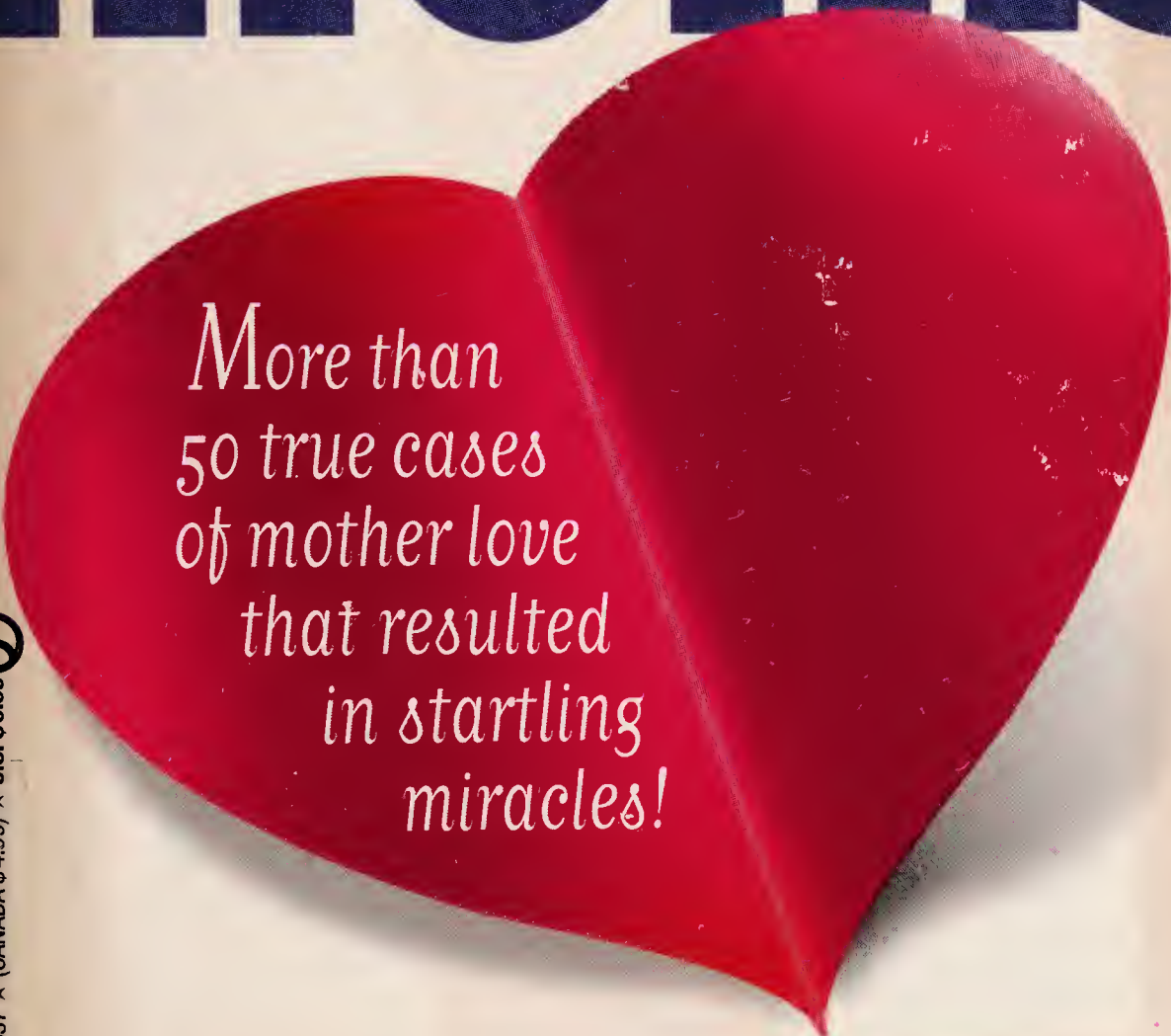


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We, the authors, dedicate this book to our own most amazing moms, Hazel Olson and Lorraine Lippold, and to our departed grandmothers, Dina Olson, Anna Jensen, Nana Lippold, and Ruth Johnson. We are forever deeply grateful for the loving, guiding, nurturing foundations they provided, which anchored our lives and set our path—and, of course, we bless them for giving us the very gift of life itself. We love you. In addition, Sherry wishes to dedicate her love and gratitude to her dearly departed son, Erik, and to her beloved daughter, Melissa, for making *her* their mom.



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Part One: The Sacred Bond Between Mother and Child

Oh, how little understood is the wondrous power entrusted to the mother's mind alone.—Sarah J. Hale

A Mother's Instinct Detects an "Undetectable" Disease

Barbara Merrell, 28, of St. Paul, Minnesota, "felt" something was wrong with her two-month-old son, Robin, in October 1991. The infant was eating well, but he just wasn't putting on any weight.

"My mother's instinct told me that something was terribly wrong, even though I couldn't put my finger on just what it was," she said. "Our three-year-old daughter, Melanie, had gone through a fussy stage with her stomach, but I knew intuitively that Robin's problem was far more serious."

Fortunately, the young mother followed her deep sense of foreboding.

"In spite of assurances from Dr. Christy, our family doctor, that Robin was healthy and normal, my intuition kept telling me that my son was not well," she said. "I continued to have an eerie feeling that Robin was desperately ill."

Barbara's husband, Lawrence, did his best to reassure her. "There can't be anything wrong with Robby," he said in quiet argument against her nagging fears. "If there were, you know that Dr. Christy would have found it. You remember when Melanie was a baby, he solved her digestive problems in no time at all."

By April 1992, Barbara was frantic with worry, and in a one-month period she took her ten-month-old son to four different doctors.

"Each of the four doctors told me that I had nothing

to worry about, that Robin was fit and healthy," she said. "I explained to the doctors that I felt that my baby was seriously ill, but they all insisted that he wasn't."

The physicians' bland professional assurances of her infant son's health did nothing to pacify her. Desperate with fear and driven by an inner conviction that there was something dreadfully wrong with little Robin, Barbara went to see a fifth doctor.

After he had examined the infant, Dr. Joseph Lipka confirmed Barbara's worst fears and gave credence to her mother's instinctive concern. He told her that Robin had a rare heart defect and that he required immediate surgery if he were to survive.

"If we do not operate on Robin at once," Dr. Lipka said solemnly, "he has little more than two weeks to live."

Robin Merrell was rushed to the hospital, and after a delicate seven-hour surgical procedure, the child was brought forth from the operating room with a brand-new lease on life.

Barbara was too thrilled with her son's recovery to bring accusations of incompetency or lack of compassion against the many doctors who had disputed her "feelings" and "beliefs."

"I don't really blame them," she said. "The condition that afflicted Robin is very difficult to diagnose."

But not too difficult for a mother's love to discover.

And not too difficult for a mother's persistence to defy the diagnoses of learned doctors and to persevere undeterred until conventional medicine agreed with her unconventional "feelings."

She Knew the Tummy Ache Was Coming from Her Daughter

When thirty-two-year-old Ginger McCarty of East Providence, Rhode Island, experienced extreme feelings of uneasiness and nausea, she somehow knew at

once that the sensations were related to her nine-year-old daughter, Sue Ann.

“Sue Ann was at school,” Ginger said. “Although she had looked well when she left that morning, I knew that she was sick. It was as if I could actually hear her saying, ‘Mommy, please come and get me. I’m terribly sick.’ And then waves of nausea would hit me.”

Ginger McCarty got dressed and drove to the elementary school where Sue Ann was a pupil. She was not surprised to learn that her daughter was not in class but had been sent to the nurse’s office.

When Ginger walked into the dispensary, she found the nurse trying to call her at home.

“Sue Ann was lying down on a cot. I could see that she was terribly pale,” Ginger said. “The nurse looked startled. ‘I’ve been trying to call you,’ she said. ‘But I got no answer.’ ”

Ginger smiled and nodded. “That’s because I was on my way here to take Sue Ann home.”

“How did you know to come and get me, Mommy?” Sue Ann wanted to know as she leaned against her mother in the front seat of the car. “I had such a tummy ache, and I wanted you there so bad. I really got scared when the nurse said you weren’t home. How did you know to come and get me when the nurse couldn’t reach you?”

“I don’t really know, sweetie,” Ginger admitted. “I just knew you needed me. That’s called a mother’s love!”

The Golden Link of Love between Mother and Child

It has been said that a mother’s love is the golden link that binds us to God by giving us an earthly example of the kind of unconditional love that we may expect in Heaven.

There truly is something special, something sacred, about the unique bond that exists between mother and

child, and in this book we shall present true case histories which will demonstrate the seemingly limitless range of the psychic connection between mothers and their children.

In ways that our science cannot yet define, loving mothers have within them the innate ability to “know” about their children beyond the range of normal perception.

There is a profound truth in the words that every child has uttered more than once: “You just can’t fool Mom! Somehow she always knows.”

“Mom, I Need You!”

It was two o’clock in the morning of July 17, 1987, when Nada Moresco, 48, opened her eyes to glimpse a shadowy form that resembled her daughter, Kathleen.

“Mom, I need your help,” the apparition said to her.

Her twenty-two-year-old daughter lived ten miles away from her, but Nada was convinced that the image was truly that of Kathleen.

She picked up the telephone and dialed Kathleen’s number. She could get only a busy signal. A call to the telephone company produced the information that the line was out of order.

Nada knew somehow that she could not wait until morning. She dressed hurriedly and drove to her daughter’s apartment.

When she arrived, she could hear the television set blaring, but no one answered her knocking.

Using her own key to the apartment, Nada opened the door and discovered Kathleen lying in a pool of blood. An overturned ladder and the broken frame of a painting nearby provided mute evidence of a decorating chore that had sadly been transformed into a serious accident.

Some hours later, after her head had been stitched up in the hospital’s emergency room, Kathleen explained what had happened: “I fell and struck my head on the end table. I could tell from the gushing blood that I had

sustained a deep cut. I was going to telephone for help when I blacked out. As I was falling into unconsciousness, I called out for you, Mom!”

When had all this occurred?

“It was just a little before three. Mom, how did you know I needed your help?”

The Sacred Bond of Love That Exists between Mother and Child

What do we call this remarkable telepathic link between mother and child?

How do we define these incredible powers of clairvoyance and precognition?

Dr. Louisa E. Rhine, who conducted the famous “ESP lab” at Duke University, researched hundreds of cases of mother-child telepathy and clairvoyance. In one example from her files, Dr. Rhine tells of a young mother in Washington state who experienced a horrible dream in which she saw the large ornamental chandelier that hung above her baby’s crib crash down into the child’s bed and crush the infant to death. In the dream she noticed that the hands of the clock on the baby’s dresser were at 4:35.

Although she felt somewhat foolish for doing so, she slid out of bed, went into the nursery, and returned with the baby. Placing the sleeping child gently between her husband and herself, the woman fell at once into a deep sleep.

A few hours later, the young couple were awakened by a loud crashing noise. The sound came from the nursery, and they found that the chandelier had fallen into the baby’s crib. The clock on the baby’s dresser recorded the time as 4:35.

Psychiatrist Dr. Berthold Schwarz has documented more than a thousand cases of mother-child paranormal occurrences.

He describes an instance in which his wife, Ardis, was having difficulty finding a baby-sitter. Suddenly

she remembered a woman who had been recommended to her many months before, a woman named Mrs. Axwell. At that very instant of recollection, their daughter shouted, "Mrs. Axwell, Mrs. Axwell. Get Mrs. Axwell." The child had never met the sitter, and she could never even have heard her name.

There is a connection between mother and child that far transcends "woman's intuition." And it is more than "extra" sensory, because it is innate, basic to the feminine soul expression.

And it is such an integral element of the mother instinct that it is even a part of that marvelous stuff of which dreams are made.

Her Dream of a Fire Saved Her Family's Life

In July 1991 Mrs. Gina Delatoso, 32, took a temporary factory job in a nearby city in order to help the family budget squeeze through the recession. During the summer she commuted, but in the winter when it was too cold and the roads were icy she stayed in an inexpensive motel near the plant rather than driving home.

At 3:00 A.M. on a January morning, Gina experienced a dreadful dream in which she saw herself surrounded by flames. The nightmare was so vivid that she awakened with the odor of burning cloth filling her nostrils.

Terrified by the thought that her motel room might be on fire, she got out of bed and checked the small room thoroughly. Although she found no fire, the feeling of danger persisted.

"All at once I knew that the fire must be in the house in which my husband, Jake, and our two sons, Frankie and Charlie, lay sleeping," Gina Delatoso said.

She called their home, but no one answered. She continued to call, again and again.

At last she heard the click of the receiver being lifted—and nearly simultaneously with his "Hello" she heard her older son coughing.

“Are you all right, Frankie?” she shouted into the receiver.

“Mom! Mom! The house is full of smoke!”

Gina told her seven-year-old son not to panic. “Go wake up Daddy and Charlie. Find out where the smoke is coming from. Have Daddy put out the fire and call me back!”

After an excruciatingly long thirty minutes, Jake called her. The boys had put their mittens on an old electric heater when they came in from playing in the snow. Sometime during the night, the frayed electric cord had popped a spark onto a pile of newspapers and magazines. The papers had issued a great deal of smoke, and by the time they had located the fire, the flames were just beginning to nibble at nearby curtains.

Gina went back to bed, relieved that no real damage had been done to their ranch-style home.

“I know, however, that if I had not had that awful dream and awakened to smell that smoke in my mind—and if I had not called the house—my home would have burned to the ground along with my three loved ones,” Gina said.

If love is the greatest power in the universe, then a mother’s love is a refined aspect of that marvelous cosmic energy that emanates directly from the godhead.

As the British poet Felicia Hemans has observed, “In all this cold and hollow world, there is no fount of deep, strong, deathless love, save that within a mother’s heart.”

Establishing the Sacred Bond of Love before the Child Has Left the Womb

Psychologists have only begun to explore the many subtle, unconscious links which exist between the expectant mother and the child she nurtures within her womb.

Mildred Bryce was in her second month of pregnancy when her doctor advised her that she must have an abortion. In his opinion, it would be fatal for her to bear the child.

At her husband's urging, Mildred made the necessary arrangements to be legally aborted.

"The night before the operation I had a beautiful dream in which an angel appeared before me holding a handsome baby boy in his arms," Mrs. Bryce said. "On the strength of that wonderful dream, I refused the abortion."

Mildred Bryce carried the baby to full term. Seven months later, she gave birth to the strong, well-developed baby boy that she had seen so vividly in her dream.

A growing number of medical researchers are coming to accept a mother's claims of sensing her infant *in utero* as far more than a romantic hypothesis. Dr. Marshall Klaus believes that during the last months of pregnancy a mother naturally works to bond with her unborn child. She sings and talks aloud to the child within her womb because she knows that the infant hears and responds physically with synchronous body movements.

Dr. Klaus portrays the first hour after birth as the most critical time in human life. "For now the bond between mother and child is established in strange, mysterious, and unfathomable ways," he says. "Anyone else around literally gets caught in the magnetic fields of attraction weaving back and forth. The self has divided and reunites with the self. The hologram part starts immediately moving into and reflecting the whole."

Further describing the mystical process of mother-child bonding, Dr. Klaus says that it is as if the mother possesses a kind of magical "glue" that is designed to seal the new infant right into her.

Dr. David Cheek of Boulder, Colorado, agrees that the first moments of life are crucial to the intense rapport that occurs between mother and child. He has col-

lected hundreds of cases in which extraordinary acts of both prenatal and postdelivery communication could be recalled in adult life.

Dr. Stanley Krippner, who served as the director of the William C. Menninger Dream Laboratory at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York, found many instances of a telepathic link between expectant mothers and their unborn children.

In research conducted by Diane R. Schneider, with the cosponsorship of Dr. William Pomcranre, director of the Maimonides Hospital obstetrics department, it was determined that some women have dreams which accurately foresee the future in regard to their pregnancies and deliveries.

When Elizabeth Randolo was pregnant, she often experienced a beautiful dream in which she was walking among lovely flowers with a little girl at her side and with soothing, uplifting music playing in the background.

After her daughter, Lisa, was born, the lovely dream ceased, but Elizabeth often thought of it.

When Lisa was about five, she took the girl along to a flower show that was being held at a convention hall in a nearby city. The entire hall had been transformed into a lovely, fragrant garden, and an orchestra played soothing, uplifting music.

“Suddenly it struck me,” Elizabeth said. “This was my dream, that beautiful dream that I had had when I was pregnant with Lisa!”

The most remarkable facet of Elizabeth’s report occurred when her daughter tugged at her skirt, her eyes sparkling excitedly, and said, “We’ve been here lots and lots of times before, haven’t we, Mommy?”

A Selfless Love That Never Shrinks or Cowers

No language can express the power and beauty and heroism and majesty of a mother’s love. It shrinks not where man cowers, and grows stronger where man faints, and over the wastes of worldly

*fortune sends the radiance of its quenchless fidelity
like a star in heaven.*

—E. H. Chapin

The selfless heroism of a mother protecting her young has been noted and duly recorded for centuries.

On that terrible night in February 1992, Michelle Michon of Akron, Ohio, awakened with the heavy acrid stench of smoke invading her lungs.

“I was frightened out of my wits,” the twenty-eight-year-old mother of two admitted. “My husband was at work, and I had fallen asleep on a downstairs couch. All I could think about were Valerie and Kimberly, my daughters, asleep in their room upstairs, and how I must save them from our burning home.”

The overpowering force of mother love drew Michelle unhesitatingly toward the bright-orange flames that licked around the corner of the kitchen in the rear of the house.

Dimly she remembered the pot of grease that sat on the stove. Somehow a heating element must have been turned on by mistake, perhaps by her husband when he made coffee before going to work. Whatever the source, the grease had caught fire and ignited the cupboards above the stove.

And now the flames moved fiercely, inexorably toward the stairway that led to the upstairs bedrooms . . . to the sleeping forms of five-year-old Valerie and two-year-old Kimberly.

Barefooted and trembling, Michelle ran up the flight of stairs, which was totally obscured in black, suffocating smoke. She gagged as a thick plume of heavy smoke filled her lungs.

“My own self-protective, survival reflexes made me gasp for air and want to turn back,” she said. “I wanted to run for the door and swallow several big breaths of clean air before I returned to rescue my daughters.

“But some stronger force within me told me that I must continue up the stairs to Valerie and Kimberly. I knew that I must get them out fast or they would die!”

Michelle pulled her sweater over her face and con-

tinued up the stairs. A window exploded as she passed it in the hallway and showered her with glass.

“All I could think about were my kids,” Michelle said. “I could hear them crying, and the sounds of those tears told me that they were still all right. I pushed open the door to their room and swept them up in my arms.

“And then it was like some stronger force within me just took over. I don’t really remember how I carried them down the smoke-filled stairs and got them outside. But I did!”

By the time Michelle made her way out of the burning house, she was met by several neighbors and by members of a fire rescue squad who had been summoned by the car phone of an alert passing motorist.

“It was amazing the way she put her life on the line to save her kids,” one of the firemen stated. “It was obvious that she didn’t care what happened to herself. She was only concerned about saving her daughters. That’s a real mother’s love for you.”

When Eve was brought to Adam, he . . . gave her the most sanctified, the most glorious of appellations. He called her Eva, the Mother of All. . . . In this consists the glory and the most precious ornament of woman.

—Martin Luther

A Mother’s Miraculous Rescue of Her Dying Daughter

God could not be everywhere, and therefore he made mothers.

—Old Jewish saying

Some years ago a successful businesswoman in Washington, D.C., told us an extraordinary story of how she had managed to locate her missing daughter and bring her to the hospital just in time to save her from death due to a drug overdose.

“Janet had been going through a rebellious period in which she had been experimenting with recreational drugs,” Ava Steinberg said. “We had had one violent

quarrel after another over her irresponsible lifestyle, and one night Janet left the house and disappeared.”

Three months went by, and the frantic mother had no idea where her daughter had vanished.

“I had not heard one word from her,” Ava said. “The police had been unable to find a single clue to her whereabouts. I didn’t even know if she was alive or dead. It was a terrible, heartbreaking situation for a mother to be in.”

Ava telephoned her ex-husband on the West Coast, but he had had no word from their eighteen-year-old daughter.

“I can’t tell you how miserable I felt,” Ava said. “If only I had known *where* Janet was. I would have telephoned her and begged her to come home so that we could work things out.”

Ava is legally blind. Only by holding papers at a certain angle and moving them close to her thick-lensed eyeglasses can she read the numerous documents with which she must deal in her prosperous manufacturing business.

One day as Ava sat at her office thinking that things could not get much worse, she accidentally knocked her glasses off her desk—and subsequently stepped on them and smashed them as she was searching for them. With a sinking feeling inside, she realized that her one remaining pair of glasses was in her dressing room at home.

“It was at that moment that the telephone rang,” Ava said. “My secretary said that it was someone who insisted on speaking only to me. I answered and heard only one word—‘Momma’—and the line went dead. I knew that it was my Janet and that she was very ill and needed me at once!”

And then the miracle of a mother’s love occurred: Ava could see!

“I picked up a city map from my bookcase,” she said. “I could read even the smallest print. And then I knew exactly where Janet was. My eyes focused on one particular address. In my mind I could see an

apartment, and I could clearly see my daughter lying unconscious beside the telephone.”

Amazingly, Ava, who normally had great difficulty driving, even with her special glasses, got into her automobile and drove unerringly through the city of Washington to the exact address that she had envisioned.

Once she determined that her daughter did, indeed, reside in an apartment at that address, she persuaded the superintendent to allow her access and to call an ambulance.

“I held Janet’s head in my lap until the ambulance arrived,” Ava said. “She was completely unconscious and had no awareness of my presence. Thank God, I was in time.”

It was later apparent to investigators that Janet had accidentally taken a fatal dose of drugs, realized her error, then desperately reached out for her mother’s unconditional love by attempting a telephone call for help before she lapsed into unconsciousness.

But what will never be subject to elucidation is how Ava was able immediately to know the whereabouts of the daughter from whom she had received no communication for many months—and how, though normally legally blind, she was able to drive through heavy traffic directly to an address that was previously unknown to her.

The only explanation possible to Ava and to Janet, who now works in her mother’s business, is that sometimes a mother’s love can work miracles.

*Children . . . in later years you may have friends,
fond, dear friends, but never will you have again
the inexpressible love and gentleness lavished
upon you which none but a mother bestows.*

—Thomas Babington Macaulay

Never Underestimate the Power of a Mother's Prayer

A mother's first ministration for her infant is to enter, as it were, the valley of the shadow of death and win its life at the peril of her own! How different must an affection thus founded be from all others.

—Lydia H. Sigourney

When Tanya Heiss of Bismarck, North Dakota, was seven years old, she died of pneumonia—and then returned to life because of her mother's prayers.

"My father, Darrell Jensen, had died only three years before," Tanya said. "It was early in May of 1944, and two doctors had operated on me right there in our ranch home in Montana. They took out a rib and a part of a lung to remove the infection. They had slipped a door off its hinges to serve as an operating table. The only thing I was conscious of was my mother praying over and over that I not be taken from her as my father had been."

Tanya remembered hearing one of the doctors say, "It's no use, Mrs. Jensen. Tanya is gone."

"At that same instant," Tanya said, "I found myself walking across a footbridge into a beautiful place that I thought for certain must be Heaven. At the end of the footbridge, I saw my dad standing with an angel. 'Go back, Tanya,' he said in a gentle voice. 'Your mother needs you.'"

Tanya recalled that she protested and said that she wanted to stay there with him in that beautiful place.

"Childlike, I turned to the angel and asked if I could see Jesus. The angel smiled and said, 'Not this time. You have a lot to do first, and your mother is waiting. Her prayers have granted you a longer life on Earth. It is up to you to make your time productive.'

"My father urged me to listen to the angel. 'I left your mother too soon. It was before my time. I wanted to stay longer. You go back now for both of us. You can come back later. We will all be together again later on.'"

Tanya said that she just seemed to walk back to the room in the ranch home where the doctors stood over her mother.

“Mom was holding my physical body in her arms and crying. When I moved and gave a little sigh, she sobbed over and over again: ‘Thank you, God! Thank you, thank you!’

“My mother and I were exceptionally close all of her life,” Tanya concluded. “She died in 1988, and I know Dad was right that we will all be together one day.”

From beyond the Grave—A Mother’s Wonderful Good-bye Kiss

The great American author Washington Irving once observed: “A father may turn his back on his child; brothers and sisters may become inveterate enemies; husbands may desert their wives and wives their husbands. But a mother’s love endures through all; in good repute, in bad repute, in the face of the world’s condemnation, a mother still loves on.”

And we know that a mother’s love can live on—even beyond the grave.

John Carlson had left the bedside of his mother, who was dying of cancer. The ordeal had been a long and painful one for his poor mother, as well as an emotionally exhausting one for him. John’s father had passed away four years before, and his mother had been in ill health since her husband’s death.

“Please go home and get some rest, Johnny,” his mother had told him. “You must not stay here another night worrying over me. Go home and see to Sarah and the children.”

