the wall climbing.

Going back was very difficult. I was fighting against pressure and time. Earlier I had likened that pressure to being far underwater. At the start of this upward climb though I felt I was battling a 250,000/hr wind. Still, I was listening, and it didn't take me long to locate my source, my door to the way out. Far off, I heard human voices, even though they were weak. That's what I followed, a piece of my world that I could relate to. As I climbed, the pressure decreased and my surroundings grew lighter. While I was climbing it seemed that my mind could operate 1000 times more quickly than it does here.

Part way up, I can't say how far, a crystal-clear light, that was not very large, appeared to my right. In appearance, it resembled a water fountain with little points of light inside it, like a sparkler. This light wasn't white, or gold, just clear. And while I would say it was bright, it was easy to look at. It moved around me in awesome patterns, even occasionally traveling through the wall. It radiated a great feeling of companionship and trust. Later, I asked it if it had come to light my path, and it seemed to respond joyfully.

Another transition took place, and I found myself, again, horizontal below my body. I noticed that the colors I was now seeing were the ones I associate with our life here. Somehow, my change in position had cut me off from the colors of wherever I had been. Then I re-entered my body. There was the light of the emergency room, and the faces of friends around me. But what totally absorbed my attention, even as people attempted to talk to me, was that I still saw the light! Somehow it followed me into this world, and I couldn't believe it! It was right around where my waist is, and so bright that I couldn't see my legs! Then it gradually moved away from me, growing in size until it filled the room. "You're safe," it communicated. Then it disappeared!

Even when I was in that other realm, I didn't believe that place was my ultimate destination. Today I know that when I die, if I see that light again, I will surely follow it. Has my life changed as a result of my near death experience? I would have to say very much. I had a real fear of death before. I didn't know if there was a God. I didn't know if we just turned into dust at physical death. Now I know we do survive. I also believe that there's a Supreme Being of some kind, though what that is I think is far beyond our understanding. I have become far more sensitive to the inner life of people, and considerate. People who would have upset me before my NDE, I now can care for, even though their behavior might be construed by some to be offensive. And I reach out to help. This world needs more of that. Seattle IANDS c P.O. Box 84333 / Seattle, WA 98124