John said that he would go home and look in on his wife and kids, but that he would come back to the hospital in a few hours to be at her side.

“I saw that the kids were already tucked in bed,” John said, “so I sat with Sarah and told her that I was

certain that Mom was soon to pass. I really didn't want to leave her alone."

Sarah urged him to get a little rest before he returned to his vigil at the hospital.

"I've got this sales presentation to finish before I go to bed," she said. "So I'll be up if the phone rings."

John checked his watch and decided that he would nap for a bit before he returned to his mother's bedside.

"I couldn't have slept more than thirty minutes when I felt what I knew to be the touch of my mother's lips on my cheek," John said. "It was a kiss of such sweetness and love that it could only have come from my mother.

"I opened my eyes and sat up. I had left a small lamp on in the room, and there, in the dim light, I could distinguish a kind of mist that had assumed human shape. Although I could not make out any distinct features, I knew that it was Mom. I felt the strongest emanations of pure love flowing to me from that vaporous form. Then it floated out of sight through the ceiling."

When John called the hospital a few moments later, he was not surprised to learn that his mother had just died. The night nurse said that she had been about to call him.

"She spoke a few words to console me," John said. "But I had just received the greatest sort of consolation from my mother, who had come to show me that there is life beyond physical death. And no one will ever be able to convince me that it was not my mother who gave me that wonderful good-bye kiss!"

Part Two: Somehow Mom Always Knows

A Mother's Terrible "Knowing" of an Approaching Accident

*A mother is she who can take the place of all others
but whose place no one else can take.*

—Cardinal Mermillod

The moment that her son, Roy, said that he was going to go fishing, Judith Galkowski felt an awful shudder that transformed her entire body into an icy shell. She leaned heavily against the kitchen counter, a heartbeat away from fainting.

"W-what did you say?" she asked, as if she might magically restructure his words if she demanded an instant replay.

"Mom, I simply said that if the weather is nice tomorrow, I'm going to go fishing," Roy repeated, laughing at his mother's seeming overreaction to the most mundane of activities. "It's Saturday tomorrow. You know, the weekend? A break from studies and baseball practice. Time to relax."

Once again the very words made the blood drain from her face and her knees turn wobbly. As she allowed her trembling body to ease into a chair at the kitchen table, Judith wondered what was wrong with her. Roy was a strapping eighteen-year-old, a senior in high school, a good student and a competent athlete. He had been going fishing by himself ever since he was a small boy. There were few lakes and streams near their home in Bemidji, Minnesota, where he had not cast his line at one time or another.

"But must you go tomorrow?" Judith wanted to know.

Roy frowned and paused in the midst of spreading a

thick scoop of peanut butter on the sandwich he was making at the kitchen counter. "Is there something special about tomorrow? It's April 21, 1991. Someone's birthday or anniversary or holy day that I've forgotten?"

Judith shrugged, feeling lost, frightened, strangely disoriented. "No, not really. I just wondered if you had to go tomorrow, that's all."

Roy tossed down the knife a bit harder than he intended. Judith could see that he was suddenly angry.

"I get it," he said, his lips becoming a hard, tight line. "Dad has some plans for me. That's it, isn't it? He's thought up some more meaningless busywork to keep me from enjoying the weekend. It's not enough for him that I study hard to make good grades or that I practiced hard to make the baseball team. It's never enough for him."

Judith winced at the edge in her son's voice. She was all too keenly aware that Roy and his father had not been getting along very well lately. When she had confronted her husband, Nick, with her observations of conflict between father and son, he had dismissed her concern with a somewhat irritable discourse on the natural course of events when a teenager thinks he's getting too big for his britches.

"No, it's not that," Judith hastened to correct Roy's misinterpretation of her misgivings. "It's not Dad. I . . . I just have a funny feeling about your going fishing tomorrow."

"Funny, like 'ha-ha' and amusing?" Roy asked. "Or funny like strange, weird, peculiar?"

"I just have a feeling that you shouldn't go fishing tomorrow, that's all," Judith said, putting it as simply as she could. "Call it woman's intuition. You've heard of that, haven't you?"

"Ah," Roy nodded, his face sobering into an expression of mock seriousness. "A prognostication from the seeress of Minnesota, the Jeanne Dixon of the pine trees, the Cassandra from the land of ten thousand lakes."

Judith felt herself becoming both a bit defensive and

a little red in the face. "You shouldn't make light of your mother's feelings."

"Mom, what can go wrong at the old fishing hole on what should be a lovely spring day?" Roy asked, chuckling in that annoyingly condescending manner that teenaged boys acquire at the moment when their newfound worldliness begins to seem superior to the maternal wisdom that once guided their every waking action. "You think maybe the Loch Ness monster will get me? Or Bigfoot? Or maybe a giant northern pike will jump into the boat and carry me off into the waters!"

To her growing resentment, Judith realized that her sincere feelings of unease had become a source of amusement for her son, and she was relieved that she was spared further indignities by the entrance of her daughter, Laura.

"Supper ready pretty soon?"

"Hey, Laura," Roy called out to his sister. "You know how many blondes it takes to change a light bulb?"

Laura was sixteen, two years younger than her sibling. She was nearly as tall, though, with long blond hair and an innocent angel's face that masked a quick wit and a sharp tongue.

Although Judith started to scold Roy for launching into a litany of stupid blonde jokes, she was actually grateful to be removed as the target of his teasing—and she knew that Laura was more than capable of taking care of herself.

Later that night, after the evening meal was completed, the dishes washed and put away, Judith stepped quietly into her son's room. "Roy, about your going fishing tomorrow," she began, quite aware that she was interrupting his weekend homework.

"Mom, if it makes you feel any easier, I won't go tomorrow," he said.

Judith felt several nerves begin to untense.

"If it rains," Roy added with a self-satisfied smirk.

Again the icy fear, the trembling. What was wrong with her?

"I lay awake half the night, praying for rain!" Judith Galkowski said. "Once I awakened, certain that I heard raindrops on the roof. I woke Nick, asking him to verify what I thought I had heard. He grumbled, said I was hearing things, and rolled over to fall quickly back to sleep."

Then, in what she thought was a profound answer to her prayers, Judith sat up around 6:30 A.M. to a steady splatter of raindrops against the windowpanes.

"I sat up to be sure that I wasn't dreaming again," Judith said. "Then, reassured, and certain that it was really raining, I lay back down, feeling that I would finally be able to enter a restful sleep."

But then she heard sounds in the kitchen.

When she went to investigate, she was startled to discover Roy gathering his fishing gear and getting ready to leave the house. A worried glance out the window told her that the trailer bearing their family boat was already hitched to their Oldsmobile's rear bumper.

"You . . . said that you wouldn't go fishing if it rained." Judith reminded her son of his promise in a faraway, hollow voice that only dimly sounded like her own.

Roy set his gear down and crossed the kitchen to give her a warm hug. "Mom, it's barely sprinkling. Don't worry, for Pete's sake. I'll be all right. And I swear that I'll be back no later than four."

Before she could repeat her feelings of terrible concern, he had given her a kiss on the cheek and left the kitchen. When she heard the Olds' engine turn over, she walked to the stove to begin brewing a pot of strong coffee. She knew that sleep would now be out of the question.

"It seemed hours before Laura and Nick got up for breakfast and I had some company," Judith said. "They were both surprised that I had breakfast waiting for them, since I am known to be as late a sleeper as possible—especially on rainy Saturday mornings. I was jumpy as a cat, but I tried my best not to show it.

As soon as Laura and I had done the breakfast dishes, I got at some housecleaning chores with a frenzy."

By eleven that morning the light rain had stopped, and Judith went outside to their back yard to sit on the bench beside the small pond, the ever-flowing fountain, and the beds of flowers that Nick had fashioned as a kind of peaceful spot for the family's contemplation and relaxation. Once there, she found herself beginning to tremble and, against all her inner resolve to control her emotions, to weep uncontrollably.

When Nick asked why she was crying, Judith was unable to provide him with a comprehensible reason; instead, she began to speak of the importance of the family unit and how vital it was to make certain that the children knew that they were loved.

Nick scowled, barely able to disguise his disgust. "It's Roy, isn't it? Has he been getting mouthy and disrespectful with you, too? You know, I've about had it with him. I mean, I understand when young men start feeling their oats, but it seems that he believes his mission in life is to bug the hell out of me!"

Judith tried to draw Nick out as to just what it was that had suddenly created so much tension between father and son, but Nick was on a roll.

"How can two kids be so different? Laura is a doll, an angel. Always easygoing. It's like Roy always has a chip on his shoulder. I can barely say two words to him anymore without his smart-mouthing back to me."

When Judith told him that Roy felt that Nick was the one who was always on his case, her husband seemed not to hear.

"Let's change the subject," he said coolly. "A few more months and he's out of here. He can be off to college or find his own job—and then he can find out if he is really as smart and all-knowing as he believes himself to be.

"Come on," he said, completely dismissing the topic, "let's go into town. I'll buy you lunch. Our independent son took our new Oldsmobile, but we still have our old Ford station wagon."

After a pleasant lunch, which normally would have

sent Judith's spirits soaring, Nick, in an obvious effort to elevate the downward spiral of their mood, suggested a matinee movie at the mall. They returned home about four-thirty.

"Our new Oldsmobile and our boat aren't home yet," Nick growled as they pulled into their driveway. "What time did that kid say that he would be home?"

Judith truly hoped that her husband was more concerned about the welfare of their son than the status of their property. She sincerely prayed that he would be worried about Roy when she informed him that he had promised to be home no later than four o'clock.

Nick sat quietly, his hands resting on the steering wheel of the station wagon. He looked at his wrist-watch. Twice. Then he studied the timepiece a third time, as if it were a crystal ball that was capable of revealing the answers to all troublesome questions.

"You know," he said at last. "I'm worried about Roy. Maybe we should go check on him. Where did he say he was going?"

"I told Nick that Roy hadn't said where he was going to go fishing," Judith said, "but I asked him to let me drive. Normally Nick does the *macho* me-Tarzan, me-drive bit; but without a word of protest, he got out of the car and walked around to the passenger side while I slid behind the wheel. And somehow Nick remained completely silent while I just drove, guided by . . . I don't know what. God. Mother's intuition. I don't know. But I drove, maybe, ten miles north, six miles west, another two miles north. . . .

"I turned off on a side road, one that I never before knew existed," Judith continued. "We rounded a bend, and Nick reached out to grab my arm. Ahead of us was a jeep . . . a pickup . . . people running toward the ditch. Our boat, minus its trailer, rested against some bushes. I wanted to scream when I saw our Oldsmobile on its side in the ditch. 'Dear God, please, please, please,' was all that I could say."

Judith managed to push open the car door, and she began to walk numbly, as if in a trance, toward the scene of the accident. Nick called upon some hidden

reserve of strength and ran ahead to their Oldsmobile . . . and their son.

“I was dimly aware of someone with a cellular phone in their vehicle calling for help,” Judith said. “Mostly, though, I focused on Nick reaching through the broken window of the Oldsmobile, brushing aside shattered glass, and pulling Roy free from behind the steering wheel.”

His normally ruddy complexion pale and wan, a gash on his forehead trickling blood down the side of his face, Roy blinked his eyes in total confusion and bewilderment. “Dad . . . Mom . . . how did you get here?”

Judith managed to shake herself free of her peculiar altered state of consciousness and answer her son’s puzzlement with a noncommittal “We’ll tell you later.”

The summons for professional assistance on a passerby’s cellular telephone soon produced a highway patrol car and an ambulance, the latter arriving with siren shattering what little remained of the spring day’s twilight calm. The sudden appearance of the law and the medics made the accident seem all the more real to Roy.

“Dad, Mom, I’m really sorry about the car and the boat,” he said, feeling an immediate compulsion to apologize. “I guess the dirt road was a little muddy . . . slippery . . . because of the rain. The trailer jackknifed on me. I mean, maybe I was driving just a little bit too fast. Anyway, I was looking over my shoulder at the boat trailer when I started to skid.”

It was really apparent what had happened next, but Roy seemed to need to explain how the car and trailer had turned over and the boat, suddenly free of restraining ropes, had slid over the damp soil on its own, as if seeking to reenter the comfort and security of lake water.

When the two paramedics began to examine Roy, Nick and Judith left their son to speak with the officer from the Minnesota Highway Patrol.

After the officer had recorded all the requisite insurance information, he asked the logical question. “Since

you were traveling together in separate vehicles, did you witness the accident?"

The officer's eyes widened in disbelief when Nick told him that the two of them had not been traveling together. They had, in fact, been back home in Bemidji when the accident had occurred.

"But that's fifteen . . . twenty miles from here," the trooper protested. "Neither of your vehicles has a cellular phone. How did you happen to arrive here just after your son's accident? Had you prearranged a meeting time?"

"We didn't even know where Roy was fishing today," Nick explained.

The officer studied Nick's face for several moments before he turned his attention to Judith. "I guess this must be an old familiar fishing spot for the family, then. A logical place to look for your son when he didn't come home right away, eh?"

Judith smiled and tried to look as normal as possible. "Neither of us has ever been here before, officer."

The arrival of a tow truck spared Judith and Nick from the full force of the officer's baffled scowl of confusion and skepticism. Out of the corner of her eye, Judith saw the patrolman tip back his hat and scratch his head. He put his hands on his hips, then, after a moment's consideration, shrugged his shoulders and went back to making notes for his report.

The paramedics issued their assesement that, apart from a bump, the gash on the forehead, and numerous bruises, Roy was in good shape. If Nick and Judith so desired, he could ride back to the hospital for a more complete examination, or they could take Roy to their family doctor in a day or two.

"I really feel fine," Roy said. "I'd rather ride back home with my mom and dad."

After a brief consultation with the mechanics who had brought the tow truck, Nick joined Judith and Roy in the station wagon with some additional good news. "The Olds has sustained very little actual damage, and the boat only has a few scratches. The trailer is totaled,

but that's a small enough price to pay when we consider what might have happened here this afternoon."

A few minutes later, when they were driving home, Roy could not contain his curiosity a moment longer. "Just how did you guys know where to find me?" he asked from the back seat. "When I left the house this morning, I didn't know myself where I was going to go fishing."

Nick did his best to explain to his son how his mother had somehow tapped into some source of incredible knowledge and had driven directly to the spot where Roy lay dazed in the accident.

"An answer to a mother's prayer," Judith said. "I just knew that my boy needed us. The strange thing was, I knew it last night. That was why I tried to talk you out of going fishing today."

"Mother knows best," Roy said meekly. "I should have listened to you."

Nick admitted that all he had done was sit there in silence while Judith had taken over the wheel and followed some sense of inner guidance and direction.

"God's hands were on the steering wheel over mine," Judith said.

"God's hands on the wheel, your mother leading us to the scene of the accident," Nick said. "I was just along for the ride."

There was a moment of silence before Roy spoke again. "Dad, I couldn't believe the way you jumped up on the side of the car and smashed away the broken glass."

"Oh, yeah?" Nick said softly, his hands gripping the steering wheel with renewed vigor.

"Yeah," Roy continued. "And the way that you pulled me out from behind the wheel and lifted me right out of the Olds. I couldn't believe that you were so strong! I felt like a little kid again . . . and you were lifting me up to the safety of your arms, like when you used to pick me up to comfort me when I stubbed my toe or hurt a finger. Dad, you were terrific . . . and I realize that compared to you, I'm nothing, a punk kid."

Roy began to cry, a blessed release from the tensions

of the accident and, perhaps, from the stress of what had seemed a growing estrangement from his father.

When Nick spoke, his voice was made unsteady by the tears that flowed freely down his own cheeks. "Roy, son . . . I am so proud of you and your scholastic accomplishments. You are going to be so much more than I ever was."

Roy sat quietly for a moment, regaining his composure. "Mom, Dad, I love you two so much."

Before Judith could speak, Nick had answered for both of them. "We love you, too, son."

"I knew that I had been blessed with the direct answer to two very important prayers that night," Judith said. "First, Roy's life had been spared in what could have been a fatal accident on a lonely country road. Second, my husband and my son had found each other's love and respect once again."

Judith waited until they were nearly home before asking the question she could no longer resist: "By the way, Roy, did you catch any fish today?"

Nick and Roy both laughed at her calculated query. "You know, Mom, I did," Roy replied. "But they were all so small that I decided that they weren't ready to be taken from their home in the lake. So I threw them back in the water to give them another chance to grow up."

Concluding her dramatic account, Judith told us, "That night, I gave my heartfelt thanks to God that He had decided to return our son to us and that He had chosen to be merciful and give Roy 'another chance to grow up.' "

A Mother's Vision of Her Son's Death on the Battlefield

The mothers of brave men must themselves be brave.

—Mary Bell Washington

Dr. Walter F. Prince, an Episcopal minister-turned-psychologist who was for many years research officer of the American Society for Psychical Research, re-

ceived the following account from Colonel C. de W. Willcox, a former professor at the U.S. Military Academy:

“One day (in about 1900) . . . the wife of Captain A. D. Schenck . . . at eleven in the morning, gave a cry and said that she had seen her son killed in action in the Philippines, where [he] was serving during the insurrection. No effort made by her family or friends could calm her.

“Later in the day a telegram from the War Department brought the news that the young man had been killed, and on making allowance for the difference of longitude, it was found that the hour given agreed with that of Mrs. Schenck’s vision.”

Dr. Prince later obtained the address of Mrs. Schenck’s daughter, Elizabeth Schenck Smith of Washington, D.C., who corroborated her mother’s experience.

According to Mrs. Smith, her mother had been sewing one morning at Fort Screven, Georgia, outside Savannah on Tybee Island. She suddenly got up from her chair and emitted a cry of despair: “Oh, I saw your brother. I saw Will’s shoulder disappear as he fell backward.”

Elizabeth Schenck Smith testified that her mother remained restless all that day and that no member of the family could quiet her anxiety. “When the papers came that evening, they spoke of a clash in the Philippines, and we hid them from her,” Mrs. Smith said.

The next morning, the papers carried the following news: “A scouting party of Americans, led by Lieutenant Schenck, ran into a Filipino ambush. Four men were killed or wounded.”

“After that notice,” Mrs. Smith stated, “more definite news seeped in until General Otis’s report: ‘Twenty-fifth Inf., January 29, 1900, near Subig, Luzon, First Lieu. William T. Schenck killed.’ ”

Subsequent information verified that Mrs. A. D. Schenck had perceived her son’s “departing presence” at the very hour and day of his death while on a scouting party in the Philippines.

“My mother was always particularly close to this one of her six children, afterwards posthumously cited for bravery in action,” Mrs. Smith concluded.

This Mom Learned to Slip in and out of Her Body during Childhood Illnesses

All that I am my mother made me.

—John Quincy Adams

Susan Henke, 59, from Elizabeth, New Jersey, said that she acquired the knack of slipping in and out of her physical body during a series of childhood illnesses. Later in life, when she was a mother, she many times employed this unique method to keep tabs on her kids, Bruce, Keith, and Carol.

“When I was around nine and ten, it seemed as though I suffered through one darned bug after another—chicken pox, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, sinusitis,” she said. “In fourth grade, I missed two months of school, and I had to try to keep up with the rest of my class by doing my homework from my bed. I started getting behind, and I really got frustrated. I was so tired of lying there in bed that more than anything else in the world I wanted to be back in school.”

Susan remembered that the first time she had an out-of-body experience, she had simply lain in bed one morning and concentrated “with all her might” on going to school.

“In my mind, I went through all the motions, just as if I were physically getting ready to go to school. I mean, in my head I got dressed, ate breakfast, and walked to school. I didn’t neglect a single detail, right down to brushing my teeth and putting ribbons in my pigtails. Mentally, I completely re-created a typical morning’s preparation and journey to the school building.

“Then a kind of cloud seemed to pass before my eyes,” she said. “I heard a funny kind of popping noise, and I was there in school in class with all my friends.

“It was all so clear. I could see the kids squirming and shifting in their desks. Miss Carlyle was tugging on the tip of her chin like she always did when she was impatient. I could see a couple of the guys passing notes. Then Miss Carlyle saw them too and made them stand in separate corners of the room for the rest of the class period.”

That night when one of her friends called, Susan told her about the incident.

“Cathy wanted to know how I had found out about Curly and Vernon getting caught passing notes. Of course, I didn’t tell her. But I actually used this method to enable me to keep up with my classmates in school whenever I became ill.”

It did not occur to the adult Susan to use this remarkable surveillance method to keep an eye on her children until August 1967, when she was thirty-three years old and suddenly hospitalized with ptomaine poisoning after eating at a small diner during a family outing.

“I lay violently ill, clenching my teeth against the terrible stomach cramps,” Susan said. “I had only arrived at the emergency room an hour or so before, and I had not yet been given any medication that really alleviated my suffering.”

A particularly nasty wave of nausea shuddered her body, and Susan became conscious of something she could only describe as a “wispy puff of cotton” floating away from her physical self.

“And then my consciousness was in that weird cottony puff of energy as it floated to the middle of the hospital room,” she said. “There, it seemed to unravel itself into another version of me. This new body seemed to contain the ‘real me,’ and I could stand there and look down on my old body lying there in the bed.

“Dear God, I looked a sight. There was a tube running out of my mouth and nose, and my skin seemed the color of pale pea soup. A couple of nurses came running in and started to fuss over me.

“I suppose, at first, I thought I was dead,” Susan

stated. "But I could see my physical body lying on the bed, and I was still breathing, so I thought, Aha! This is like when I was a kid home sick with a bout of chicken pox or whatever and I traveled to school in my ghost body to keep up with the kids in class."

Convinced that she now had a more complete concept of what was going on, Susan decided to move on out into the hospital corridor.

"I went on to the lounge, where I saw Al, my husband, sitting slumped in a chair smoking a cigarette. He had crossed his legs, and his left foot was jumping nervously. His hands were shaking too, and I could see that he was really concerned about me.

"Three-year-old Bruce was sitting at a small table beside Al, coloring in the new *Mary Poppins* coloring book that I had just bought him. I wanted to yell at him when he stopped to bite off the end of the red crayon. He was always chewing the red crayons, and I was always after him to stop."

Susan's seven-year-old son, Keith, was flipping idly through a magazine and sipping at a can of soda.

"Once again I wanted to yell!" Susan said. "Just before I had collapsed from the spoiled chicken or potato salad or whatever it was, I had already informed Keith that he had had more than his quota of soft drinks for the day."

Susan wondered where her eleven-year-old daughter, Carol, was—and in the next instant she was standing beside her in the hospital gift shop.

"Bless her heart, she was looking at some get-well cards for her mommy," Susan said. "She took one down off the rack, and it was one of those kind of racy humorous contemporary cards.

"I could 'hear' Carol reading the verse. She gave a little giggle, then looked around, kind of embarrassed, to see if the clerk had seen her reading the adult verse in the card. Carol took out her little coin purse and bought me a nice flowery card."

Suddenly Susan felt herself being pulled upward. "I seemed to slip easily right through the walls. I found myself in a room where two doctors were talking about

me. The older one, a rather gruff man, was wondering if they should contact the health commissioner and have him close down the diner where we had eaten.”

Motherly concern—or annoyance—brought Susan’s spiritual body back to Bruce, contentedly chewing on the red crayon at the very side of his father, who remained totally oblivious to his son’s unauthorized snack.

“Then it was as if I was hearing a doctor speaking to a nurse at the bottom of a rain barrel,” Susan said. “From some faraway place I heard him saying something about ‘giving me a few more cc’s,’ and I felt myself being pulled away from Bruce the Crayon Chomper.

“Just like that, I was back in my physical body—and I felt terribly ill!”

When her daughter Carol walked in with the get-well card, Susan grimaced through her discomfort and decided that she could use a good laugh—so she repeated the naughty limerick lines that Carol had read in the contemporary card that she had put back in the rack.

“Carol got very pale, and her eyes got big and wide,” Susan said. “My husband, Al, wondered if I was delirious, reciting such double-entendre doggerel in front of the kids.

“I started to bawl Brucie out for eating another red crayon, but then I stopped in midgrowl. I realized that I had discovered an incredibly potent tool that I could employ in keeping an eye on my kids.”

Susan said that she decided not to disclose her out-of-body experience during her intense pain in the hospital—nor did she confess the strange talent that she had acquired when she was a youngster afflicted with a steady barrage of childhood illnesses.

“I let all three of them go through their high school years believing that their mother either employed a staff of private detectives to spy on them or that she was a witch possessed of an all-seeing third eye,” Susan said.

“It wasn’t until Christmas of 1982 that I finally con-

fessed that I had the ability to travel out of my body—and that that was how I could keep such a close eye on them. Bruce was eighteen, a freshman at the university. Keith was twenty-two, halfway through his first year employed as a computer analyst. Carol was twenty-six, married, pregnant with her first child. I figured that they were all mature enough to hear the truth about their mother's unique talent.

“So I told Carol how it was that I knew exactly where she and her best friend, Melissa, were hiding on that day when the two fourteen-year-old girls decided to run away from home.

“I explained to Bruce how it was that I was able to find his bicycle when it was stolen from in front of the elementary school when he was eight.

“I carefully outlined the out-of-body procedure I employed to find the unconscious Keith on that terrible day in his junior year in high school when he suffered the hiking accident in the national park.

“In response to their individual surprise and group skepticism, I gave them each three or four other examples of how I had been able to keep such a close watch on them.

“I don't think any of them, including my husband, Al, believed me,” Susan said. “They seemed to prefer to cherish their belief that their mother was a witch with an all-seeing third eye.”

Dr. Colin Ross, associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, has said that he believes out-of-body experiences (OBE) to be much more common than most people think. In 1991 he led a team of researchers who interviewed 1,055 men and women aged 18 to 70 to determine if they had ever had an OBE. The investigators found that an amazing 302 of the people surveyed (28.6 percent) testified that they had actually experienced leaving their physical bodies and returning to them later.

His Mother's Sorrow over Their Separation at Christmas Enabled the Young Marine to be in Two Places at Once

There is no influence so powerful as that of the mother.

—Sarah J. Hale

In the May 1968 issue of *Fate* magazine, Don H. Checketts told a most remarkable story of how his mother's sorrow over their being separated at Christmas created a miracle that enabled him to visit her in Ogden, Utah, and *remain physically on duty at the Marine base at the same time.*

It was 1929, and Checketts was a nineteen-year-old Marine stationed at Campo de Marte in Managua, Nicaragua. Mail call on December 2 brought him a long, anguished letter from his mother that described in detail her great heartache over their being separated by so many miles during the Christmas season. She wrote that she would do anything if she might see him, if only for a few moments.

Checketts became very depressed by the sorrowful tone of his mother's letter, and he went to his bunk that night wishing that there existed some means by which he might establish instant communication with his mother and somehow relieve at least some of her grief.

At last he fell asleep. Then, after only a few minutes of deep slumber, he came wide awake with the driving compulsion that he had to go somewhere in a hurry.

Checketts got out of his cot, looked over at his buddy, then was startled to see his own physical body still lying on the bunk behind the draped mosquito netting.

Only momentarily shocked by the sight of his physical self lying asleep on his cot, Checketts was more impressed by the deep awareness that he had to get moving, that he had somewhere important to go.

As if he were receiving instructions from some invisible higher intelligence, he stepped outside the tent, raised his arms above his head, and looked up at the

moon. What occurred next, Checketts tells us, was breathtaking.

First, he said, he had a sensation of tremendous speed, as if he were toppling end over end in midair.

“Kaleidoscopic scenes passed so fast they blurred—snow-covered mountaintops, river valleys, lakes, and vast areas like deserts,” he stated.

When everything came to a stop, Checketts was still stretching his arms toward the moon, but now the moon shone over towering cliffs and snow-covered hills instead of tropical jungle. Although he had never seen his parents’ new home in Ogden, Utah, he somehow knew that the white house at the top of the hill before him was that very domicile.

He made his way through undisturbed snow to the porch of the house. His knock at the door produced sounds of movement within. When the door opened, his mother stood before him in her nightclothes.

Mother and son were overcome by the unexpected reunion, and tears flowed unchecked. She expressed concern that he was standing outside in the cold in his short-sleeved uniform, but Checketts told her that he would be able to stay for only a few minutes, just long enough to let her know that he was all right.

With a farewell hug and a kiss, Checketts turned away from his mother, left the porch, and walked back down the hill.

He turned around only once and saw his mother still standing in the open doorway, waving at him.

Soon the strange sensation of incredible speed once again captured him, and when Checketts was again aware of his surroundings, he was standing in front of his tent in Nicaragua.

He went inside, got back into his cot, and awoke the next morning to find his pillow wet from tears.

More than ever he was convinced that the remarkable journey to his mother’s arms in Ogden, Utah, had been a real experience. Every detail was clearly defined in his mind, and he had been left with an exhilarating sense of personal freedom.

On December 28, mail call brought Checketts a

letter from his mother which was dated December 3, the morning after his extraordinary adventure in his spiritual body. Both Checketts and his tentmate, to whom he had confided the experience, were able to read that his mother confirmed the incident in every detail.

*If there be aught surpassing human deed or word
or thought, it is a mother's love.*

—Marchioness de Spadara

A Mother's Healing Hands

*Youth fades; love droops; the leaves of friendship
fall. A mother's secret hope outlives them all.*

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

The very pregnant young woman was quite distraught. She was about to come to full term, and her doctor had just given her an unsettling prognosis. In such disheartening moments, a woman just naturally wants to seek out her sympathetic mother and express her anxiety freely.

“Mom, the doctor says that the baby is not properly placed in the womb,” Joanne Halpert said. “He tells me that I must go into the hospital. I’m really scared, Mom. And you know that Denny and I can’t afford a hospital stay right now—plus the delivery costs coming up soon.”

Mrs. Dolly Edmunds shook her head and clucked her tongue softly before she spoke. It always grieved her so to see people in anguish and pain. She was an avowed enemy of suffering. And now that it was her own daughter crying out in fear and anxiety. . . .

“It would be such a pity to go into the hospital before the baby is due, just to have things straightened out inside,” Mrs. Edmunds smiled. “When do you next see your doctor?”

“Tomorrow,” Joanne sighed. “I’m certain that he’ll put me in the hospital then. But, Mom—” She paused,

her voice almost a sob now. "I am so worried about my baby."

Dolly Edmunds put her arms around her daughter's shoulders. "Of course you are, darlin'," she said. "Especially it being your first one and all."

She gave Joanne a kiss on the forehead. "Don't you worry, now. We'll see if we can't give your doctor a bit of a surprise."

Dolly placed her hands just a few inches away from her daughter's swollen stomach and moved her fingers in a twisting motion.

"Oh . . . oh, Mom, I think you did it!" Joanne smiled and blinked back her tears. "I think the baby just moved to where he's supposed to be!"

The next day when she went to see her mother again, Joanne was glowing with happiness. She did not have to enter the hospital after all. Everything was as it should be.

Her doctor had told her that by "some extraordinary means" the baby had moved to its proper place in the womb.

Joanne Halpert knew very well that her mother, Mrs. Dolly Edmunds, was that "extraordinary means." And everyone else in the small Central Texas town would agree with her, because the charming mother of three children has been accomplishing extraordinary healings since around 1964, when she was twenty years old.

Dolly's strange powers of healing have advanced to the stage where she has only to listen to the voice of one of her children—or a "patient"—over the telephone, and she is able to detect the conditions of the illness in the caller. In the majority of cases, she can dispose of the malady without ever seeing the "patient" in person.

When Dolly was only five years old, an elderly neighbor lady, who everyone said had the gift of second sight, used to tell all the neighborhood women that little Dolly Perkins was continually bathed in a circling blue light.

After her marriage at the age of twenty to William

Edmunds, Dolly was approached on the street by a total stranger who asked her when she planned to begin her healing ministry.

Confused and startled by such an unexpected query from a strange man, Dolly visited her mother, Mrs. Opal Perkins, to tell her of the unusual happening.

"I know the man must have been some kind of nut," Dolly said. "But, Mommy, I find his words so unsettling. It's like they keep echoing inside my brain."

"Then let's put those words to the test," Mrs. Perkins said.

When Dolly wondered what her mother meant by a "test," the elder woman was quick to explain.

"I've had this blamed lump on the back of my hand for some time now," she said, thrusting the cyst nearly in Dolly's face. "If you have the gift of healing, make it go away."

Dolly reached out with trembling fingers to touch the cyst on the back of her mother's left hand. Then, inexplicably, she burst into tears under the stress of some nameless tension, and she was suffused with the strange feeling of some paranormal power.

"It's gone!" Mrs. Perkins shouted in wonder. "You did it, child! You healed me!"

But in a sudden paroxysm of tearful release, Dolly's fingers brushed against her mother's head.

"Oh, dear God!" the newborn healer exclaimed. "Mommy, I took it from your hand and put it on your forehead!"

Sure as eyes could see, the lump which had been on Mrs. Perkins's hand now appeared in the same size and shape on her forehead. When Dolly had brushed her mother's head with her fingers, she had somehow transferred the cyst from one spot on her body to another.

But now Dolly Edmunds knew that she had the gift of healing, so she quickly accomplished "the total banishment of the traveling growth."

"When I first discovered that I had the power to heal others, I seriously thought that I was going out of my

head," Mrs. Edmunds said. "Of course, I knew right off that it wasn't *my* power to heal. The gift had come from God Almighty. So after a time I began to look at the gift more logically, telling myself that if the Good Lord had seen fit to bless me in this way, who was I to try to deny it?"

Dolly Edmunds was quite puzzled, though, by her husband William's openly hostile reaction to the sudden manifestation of her spiritual gift.

"Such powers have to come from Satan!" he shouted at her after she told him about the stranger who had asked about her healing mission and how she and her mother had tested his words by removing the cyst on the back of the elder woman's hand.

Dolly could not make good sense out of her husband's recipe for logic. Why would nasty old Satan do good things, like heal folks? It seemed more likely to her that pain and sickness came from Satan—and healing came from God.

William's answer seemed already prepared, cleanly sliced, and coldly delivered. "Satan gives some people the power to heal in order to deceive them so they may, in turn, deceive others into taking the credit and the glory of healing away from God. That stranger who approached you just may have been one of Satan's demons in disguise."

Then one night William came home from work with a blinding migraine.

"If you really are a *godly* healer," he challenged her, "cure me of this migraine. I've suffered from these damn headaches long enough."

Although Dolly Edmunds knew by that time that she had been given the gift of healing, she still did not know quite how to proceed with the mechanics of the process.

"But somehow my hands were forced above me without any personal control," she recalled. "From then on, my husband never again suffered from migraine headaches."

As if his personal act of healing were some kind of litmus test that proved God's, rather than Satan's,

blessing of his wife's gift, William Edmunds was completely supportive of Dolly's abilities from that time on.

Dolly never failed to send her three children to the local doctor for their school vaccinations, and over the past thirty years or so she has never offered her gift of healing as anything other than a supplement to regular medical treatment.

"Mom was like our own live-in doctor," Mrs. Joanne Halpert said. "She was always there for us with her healing hands. She just cannot seem to give enough of herself to others. Some weeks she sees as many as thirty or forty 'patients.' And never has she ever accepted a single penny for her gift of healing."

Somehow Mom Always Knows

Give a little love to a child, and you get a great deal back.

—John Ruskin

That magic invisible link between mother and child can often be puzzling to young children attempting to discern whether or not Mom really does have eyes in the back of her head!

Sherry Hansen Steiger averted certain disaster one evening in 1971 when she returned home from her position as counselor at State University of New York at Stony Brook (SUNY) on Long Island. She had very little time to pick up her children, Melissa and Erik, and head to Smithtown Shopping Mall, where she counseled runaway teenagers one night a week and conducted a community meal program. As she entered the front door, she hurriedly yelled for her husband to get the kids in the car and she would be there in a second.

Accustomed to going in and out the front door in such flurried departures, Sherry normally would not even have gone through the kitchen. But on this particular evening something inside her told her that no mat-

ter how rushed she was for time, she must go into the kitchen—*immediately!*

Obedying her inner message, she ran into the kitchen to find that her son, Erik, had pulled a chair up to the stove, turned on the burner, and put a potholder-towel over the flames.

Apparently her husband had grabbed Erik off the chair without noticing that the stovetop burner had a smoldering cloth on it—and had headed straight for the van.

By the time Sherry entered the kitchen, flames were shooting up to the ceiling. She grabbed a pair of tongs, snatched the burning rag from the stove, and tossed it into the sink. Miraculously, some level of maternal awareness had alerted her to a mischievous act of her young son that could have resulted in the destruction of their home and all their belongings.

Dr. Louisa E. Rhine's pioneering research includes numerous cases in which ESP impressions of serious or threatening circumstances turned out happily. In her *Hidden Channels of the Mind*, she tells of the experience of a woman in Wyoming who had gone to the dentist one afternoon, leaving her two-year-old baby girl and her three-year-old boy with a baby-sitter.

As the mother sat in the dentist's chair having a tooth filled, she suddenly felt that there was an emergency at home.

"I wanted to run out of the office, but the dentist was working on my tooth," she told Dr. Rhine. "Tears began to run down my cheeks, and I became emotionally upset."

The concerned dentist thought that he was hurting the woman or that she had become ill.

"I assured him I wasn't sick," she said, continuing her story, "but I asked him to please hurry and finish so I could get home as soon as possible."

When she reached home, the police were just bringing her little boy to the house.

"There was an ice cream man who passed our house each day," she said. "The baby-sitter had given the child some money and said that he could go and get

some ice cream. Then she left the door and went to see about something.

“When my little boy didn’t come right back, she went to the front yard and couldn’t see him anywhere. She went to the circle, looked in the fountain, and searched up and down the street.”

What the baby-sitter did *not* do was to call the mother at the dentist’s office or her husband at work—as she had been told to do if anything should happen to either of the children. It was the lady next door who finally called the police.

Later, the shaken mother learned that a woman driver had nearly struck her wandering boy on the street, so she picked him up and took him to the police station.

“The policeman finally gave my son his ice cream, for he hadn’t been able to catch up with the ice cream man—even though he had crossed several main streets in pursuit of him,” she said. “And all this while I was at the dentist!”

Parapsychologist J. H. Rush published an account of a woman who experienced a daughter’s pain while the two were quite a distance apart and the mother was unaware of her child’s accident. Quoting from the woman’s original letter in his monograph *New Directions in Parapsychological Research*, Rush recorded the following:

“My daughter was away at college . . . and I started to write to her as usual. When I had about finished, my right hand started to burn so I couldn’t hold the pen and the pain was terrific. . . . Less than an hour later we received a telephone call from the college telling us our daughter’s right hand had been severely burned in the laboratory with acid at the same time I felt the burn.”

In the *Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research* (vol. 46, 1952), L. A. Dale contributes a case in which a mother awakened from her sleep with extreme pain in her right arm and hand. Convinced that

she had been experiencing a difficult dream but unable to remember its content, she went back to sleep.

When she awoke again sometime later that night, she was able to remember that she had been dreaming of her son, who was attending college a few hundred miles away. In her nocturnal vision, she had noticed that there was “something different” about him.

Late the next afternoon, she returned from running some errands downtown to discover that her son had come home unexpectedly from college. “The first thing I noticed,” she said, “was his bandaged hand. My experience of the night before was brought home very vividly. He had been in an accident and his hand had been very badly cut. On comparing notes, we found that the time element was the same as in the dream.”

Mom Knows—Even When She’s Not Supposed to Find Out!

Some are kissing mothers and some are scolding mothers, but it is love just the same; and most mothers kiss and scold together. —Pearl S. Buck

Early in May 1991, Donald Wasche, 29, of Tempe, Arizona, broke a leg and two ribs and sustained a mild concussion while sky diving.

“Don’t let my mother know,” Wasche warned his fiancée, Karen Osenbau, just before he entered surgery. “When I was eight, I broke an arm falling off a bicycle on a tightrope that I rigged from the garage to the front porch. When I was seventeen, I crashed my first car into a large tree on a hairpin curve and broke an ankle. When I was nineteen and in college, I totaled my motorcycle and fractured my skull in a hill-climbing contest.”

Karen shook her head in silent awe as Donald recited his litany of broken and fractured body parts. When he paused for breath and to grit his teeth against the pain, she added, “And then there was the time two years ago when you were driving in the stock car race.

You rolled the car and broke three ribs and fractured an elbow.”

Donald nodded his head in agreement. “I promised Mom then that I wouldn’t engage in any more dangerous pastimes. She would blow a gasket if she knew I had been sky diving for the past four months. Promise me that you won’t tell her!”

“But she calls for you at our apartment about every seven or eight days,” Karen protested. “What if she calls and you’re in the hospital? What do you want me to do, lie to your mother?”

“Absolutely!” Donald said over his shoulder as an orderly wheeled him down the hall and into a restricted area for surgical preparation. “Besides, I don’t want Mom to worry about me.”

Donald’s parents lived in Carbondale, Illinois, and his mother, Mrs. Rose Wasche, seemed to be a pleasant, caring, but somewhat nervous woman, who, Karen had to admit, had in Donald a son who had given her plenty to be nervous about over the years.

“There’s no way that I am going to lie to Donald’s mother if she calls,” Karen told her friend Mary. “I feel bad enough for not calling her right away and letting her know that her son is in the hospital.”

“But you promised Donald,” Mary reminded her. “He’s just trying to protect her feelings. He doesn’t want her to worry.”

“But if she calls our apartment and asks to speak to Donald, I don’t want to lie to her,” Karen said. “Rose is too nice. And besides, when Donald and I get married in October, how does it start off our relationship as in-laws if she finds out that I lied to her?”

Mary agreed that Karen, as the future daughter-in-law, should not tell any big lies to Mrs. Wasche. Rather than outright lying, she advised, just avoid telling the truth.

“If she calls, just say that Donald is out; like maybe he’s away on business or something,” Mary said. “Then he can call her back in a day or two from the hospital or when he’s back home.”

Karen decided that her friend’s plan was a sound

one, and she was able to apply it that very night when Rose Wasche called the apartment. Karen invoked all the proper amenities, then informed Mrs. Wasche that her son was away on an overnight business trip.

She spent a few more minutes in friendly conversation, and then it was over. She had not really lied to Mrs. Wasche, Karen rationalized. She had just managed to avoid telling the truth.

But Karen and Donald should have known that nothing can shield the truth from the penetrating love power of an amazing mom.

As Rose Wasche recalled the incident later from her home in Carbondale on the night in question she had been reading a new romance novel in her big easy chair before going to bed.

“My thoughts kept wandering from the story,” she said, “even though I had been thoroughly interested in the book when I had started reading. At first I thought I was being distracted by the sports news that my husband, Eric, was watching on television. But then I realized that what I was really doing was thinking of Donald and wondering what he was doing.”

In the next few moments, Mrs. Wasche was suffused by anxiety. “I felt so strongly that something awful had happened to Donald. I tried to shake such uneasy sensations from my consciousness, but I continued to worry and became increasingly anxious.”

Mrs. Wasche informed her husband that she was going to call Donald in Arizona to try to put her mind at ease. But when Karen answered the telephone and told her that Donald was away on a short business trip, she became even more worried about their son.

“Something’s not right,” she complained. “I know that something bad has happened to Donald.”

And then she received a clear impression of their son in a hospital bed. “Donald has been hurt,” she told her husband.

Mrs. Wasche’s next long distance telephone call was to the hospital in Phoenix where Donald had been taken after his racing accident two years before.

“I received confirmation that a patient named Don-

ald Wasche had just been admitted to the hospital, but the person to whom I spoke said that no further details were available at that time.

“Next I called Karen and told her not to tell me any more fairy tales,” Mrs. Wasche said. “I told her that I had sensed that something was wrong with Donald and that I had already called the hospital and they had confirmed Donald’s admittance.”

To say that Karen was stunned and shocked by the nature of Rose Wasche’s second call would be, in Karen’s words, “to utter the understatement of the year.” She knew that she could not continue to keep her promise to Donald under such remarkable circumstances. She had always believed in a woman’s intuition, but Rose Wasche obviously possessed it to a phenomenal degree.

“I truly apologize for not telling you the truth right away, Rose.” She managed to get out both an apology and an explanation for her actions without being interrupted. “Donald made me promise not to tell you. He didn’t want you to worry.”

Rose Wasche accepted her future daughter-in-law’s apology, but she scolded her for trying to keep the truth from her. “I’m his mother. In twenty-nine years, Donald has never been able to keep something from me. A mother always knows!”

“How” Is It That Mom Always Seems to Know?

The bearing and the training of a child is a woman’s wisdom.

—Alfred Lord Tennyson

The remarkable psychic interaction between mother and child has not gone unnoticed by scholars and researchers throughout the centuries. While not all “psi” experiences are as dramatic as some of those that we describe in this book, each kind of paranormal activity bears a name of its own and is subdivided into many types.

Precognition is that strange function of mind whereby a caring mother seems to receive a glimpse of

the future and gains knowledge of events yet to take place.

Telepathy is the transference of thought from one mind to another—"Mother's invisible telephone." Distance and time seem unable to affect this psychic phenomenon. Laboratory tests have been conducted with the subject at distances of more than five hundred miles from the experimenter—with no decrease in the subject's scores. We'll share cases in this book in which loving mothers made telepathic contact with their children over distances of thousands of miles.

Clairvoyance is the awareness, without physical aids or normal sensory means, of what is going on elsewhere—"Mother's invisible television camera."

Telekinesis or *psychokinesis* is the movement of physical objects, seemingly caused by some force unknown to science, perhaps the direct action of mind on matter. It may be this power of mind that mothers harness from time to time to create miracles.

Astral projection, or out-of-body experience, is the apparent projection of the mind out of its fleshly domicile. Such "projection" may be accomplished within a small range, such as by the mother who traveled in her spirit body from the hospital to her home to check up on her kids, or across a quite limitless range, such as the son who projected halfway around the world to visit his mother while he was overseas in the armed forces.

Psychometry is the determining of facts about an object's owner simply from contact with the object—which is why children soon learn never to lie to their mystical mothers about the true source of any recent acquisition.

Even from these brief definitions, it becomes apparent that many attributes of "psi" phenomena overlap. It has long been a contention of certain serious-minded parapsychologists that each of these types of phenomena is but an individual manifestation of the same force, energy, or function of that power within us that truly makes us human beings—with a spark of the divine thrown in. Mothers may simply have a higher

charge of this divine energy in order to guarantee the continuation of our species.

It is interesting to note how many of the psychic activities in our accounts were experienced while the mothers were either asleep or in sleeplike states of trance or self-hypnosis. This may indicate that each of us—whether we be mothers or children or both—has the subconscious ability to focus on consciously unperceived data banks of information about ourselves and our loved ones.

Everyone who remembers his or her dreams has first-hand proof that there are various levels of mind. There is the one level that “authors” the “script” for the night’s performance; another level that “directs” the “play” and cloaks it in the symbolism that some psychiatrists tell us is necessary to preserve sanity; and yet another level that acts as the surprised captive “audience” for the nocturnal performance.

The literature of psychological research and parapsychology is filled with accounts of clairvoyant experiences which took place in dreams or while the percipient was in a relaxed state, and we shall certainly reveal a number of cases in this book in which a mother’s dream of threat to her child prompted her to act in extraordinary ways.

Part Three: Mother's Invisible Telephone

Mom Got the Message: "Please Come Home!"

Being a mother is rewarding to one's female instincts, trying to one's nerves, physically exhausting, emotionally both frustrating and satisfying, and above all, not to be undertaken lightly.

—Dr. Margaret Raphael

In November 1987, Glenda Nuñez, 45, of Boca Raton, Florida, had an opportunity to accompany her husband, Fabian, on a four-day business trip to North Miami Beach—a business trip that would leave the weekend free for a little pleasure and a chance to visit her sister Avelina.

After quite a bit of deliberation and a lot of discussion, the Nunezes decided to ask their nineteen-year-old daughter, Martha, (a.k.a. Marty) to come home from college for a few days to house-sit their new home. Glenda and Fabian had given the matter careful consideration because there were two basic problems: (1) The Nunezes had moved to Boca Raton from Pensacola only three months before. Marty would not only be unfamiliar with the house, she would be a stranger in the neighborhood. (2) The business trip would be in large part spontaneous and unscheduled. Fabian did not know for certain where they would be staying on any one particular night until they arrived at Avelina's place on Friday. In case of emergency, there would be no easy way for Marty to get in touch with them.

Marty accepted the responsibility as a vote of parental confidence in her newfound maturity. As the younger, unmarried daughter, she knew that she was the logical choice to watch the house. She could understand why "Grandma and Grandpa" might not be eager

for Delores and her three kids to take over the home-
stead for six or seven days.

Besides, she was curious about the new home, and she knew that her mother did not often have an opportunity to travel with her father. Also, she would have some peace and quiet to write that long paper for her American literature class.

Marty told her parents not to worry about a thing, and she stood on the curb returning her mother's good-bye waves until the car turned at the cross street and disappeared from view.

The first two days and nights were uneventful, and Marty did not mind at all being alone. After three months in a noisy corridor of a coed dorm, she actually relished the solitude.

"It was great," she said. "I loved being able to watch television whenever I wanted to. I could stay up all night watching old movies. I could work on my paper at any hour I pleased. And the new house was really neat. I was glad I got a preview of the new home before Christmas vacation."

It was on the third night, just a few minutes before midnight, that the trouble began. Marty was working intently upon her college report when the telephone rang. Fully expecting it to be her parents checking in, she answered with a cheery hello.

"'Hello' yourself," a gruff male voice responded to her greeting. "Who is this?"

Marty hesitated, unsure whether or not to provide the requested identification.

"I asked whose company I have the pleasure of talking with together at this time!"

The words were slurred, and their meaning was somewhat incoherent. Whoever the caller was, he was drunk.

"All right!" he shouted, annoyed. "Be that way. I'm coming over, then. Be there in a few minutes. I got something for you."

Marty was suddenly paralyzed with fear. Did the drunken caller really know their address? Was he really coming over? What would she do?

After taking a few moments to calm herself, she tried her best to reason that someone with a little too much to drink had attempted to dial a friend and had punched their telephone number by mistake. After all, her parents certainly wouldn't have a friend who would place drunken after-midnight telephone calls to their home.

But just to be certain that he wouldn't call again and upset her further, she took the telephone receiver out of its cradle. If he got a few hours of busy signals, he would be sure to leave her alone.

Marty fixed herself a cup of coffee and tried to get back into her paper for American literature.

The sound of a heavy fist pounding at the front door nearly sent her scurrying under the sofa to hide.

"Come on, in there! Open up!"

It was the same gruff, drunken voice. Good grief, how had he known where she lived? Was it possible to trace telephone calls from the caller's end—and then locate the address to go with the number?

"Let me in! Come on, Fabian, cut the crap!"

Marty was startled to hear the coarse voice address her father in such a familiar manner.

Carefully she approached the door and switched on the porch light.

"That's better. Now let me in. I got a present for you."

Marty peeped through the slim curtained window at the side of the door. A rough, disheveled man with a three- or four-day growth of beard leaned heavily against one of the front porch pillars. In one hand he held a paper sack that quite obviously contained a bottle of alcohol. In the other he clutched a shopping bag whose contents were unknown.

The stranger at the door caught a glimpse of Marty's face at the window. "I see you, I see you, tra, la, la, la," he sang out, raucously off-key. "Let me in, fair brown-eyed girl."

"Who are you?" Marty asked, doing her best to keep her voice steady.

“T. J.!” he roared, as if his identity should be known to all discriminating persons. “Now open up!”

“If it is true that you have business with my father,” Marty said, attempting to sound authoritative, “then you must return at a decent hour, sir. My father is asleep and cannot be disturbed.”

“Well, la-de-da! His lordship slumbers! Get him out of bed and drag him down here—or I’ll kick the door in!”

It was obvious that the bizarre drama was about to turn nasty.

“*Oh, Mom, please come home!*” Marty found herself whispering over and over. She had this wonderful image of her parents pulling in the driveway at that very instant and her very capable father dealing with the disruptive drunk at the door.

The loud thud that shook her from her reverie was quite clearly the brute kicking the front door.

It was time for decisive action. Marty called the police, then returned to the front door to deliver her ultimatum to the uncouth stranger: “Stop kicking the door. I’ve called the police, and they’ll be here any second now.”

“You wouldn’t dare call the police!” he snarled. But then the sound of a faraway siren reached their ears. Whether it was the squad car answering Marty’s summons could not be guessed, but it was a convincing enough audible demonstration of her serious intent that the intruder was persuaded to move quickly away from the front door.

The police actually arrived in an impressively short period of time, but the mysterious and vulgar T. J. had disappeared.

Although the officers promised Marty that they would continue to drive by from time to time and keep a protective eye on the place, the nineteen-year-old didn’t sleep a minute all night.

“I kept wondering if the creep would manage to break in some time when the police would be at the farthest-away point, and I would be unprotected,” Marty said. “The police would be saying to them-

selves, 'Yes, we just checked the Nunez house. All clear.' But inside, the monstrous T. J. would be chasing me with a carving knife."

The next day Marty decided that she really didn't want to spend another night alone in the house. She kept mentally transmitting the message *Please come home! Please come home!*

"I would go in peaks and valleys, you know," Marty said. "I would 'peak' myself up by saying that I wasn't afraid of this T. J. creep, that I could handle things. Besides, I kept thinking, the cops probably scared him so much that he's in Alabama by now.

"And then I would 'valley' and think that I really got him mad by calling the cops. He would probably sneak back that night and burn the house with me in it."

The most frustrating facet of her dilemma, Marty recalled later, was not having any way to contact her parents. It would be at least another night before they would arrive at her Aunt Avelina's place.

But that afternoon, Glenda and Fabian Nunez pulled into the driveway at their new home in Boca Raton. Within moments, Glenda was embracing her daughter and asking her what was wrong. "Why did you need us home, Baby?"

After Marty had composed herself, she told her parents the whole frightening story.

Her father was outraged, for T. J. was an acquaintance of his—T. J. Novascone, a salesman for a rival firm who had a serious drinking problem. Because he traveled often to various South American countries, Novascone had promised to bring Nunez an archaeological artifact as a means of ingratiating himself into favor among Nunez and his business associates.

"It is unlikely that T. J. would ever have harmed you," her father said, "but he can get out of sorts and forget his manners when he has been drinking. I will have a very stern and serious conversation with him, and he will give you an immediate apology for his crude behavior."

Glenda Nunez told her daughter how she had re-

ceived her telepathic message the night before. "Your father and I had checked into our room around nine o'clock. We relaxed by watching a movie on television," she said, "and we were both asleep by midnight. At about two o'clock, I sat suddenly bolt upright in bed. I had a clear image of you. You appeared to be very frightened, and I heard your voice saying over and over—at least six times—'Mom, please come home.' "

Mrs. Nunez said that she wanted to check out immediately and begin the drive back to Boca Raton. "Your father thought at first that I must be imagining things, but we kept trying to call home and got nothing but busy signals. When we finally asked the operator to check the line, she said that no one was speaking and that the phone appeared to be off the hook. I don't think either one of us really slept any more that night, and we were in the car by the first light of dawn."

When Marty learned that the loud and vulgar drunk was quite unlikely to be a true menace, she was a bit embarrassed that she had not handled the situation with more authority.

"In one way I felt that I really wasn't so mature after all," she said. "But I am still glad that my mother received my distress call and came back from vacation three days ahead of schedule."

Laboratory tests have revealed a number of interesting facts concerning the conditions under which telepathy—and, in general, all psychic phenomena—work.

Distance appears to have no effect on telepathy or clairvoyance. Equally remarkable results have been achieved when the percipient (receiver) was a yard away from the agent (sender) or when the experimenters were separated by several hundred miles. Dr. S. G. Soal, the British researcher who has conducted extensive tests with dozens of "mind readers," has written: "In telepathic communication it is personality, or the linkage of personalities, which counts and not spatial separation of bodies . . . [for] minds are not spatial en-

tities at all. . . . We must consider brains as focal points in space at which Mind produces physical manifestations in its inter-action with matter.”

Laboratory research has also demonstrated again and again the solid proof that such paranormal abilities as telepathy and clairvoyance are exercised with great facility between people who care about one another, and especially between immediate family members. The parent-child combination offers the most fertile psychic ground; but since women generally demonstrate a greater tendency than men to be in touch with the paranormal, the mother-child connection is demonstrably richer in the production of ESP linkups.

Some researchers have stated that their laboratory findings suggest that a strong emotional tie is the greatest single facilitator of psychic prowess. Few people would debate the assertion that the emotional tie that a mother feels toward her child is the most powerfully charged connection in the universe.

His Mother's Telepathic Warning Saved His Life

The God to whom little boys say their prayers has a face very much like their mother's.

—Sir James M. Barrie

It was October 1942 and Guadalcanal was in its most critical stage of fighting. Japanese bombing raids were incessant, and American Wildcat fighter planes were desperately involved in aerial battles.

The scene was hardly that of the quiet reverie in which psychic impressions are commonly received, yet on the night of October 25, Pfc. Mike Townsend received a telepathic impression from his mother in Jefferson, Alabama, that saved his life.

Townsend had been mired in his muddy foxhole for hours on that day that the Marines would later refer to as Dugout Sunday. By evening the battle had not abated, and Pfc. Townsend was ordered by his squad leader to deliver a message to headquarters company.

As he slithered his way across the battlefield, his mind was occupied solely with the business of survival.

The young soldier managed to deliver the dispatch; and on his way back to his foxhole, he stopped to enter a dugout in which several Marines were clustered around a coffeepot that one of them had somehow managed to preserve.

The Marines invited him to share their java, and Townsend gratefully accepted, letting the steaming brew nestle snugly in his mud-caked hands.

The drone of the airplane engines became a lulling roar in the back of his consciousness. Townsend's thoughts began to drift.

He saw his mother, Edith Townsend, kneeling in their home church in Alabama. His eyes lingered longingly on the vision, and a feeling of warmth and nostalgic longing filled his being.

Suddenly he could hear his mother's voice bombarding him from all sides. He was positive in his identification of her voice, but he could not make out the exact words. There was something unnerving about her tone, however, and he received the distant impression that she was attempting to warn him of danger.

On a sudden impulse, Townsend threw down the coffee mug, picked up his rifle, and ran out of the dugout, leaving the startled Marines staring after him in surprise.

The soldier began crawling back through the mud toward his squadron's position.

He had managed to get some twenty feet from the dugout when the sky exploded with light, the earth trembled, and the air was filled with the agonized cry of men in pain—as a Japanese shell scored a direct hit and killed everyone in the dugout.

Townsend lay still on the ground, trying to blot out the faces of the Marines he had seen around the coffeepot just minutes before. A violent trembling seized his body as he lay face down in the mud of bloody Guadalcanal.

At this unlikely moment, Townsend again pictured his mother in his mind. Once more, even though he

still could not make out her words, he felt that she was trying to warn him.

At the same time, the thought of his loving mother became very soothing to the distressed soldier. The more he thought of home, his family, his sweetheart, and his mother's Southern fried chicken, the more relaxed his body became and his muscles ceased their trembling.

At that very moment, a squad of Sendai Japanese marines came running in his direction. As they jogged past him, bayonets fixed and ready, Townsend did not move.

Had it not been for the second warning premonition from Edith Townsend, his beloved mother, his quivering body certainly would have been noticed by the Japanese marines and he surely would have been killed.

Three years later, the war was over and Mike Townsend had safely returned home. He married his childhood sweetheart in the same church which he had seen in those awful moments back on Guadalcanal. Had it not been for the vision of his mother, who had actually been kneeling in the church praying for his safe return at that very same time, Townsend might never have come home to claim his bride.

In a somewhat similar case, the late rugged movie tough guy Lee Marvin verified for Brad Steiger the ESP connection that Marvin had shared with his mother when he was wounded during fierce fighting in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

Marvin had been shot in the back by a Japanese soldier, and when he returned to the United States, he discovered that both his mother in America and his father in Europe had sensed that someone had wounded their son at the very moment that it had happened.

Marvin's mother opened the front door of their home on the same night on which he was wounded and saw Lee standing before her, his uniform in rags, bandages around his head. She immediately looked at the clock to check the time.

When Lee was reunited with his parents after the war, they did some careful figuring and juggling of time distances and realized that at the exact instant of his father's dream and his mother's vision, he was being shot somewhere in the Pacific.

Lee told his mother that only one thing was wrong in her vision: She had seen bandages on his head, but he had been shot in the back.

"But where did it hurt most?" his mother asked.

Lee had to admit that, strange as it might seem, although the bullet had entered his back, he had felt the most pain in his head.

Since the primary motivation in all paranormal experiences is to communicate with someone when the normal means of sensory expression have been blocked, many researchers have long argued that parapsychology should spend more time studying and understanding human beings. Along with the specific question of what aspect within the female psyche enables a mother's love to transcend the normal physical barriers of our material planet are a number of other basic queries regarding the psychological makeup of all humans that are begging to be answered. For instance, what is it within the human spirit that makes us desire intimate communication with our friends and our families? And why must we share our ordinary and extraordinary experiences before our enjoyment of an activity seems complete?

Once such inner needs and motivations have been more carefully analyzed, some researchers are convinced, science will more easily be able to define the fragile conditions that encourage paranormal communication between living minds and between discarnate minds and living brains.

A Strange Waking Vision during Mother's Accident

What is a home without a mother?—Alice Hawthorne

Dr. Louisa E. Rhine and numerous other parapsychologists have long noted the peculiar imagery which can occur when one slips into a light trance, such as during a daydream or at any time when the "sleep-walking borderline is ill-defined."

Dr. Rhine recounts the experience of a sixteen-year-old girl in Cincinnati who perceived a glorified image of her mother when the actual physical person was distant from her. In this particular case, her mother had told her that she would return home by 5:45 in the afternoon; and since her mother had always been a very punctual person, the daughter began to feel anxious when she had not returned by the designated time.

"I began to pray for her safety," the daughter said. "I sat in a rocking chair where I could look along the side yard to the front gate.

"Suddenly, as I prayed with my eyes closed, I heard the gate click. I looked up and saw my mother walking slowly toward me. She was perfectly beautiful with a glorified beauty. She wore a white silk lace gown."

The girl was quite aware that when her mother left the house earlier in the day she had been wearing a white linen blouse and a wool skirt.

The teenager arose and walked toward her mother, all the while admiring her unearthly beauty. "I was about to ask her where she had acquired such a beautiful gown—but before a word had left my lips, Mother sidestepped off the walk and into a patch of flowers. In the next instant, she was gone!"

The girl looked all about for her mother, calling her name and becoming quite frightened.

Sobbing and praying, she seated herself again in the rocker and fixed her bewildered gaze upon the front gate.

Finally, about five minutes after six, her mother re-

turned, once again wearing the white linen blouse and the wool skirt.

Her daughter ran along the yard, grabbed her hand, and told her excitedly all that had occurred in the past few minutes.

After she had rested a moment, her mother explained that she had suffered an accident on the streetcar two blocks from home.

"I was seated at the end of the bench near the running board when the car lurched around the corner unexpectedly," her mother said. "Quite unprepared for this jerk, I was pitched out of the car."

At that time Cincinnati streetcar lines ran what they termed their "summer cars," a kind of sight-seeing streetcar with open sides and a long running board from end to end.

Fortunately, a man seated on the same bench had grabbed her, managing to grasp her belt with his fingers. The conductor rang an emergency bell, and the motorman stopped at once.

"I was let down gently into the street with the assistance of the gentleman and the conductor, and I was kept from being injured," her mother said. "But all the while that I was undergoing this frightful incident, my thoughts flew to you."

And somehow in a manner that science cannot yet elucidate, the woman's teenaged daughter had perceived an almost angelic image of her at the same time that the woman, in actuality, was several city blocks away, dangling a few feet from serious injury on the street, her fate determined by the fortuitous grasp of a stranger. Had the image, projected by a mother's love, been devised by some unknown aspect of the mind to assure her daughter of her safety? Or, if the benevolent stranger's grasp had been less secure, to prepare her for the news of her mother's accidental death?

The motivation and psychic rationale for the expression of a mother's love are much simpler to analyze in another account taken from the files of Dr. Louisa Rhine:

A young twenty-two-year-old Texan was working the night shift at a factory some four hundred miles from the home of his parents.

As he later recalled the incident: "At approximately 11:00 A.M. on a certain Friday, I was asleep at the boardinghouse, and my mother came to me in a dream. I saw her face very distinctly, and I could tell by her expression that she was in trouble."

The young man awoke feeling very distressed. Although there had been no specific warnings portrayed or information relayed in the dream, he was convinced that the image of his mother's anxious, troubled face had a serious meaning.

At 8:00 P.M. that evening, he received a telegram from his sister informing him that their mother had been seriously injured and asking him to come home at once. He was "shocked, but not surprised." Because of the dream, it was as though he had been expecting such news.

Sadly, the young man arrived home too late, but he learned that his mother had received her mortal wound at the time when he had been sleeping in his boardinghouse room and dreaming of her being in some kind of trouble.

"While Father was in Denver, my mother had decided to drive the team of horses and the wagon to get my sister, who taught school six miles away," he wrote in his report. "At approximately 11:00 A.M. the team ran away. Mother was thrown from the wagon, struck by one of the rear wheels, and mortally injured, passing away about 2:00 A.M. the following morning."

She Knew When Her Pilot Son Was Shot Down in Korea

The mother-child relationship is paradoxical and, in a sense, tragic. It requires the most intense love on the mother's side, yet this very love must help the child grow away from the mother and to become fully independent.

—Erich Fromm

In 1978, as one of the founding members of the Wholistic Healing Board through the Institutes of Health and Welfare in Washington, D. C., Sherry Hansen Steiger was privy to the findings of a research project which revealed yet another invisible link between mother and child.

Newborn infants in the nursery and their respective mothers in their various hospital rooms were monitored for both audible sounds and internal responses by special sensing devices. Even though the nursery and the mothers' rooms were placed far apart—and the mothers' rooms had been soundproofed as an additional condition of the test—it was noted that whenever an infant would begin to cry, its *own* mother's breasts would begin to lactate even though the mother was completely unable to hear the child with her "physical" ears. In each single instance, a mother's breasts would begin to lactate *only* in response to her own child's cries. Some invisible two-way party line seems to exist between mother and child which tells the mother when her child is hungry or in distress.

Whenever Sherry tells of a telepathic experience between one of her children and herself, her own mother always says, "Yes, you're just like your Grandma Johnson. You know that the women in our family seem to have that mysterious inner knowing—that invisible telephone."

One of Sherry's Swedish grandmother's many revelatory experiences was not such a pleasant one, but it is of a kind often repeated in similar stories in our research.

Sherry lived with her Grandma Johnson in Dearborn, Michigan, from the time she was born until she was about eight years old. For a short time, Sherry and her parents lived in an apartment that her grandfather had constructed in the basement. When Sherry's mom and dad were divorced, Papa Johnson fixed up the attic, where she and her mom slept.

Grandma and Papa Johnson had four children: Arthur, the oldest and only son, nicknamed Bud; Delores (Del), the oldest daughter; Sherry's mom, Lorraine;

and Cheryl, a “surprise,” who was three years younger than Sherry and who seemed more like her sister than her aunt.

The house was always bustling with activity. At one time or another nearly all of their children and their families lived with Grandma and Papa. And sometimes it seemed as though they all lived there at the same time.

The dining room table was most frequently the hub of the family’s activities. Sherry remembers that it became a common occurrence to spread various items such as soap, toothbrushes, and toiletries out on the table to be packaged up and shipped to the needy. On other occasions, the family would gather to help Grandma sew cancer pads out of sheets and towels. And there were also the times when they would sort and group blankets, washcloths, clothes, and shoes to send to the orphans in Korea.

Uncle Bud was a pilot in the Korean War, and his frequent letters told sad, wrenching tales about the deplorable conditions of the civilian people. His sympathetic heart touched every member of the Johnson family. His compassionate words enabled them to envision the poor helpless mothers and their children who were victims of a war and of circumstances beyond their control. Uncle Bud told of how often the innocent were left homeless, naked, and starving.

It was on a night that seemed so quiet and peaceful in Dearborn that Grandma Johnson shattered the tranquil evening with a stark, piercing cry that could mean only one thing—something was suddenly very wrong.

Grandma Johnson was suddenly jolted awake out of a sound sleep. Sitting straight up in bed, she screamed out, “Something has happened to Art! Oh, no! Something has happened to our Bud.”

The light of day brought the dreaded confirmation. At the exact moment that Grandma Johnson had sat up in bed with the stark insight that something awful had happened on the other side of the Earth to her only son, Uncle Bud’s jet had been shot by a Korean fighter.

Bud Johnson, a skilled pilot, had pulled out of a tail-

spin, but when he attempted to return to the aerial dogfight to rescue his buddy in the plane below him, he had crashed and died.

Ironically, Uncle Bud's youngest son, David, was exactly one year old on the same day his daddy died.

She Sensed her Daughter's Pain via Long-Distance ESP

*We never know the love of our parents for us till
we have become parents.* —Henry Ward Beecher

In his scholarly monograph *Telepathic Impressions: A Review and Report of Thirty-five New Cases* (Proceedings of the American Society of Psychical Research, vol. 29, June 1970), Dr. Ian Stevenson of the University of Virginia Medical School includes the case of Mrs. Ellen Vlok, Republic of South Africa, who sensed her daughter Elsa's discomfort when they were separated by a distance of eighty-five miles.

In her account of the incident, dated October 21, 1963, Mrs. Vlok explains that at the time of the remarkable ESP encounter she resided in Piquetberg, Cape of Good Hope, while her daughter taught at the Albert Road School at Woodstock and lived at the Sea Point hotel, near Cape Town. Because she lived some distance from the school, Elsa had to rise very early in the morning to arrive at her classroom on schedule.

It was on a Wednesday morning that Ellen Vlok suddenly "became uneasy" about her daughter. Regardless of how hard she tried to overcome the unpleasant sensations, "the conviction that something was amiss with Elsa grew stronger and stronger."

Both Mrs. Vlok's husband and their son were attorneys and had already left for the office when she was seized by the uneasy feelings about Elsa. She knew that they were surprised when she burst, "quite breathless," into their office and pleaded that one of them immediately drive her to Elsa's hotel, over eighty miles away.

"They both ridiculed the idea as just being my fan-

ciful imagination. But I remained adamant,” Mrs. Vlok stated in her report. “Eventually my son laughingly consented to leave the office and to drive me to the Sea Point at once.”

The nearer they drew to Cape Town, the more Mrs. Vlok urged her son to drive faster. When, after a two-hour drive, they reached the hotel, at around 11:00 A.M., she rushed up the stairs to the second-floor room of her daughter.

“On opening the door, we found her pathetically perched in a queer position on the edge of her bed, still in nightclothes, numb with cold, and unable to move at all, having slipped a disc in her spine as she was getting out of bed,” Mrs. Vlok said.

Elsa had been in that uncomfortably taut position for more than four hours. Her cries for help had proved futile, for the hotel maids only came around noon to do the rooms.

Neither Mrs. Vlok nor her son could move Elsa, so they immediately summoned a doctor “who could bring relief.”

Later, in her account of the incident, Elsa recalled that it must have been about 7:00 A.M., as she was preparing to dress for school, that she “suddenly realized I could not straighten up.” The pain she remembered as “excruciating.” Although she had no impression of her mother, she “was not one scrap surprised” when her mother walked in with her brother in tow.

When queried by Dr. Ian Stevenson as to whether their mother had on any other occasion expressed undue concern over Elsa’s welfare or at any other time pleaded to be taken to her daughter, her son, P. V. Vlok, answered in the negative.

“In fact,” he added, “I can dispel immediately any suggestion that she is an imaginative person. She is highly intelligent, practical in her outlook and in her thoughts, and certainly not given to all sorts of suggestions.”

Mrs. Vlok lived up to her son’s assessment of her practicality when she answered the researcher’s query about whether she had experienced any imagery con-

cerning her daughter by saying simply and directly: "I just had a distinct conviction, with no specific details, that something had happened to Elsa—that she was in trouble—with a strong urge that I should go to her."

In his evaluation of the case of Mrs. Vlok and her daughter Elsa and the thirty-four other incidents in his monograph, Dr. Stevenson concludes the following:

"That we are linked to each other in hidden ways that are, at least sometimes, powerfully influential has been the contention of mystics of all ages and places. It was also hinted at or explicitly stated as a conviction by several pioneers in psychical research. . . .

"To believe in some universal binding that joins us all is not, of course, to deny that for most of us this union is never manifested consciously. But even if we can only observe it occasionally, and usually between persons united by love and during a special crisis to one of them, this should arouse our curiosity and our efforts to find out why this is so—why the union is latent for most of us and why it does sometimes reach expression in a few of us."

Luther Burbank, the famous breeder of plants, cherished strong beliefs that he had inherited telepathic ability from his mother. In *Hearst's Magazine* of May 1923, he said:

"I inherited my mother's ability to send and receive communications. In tests before representatives of the University of California she was able—seven times out of ten—to receive messages sent to her telepathically.

"My mother, who lived to be more than ninety-six years of age, was in poor health the last years of her life. During those years I often wished to summon my sister. On such occasions I never had to write, telephone or telegraph to her. Instead, I sent her messages telepathically, and each time she arrived in Santa Rosa, California, where I live, on the next train."

“Gram Has Passed Away”

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. —Psalm 127:3

Rachael Fellenstein, 52, of Elgin, Illinois, has a clear memory of the morning in March 1949 when her mother, Rhonda Demske, received a strong telepathic message that Rachael’s grandmother, Sarah Lebowitz, had passed away.

“We lived at the time in Columbus, Ohio, and Gram and Grandpa Lebowitz resided in East Brunswick, New Jersey,” Rachael said. “I was not quite eight. My sister, Maxine, was five. I remember clearly that I was setting the table for breakfast when Mom came down the stairs crying and saying, ‘Gram passed away during the night.’”

Rachael nearly dropped the plates that she was carrying to the table, and little Maxine, perceiving their mother in tears, began to sob in concert.

“Her head lowered and her hands cupped over her eyes, Mom walked slowly toward the large easy chair in the living room and sat down,” Rachael said. “I ran to her side to comfort her. Even at that young age, I knew that my mother and her mom were extremely close.”

It was at that moment that Rachael’s father, George Demske, entered the living room. He still had shaving cream specks on his chin and beneath his ears. It was obvious that he had heard the sounds of his wife weeping and had come to see what the matter was. His eyes were sad, and his facial expression was already set into a sympathetic mold.

“Sarah,” he wanted to know, “what’s wrong? Have you a stomachache? What is it that causes you distress?”

“Papa always spoke in a very crisp, accentuated manner,” Rachael said. “He had immigrated with his parents from Poland in 1934, and he had been mocked as a schoolboy for his thick accent. He had listened

carefully to radio announcers and had done his best to imitate their mid-American tones.”

As his wife divulged the reason for her great sorrow, George Demske’s expression altered from one of commiseration to one of incredulity.

“How is that you know this, darling?” he asked in a gentle voice. “There has been no telegram delivered. We have received no long distance telephone calls. We have received no message of any kind that would bring us such terrible news.”

Rachael put her arms around her younger sister and began to relax. “I began to think that maybe Mom had only dreamed about Gram’s death,” she said.

“Daddy was always calm and collected. If he said that there had been no telephone calls or telegrams to inform us of Gram’s death, then that meant that she was still alive.”

But her mother was firm in her grief. “You know that Mama and I have our own private telephone line,” she reminded her family. “We have always known things about each other without speaking.”

There was no question that Gram and Mom seemed always to be in touch on some level of awareness. Rachael and Maxine had wondered if they might be witches or something.

George knelt to take his wife’s hands tenderly in his own, his thick fingers ink-stained from the printing presses that he operated for the newspaper. He readily conceded the reality of the special bond that Rhonda had with her mother, but he wished to make a point of his own.

“Perhaps this time you have only had a vivid dream,” he said. “You know that your mother is well and that she enjoys perfect health. It was only three months ago at Hanukkah that we saw both of your parents. It has been less than a week since you spoke to her on the telephone. It is a blessing that she is so well.”

Rachael nodded her head in silent agreement with her father’s analysis of the situation. Gram always presented a picture of glowing vitality.

Gram herself often boasted to Rachael and Maxine that she had needed a doctor only twice in her life—once to give birth to their mother and once to give birth to Uncle Ira. Rachael knew that her mother had been born when Gram was very young. Even now, it seemed as though they might be sisters, rather than mother and daughter.

Rhonda Demske dabbed at her large brown eyes with a handkerchief and spoke to her family in a hushed but firm voice: “Gram . . . my mother . . . died last night. I *know* that she did.”

“I went back to setting the table,” Rachael said. “I didn’t know what else to do. Mom gave a deep sigh, whispered something to Daddy about life going on, and said that she would make breakfast. But before she could begin, a telegram arrived from Uncle Ira saying that Gram had died suddenly and quite unexpectedly during the night. She had suffered a heart attack.

“With that sad confirmation of Mom’s *knowing*, none of us felt like eating that morning. Daddy held Mom in his arms, and Maxine and I hugged her legs and cried.”

Forty-four years later, Rachael Fellenstein vividly recalled the details of that morning in March 1949, and she freely states that the implications of her mother’s accurate clairvoyant and/or telepathic *knowing* of Grandmother Lebowitz’s death transformed her entire life.

“If Mom had rationalized the impression that she received of Gram’s death, she would have dismissed it at once,” Rachael said. “She had no clue that Gram was ill. Gram was only forty-five years old, and she had been healthy and robust when we had seen her three months before at Hanukkah. Mom had spoken to her on the telephone only five nights before her death. Gram herself had no clue that she was ill. In short, Mom had no knowledge of any illness stalking Gram, and there was no way that she could have inferred that Gram would face a heart attack based on any information available to her.

“Yes, if Mom had used her head, instead of her heart

... if she had used her intellect, rather than her feelings, she would have rejected the vision of her mother's death at once. But Mom was attuned to receive information through the higher levels of her consciousness. She had been made aware of the marvelous tool of intuition and her psychic abilities at an early age. What is more, her love connection with her mother had taught her to trust in these abilities."

Continuing her evaluation of the dramatic experience of mother-child telepathic communication, Rachael made a strong point of the fact that her mother had not received a telephone call or a telegram informing her of Gram's passing until long after she had announced her grief to her family.

"At the early age of eight, I was given profound proof of the spiritual level of communication that exists between all humans—and perhaps reaches its most common and complete expression in that remarkable link which exists between a mother and her children," Rachael said. "I did not hesitate to work together with my own children, Daniel and Ruth, to create a strong love connection and to seek to develop our psychic connection as well. We truly feel that we have been able to utilize our spiritual bond to great advantage throughout the many stages of our parent-child relationship."

Part Four: Prophetic Glimpses into the Future

A Mother's Broken Promise That Saved Her Child's Life

Loving a child doesn't mean giving in to all his whims; to love him is to bring out the best in him, to teach him to love what is difficult. —Nadia Boulanger

Blanche Weidmuller was so pleased when the afternoon of July 28, 1927, turned out to be perfect for their promised boat ride on the *Favorite*, a double-decker that made short excursion runs on Lake Michigan between Chicago's Municipal Pier and Lincoln Park.

As Blanche and her daughter walked on the pier toward the large boat, festively bedecked with red and white decorations, a boatman pulled alongside and offered a ride in his motor launch.

"Thank you," she told him. "We're taking the *Favorite*."

A bit farther along the pier, another boatman extended an invitation to try his vessel.

"We're taking the big boat, thank you, sir!" her six-year-old daughter answered excitedly.

And then a most bizarre thing happened when a third boatman approached them and told them that he had their boat for Lincoln Park.

"Yes," Blanche Weidmuller answered without hesitation. "This is the boat."

As the man lifted her daughter into the boat, the girl screamed her anguished protest: "This isn't the boat, Mother! You promised that we would ride on the *Favorite*!"

Blanch said she was sorry that she had caused disappointment, but she was not sorry that she had broken her promise. When the man had proclaimed, "This is

your boat,” she had felt a sudden sharp and peculiar sensation between her eyes, and something mysterious had assured her that this was truly the boat for their ride.

That night, after they returned home from their outing on the lake, she drew her daughter close to her and said, “I know that promises should be kept, but this one had to be broken. I don’t know why.”

To her great relief, her daughter gave her a forgiving kiss.

It was only a little while later that the streets were reverberating with the shouts of newsboys excitedly announcing an extra edition of the *Daily News*.

The banner headline for July 28, 1927, read: “25 Drowned as Lake Boat Sinks!” According to the story, the *Favorite* had capsized half a mile off North Avenue when it became the victim of a sudden violent squall.

What Blanche Weidmuller would never be able to fathom is *why* and *how* some mysterious force compelled her to break her promise to her daughter and save their lives while so many others were doomed to board the *Favorite* and die.

She Knew Her Son Would Not Return from His Camping Trip

Parents lend their children their experience and a vicarious memory; children endow their parents with a vicarious immortality. —George Santayana

In June 1968, Elizabeth Comstra of La Crosse, Wisconsin, was disappointed to hear of her son Tim’s plans to go on a two-week Canadian camping trip with eight or nine of his friends.

“I had really hoped to see more of you around home this summer, Tim,” she complained. “You’ve no more than just got home from college. Dad and I thought that we could do some more family things this summer before you graduate next spring and are really off on your own.”

Her tall, blond, handsome son gave her one of his

killer smiles and followed it up with a warm squeeze of affection. She could not help noticing how the once desperate hugs for comfort from an insecure little boy had now given way to patronizing, "humor Ma" squeezes from a confident young man.

"Ma," he began, shrugging off her protests, "it's only for two weeks. You know how I've always wanted to go 'way up north into the wilds of Canada. You know how I love to go fishing and boating. And I can't wait to go swimming in those pure, clear lakes."

She shuddered, warning him how cold the water in those lakes might be. But she knew he was an expert and strong swimmer.

And then his voice became very serious: "I haven't seen some of the guys since we graduated from high school three years ago. And the thing of it is, with this war going on in Vietnam, you know, we could all get drafted and not see each other for years—maybe never again."

Tim's words cramped her stomach with an icy pain. "Don't say things like that, about going to war. Maybe it will all be over in another few months. Besides, you're going to be a senior and you've got good grades. You're not about to be drafted."

"Not until after I graduate, anyway," Tim scowled.

"Does it have to be for two weeks?" she asked, wanting him to consider his decision very carefully. "Your brother and sister are going to be very disappointed to hear you're leaving again so soon."

Tim laughed. "Jealous, you mean! They'll be glad I'm leaving for a while."

"I could see that there was no talking Tim out of taking the camping trip with his friends," Mrs. Comstra said later. "In a way, of course, I could understand why in such troubled times he would want to enter the beauty of nature to escape the grim realities of the world that he would face soon enough as a young adult fresh out of college.

"Maybe I was a little jealous myself. Such a trip would have been out of the question for me when I was Tim's age. In fact, when I was Tim's age, nearly

twenty-one, I was already four months pregnant with him!”

Elizabeth Comstra only wished that she could somehow shake off the terrible feelings of foreboding that she had about the trip to Canada. She kept trying to tell herself that she was only experiencing a mother's natural concern over a child's journeying away from home. But within the quiet recesses of her inner self, she knew that something awful was going to happen to her firstborn son. Some terrible inner realization told her that she would never again see her handsome son alive.

The fourth night after Tim and his friends had left on their automobile caravan from La Crosse, Elizabeth Comstra suffered through a very restless night.

“I heard Tim calling to me, over and over,” she said. “His brother and sister both called me Mom, but he had always called me Ma. And all night it seemed that I heard him calling for me—Ma! Ma! Ma!”

The next morning she told her husband, Irv, and her daughter, Vivian, that she knew something was wrong with Tim.

“Irv tried to comfort me by saying that Gordy, one of the boys along on the trip, had called his parents just the night before and said that all was well.”

After Irv left for work, Mrs. Comstra felt as though she would explode with anxiety and stress. Vivian suggested that the two of them go for a walk, and she readily agreed with her daughter's plan.

That night when she was sitting alone out on the screened porch unable to sleep, Elizabeth Comstra had a vision in which her son Tim appeared to her. “I know I was not dreaming,” she insisted. “I saw Tim as solidly as I had ever seen him.”

At first Tim looked very sad, but when he seemed assured that his mother could see him, he smiled and said, “Don't worry, Ma. I'll be okay. And I'll look after Eddie when he goes away.”

At around two o'clock in the morning, the Comstra family received the awful news that the car Tim was driving had skidded in a heavy rainstorm and had gone

over the side of a bridge into deep lake water below. Only two of the five young men in the automobile managed to get out alive.

Although the authorities made extensive efforts to reclaim the bodies of the three victims, Tim's body had not been found.

"Allowing for the differences in time zones, Tim's spirit appeared to me just a few minutes after the time that his friends told us his car skidded off the bridge into the lake," Mrs. Comstra said.

"The boys who survived the accident said that although Tim had managed to open his window, he had hit his head hard against the steering wheel as he fought to regain control of the vehicle. He was quite likely knocked unconscious before they entered the water. The night was so dark and stormy and the water so black that they said they never saw Tim again once they went under the lake's surface. They also told us that the lake bottom was thick with silt and peat and made the divers' job of reclaiming the bodies very difficult."

That September Edward turned nineteen, and he was drafted in November.

"Of course I was upset," Mrs. Comstra said. "Tim's body had never been found, and now Eddie was called away to join our armed forces in an increasingly unpopular armed conflict. But somehow I found support in the promise that Tim's spirit had made to me, that he would look after Eddie when he went away. I had a strong feeling that Tim had foreseen Eddie being drafted and being sent to Vietnam.

"People can argue coincidence all they want," she concluded, "but Edward made it through some of the heaviest fighting in Vietnam without getting a scratch. Another thing, on three occasions he was thrown or fell into lakes or streams in which the water was 'way above his head, and every time he managed to get safely to shore. All his life, Eddie has hardly ever been able to swim a stroke. But Tim was always a very strong swimmer."

A Mother and Daughter Experience Dual Dreams of a Fatal Accident

Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and grandchildren. —Deuteronomy 4:9

On March 8, 1984, Patsy Eastburn of Fort Collins, Colorado, had a dream in which she saw her mother, Myrna Johnson, lying on her side on the street in a pool of blood.

“I woke up in a cold sweat,” Ms. Eastburn said. “I always had a close connection with my mother, and we had experienced many telepathic exchanges ever since my early childhood. Four years before, Mom had dreamed of Dad’s fatal heart attack while he was away on business, and this dream was so vivid that I began to worry that I had now experienced a prophetic dream of my mother’s death. I telephoned her at once, even though it was only seven o’clock in the morning and I knew that Mom usually slept until around nine.”

Ms. Eastburn had intended to tell her mother about the terrible nightmare so they might interpret it together. But then she heard her mother’s remarkable opening words after the brief exchange of amenities:

“Oh, Patsy, I am so glad that you called. I’ve been awake for hours, unable to go back to sleep. I had an awful dream last night. My car was hit by a big truck—and I was killed! Oh, Patsy, I saw myself lying in the street in a pool of blood. It all seemed so real!”

Patsy Eastburn remembered that she was struck nearly speechless by her mother’s revelation that they had experienced a dual dream of death. Although a deep and sudden fear made her shudder, she resolved not to mention her own dream and to keep her voice calm and reassuring for her mother’s sake.

“If anything happens to me, dear, I want you to have my collection of antique plates,” her mother said. “Your brother may have the wildlife paintings that he

loves so much. You may divide your father's athletic trophies."

"Nothing is going to happen to you, Mom," Ms. Eastburn told her. "You just had a bad dream. Remember, that book on dream interpretation that you checked out of the library said that when you dream of your death it is very often a symbol of change coming in your life."

Her mother sighed and said that she had already thought of that. "This dream was very different from any dream that I have ever had. It was so real. I think that I have actually dreamed about my death."

Myrna Johnson talked more about the large truck how it ran a red light at an intersection, and crashed broadside into her car.

"As if I were some rag doll, I was tossed out of my car and onto the street," she told her daughter. "It was so awful the way that I could see myself lying there with that pool of blood getting larger and larger."

Patsy Eastburn continued to provide optional symbolic interpretations for the horrible images of death that her mother's dream machinery had so vividly dramatized.

"I finally managed to change the subject to my brother Jim's approaching April wedding, one of Mom's favorite topics, but the diversion was short-lived," Ms. Eastburn said. "Mom began to worry that she might not be alive to see her only son married at last at the age of thirty-five."

That night, Patsy Eastburn had another dream. She was seated among a large number of friends and relatives at some kind of party or formal gathering. Food and drink were being passed on trays, but the occasion for the party seemed a somber one. On one level of awareness, she knew that she was attending a funeral and that it was quite likely her mother's.

"Certain of my friends and relatives kept coming up to me and asking if I had met a Mr. Ritter," she said. "When I would say that I had not had the pleasure, they would step aside as if to introduce me to the man. Strangely, though, I could never see his face. And when

I would extend my hand in greeting, he would always seem to disappear.”

Ms. Eastburn also remembered that Eileen Lee, her high school math teacher, suddenly appeared in the dream and asked her to remember a sequence of numbers.

“Although Mrs. Lee had been dead for twelve years or more, in the alternate reality of my dream she was as hard-nosed a taskmaster as always,” Ms. Eastburn said. “Mrs. Lee told me that I would be tested very soon and that it was important that I remember the correct order of the numbers. At first I had difficulty hearing the numbers, and I asked her several times to repeat the sequence. At last she walked away from me smiling in triumph when I successfully repeated the correct order of the digits, and she reminded me that a test would be coming soon.

The next morning at 8:15 as Patsy Eastburn was preparing to leave for work, the neighbor’s dog began a peculiar howling that upset her in a way that she could not understand. “It was as if that mournful sound were touching me deep inside in some strangely sorrowful way,” she said.

A few minutes later, at about 8:20, when the friends with whom she carpoled arrived to pick her up, Ms. Eastburn began to weep uncontrollably as she got into the car.

“My friends were immediately solicitous,” she said. “I felt so very embarrassed, but I didn’t know what was wrong with me. I told them that I would be fine in a few minutes, and I shrugged off their suggestions that I had been working too hard. By the time they dropped me off at work at 8:53, I had managed to stop crying, but I still had an awful sense of foreboding.”

Within the hour, Patsy Eastburn’s brother, Jim, telephoned her at work with the sad news that their mother had been killed at around 8:22 that morning.

“She had had an early appointment that morning with her beautician,” Mrs. Eastburn explained. “A massive trailer truck was unable to stop for the red light, and it skidded through the intersection and hit

Mom's car while still moving at a high speed. Mom was thrown from the car and was found lying on her right side in a pool of blood.

"Her death, we were told, had been instantaneous—and it had occurred at the very minute that I had suddenly begun to cry in front of my friends in the car pool."

As an eerie addendum to the tragically accurate dreams of her mother's impending death, the name of the truck driver, who escaped injury, was Mel *Ritter*. The license number of his truck comprised the same series of numerals that the schoolteacher in Ms. Eastburn's dream had admonished her to remember.

Mother's Dreams of Premonition

Children are the bridge to heaven. —Persian Proverb

In his *Strangest of All*, the late Frank Edwards, author and radio personality, relates the experience of Mrs. Albert Harrison of Brooklyn, who, on November 18, 1955, woke up screaming in terror. Once her startled husband had calmed her to some degree, she told him that she had just had a dream in which she had seen their son, James, die in a flaming plane crash.

In her description of the dream, she saw a very large airplane leaving an airfield. She noticed that there were civilians around, but most of the passengers were soldiers.

"Then, as the plane was taking off," she said, "I saw a house right in its way as it dived and caught fire."

From her dream perspective, Mrs. Harrison saw herself waiting outside the flaming wreck, helplessly watching as man after man jumped free of the burning aircraft.

"I saw my boy and he was burning!" she said. "He fell down. He didn't move. I knew he was dead."

Shocked and dazed from her dreadful dream, Mrs. Harrison almost decided not to answer the telephone when it rang. Summoning all of her courage, she picked up the receiver.

It was a long distance call from Seattle. Her premonition had been correct in that her son, twenty-year-old Pfc. James Harrison, had been on board a large military transport plane that had crashed and burned on takeoff. Twenty-seven servicemen had been killed and many more injured. But Mrs. Harrison was overjoyed to learn that her son was not dead, merely suffering from minor burns.

Later, James Harrison said that he had been in the cabin of the plane at the time of the crash and had probably been thrown out at the moment of impact. The next conscious memory he had was of rolling over and over in the snow to put out the flames that were burning his clothes.

He had injured his shoulder, his hand was burned, and he was too weak to stand up—so he began to crawl away from the burning gasoline. When he finally extinguished the fire on his clothing, he turned around to see if he could help someone else.

According to Frank Edwards's account of the incident, "The time of the accident and the description of what happened coincided almost exactly with the dream of the boy's mother, except for the happy ending."

Her Son's Calls for Help Were Heard in Her Dream

Edwards writes of another mother's premonition that had a happy ending in his retelling of the experience of Mrs. William Evans of Kirlin, Indiana, who, one spring night in 1956, had a dream in which she could hear her son, Harry, calling faintly for help.

Nineteen-year-old Harry was supposed to have been home by midnight, so his mother had gone to bed with an uneasy mind. When her dream woke her around four o'clock in the morning and he still wasn't home in his bed where he belonged, she set out to find him.

Mrs. Evans searched the slippery country roads for miles without results until she came to fresh skid

marks near a bridge. There, down in the dry creek bed, far out of sight of the road, was her son's overturned car.

Fortunately Harry's injuries were minor, but he had been pinned in the wreck for seven hours. As the rescuers freed him, he said, "I was sort of stunned at first, and I kept calling Mom for a long time. I knew she would come. I just didn't know when!"

How Psychoanalysts View Prophetic and Telepathic Dreams

Although Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, at first professed a profound skepticism about prophetic and telepathic dreams, in his article "Dreams and Telepathy," published in 1922, he admitted the possibility of such phenomena. He had also written a much less cautious full-length essay, *Psychoanalysis and Telepathy*, which he would have read to the International Psychoanalytic Congress of 1922 if Ernest Jones had not persuaded him to consider the possible negative repercussions his outspoken attitude toward the paranormal might have on the whole fledgling psychoanalytic movement. Consequently, the controversial *Psychoanalysis and Telepathy* did not see print until after Freud's death in 1941.

There is little question that two of Freud's most brilliant friends and followers, Dr. C. G. Jung and Dr. Sandor Ferenczi, had a great deal to do with his reappraisal of psychic phenomena. Jung, who later broke away from Freud to establish his own school of psychoanalysis, used to regale his friend and mentor with tales of his personal experiences in what the Germans still refer to as "occult" research. Ferenczi, on the other hand, introduced Freud to several patients who demonstrated clairvoyant abilities. The founder of psychoanalysis was so struck by the extrasensory communications between Ferenczi and his patients that he pronounced that such demonstrations had "put an end

to any possible doubt about the reality of thought-transference.”

In 1924, Freud wrote a letter to Ernest Jones in which he remarked how impressed he was by a report on telepathic phenomena which Gilbert Murray had prepared for the Society for Psychical Research. And then in the famous letter to researcher Hereward Carrington, Freud declared: “If I had my life to live over again, I should devote myself to psychical research rather than to psychoanalysis.”

Today psychiatrists and psychoanalysts vary greatly in their attitudes toward such stories as we recount in this book about the remarkable psychic link between a mother and her children. Those who profess nothing but adamant skepticism toward such accounts will say that such illustrations express nothing but the percipients’ desire to believe in the validity of such experiences. On the other hand, those who consider psychical research to be making a valuable contribution toward a more complete understanding of what it is to be human will insist that there are far too many accounts of paranormal activity connected with the power of a mother’s love to be dismissed by an arched eyebrow or a cursory examination of the data.

Many psychiatrists have developed a respect for the validity of such occurrences when, in the course of analysis, a close relationship that can only be described as psychic has developed between a doctor and his or her patient. Some therapists have reported patients who have related dreams that have dramatized actual incidents which the analysts themselves experienced that day—or even the week before. Many reports have been made of several patients of the same analyst sharing dreams or reenacting group or individual experiences, as if some strange circle of telepathic dreams had been established.

Dr. Jule Eisenbud has remarked that the psychic process “is a thorough-going part of the total behavior of the individual and as much of a determinant in the actions and thoughts . . . as other types of stimuli.”

It would seem that since so much of psychoanalytic

theory and practice has to do with the interpretation of the symbols created during the dream experience, the bonds between psychology and parapsychology would be strong indeed. The same laws of psychodynamics that apply to the dream also appear to apply to psychic phenomena.

A man who has been the indisputable favorite of his mother keeps for life the feeling of a conquerer, that confidence of success that often induces real success.
—Sigmund Freud

Mom's Sense of Impending Danger Saves Her Children

The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom.
—Henry Ward Beecher

On many occasions some invisible sense that danger was looming over her children has prompted Sherry Hansen Steiger to take the necessary action which saved their lives.

While on a vacation to Florida in 1972, Sherry, her husband, Paul, their two children, Erik and Melissa, and two teenaged friends, Jan and Jimmy, escaped a sudden and terrible death only by heeding the warning that was transmitted to them through Sherry's special mother's radar.

Driving straight through from Columbus, Ohio, in an oversized van that had been customized for sleeping and storing camp gear, they arrived at their campsite tired, yet enthusiastic enough to set up the tents that night. For the next two days, they enjoyed beach walks, building sand castles, collecting shells, and burying each other in the sand.

On the third night at the campsite, all parties were tucked into their sleeping bags and had been sound asleep for many hours when all of a sudden, Sherry sat up in her sleeping bag and screamed, "We've got to get out of here—*now!*"

Nearly in a trance state, Sherry repeated herself until

all were awake. By this time Sherry's family and friends had learned not to question her instincts when they came from that depth of feeling, as there had been sufficient experiences to prove them valid.

On this occasion, however, Paul had an annoying edge to his voice when he asked, "I don't understand. Why do we have to leave now? The sky is clear; all the stars are brightly shining; all else in the campground is completely quiet. What possibly could be wrong?"

Somewhat puzzled herself, Sherry answered, "I honestly have no idea. I just *know* that if we don't leave now something terrible is going to happen to our children."

Jan and Jimmy already had Erik and Melissa in their arms and were awaiting instructions outside the tent. When Sherry went out and saw the clear night air and observed the extreme quiet and peace that seemed to be all around the campground area she acknowledged that she, too, felt it was weird, but *necessary*.

Coming up with a constructive idea of where to go and what to do was the next item of business. Sherry thought of an idea that must have sounded insane at four o'clock in the morning—to take all their dirty laundry to the next town to a laundromat. Then at least they would be doing something constructive during their getaway. So they hurriedly gathered up the dirty laundry, grabbing damp, sandy towels and beach blankets to be washed as well.

In Sherry's mind there was no time to take anything else except a couple of food items, so they could eat an early breakfast at the laundromat.

It took about forty-five minutes to arrive at the next town. They had monitored the radio for a message alerting them of a storm or some such danger, but there was no indication of any sort of omen or portent of disaster.

What could they do but make the best of it? They all sang songs until they reached the laundromat, then everyone pitched in to do the many loads of wash.

Finding an open convenience store for change for the washing machines and dryers offered them an op-

portunity to ask the clerk if he had heard of a storm moving in, a monster lurking in a nearby campground—anything! But once again, all seemed to be peaceful and quiet.

By now the first hues of dawn were coloring the sky, and with clean, dry, fresh-smelling towels and beach clothes (and clean diapers for one-year-old Melissa), the group loaded up the van and turned to Sherry for the sign to return to camp.

Singing all the way back to the campground, they had all but forgotten the reason they had left—until they couldn't find their tents.

Driving into the campground, they saw a vacant lot where their camp had been set up. There were some scattered cans from the food boxes and some clothes tossed here and there, as if they had been thrown about by some incredible force.

They got out of the van and stood in a complete daze.

Just then a park ranger drove up and excitedly bolted out of his truck. "Oh, my God! Thank heavens you are all safe," he said. "We have been conducting a search for your family. We thought you all must have been killed!

"We have just had the most incredible freak occurrence of nature I've ever seen in my over thirty-five years as a park ranger. Somewhere around 4:30 A.M. or so, maybe a tad later, out of nowhere—and I mean *nowhere*—came this waterspout from the ocean—out of a clear sky!

"It swept onto the campground with no warning and with absolutely no time for anyone to act or to warn others. It tossed your tents in the air like they were kites. It picked them up, spun them around, and tossed them in all different directions. We are still finding things from your camp area scattered *everywhere!*"

The park ranger explained that a waterspout is like a "mini-tornado" or small hurricane that comes in off the ocean with incredible force and then either dissipates or goes back out to sea.

He suddenly looked Sherry square in the eyes and

asked, "Excuse my language, but how in the hell did you get the kids and all out in time? What happened? Where did you go at this time of the morning?"

"You can't believe how worried we have been," he continued. "There is no conceivable way that you would have escaped unhurt. More than likely, if you had all been asleep in your tents—as we assumed you were—you would have all been in pieces around the area with the rest of your belongings. You really must have angels surrounding you guys!"

After explaining Sherry's sudden feeling that the lives of her children were endangered, the ranger simply looked at them and shook his head, saying, "Boy, this is sure one for the books! Come, let me show you where your tents ended up."

They followed the ranger to view the twisted, mangled tents with the stakes piercing the fabric at various points.

Sherry and her family stood in awe. After taking a few pictures of the carnage as a lasting reminder of their narrow escape, they all shed tears and offered many prayers of thanks that their lives had been spared on such a night of unsuspected violence!

On an earlier occasion when her daughter was an infant, Sherry's seemingly supernatural knowledge of an accident that was about to occur may have saved the life of her baby and the rest of her family as well.

Sherry, her husband, Paul, and their two children—Erik, age three, and Melissa, under three months—were on their way to their evening ministry at Smith Haven Mall on Long Island. Sherry was nursing Melissa in the front passenger seat of the car while Paul drove. Erik was busy playing with his toy cars in the back seat.

Sherry's energies were entirely focused on Melissa. She valued this bonding time and made certain that she offset the jiggling of the car, the traffic noise, and the sense of rushing to their place of employment with extra nurturing love as she stroked her daughter's arm and back with a soothing, calming tenderness.

Suddenly Sherry was struck with an awful feeling that something was about to harm this gift of life feeding at her breast—and at the same time she received the guidance of what to do to protect her baby. Having absolutely *no* idea what the imminent threat might be and without removing her fixed gaze from Melissa for even a split second, Sherry screamed out as firmly and loudly as possible without shattering her daughter's eardrums, "Paul, steer hard to the right now! *Now . . . to the right . . . now!*"

She must have uttered the words with enough force and conviction to cause Paul not to question her and not to look around to check things for himself—to just act immediately on the shouted order.

In that indescribable moment of time wherein a minute seems to last an eternity, yet an eternity seems to happen in a minute, Sherry was dimly aware of the crashing and bending of metal, the squealing of brakes, the breaking of glass—all spinning around in her head as if they were each part of some supernatural dream-time occurrence.

When their Ford Mustang finally came to a stop, it became more than apparent in *real* time that Sherry and her family had just been involved in a major automobile accident. In a grateful stupor they looked at each other with a silent prayer of thanks on their lips that not one of them was injured.

From the rear left side, a drunk driver had gunned his truck out of a bar's parking lot and roared into the street in such a manner that he had been heading straight for the driver's door of the Mustang at a speed of about sixty-five miles an hour. Even if Sherry had been looking at the road instead of at Melissa, it would have been impossible from her point of view to see the truck approaching. Somehow that mysterious motherly protective instinct that transcends time, space, and the physical senses miraculously saved not only her two children but herself and her husband as well.

Because Paul had acted immediately, without the slightest hesitation, and had turned the steering wheel hard to the right, the truck had become severely entan-

gled in the right *rear* of the Mustang, just behind the back door. Erik, who fortunately had been on the other side of the back seat, was the most miraculously spared.

When the police arrived, they were baffled as to how the family had escaped serious injury. Several witnesses described how the truck seemed almost to target the car, how it appeared to speed right toward the Mustang.

The police were hard-pressed to see how Paul could have steered fast enough and hard enough to escape a more direct hit from the charging truck. And how, the officers asked, did Paul know to steer to the right? If the larger vehicle had hit the driver's door of the Mustang, the police officers said that Paul, Sherry, and Melissa would more than likely have been killed, considering the speed and force with which the truck would have struck them.

Sherry was too busy comforting her little ones to explain, so Paul, shaken as he was, described the chain of events to the officers.

All they could say by way of intelligent response was, "That must be some motherly love. I'd say you had a few angels watching over you, too!"

There was no doubt that both those aspects of divine energy had interceded on the family's behalf, for it took police officers and a fire department rescue squad more than three hours to pry the two vehicles apart.

Can a Mother's Grim Glimpse of the Future Be Changed?

*The future destiny of the child is always the work
of the mother.*

—Napoleon Bonaparte

On a July morning in 1952, according to a case in the files of Dr. Louisa E. Rhine, a woman in New Jersey attempted to avoid the death of a child as she had foreseen it in a precognitive vision.

In this glimpse of the future, which had occurred as the woman had lain resting in a darkened room, she

envisioned the aftermath of a dreadful traffic accident. A child had been killed and lay covered with a blanket on the ground. Because the child was covered, she could not identify the victim.

In the morning, she told her next-door neighbor of the strange dream and begged her to keep a close watch on her five-year-old child.

Next the reluctant prophet telephoned one of her sons who lived near a busy intersection of the city, and she strenuously admonished him to keep a strict eye on his two small children.

The woman had another son who lived out in the country, but she felt that there was little need to warn him to be wary of traffic in regard to his children.

Nonetheless, it was his little girl—her own granddaughter Kathy—who was killed that same day when a township truck backed over her.

One thing seems certain about true precognition: Whether it comes about through a dream, a vision, or a hunch, the percipient sees not *possibilities* but *actualities*.

In view of this, some researchers have maintained that the age-old query "Can the future be changed?" has no real meaning. The foreknowledge of the future, of which some level of the subconscious is aware and of which it sometimes flashes a dramatic preview to the conscious in a dream or trance, is founded on the awareness of how the individual will use his or her freedom of choice. The "future event" conditions the subconscious self. The level of the subconscious that "knows" the future does not condition the "future event."

The transcendental element of self which knows what "will be" blends all time into "what is now and what will always be." For the conscious self, what is now the past was once the future.

Generally, we do not look upon past events and feel that we acted without freedom of choice. Why then should we look at the future and feel that those events are predetermined? That a subconscious level in the

psyche may *know* the future does not mean that the conscious self has no freedom of choice.

Simply stated, if the future could be changed, it would not be the future.

In a true precognitive experience, such as those that we describe in this book, when a gifted mother has used the love vibration to enable her to perceive the future, she has glimpsed what will be—and what, for a level of her subconscious, already exists.

Parapsychologists have theorized that there are perhaps five types of precognitive experiences:

Subliminal precognition, the “hunch” that proves to be accurate.

Trivial precognition, which occurs only a short time before the actual happening.

Then, in the area of full-blown, meaningful precognitions—which indicate a power of mind not limited by space or time—there are beneficial, nonbeneficial, and detrimental pre-visions.

In a beneficial premonition, the transcendental self may overdramatize a future event in such a way that it becomes transformed into a warning which is acted upon by the conscious self’s characteristic reaction to such a crisis.

A young mother in Salt Lake City, Utah, awakened her husband one night to express her concern over the colorful mobile of cartoon animals that he had mounted on their baby’s crib earlier that evening.

She explained that she had just had a terrible dream in which she had seen the mobile fall into the crib and startle the baby. Their baby, she continued with a shudder, in its kicking and thrashing about, got entangled in the strings attached to the animals and slowly strangled to death.

The man laughed at his wife’s nightmare and assured her that there was no way the screws on the clamp holding the mobile in place could slip away from the edge of the crib. He had carefully tested the clamp. It was firm, solid, immovable.

He advised her not to be such a "worry wart," then he rolled over and went back to sleep.

The young mother tried her best to put the awful dream out of her thoughts and to join her husband in much-needed sleep, but she felt somehow that she had been forewarned in order to protect her child.

Finally, she got out of bed, tiptoed into the nursery, and gently lifted the infant from its crib. She decided that she could easily bear her husband's jibes in return for peace of mind, and she slipped quietly back into bed with the child cradled in her arms.

When she awakened the next morning, she found to her horror that the "solid, immovable" mobile had slipped from its clamp and had fallen into the baby's crib. Her dream had, indeed, been a forewarning and may have been responsible for saving her child's life.

For a deeper level of the young mother's subconscious, the toppling of the mobile was a *present* fact that was still a *future* fact for her conscious self. The absence of their baby from its crib was also a present act to the transcendental self because it was aware of how the conscious self of the mother would react if she knew the safety of her child was threatened.

To stimulate the woman to action, the deeper level of her psyche fashioned a dramatic dream with the tragic ending that depicted her baby's being strangled to death by the strings attached to the mobile.

The future, therefore, had not been altered by the young mother's action, only implemented.

As early as 1934, H. F. Saltmarsh issued a report to the London Society for Psychical Research in which he described his study of 349 cases suggestive of true precognition. The researcher established the following conditions that would, in his estimation, make a case of precognition wholly satisfactory:

1. It should have been recorded in writing or told to a witness or acted upon in some significant manner *before* the subsequent incident verified it.

2. It should contain a sufficient amount of detail verified by the event to make chance coincidence unlikely.

3. Conditions should be such that telepathy, clairvoyance, auto-suggestion, and subliminally acquired knowledge can all be ruled out as possible explanations.

Saltmarsh used these criteria to select 183 of the 349 cases as totally satisfactory cases of precognition. One of these, "The Case of the Derailed Engine," again demonstrates the power of a mother's love to tune into the future.

A minister's wife and daughter were staying at lodgings at Trinity, near Edinburgh, Scotland, on July 15, 1860. It was a bright Sunday afternoon, and between three and four o'clock, Mrs. W told her daughter to go out for a short walk on the "railway garden"—the name that she had given a strip of ground between the seawall and the railway embankment.

The daughter had been gone only a few minutes when Mrs. W distinctly heard a voice within her say: "Send for her back—or something dreadful will happen to her!"

Mrs. W was seized by a sense of foreboding, which progressed into a feeling of terror that soon had her trembling and physically upset over the nameless dread. She ordered a servant to go and bring her daughter home at once.

The servant, seeing her mistress visibly distraught, set out immediately.

Mrs. W paced the floor, more upset than ever, fearful that she would never again see her beloved daughter alive.

In about a quarter of an hour, the servant returned with the daughter, who was, thankfully, safe and well.

Mrs. W asked the child not to play on the railroad embankment and obtained her promise that she would sit elsewhere and not on the spot where she usually played.

Later that afternoon, an engine and tender jumped the rails and crashed into the wall where Miss W had

been playing before the servant had brought her home. Three of the five men who were there were killed.

A few days later, Miss W and her brother visited the scene of the tragedy and saw that the smashed engine had crashed into the precise spot where they had spent two hours on the previous Sunday.

Saltmarsh theorized that what we call the “present moment” in our attempt to measure linear time is not really a point in time at all, but a small interval which he termed the “specious” present. According to his theory, our subconscious minds have a much larger “specious” present than our conscious level of being. For the subconscious, all events would be considered “present.”

If, on occasion, some of this subconscious knowledge were to burst into the conscious, we would be likely to interpret it as either a memory of a past event or a precognition of a future occurrence.

Saltmarsh is not alone in suggesting that all events—past, present, and future—are part of the “present” for the deeper levels of the transcendental mind. In his book *An Experiment with Time*, J. W. Dunne set forth his view that time is an “Eternal Now.” All events that have ever occurred, that exist now, or that ever will be, are everlastingly in existence.

In our ordinary, conscious, waking state, Dunne postulated, our view is only of the present. In sleep or other altered states of consciousness, however, our individual view might be sufficiently enlarged to permit several glimpses of the future.

Dunne theorizes that the curious experience known as *déjà vu*, the sense of the already seen, happens because of the stimulation of a partially remembered precognitive dream. Almost everyone has had at one time or another that eerie sensation of “having been here before.” According to Dunne, in those moments when the conversation becomes familiar or the new location becomes suddenly recognizable, we may simply be recalling a precognitive dream that had been driven back into the subconscious.

As we marvel at these extraordinary cases in which a mother's love ostensibly allowed her to push back the iron curtain of time and to view the future in order to warn, protect, or save her children, we find that the conventional idea that time exists as some sort of stream flowing along in one dimension is an inadequate construct.

In our conventional concept of linear time—the one that we have been taught since earliest childhood—the past does not exist; it is gone forever. The future does not exist, because it has not yet happened. The only thing that exists is the present moment.

But wait! The present does not really exist either—since it is no sooner “now” than the “now” becomes a part of the past. What was the immediate future when you began to read this sentence is fleetingly the present and has already become the past by the time you read the next word.

If the past completely ceased to exist, then we should have no memory of it. Yet each of us has a large and varied memory bank. Therefore, the past must exist somehow in some sense—perhaps not as a physical or material reality, but in some sphere of its own.

Similarly, it would seem, the future must also exist in some way in a sphere of its own. And it may well be that the subconscious does not differentiate between past, present, and future but is aware of all spheres of time as part of the “Eternal Now.”

There are, of course, certain kinds of precognitive experiences that can easily be identified as part of the normal processes of the subconscious.

For example, a mother dreams of coming down with the measles and laughs it off. She did not succumb to the disease as a child, why should she weaken as an adult?

In two days, however, she is in bed with the annoying rash at the same time that her nine-year-old daughter is lying in her own room bravely enduring the same uncomfortable, itching childhood disease.

Rather than judge this to have been a mother's pro-

phetic dream, we might better assess the experience as an example of the subconscious mind's being much more aware of the true condition of the inner body than the superficial mind is.

In other instances, a fine intellect and a good awareness of her environment will enable a mother to make highly accurate predictions. The greatest stimulus to our contemporary economy—from stock market juggling to hemline lengths—is based upon the ability of certain knowledgeable people to make keen predictions concerning the preferences of a mass society. How much keener the ability of an intelligent mother who has carefully observed—and greatly influenced—the behavior patterns of her own children?

In contrast to these “explainable” predictions, however, are the many examples of mothers who seem beyond any doubt to have experienced genuine precognitions. And their power of prophecy rests not in some occult knowledge but within the transcendental self, which seems to be aware of events that belong in the realm of the future for the superficial self.

Some researchers are fond of presenting the problem of time in an analogy that has two passengers riding on the rear platform of a train. Looking to the right and to the left, they are able to see new views of a wide variety of scenery as the train chugs along and as fresh vistas come into their view. Fleeting, the individual aspects of the scenic panorama become the passengers' present. As the train continues, these scenes fade into the distance and are lost to view. They have become a part of the train passengers' past. But those scenes will continue to exist after they have passed from the passenger's point of view—and what is more, they were in existence long before the passengers perceived them.

If two pilots happened to be flying high above the train in an airplane, they would be able to see the train passengers' past and present, as well as future scenes which lie far beyond their limited ground-level perspective. For the pilots in the airplane all would exist as an “Eternal Now.”

The definitive answer to the problem of time and

precognition will not be easy to derive—and not every answer will suit everyone's individual perspective on the enigma.

"Time," moaned an anguished and puzzled Saint Augustine, "what is it? If nobody asks me, I know. But if I am asked, I do not know!"

Once again, it may simply be a mother's love that acts, rather than philosophizes, that will pierce the veil of time in order to come to the aid of her children.

Her Strange Powers of Prophecy Were Inherited by Her Daughter

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. —Proverbs 22:6

Janine Castillo had her initiatory vision one Saturday evening in 1971 when she was just thirteen years old and coming home from her first confession.

It had been a confession filled with accounts of childish misdeeds, which had been further magnified by her extreme piety, and Father Joseph had recognized this as he heard Janine's recitation.

Suffused with a marvelous sense of absolution, the New Mexico teenager was heading for her home when her attention was caught by a strange light in the doorway of an old storehouse. As the girl stood mesmerized, the figure of a beautiful woman appeared in the glow of the illumination.

The woman's loveliness had a celestial, unearthly quality. She said nothing, only smiled—and she seemed to indicate with a motion of her head that Janine should continue on her way home.

When she tried to tell her older sister about the vision of the beautiful lady, Estelle advised her to keep quiet about such things and not to repeat such stories to their stepfather.

She and Estelle were the daughters of a surgeon named Ramon Castillo, who had died three months before Janine was born. Their mother, Anita, later mar-

ried a prominent businessman in Santa Fe and had two other children, both boys.

But Janine was never like her brothers and her sister, and shortly after she had seen the beautiful lady, she experienced her first prophetic vision, foreseeing the death of her grandmother.

“Grandmother Castillo is very ill, and she will die in five days,” Janine told her mother at the dinner table that evening.

Her mother turned pale at any unsolicited remark, especially one that would violate the sanctity of the dinner table. She glanced nervously at her husband, Anthony Demoro, and hoped that he had not heard Janine’s childish interruption of the solemn ritual of the evening meal. Mr. Demoro insisted upon absolute silence at the table, a silence to be broken only if a particular serving dish needed to be passed.

“Please don’t embarrass me with such nonsense at the table, Janine,” her mother whispered curtly.

“It is true,” Janine persisted, ignoring the dark look that her stepfather sent in her direction. “I have seen it in a vision. Perhaps the beautiful lady I saw gave it to me.”

“It cannot be true,” her mother argued. “I spoke to your grandmother only two nights ago, and she seemed in perfect health. And what nonsense is this about some beautiful lady?”

Mr. Demoro cleared his throat in a manner which indicated that such a signal would be his last warning before severe actions were taken. Janine never actually minded presenting small, calculated acts of defiance toward her stepfather, but she loved her mother very much and did not wish to bring any additional strife into her already regimented existence.

“I had always been very close to Grandmother Castillo,” Janine said. “Two days before she died, she appeared to me and explained that she must leave me.

“On the night that we officially learned of her death, she visited me again and told me that I would soon receive a present from her. It would be a brooch that had

been in the Castillo family for nearly three hundred years.

“Although the receipt of such a present seemed quite impossible with Grandmother Castillo dead, on the day of her funeral, Aunt Sofia, my father’s sister, delivered the package into my hands. She told me that she had promised her mother before she died that she would present me with the heirloom. I have seldom removed the brooch from my person since that day.”

Janine’s accurate prediction of her grandmother’s unexpected death, talk of her vision of a “beautiful lady,” and certain other aspects of her sudden bizarre behavior had begun to make her stepfather feel uneasy, and he arranged for the teenager to be sent to a convent school in Arizona.

It was while attending this school that Janine learned that she could envision things which were occurring many miles away.

Perhaps the loneliness of her first extended stay away from home made her want to remember her family so badly that it actually induced the visions. But however they started, Janine soon found that while gazing into the smooth surface of a pool on the convent grounds, she was able to “see” things that were taking place at home in Santa Fe.

One day in the pool’s calm surface, she “saw” her mother take a bad spill from a horse. Terrified, she confided in one of the sisters.

Instantly, the nun berated her as a wicked girl. The nun declared that such visions were from the devil and that Janine must do her best to ignore such temptations.

After the session with the angry and offended nun, Janine felt even more miserable than before; not only had she been accused of a grievous sin but she could not get the awful vision of her mother’s fall out of her mind.

It was not until the next day that Janine received the “official” word that her mother had taken a nasty fall while riding with the boys. Although she was badly

shaken and had broken her ankle, she had not been severely injured.

When Janine was twenty-two, she married Dr. A. E. Damiano, a veterinary surgeon from Tucson.

Her paranormal abilities had seemed to increase with age, and one evening a woman who was visiting them handed her an ivory-handled knife, encrusted with jewels.

As Janine touched the knife, she perceived a vision of a faraway land. She next saw herself in a white, circular building with immense pillars. Then there were two struggling figures—and a mob of angry men approaching. Before the mob reached the two men, one of them stabbed the other with the very knife that she now held in her hand.

Their guest was amazed. She informed them that her husband had brought the knife from India and had told her exactly the same story.

It was not until she was pregnant with her daughter Christine that Janine once again saw her beautiful woman.

“Once again,” she said, “she was standing illuminated by softly glowing light. I had forgotten how truly beautiful she was. She seemed to appear only to reassure me that things would go well with my first pregnancy. I received no other message of which I was aware on any conscious level.”

Christine Damiano’s remarkable paranormal abilities began to manifest when she was only three. At first, although all of her predictions had been accurate, they were of only rather mundane matters—picnics, family gatherings, the contents of holiday packages, and the like.

But then there came the day in August 1990 when eight-year-old Christine predicted a murder.

“I came upon her one afternoon in her room, and when I saw the anguish in Christine’s face, I knelt at once beside her,” Janine said.

“I was about to take her in my arms to comfort her when I noticed that she was staring at the polished toes of her shiny new patent-leather slippers. Tears were

rolling down her cheeks and her lips were trembling, but I could see that she was in some kind of trance.”

In a soft, soothing voice, almost as if she were singing her daughter a lullaby, Janine Damiano asked Christine what she was seeing.

“Oh, Mommy,” Christine whispered. “A house is on fire. Two men ran from it. One tackled the other, and now they are fighting.”

The little girl put her hands up to her face and opened her mouth, but she found no voice to scream.

“What is it now?” Mrs. Damiano asked her daughter. “What do you see?”

“One of the men pulled a pistol from his pocket and shot the other . . . two times! And now the murderer has turned to run away!”

In the next moment Christine screamed. “Blood! Oh, Mommy, there is blood everywhere!”

Janine held her frightened daughter close to her and comforted her in silence for several minutes before she asked her where the murder occurred.

Christine shuddered. “At the corner of Montezuma and Osborn streets. The man is shot twice . . . shot dead.”

“When does this occur?” Janine wanted to know.

“Soon . . . maybe two or three nights from now. It happens at night, because I saw the moon shining.”

Later that day Christine told a number of playmates about her strange vision. None of them laughed at her, for they had often seen her predictions of their activities manifest exactly as she had foreseen. Each of them listened in awe to her vivid description of the fire and the murder, and they went to their respective homes to inform their parents and families of Christine’s latest prophetic statement.

Janine Damiano told her husband and a few of their neighbors of Christine’s prophecy concerning a fire and a subsequent murder, and soon there were quite a few people who had been made aware of the little girl’s vision. Some of the adults, of course, attributed the bizarre prophecy to the manifestation of a child’s vivid imagination, but those who had been witnesses to

any of Christine's previously realized predictions decided to keep a watch in the newspapers and the evening news telecasts.

Janine Damiano understood that the technique of staring at the polished toes of shiny shoes—which her daughter had unconsciously used to stimulate the prophetic vision of murder and fire—was really no different from the method that she had employed during those times when she had stared into the calm surface of the convent pool and had “seen” such faraway occurrences as her mother's fall from the horse. Long ago, she had done some research and learned that throughout history occultists and crystal gazers have been able to use just about any kind of polished surface to manifest visions. Some diviners even preferred to use a highly polished black surface.

Two nights later, the sinister and terrible events occurred just as Christine had foreseen. The body of a Mexican laborer was found lying in a pool of his own blood at the corner of Montezuma and Osborn streets. Although there had been no witnesses, residents in the area were aroused when they heard what some claimed had been two shots, and others three.

At almost the same time, firemen had been called to a house in the Mexican quarter that appeared to have been deliberately set on fire.

Manuel Justino, the twenty-five-year-old victim, had been working at a Tucson post office. Some bloodstains were later found on a footbridge that led to the Mexican quarter, and at first officials theorized that Manuel's slayer had been another Mexican. But then police found witnesses who told them that they had heard the men quarreling in English.

It was later established that Manuel Justino had been the lover of a girl who was involved in the Tucson underworld. Police came to assume that the motive for Justino's murder was jealousy, but the killer himself was never apprehended.

The account of Christine Damiano's vision had spread so far among friends and neighbors before the house fire and the murder that numerous people in

Tucson were dumbfounded when they compared her predictions with the details of the events as they actually transpired.

“I guess the genetic transmission of paranormal abilities is but another remarkable link that can occur between a mother and her child,” Janine Damiano said. “Just as I had used the calm surface of a convent pool to predict faraway future events when I was a teenager, so did my daughter Christine use the polished toes of her shiny patent-leather slippers to preview a murder that would actually take place.”

Part Five: Mothers' Love That Transcended Death and Triumphed over the Unseen World

The Love Bond That Brought His "Real" Mother to Visit Him in the Hospital

Children are the anchors that hold a mother to life.

—Sophocles

Arthur Finnegan of Camden, New Jersey, says that he will swear to his dying day that his amazing experience was a true event and not merely a dream.

Back in April 1936, when Finnegan was five years old, he was lying in a hospital bed, recovering from a tonsillectomy. He had just regained consciousness, and he remembers that the ward was completely dark except for one little light down the corridor.

"I lay there trying to understand where I was," Finnegan said. "I figured out that the light was probably coming from a nurse's desk lamp, and I wished that there could be more light around me so that I could see better the strange hospital environment."

A few moments later he heard a voice whisper, "Arthur, your mother is here to see you."

Overjoyed that his mother had somehow managed to stay at the hospital to await his return to consciousness, Finnegan looked up and saw a woman standing by the foot of his bed.

"She was dressed in street clothes and wore a coat that I had never before seen on my mother," he recalled. "Then when I looked at her face, I realized that I had never seen the woman before in my life. She was

a total stranger to me. I thought that there had been a mix-up. She was some other boy's mother, not mine.

"My throat felt too sore to ask who she was, but before I could make any sound at all, she disappeared. I lay in my bed quite disturbed, believing that I had seen a ghost, for I knew that I was not asleep and that I was not dreaming."

Finnegan said that years later the woman he knew as his mother confessed that she was only his stepmother. She had married his father when Arthur was but an infant, and they had decided it would be better that the boy grow up believing that she was his biological mother.

"My real mother had been killed in an automobile accident only a few months after my birth," Finnegan said. "When my stepmother showed me some photographs of my real mother, I recognized that she was the woman who had visited me that night in the hospital. I will swear forever that the woman in the pictures and the woman who appeared and disappeared at my hospital bed were one and the same."

The Remarkable Return of Rosalie

Of all the rights of women, the greatest is to be a mother.

—Lin Yutang

Is it possible that a mother's love can become so strong that it can actually summon the spirit of a deceased child from beyond the grave, and for a limited period of time, cause the ethereal and timeless soul to become once again a material entity governed by physical time and space?

According to the late British psychical researcher Harry Price, he personally witnessed the materialization of a spirit child who for a period of five minutes assumed form and substance in the presence of her mother.

Price had just concluded a radio broadcast regarding psychic phenomena on December 8, 1937, when a listener contacted him and informed him that they regu-

larly conducted a family seance every Wednesday evening at which they materialized the spirit of a child.

Price was invited to attend on the condition that he never reveal the location of the seance circle or the identity of the members. In addition, he had to promise not to touch the spirit without the permission of those in the circle. If he would agree to those terms, the family would permit the researcher to attend the seance and to exercise any controls and to conduct any examination that he wished.

Price readily agreed to the family's stipulations and made arrangements to attend a seance on December 15.

When he arrived at the home, Price was given some background information on the spirit child. Rosalie was the daughter of one of the sitters, whom Price referred to as "Mrs. Z" in his notes. The girl had died of diphtheria in 1920.

One night in 1925, Mrs. Z had sensed the etheric presence of her daughter and heard the child's voice calling to her. Before dawn, Rosalie had materialized and had become sufficiently solid for her mother to clasp her hand.

When members of her family and certain close friends learned of Rosalie's remarkable return, they offered to donate their time on one night a week for the purpose of establishing a systematic schedule that would encourage the spirit to visit her mother on a regular basis. The seances had proved to be most successful; at the time when they invited Harry Price to join them, the circle had been meeting weekly for twelve years.

Price subjected the room to a thorough examination before the sitting. He removed all ornaments, the clock, and any small items of furniture in order that the seance room might be as bare as possible. He locked the door and slipped the key into his own pocket.

The door and windows were sealed with adhesive tape. The fireplace was covered with sheets of paper. Every drawer was emptied; every cushion examined; and every inch of the floorboards was sounded.

With apologies to his hostess, Price sprinkled liberal coatings of powdered starch around all the movable objects that remained in the room and in front of the door and fireplace.

When Price had completed these extensive preparations, he indicated that the seance might begin.

Price's notes relate that it was just a few minutes after 10:00 P.M. when Mrs. Z told the others that she sensed the presence of Rosalie. The mother began to weep softly, and she cautioned the other members of the circle not to speak.

The room was by no means dark. A small lamp gave enough light for Price to distinguish clearly the shape of a small girl materializing beside him.

"May I touch Rosalie?" Price asked when it seemed that the materialization had been completed.

The researcher was given permission to put out his hand to touch the spirit child.

He found her flesh to be somewhat cooler than that of a living human. His fingers moved up to test the soft, silken quality of Rosalie's hair.

Then, with the mother's permission, Price lifted the girl to his knee, just as he might any living child. To his astonishment, he was able to hear a heart beating when he placed his ear to Rosalie's chest. Her pulse rate was ninety a minute.

Price turned her face nearer the lamp and later wrote that Rosalie's classical features would have "graced any nursery in the land."

Again with Mrs. Z's indulgence, Price queried the girl about conditions in the spirit world.

Interestingly, Rosalie responded to none of these questions, but when the investigator asked her if she loved her mother, the spirit child responded rapidly in the affirmative.

At this point, Mrs. Z could no longer contain herself, and she went to Price's chair and took the spirit child from his lap.

Price noted later that all the women in the circle were weeping and that he also was deeply affected by the emotional scene.

After Rosalie had been with the circle for a total of about five minutes, she slowly began to fade back into her ethereal state. Within a few moments, the spirit child had completely disappeared.

Price called for the lights to be switched back on and conducted an immediate inspection of his seals and coatings of powder. He found all of the tapes intact and discovered no tracks of any kind in the powdered starch that he had dusted about the room.

When Price made public certain of the details of the remarkable return of Rosalie, many other investigators were greatly intrigued by his account and wished to learn more about the incredible materialization of a spirit child. Price remained true to his word and never disclosed the names of those individuals who met in the circle that summoned Rosalie back from the grave each Wednesday night.

Already a controversial figure in psychical research, Price damaged his reputation further by refusing to reveal the actual names of the alleged spirit circle and by denying other researchers the opportunity to violate the sanctity of Mrs. Z's home so they might conduct experiments of their own to corroborate his account.

Through an interesting chain of circumstances in the early 1970s, author-researcher Brad Steiger was granted the privilege of receiving for his examination a great many of Harry Price's original notes and manuscripts, including his account of the Rosalie materialization. To personally examine Price's own account of the experience, one of the most controversial in psychical research, is to be touched by the investigator's excitement of discovery and to be moved by the deeply felt emotion of Mrs. Z and her circle. No additional disclosures are revealed, such as the actual identity of Mrs. Z or the individual members of the spirit circle; and there are no data that will offer absolute proof to stun the skeptic into silence. But certainly another moving account of a mother's love that was able to dissolve the barriers of death has been made available to us. It remains for each of us to decide its truth for ourselves.

Her Grandmother's Spirit Came to Bless Her Firstborn Child

*It is better to bind your children to you by respect
and gentleness than by fear.* —Terence

Gretchen Dresback, 28, of Spokane, Washington, had always been very close to her maternal grandmother, Deborah Knutson, who presently resided in a nursing home in Rochester, New York. In point of fact, Grandma Knutson was in essence her mother; ever since Gretchen's mother died, when the girl was four years old, she had brought up the child as her own.

"My biological mother, Grandma Knutson's daughter Heidi, and I had been living with Grandma when Mom became terribly ill with cancer," Gretchen said. "My father had been killed in Vietnam, and Mom and I had gone to live with Grandma in 1970. If it were not for the photo album and pictures of Mom to keep an image of her alive, I would actually have very little memory of her. I remember that she was sick a lot. And I dimly recall her telling me that she would not be coming home from the hospital, that she was going away to be with Daddy and that Grandma would take good care of me."

Gretchen had been filled with regret over the fact that her mother's brother, Uncle Ted, had placed Grandma Knutson in a nursing home. She knew that Grandma was seventy-seven years old and had been quite ill, but Gretchen was sorry that she would be so far from her grandmother when she had her first child.

"I told my husband, Larry, how much I wanted Grandma Knutson to be with me when the baby came," Gretchen said. "But I knew that even if we could afford to fly her to Spokane, she wouldn't be able to make the trip."

On October 17, 1992, two nights before her doctor figured the baby was due, Gretchen Dresback experienced a very difficult night. She was highly nervous and extremely uncomfortable. When she did slip into brief periods of fitful sleep, she would dream of terri-

ble things happening to the baby during the delivery. She looked at the alarm clock for what seemed the thousandth time that night, saw that it was 2:15 A.M., then tossed off the covers on her side of their king-size bed and began to weep.

“That was when I saw Grandma Knutson standing by the side of the bed,” Gretchen said. “I know I was not dreaming, for I was having some kind of anxiety attack, and I had just moved back the covers and sat up in bed, wide awake and irritable.”

Gretchen remembered clearly that Grandma Knutson had just stood quietly for a few moments before she spoke soothingly to her: “Everything is going to be all right, honey. You just stop your crying and fussing now. Be brave and be Grandma’s big girl. I’m gonna be with you every minute of the delivery. I will never leave your side. Everything will be fine. Now, blow Grannykins a big kiss, and remember that I will always love you!”

Gretchen found herself blowing a kiss toward Grandma Knutson’s smiling face—and then the image of her beloved grandmother disappeared.

“I cried out Grandma’s name, and I awakened Larry, who sat up rubbing his eyes and wondering if I was having labor pains,” Gretchen said. “I told him about my vision of Grandma Knutson and about how good it had made me feel. I always knew that Grandma and I were in telepathic contact, so, in one sense, her image appearing to me in a vision did not really surprise me that much. Anyway, I knew that now I would be able to get some sleep.”

Later, when Gretchen awakened with loud and terrible moans at 5:47 A.M., Larry knew that this time she was experiencing no vision and no false alarm. This time it was the real thing: labor pains!

At 1:27 P.M., Deborah Esther Dresback was born, named after Gretchen’s grandmother and Larry’s mother.

Truthful and dependable as she had always been throughout her lifetime, the vision of Grandma Knutson had accurately predicted a safe delivery. And

to Gretchen, it did seem as though she could feel the loving presence of her grandmother supporting her throughout the entire painful procedure.

That evening, after Gretchen had rested, Larry sadly presented her with a telegram from the nursing home in Rochester. With tears blurring her vision, Gretchen read that Grandma Knutson had died in her sleep.

"But notice the time," Larry pointed out. "Honey, according to the people in the nursing home, your grandmother died this morning at about 5:15. Allowing for the difference in time zones, that would be about 2:15 our time—just when you said that you had a vision of your grandmother telling you that everything was going to be all right."

Gretchen smiled, blinking back the tears. "Then Grandma Knutson *was* here in spirit to watch over little Deborah and to see that she safely made her entrance into the world," Gretchen said. "Maybe it is like that song says, when each of us dies there will be another child born to take our place and to carry on."

The Mother Who Fought an Evil Ghost for Her Son's Soul

*A good woman is the best thing on earth. Women
were last at the cross and first at the open tomb.
The church owes a debt to her faithful women
which she can never estimate, to say nothing of
the debt we owe in our homes to godly wives and
mothers.*

—Vance Havner

When Patricia and Gary Emminger stopped by the used-furniture store in Fremont, California, and saw the sale price on the refinished couch, they decided at once to buy it. It never would have occurred to them on that sunny Sunday afternoon in October 1987 that they were acquiring something far more sinister than a secondhand couch.

The Emmingers loaded their purchase into the back of their van and took the piece home with them immediately. A rather unexpected recent move from Ana-

heim to Fremont in late August had forced them to sell a lot of their larger possessions at a couple of hastily conducted yard sales, so Patricia happily rearranged the sparse furniture in the living room to accommodate their new acquisition.

The next morning Patricia arose at her customary early hour and performed a few household tasks before leaving for work. She ran a perfunctory cloth over the sofa and thought again how handsome it looked. Feeling newly pleased with their purchase, she went into the kitchen to make breakfast.

She saw Gary off to work, then gathered up the children to drop them off at the day nursery on the way to her job as a receptionist at a dental office. Five-year-old Wendy and four-year-old Mark crawled into their car seats and stoically endured Patricia's ceremonial binding of the safety straps and the slurpy cheek kissing that followed.

Late that night, Patricia sat alone, watching a favorite old movie that she had put in the VCR to help her wind down before bedtime. The rest of the family was asleep.

The movie was nearly over when she noticed a dark shadow to her left. However, when she focused her eyes directly on the spot, she could see nothing.

Patricia decided that her eyes were undoubtedly becoming tired. It was, after all, nearly one o'clock. Time even for night owls like herself to be getting drowsy—especially night owls who had to get up before six in the morning.

A few moments later, when she had resumed watching the movie, she saw the shadow again. This time it appeared to cross directly in front of her, moving toward the couch. But once again, when she focused directly on the thing, she lost it in the corners of darkness in the room.

Patricia shrugged, distracted from the movie. "Are you a ghost?" she asked the area in front of the couch where she had last seen the shadow. "I don't happen to believe in you, but if you really are one, you appear harmless enough. Stick around if you want to."

Having said her piece as a courteous hostess, Patricia fast-forwarded the movie to the thrilling climax that she had already seen at least four times, then turned off the set and went upstairs to bed. By morning she had forgotten the entire episode with the mysterious shadow.

The next day was a particularly difficult one for Patricia at the dental office. After the dinner dishes were stacked in the washer, it felt good to curl up on the big couch with some escapist fiction. Gary watched television for a while, then confessed that he, too, was quite tired. He gave her a good-night kiss and headed up to bed.

Patricia settled back into her book, figuring she was good for a few more chapters before she became too groggy to continue reading.

Several moments later, a peculiar sound caused her to raise her eyes from the text, and she was surprised to see the shadow again. As on the previous evening, it crossed in front of her and appeared to settle itself on the other end of the couch.

“Okay,” Patricia said, stifling a yawn. “If you want the couch tonight, be my guest. I am simply too tired to care. I’m going to bed.”

With that rather curt dismissal, Patricia dropped a bookmark between the pages of her novel and set it on the coffee table in front of the couch. As she was walking upstairs, she caught herself inadvertently glancing back over her shoulder.

“Really, kiddo,” she chided herself. “You don’t believe in ghosts, remember? It must be time to have the prescription changed in my glasses.”

The next afternoon when the Emmingers returned from work, they found that they had received a letter from Gary’s older sister, Carrie Swanson, reminding them that her planned vacation had arrived and that she would be visiting them the next day.

At forty-six, Carrie was ten years older than her brother. Carrie’s husband had been killed in a small plane accident six years before. They had never been able to have children, and it seemed obvious that Mark

and Wendy had become their aunt's surrogate kids. And although Patricia had two sisters, both younger than her own thirty-four years, neither of them had quite connected with Wendy and Mark in the way that Carrie had.

Carrie arrived early the next morning, just before Patricia and Gary left for work. The children jumped up and down with enthusiasm for their favorite aunt.

"Oh, boy!" Mark shouted. "Now we don't have to go to nursery school. We can stay home and play with Aunt Carrie!"

"Well, shucks, young'uns," Carrie laughed, scooping them both up in her arms. "I love you guys too!"

That afternoon when Patricia returned home from work, she found that Carrie had prepared a delicious roast with all the trimmings. Later the older woman helped her change Wendy and Mark into their pajamas, as well as read them a bedtime story. Yes, it would be wonderful to have Aunt Carrie around for a few days. In fact, she could come visit as often as she liked.

Once the kids were settled, the three adults heated the coffee and settled back on the new couch and easy chair for the delightful business of catching up on each others' lives.

"By the way," Carrie noted approvingly, bouncing slightly on the full seat of the couch, "I see that you have made at least one new purchase since I was last here."

"New to us," Gary agreed. "We bought it second-hand, but refinished and all."

Talk of the couch reminded Patricia of the shadow that she had seen the past two evenings. "That reminds me," she chuckled, "has either of you seen old Boris tonight?"

Gary laughed and wondered who in the world "old Boris" might be. Carrie's eyes sparkled, trying to guess what kind of joke Patricia was about to play.

"Well, let me tell you," Patricia said, lowering her voice conspiratorially, "he's kind of wispy in nature. Nevertheless, he floats around me when I sit up late at night, keeping me company, I guess."

Carrie laughed, affecting an expression of mock horror. "You aren't telling me on the first night of my visit that I am about to sleep in a haunted house, are you?"

Gary arched a quizzical eyebrow, waiting for his wife's punch line, wondering if this was some kind of rehearsal for Halloween in a couple of weeks.

Patricia felt herself getting into the spirit of things. She got to her feet and began to waft around the room in an exaggerated imitation of a ghost. "He walks by night," she said, lowering her voice as many registers as it would drop. "He moves like a shadow. He is everywhere!"

Suddenly Patricia felt a strange chill shuddering her body. It was as if she had become aware that her innocent joke was seriously offending some unseen guest in the room. All at once she felt surrounded by ugly, malignant hatred. She actually experienced a fear of the unknown.

Patricia ceased her ghostly gamboling and sat down heavily on the couch.

"Anything wrong, honey?" Gary wanted to know.

"No . . . nothing," Patricia managed. But on some nonverbal level of her consciousness, she knew that her childlike mockery had prompted a very serious and dangerous hostility between "Boris" and her.

"What was all that ghost business?" Gary persisted.

"Nothing," Patricia answered, maybe just a bit too curtly. "I mean, I just felt kind of spooky down here alone the other night. That's all."

Patricia reached for the coffeepot to refill Carrie's cup. "What were you saying earlier about the problem Aunt Doris is having keeping Uncle Bob out of her hair now that he's retired?"

She had successfully rerouted the conversation, but Patricia's mind was occupied with the strange shift in the home's atmosphere. Then she became aware of *something* moving up the stairs and down the hall toward the children's bedrooms. She stiffened with fear as she realized that whatever it was she had offended, it had decided to get even with her by going for her children.

Patricia was about to jump up and cry out her dread, but Mark's screams beat her to it. She was several steps ahead of Gary and Carrie, as they all began to run upstairs.

She reached her son's room first, and she was almost afraid to enter, uncertain of what she would see. But a mother's concern for her child's safety overrode all anxieties.

"A witch," Mark sobbed as she held him in her arms. "An ugly old witch was in my room!"

"You know there's no such thing as witches, Markie," Carrie told him. "And even if there were, you know that they would be afraid of your Aunt Carrie!"

Mark continued to cry softly, cuddling against Patricia's breast as she sought to soothe him. "It held out its hand and kept bending its finger at me, like it wanted me to follow it somewhere," he said between tearful gasps.

"Hey, my man," Gary said. "My man Marko is not afraid of witches. Give me five, man!"

Mark smiled, eager for paternal approval, and raised his flattened palm to meet Gary's in the high-five slap of international buddyhood.

Aunt Carrie remained bedside to read Mark another story. Miraculously, Wendy had managed to sleep through her brother's bloodcurdling scream.

Downstairs in the kitchen, as he poured himself a fresh cup of coffee, Gary had to ask a troublesome question. "Honey, did you try out your Boris the Ghost routine on the kids earlier in the evening?"

Patricia stared her husband straight in the eye. "You *know* I wouldn't do that, Gary!"

"Yeah," he admitted, lowering his eyes from her unyielding gaze. "I guess I do."

But at the same time, Patricia wanted so very much to tell Gary about the awful, ineffable *something* that she sensed heading toward the children's room with malicious intent. She wanted to tell him—but she knew he wouldn't believe her.

It was difficult for Patricia to turn out the lights that night. She walked through the house, trying to catch

sight of the elusive shadow thing. It was nowhere to be seen. But everywhere she walked, she felt surrounded by cold hatred.

The next morning at breakfast, everything seemed as it should be. Five-year-old Wendy was her bubbly self, full of cheer and giggles. Only Mark seemed to be aware of a subtle change in the home's atmosphere, but Patricia resolved not to discuss anything other than positive things with her young son.

Just before her noon break at the dentist's office, Patricia received a telephone call from Carrie.

She hated to bother Patricia at work, Carrie apologized, but Mark claimed to have seen the old witch again. "He said that she was waiting for him in his room. He keeps screaming that she crooks her finger at him. I'm sorry, Patricia, but I don't know what to do."

Patricia managed to arrange to take the rest of the afternoon off. When she arrived home, she took everyone for a ride and an outing in the park. And when Daddy came home that evening, they went for pizza and a movie afterward.

The two kids were exhausted by the time they reached home, and they fell asleep immediately upon getting into bed.

"I know what your plan was, dearie, wearing the kids out and all," Carrie said to Patricia. "But you've tuckered me out too."

Lights were out early in the Emminger home that evening. Sadly, they did not remain that way for very long. The family had been asleep for only a few hours when Mark's terrified screams once again filled the house.

As Patricia entered her son's room, she was shocked by the chill in the air. Although she could see nothing, she was certain that the evil, shadowy force had been after Mark again.

It took two hours for the three adults to calm the children—for that night Wendy had not been fortunate enough to sleep through the melee. While Patricia and Gary did their best to pacify Mark, Carrie read bedtime stories to her frightened niece.

When the children were once again asleep, Patricia decided that she must tell Gary about the shadow thing that she had seen.

Her husband listened patiently to her account of the *something* that moved between the couch and the television set and the sense of evil that she felt in the house. Although she could see clearly by Gary's facial expressions that he did not believe her, she went on to describe the cold, unseen thing that she had perceived moving down the upstairs hall to Mark's room.

At last Gary sighed heavily. "I wish I hadn't heard any of this. I really don't think it helps Mark for you to go around talking about these things."

"I haven't said a word about my feelings in front of Mark," she protested. "I just feel these things, and I wanted you to know about them."

Gary nodded. "I know you wouldn't upset either of the kids on purpose, honey. But I just don't think it helps to have you believing in things like this."

Patricia fought to control her anger as she reminded her husband of her rational nature, of her balanced approach to life, of her contempt of superstition and ignorance.

"Look," Gary offered by way of reconciliation, "maybe there is some physical reason why Mark is having these dreams. Promise me that you'll take him to a pediatrician as soon as possible, all right?"

Patricia agreed—but her thoughts were on the phenomena that she had observed. How could it be that neither Carrie nor Gary had noticed the drop in temperature in Mark's room? Why did only she and Mark seem to be aware of the "old witch"? At last she managed to get a few hours' sleep.

Patricia was able to get an appointment for Mark by late afternoon of the next day, and she took him to the clinic immediately after work.

The doctor seemed unperturbed by the whole affair. He said that many children of Mark's age experienced nightmares. Parents should stress that the monsters are unreal, he advised. Don't encourage the fantasy.

He gave Patricia a prescription for tranquilizers, just

in case they should be needed to help the boy sleep more soundly.

The tranquilizers proved to be woefully ineffective against the nocturnal visits of "the old witch," for once again that night Mark awakened everyone with his screams of terror.

For three nights, their son had been victimized by the ugly child molester that came in the darkness. As Patricia cradled her son in her arms, she sensed a mocking presence all around her.

"If you feel frightened now," the unseen entity seemed to tell her, *"be it known that this is nothing like the fear that you will soon suffer."*

The next day when Patricia returned home from work, she experienced a more complete range of evil. Wendy rushed excitedly to her arms and gave her a sloppy, enthusiastic kiss of greeting. But when Patricia inquired of Mark about her missing hello kiss, he jerked his face away from hers with a scowl of disgust.

"I can't stand you," he snarled. "I don't want to be near you. I won't kiss you anymore."

Patricia was shocked and hurt. She glanced at Carrie and saw the look of astonishment on her face. This was definitely not their loving little Mark speaking.

That night during dinner Mark continued to refuse to permit his mother to touch him. His sister could cuddle him. Aunt Carrie could kiss and hug him. Daddy could wrestle with him and show masculine affection, but Mommy could not get near her little boy.

On her way home from work that next evening, Patricia stopped at a toy store and bought presents for Wendy and Mark. When she arrived at home, Wendy met her at the front door with her usual kiss of greeting. Mark only glowered at her.

Wendy responded to her surprise gift of a new doll with little cries of pleasure and appreciation.

Mark refused even to open the brightly colored wrapping paper to identify his present, and his lips curled back in a contemptuous sneer. "You can't buy my kisses with presents!" he said, spitting out the hateful words at his mother.

Patricia was determined to remain calm. She could see the emotional turmoil that boiled within little Mark.

Suddenly he broke into a run and hurled himself into her arms. "Mommy, I do love you," he cried. "Sometimes . . . I don't understand . . . what . . ."

Patricia sat on the floor and pulled her son onto her lap, kissing his forehead, hugging his tiny frame.

Then, all at once, Mark's face changed again. His lips twisted into an evil sneer. With a violent shudder of his body, as if he were repulsed by his mother's very touch, he slid out of her lap.

"Why can't you just leave me alone!" he shouted as he ran from the room. "I don't love you anymore!"

Patricia sat on the floor in despair. Wendy stood near, uncertain what to do. She wanted to comfort her mother but felt that she should remain silent. Patricia put her hands to her face and began to sob disconsolately.

Later that evening when the children were sleeping, Patricia, Gary, and Carrie sat at the kitchen table to discuss the awful change in Mark's behavior. It soon became apparent that Gary had already made up his mind that their son should see a psychiatrist.

"He keeps insisting that he sees some old witch, day in and day out," Gary argued his decision. "Now he's undergone a complete personality change and refuses to allow his mother to touch him—the mother that he has always loved with all his heart. I think we owe it to Mark to put away our prejudices regarding mental illness and take him to a psychiatrist."

Patricia pleaded for understanding of what she considered the true root of their son's aberrant behavior. "There is something evil and awful in this house—and slowly but surely it's entering Mark's mind and causing him to act as he does. Don't you see that this thing is trying to possess our son?"

Gary replied coldly. "Patricia, I don't see any shadow thing moving around the house—and neither does Carrie. Neither does Wendy. Don't you see that

your persistence in this silly ghost thing only aggravates Mark's problem?"

Although Carrie had been sitting quietly, reluctant to enter a family discussion of such perplexing depth, she now volunteered yet another possibility.

"Patricia," she began her case in earnest, "I do not intend this as a criticism. I understand how difficult things are economically for you two right now. But do you realize that you are the only working mother in this neighborhood? Could it be possible that Mark resents not having his mother at home like all the other kids? You know that he hates nursery school. He's been so glad to stay at home this past week with me."

Patricia studied her sister-in-law's face intently. Could she be onto something?

"Maybe by saying he doesn't *like* you," Carrie continued her theorization, "Mark is really saying that he doesn't like it when you *leave* him."

Gary nodded warmly at his sister. Carrie might truly have discovered the source of the problem.

Patricia was impressed by Carrie's insights. Maybe she had hit upon the real reason for Mark's sudden change of personality. And maybe the "shadow" that she had seen when she was trying to relax after a hard day at work was really the shadow of guilt moving across her psyche in an attempt to get her to stay home and be a good mother.

"But can I afford to quit my job?" she asked her husband pointedly. "Can we make it without a second paycheck?"

"We can certainly afford it until Mark gets better and feels all right again about your working," Gary answered. "I mean, after the move and all . . . maybe it was all just too much for the little guy."

The next morning when Patricia told Mark that she was going to quit her job and stay home with her children, he only shrugged indifferently. Disappointed by his sullen response, she assured herself that Mark wanted the proof of deeds rather than words.

Patricia was determined to do anything to help her son. She gave notice at the dental office that afternoon,

and she expressed the hope that the job might be waiting for her after things got straightened out at home.

That night she sat up late in the living room, mulling over the bizarre situation. Everyone else had retired. Mark seemed to be sleeping peacefully. Could the week of terror really have resulted from her son's feeling of desertion when she left for work?

Suddenly she felt the temperature drop. A dozen warning alarms went off in her brain, and she feared raising her eyes to look around the room.

As the deathlike chill permeated the room, the atmosphere of hatred seemed to solidify. She *knew* that something monstrous and evil was in the room with her.

There, in front of her, was the shadow she had first seen a week ago. The hands and face of the dark form now appeared lighter, and Patricia was able to make out features. The thing was grossly emaciated, and yellowish-green skin stretched tautly across its high cheekbones. Long hair flowed to its shoulders. Its thin, outstretched arms supported bony hands and clawlike fingers.

Bright, soulless eyes stared hollowly at her, and the ghastly image curled its lips into a vile sneer. Patricia's body began to tremble when she realized that this was the same sneer that she had seen on Mark's face that day when he refused the toy.

At last she was certain that she fully understood what the sepulchral being intended to do with Mark. It intended to murder his soul and to inhabit his body.

Slowly the loathsome form dematerialized before her eyes. The chill lifted from the room.

With a sudden jolt of fear, Patricia ran upstairs to Mark's room. She sat on his bed and gathered his sleeping form into her arms. Somehow she must find a way to thwart the evil creature's plan to possess her son's body.

A sound from the hallway startled her. Unconsciously, with a mother's basic reflex, she tightened her arms around her son.

"*My God, I saw it!*" The voice distorted by tears and

sobbing belonged to Carrie. "My God, Patricia! I was in the kitchen, warming some milk to help me sleep. I saw that thing take shape. *What was it?*"

Tears of relief flooded Patricia's own eyes. Carrie had seen the thing! At last she had an ally in her spiritual warfare against the hideous shadow creature.

"It . . . it wants Mark, doesn't it?" Carrie asked in a voice barely a whisper.

Patricia nodded, then told her sister-in-law the entire story from the beginning, from the very first time that she had seen the shadow out of the corner of her eye. "We're going to stop it, Carrie! We will find a way to destroy it!"

The two women awakened Gary and handed him a steaming cup of strong black coffee. "You *will* listen to us," Carrie told him.

More than an hour and several cups of coffee later, Gary could still do little more than shake his head and rub the stubble on his chin. "It's all so . . . medieval," he said at last. "I mean, an evil spirit or whatever trying to possess our son. How can such things be?"

"But you do believe us, don't you, Gary?" Patricia asked, placing an imploring hand on her husband's arm.

Gary looked quietly for several silent moments into the eyes of his wife, then those of his sister. "I've got to believe the word of the two women in the world that I love and trust the most. If you both say that you've seen the thing, then I believe you."

"Just one more thing," Patricia advised them. "I have come to believe that somehow that spirit draws energy from us by our thoughts and strong emotions. We've got to try not to think of it at all. And we must not show any signs of fear."

Dinner the next evening was very quiet. Throughout the meal Gary sat lost in thought, scarcely eating his food, glancing cautiously from time to time at the scowling Mark, who sat glowering at each family member in turn. Carrie also seemed nervous, and even Wendy noticed that her aunt's hands shook as she passed the bowl of mashed potatoes. Patricia, on the

other hand, felt herself growing almost jubilant. She was convinced that she now had the means to defeat the terrible entity that had violated the sanctity of her home and threatened the life of her son.

Since Mark had begun his campaign of disliking his mother, the bedtime ritual at the Emminger home had been altered. Patricia had confined her attention to Wendy, and Gary had assumed the responsibility of putting Mark to bed.

Mark had never rejected affection from his father, yet this night he suddenly snapped at Gary and refused to allow himself to be touched. "You've been listening to her lies," the boy snarled, indicating his mother. "Now you're as bad as she is! I don't like you anymore either!"

A stricken look crossed Gary's features, and Carrie hurriedly entered the room. "Aunt Carrie will help Markie with his jammies, okay, Daddy?"

His beloved Aunt Carrie now came in for her share of scorn and rejection. "Why don't you go home?" Mark asked, his voice full of venom. "No one wants you here. You're old and fat and ugly."

Patricia reached for her sister-in-law's arm and led her out of the boy's bedroom. Both Carrie and Gary had been deeply hurt. "Remember, we have to try to ignore it," she reminded them.

The three adults entered the living room, determined to involve their minds in something on television. They had just begun to become engrossed in a program when the windows began to make a fearsome noise. Although there was no wind outside, the glass panes shook violently.

Gary gritted his teeth, and Patricia could see that he was doing his best to ignore the unreality of the situation. Carrie seemed to be holding up fairly well.

Then the drawn curtains began to flail wildly, knocking a vase to the floor and noisily tipping over several framed family photographs on a small table. A number of books appeared to fly off a shelf of their own volition.

Gary got to his feet, his eyes wide with unnamed

fear. "This is too much. I can't believe these things are happening to me in my house!"

"Please, Gary, ignore it!" Patricia beseeched him.

No sooner had she spoken aloud when she heard a voice inside her head that echoed with malice: "*You can't ignore me. I am stronger than any of you!*"

With a start, Patricia realized that the thing was communicating with her telepathically. Inside her mind, she defied the intruder: "*We are stronger than you. We are strong together. Now get out of this house. You are not wanted here!*"

The only reply was menacing, low-pitched laughter—and from the look on Gary's face, he, too, had heard the ghastly sound.

"That's it," he said. "I'm out of here. I'm taking Wendy, and I'm getting out of the house."

"Gary," Patricia pleaded, "we must be strong together."

"I'm not strong," Gary admitted. "I can't handle something like this. Things like this are not supposed to be able to happen. I've been taught my whole life to disbelieve in the supernatural. I can't take it. I'll be no use to you anyway."

Carrie agreed with her brother. "Let him take Wendy and go! His fear will only feed the thing."

Patricia made one last attempt to regain her husband's support in the fight against the ugly shadow thing: "We've got to stick it out and fight it. The thing knows the showdown is approaching. Don't you see how it works? As soon as you and Carrie started believing me, accepting the possibility of its existence, Mark wouldn't let either of you near him."

"So now it can read our thoughts?" Gary said, glancing nervously about the room.

"Not only can it read our thoughts but tonight it has been talking to me telepathically," Patricia replied.

Two of the picture frames that had been pushed over by the animated drapes exploded loudly and sent glass fragments spraying across the room.

"I'm sorry," was all Gary could say before he pounded up the stairs to get their daughter.

After Gary had left in the van with Wendy, the windowpanes began to vibrate with such violence that it seemed as if they could shatter at any moment. The draperies continued to flap noisily, as though they were flags on a pole resisting a strong wind.

Carrie reached for the Bible on the coffee table, clutched it in her trembling hands, and began to pray for deliverance from evil in a remarkably steady voice.

Within a few minutes the wind from nowhere died down, and the draperies once more settled quietly against the windows.

“Keep praying,” Patricia said to Carrie. “I’m taking the Bible with me, and I’m going to Mark’s room. I think the thing knows that tonight is its last chance to possess him. I feel that it is about to go after Mark with all of its strength.”

Patricia gathered her sleeping boy into her arms and tried to prepare herself for whatever was to come. Within moments she felt the chilling approach of the detestable being, and its ghastly form began to materialize before her.

An eerie sepulchral haze surrounded the entity as it moved inexorably toward her. Its bony arms were outstretched, and an almost irresistible force seemed to flow from its yellow-green claws. Patricia could not keep the thought from her mind that if those vicious hands should ever touch her, her very essence would be ripped from her.

The being stepped closer, and for one terrible moment Patricia felt herself faltering. Her mind began to swirl, and she knew that she was losing strength to the entity’s demoniacal power. From far away she could hear its soulless laughter.

The sound of that pitiless cackle was all that Patricia needed to rally her inner resources. “I will not let you take my son!” she shouted at the thing.

Somewhere deep inside of herself, Patricia tapped a source of primeval energy. Centuries of culture and sophistication melted away, and she was simply an enraged mother protecting her young. She held the Bible

in front of her as if it were a shield and advanced toward the evil creature.

"I am stronger than you, you reject from Hell," Patricia snarled at the entity. "My love for my son is stronger than your will to possess him."

As Patricia continued moving forward, she was rewarded when she saw the creature begin to move backward. Feeling a tremendous surge of power and thrusting the Bible toward the entity, she spoke with authority: "God's word is stronger than you are. God's love is stronger than you are. You are beaten! Leave my son; leave my house! The power of love has defeated your power of evil!"

The entity continued to retreat, growing smaller and fainter as it moved backward. Patricia continued to hold the Bible in front of her, only dimly aware that they were moving down the stairs toward the living room. Then it suddenly occurred to her that "Boris" was headed toward the couch.

"So that's it!" she exclaimed. "Now I know where you came from, you miserable scum!"

Patricia could see Carrie still seated on the couch with her hands folded, and she could hear her prayers entreating God, the Holy Spirit, and all the saints to banish evil from the house.

"Carrie, get off the couch . . . right away!" Patricia shouted. "The thing is headed for the couch. That's where it came from!"

As if moving awkwardly in a dream, Carrie did as she was told.

Patricia continued her advance on the being, watching it become increasingly dimmer as it neared the couch. Its vaguely luminescent quality departed, and Patricia was staring at the formless shadow that she had first seen seven days before. It hovered above the couch for only a few seconds before it seemed to evaporate into the cushions.

Both women were startled by the sound of the front door closing. Gary was returning with Wendy cradled in his arms. "I . . . I couldn't stay away," he managed by way of apology for his former cowardice in the face

of the supernatural. "I thought you might need my help."

"I need it now," Patricia said, giving terse commands while she kept her eye on the spot where the entity had sunk into the couch. "Take this damned couch from our home right now, tonight!"

Patricia and Carrie helped an unquestioning Gary load the couch into the van. Then, leaving the children in their aunt's care, Patricia and Gary made a desperate trip to the city dump. "Boris" was going on his last ride.

With only the pale light of a crescent moon to guide them, Patricia and Gary lifted the couch from the van and placed it among the city's debris. To provide a kind of ritual cleansing, Gary squirted some charcoal lighter over the piece of furniture and tossed a match on the cloth cushions.

"It's over," Patricia whispered, clutching her husband's arm and watching the blazing couch. "It's finally over."

When the last flames had died down, Patricia and Gary drove back home. Together they climbed the stairs and walked down the hallway to Mark's room. The boy was sleeping serenely, his Aunt Carrie at bedside watch.

Patricia walked over and lay a gentle, maternal hand on her son's forehead.

"Mommy?" a sleepy voice asked.

"Yes, Markie, it's Mommy."

"Oh, Mommy," Mark smiled, reaching up his arms for a hug and a good-night kiss. "I love you so much!"

"Thank God," Patricia sighed in a meaningful prayer of thanks. "We won."

The Visitation of His Mother's Spirit Proved the Dead Can Return

What the mother sings to the cradle goes all the way down to the coffin. —Henry Ward Beecher

Playwright and producer David Belasco was a noted

theatrical figure who was also the owner and manager of the Belasco Theatre in New York. In 1905 he produced *The Girl of the Golden West*, which was later transformed into an opera by the great Puccini.

One of his own plays, *The Return of Peter Grimm*, produced in the early 1920s, tells the story of a strong-minded family man who returns as a ghost to see how his family is getting along without him. In 1925 the play was made into a motion picture starring Alec B. Francis and Janet Gaynor. In 1935 the story was filmed again, featuring strong performances by Lionel Barrymore, Helen Mack, and Donald Meek.

In a small booklet issued in connection with the stage production of *The Return of Peter Grimm*, Belasco explained the reason why, "after long brooding on the subject," he had decided to write a drama about the dead returning; and he revealed in a forthright manner how the spirit of his mother had convinced him of the reality of life after death by appearing to him at the time of her transition.

"One night, after a long, exhausting rehearsal, I was worn out. I went to bed in my Newport home and fell at once into a deep sleep," Belasco said.

"Almost immediately, however, I was awakened and attempted to rise, but could not—and was then greatly startled to see my dear mother (whom I knew to be in San Francisco) standing close by me."

As Belasco attempted to speak and to sit up, his mother smiled at him, "a loving, reassuring smile," and spoke the name that she had called him in his boyhood: "Davy, Davy, Davy."

She leaned down as if to kiss him, then drew back a bit and said, "Do not grieve. All is well, and I am happy."

With those words spoken, she moved toward the door of the bedroom and vanished.

"The next day," Belasco stated, "I related the incident to my family and expressed the conviction that my mother was dead. A few hours later (I was still directing rehearsals of *Zoza*) I went to luncheon with a member of my staff who handed me some letters and

telegrams which he had brought from the box office . . . Among them was a telegram telling me that my darling mother had died the night before, at about the time I had seen her in my room.”

Later Belasco learned that just before his mother had slipped away into death, she had roused herself, smiled, and three times murmured, “Davy, Davy, Davy.”

An intelligent, open-minded man, Belasco was quite aware that some might explain his experience with his mother’s apparition as an example of “thought transference.”

“But such an explanation, to me, is totally inadequate,” Belasco concluded his account. “I am sure that I did see my mother. And other experiences of a kindred nature served to confirm my knowledge that what we call supernatural is, after all, at most but supernormal.”

In 1931 David Belasco joined the spirit of his mother in the Great Mystery.

For thousands of years now, many individuals have received personal proof of survival by observing their loved ones at the moment of death. Reports of deathbed experiences have long intrigued investigators of psychic phenomena, and today we have the work of such researchers as Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, Dr. Raymond Moody, and Dr. Kenneth Ring to share a greater knowledge of this most personal, and final, of all human phenomena.

Interestingly, however, a systematic investigation of deathbed reports was not attempted until the early 1960s when the pilot study of Dr. Karlis Osis sought to analyze the experiences of dying persons in a search for patterns (*Deathbed Observations by Physicians and Nurses*, Parapsychology Foundation, Inc., New York, 1961).

640 Doctors and Nurses Reveal over 35,000 Remarkable Deathbed Reports

Based on their specialized training, their ability to make accurate medical assessments, and their proximity to dying patients, Dr. Osis selected 640 doctors and nurses as informants. Each of the respondents to Dr. Osis's questionnaire had observed an average of 50 to 60 deathbed patients, this totaling a remarkable sum of over 35,000 cases. The initial questionnaire was followed up with telephone calls, additional questionnaires, and personal correspondence.

A total of 385 of the medically trained respondents reported 1,318 cases in which deathbed patients reported seeing apparitions of previously deceased loved ones or phantasms who were known to them.

Visions of heaven or scenes of wondrous beauty and brilliant color were reported by 248 respondents in 884 instances.

Mood elevation, that is, a shift in the dying person's emotions from extreme pain and fear to tranquility was reported by 169 respondents to have been observed in 753 cases.

The physicians and nurses stated that the experiences left nearly all of the patients in a state of peace or exaltation. In about half of the cases, the apparitions of loved ones or religious figures seemed to manifest to guide the dying patient through the transition from death to the afterlife. Those who had visions of the "other side" seemed serene and elevated in mood. One distinct observation from Dr. Osis's study was that few patients appeared to die in a state of fear.

Interestingly enough, the more highly educated patients evidenced more deathbed phenomena than those who were less well educated, thus contradicting the allegation that the more superstitious are the only ones to have such experiences.

Those with strong religious beliefs most often identified a saintly figure or previewed Heaven, but holy or angelic figures were often reported even by those patients with no religious affiliation.

Another interesting finding of the study was that visions, apparitions of deceased loved ones, and mood elevations are reported more often in cases where the dying patient is fully conscious and appears to be in complete control of his or her senses. Sedation, high fever, and painkilling drugs seem to decrease, rather than to increase, the ability to experience these deathbed phenomena. At the same time, cases of brain damage or brain disease were found to be unrelated to the kind of deathbed experiences that were relevant to Dr. Osis's survey.

"[Phenomena] in line with the survival hypothesis occurred predominantly in patients whose mentality was not disturbed by sedatives or other medication, who had no diagnosed hallucinogenic pathology and who were fully conscious as well as responsive to their environment," stated Dr. Osis. "Just the opposite is true for trends irrelevant to the survival hypothesis. The irrelevant trends occurred more frequently in the patients generally prone to hallucinate, such as the sedated patients, those whose pathology was diagnosed as hallucinogenic, or those whose consciousness and contact with their environment was impaired."

The study also discovered cases in which there was collective viewing of the apparitions by those who had gathered around the deathbed. There were numerous instances of ESP interaction between patients and their attending physicians and nurses, and there was also a good number of cases in which a physician or nurse had a change in personal philosophy after having witnessed the experience of a dying person.

The Greatest Gift a Mother Can Receive

[We] may learn from little children, for the hearts of little children are pure; and therefore, the Great Spirit may show to them many things which older people miss.

—Black Elk

During the mid- to late 1960s, when she was attending seminary at the Lutheran School of Theology

at Chicago, Illinois, Sherry Hansen Steiger was fortunate to be able to take courses from Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, who would soon become internationally famous for her pioneering work with the dying. While enrolled in such courses as "Church History in Psychoanalytic Perspective" and "On Death and Dying," Sherry not uncommonly brought her infant son, Erik, to Dr. Kübler-Ross's classes, bedding him down on a blanket in the back of the classroom.

Sherry was immediately taken with her professor's research into the death process, for even during her undergraduate work in nursing, she had had the firsthand opportunity to observe that dying patients often experienced an encounter with the supernatural. On occasion, when patients would "come back to life" after a near-death experience, Sherry had witnessed that their lives were often transformed by what they had seen on the other side.

Dr. Kübler-Ross once remarked during one of her lectures that in her experiences in working with dying children, they always seemed to know in advance when they were going to die. Regretfully, not many doctors or nurses—or, for that matter, even parents—would pay adequate attention to the messages that children gave of their advance knowledge of what was imminent in their lives. Understandably, most of the time everyone involved with the child preferred to think positively and wished to focus on the prospect that the child would pull through and live.

Perhaps because in Dr. Kübler-Ross Sherry had the best of teachers—one who in later years became a dear personal friend—she was more attuned to the messages that her son, Erik, would attempt to convey to her regarding his approaching death. Of course, accepting the reality of life without her dear son was an entirely different matter.

Sometime in 1973, after a great deal of family counseling, it was recommended that Sherry and her husband, Pastor Paul Hansen, obtain a divorce. Sherry and their children, Erik, six years, and Melissa, two years, remained in Colorado, while Paul accepted a call from

a church in Newark, Ohio. After two years, however, though Paul still hoped reconciliation was possible, he agreed to the divorce if they split custody of the children and Erik remained with him.

In early October of 1975, the family reunited in Ohio for the purpose of explaining to the children that although both parents loved them, Melissa would go with Mommy and Erik would stay in Ohio with Dad. In late October, Sherry and Melissa moved to Virginia Beach, and almost at once Paul began to call to report the terrible difficulties that Erik was having in adjusting to the situation. On one occasion, the boy was even hospitalized and diagnosed with minor heart problems possibly resulting from the stress of being separated from his mother.

On December 1, Sherry canceled the divorce proceedings because of her son's traumatic response to the situation. Although Sherry's decision (based upon the advice given by the ministerial counsel they'd received) to go her separate way remained firm, Paul had realized with great pain that Erik wanted to be with his mother. The burden of losing his whole family was more than Paul felt capable of dealing with in addition to the pressures of Christmas, the busiest time of the year for pastors. Sherry agreed to grant Paul's request to stick it out through the holiday; she and Melissa drove to Newark from their home in Virginia Beach to reunite the family at Christmas. Sherry even became somewhat involved in the church functions, as she loved the warm, friendly country spirit of the parishioners.

It was at Erik's school Christmas pageant, as she proudly watched her son singing Christmas carols on the auditorium stage, that Sherry received an almost unbearable glimpse into the future. Erik's red hair had an extra-shiny gleam, and the stage lights seemed to capture every freckle on the face his mother loved so much. His whole manner seemed to sport an extra-joyful spirit, and he seemed to be ablaze with the excitement of Christmas and the knowledge that his mommy and little sister were back in his life again.

Although Sherry sat with Melissa on her lap in seats that were at least midway toward the back of the large auditorium, she sensed a strange feeling of closeness to her son. While the class was singing "The Little Drummer Boy," Erik's favorite Christmas song, a bizarre uneasiness crept up to tickle Sherry's throat and tummy. The next song, "Away in a Manger," forced her to well up into tears.

As the words "no crib for a bed" were sung, a surreal scene was frozen in a stopgap of time in Sherry's mind. It was as if a camera lens focused in on Erik, zoomed in for a close-up, then was captured in a freeze-frame. And then a voice from out of nowhere said ever so clearly to Sherry: "*This is the last Christmas you'll see your son.*"

It was as though she had been struck a cruel and violent blow to the solar plexus. The psychic pain was so overwhelming that it was four-year-old Melissa who jolted Sherry back into reality.

"Mom, Mom, are you all right?" Melissa was actually shaking her. "Why are you crying? Isn't this a happy time? Why are you crying?"

Not aware that she was weeping, Sherry wiped her tears away, tried to regain her composure, and said, "Yes, yes, it *is* a time to be happy. I guess they're just tears of joy, honey."

Although the bizarre freeze-frame image of Erik and the awful message still pierced her heart, Sherry saw that Melissa was comforted by that explanation, so she left it at that.

The rest of that evening and the next few days proceeded as normal—except for the memory of the troubling vision that haunted Sherry as to its exact meaning.

Then came the special midweek children's Christmas service. The church was packed. It was customary for all the children to gather at the steps near the altar, while the pastor gave a sermon just for them.

Children from under two years to ten were all excitedly sitting on the steps, listening to Pastor Paul deliver a Christmas message to them that taught them the

real meaning of the holiday. It was baby Jesus' birthday, and Pastor Paul pointed to the manger scene under the decorated Christmas tree.

"Now, since it is baby Jesus' birthday, if you were going to his birthday party and could take him any gift you wanted to, what would that gift be?" Pastor Paul asked the children. "I want you to really think about it, and then when you are ready, I want you to tell everyone what your gift would be."

It took only a few seconds for the children, one by one, to seem satisfied that they had selected just the right gift for the baby Jesus. "I'd give him my favorite toy fire engine," one little boy said. A little girl offered her favorite doll. Another said that she would give baby Jesus her "very, very favorite cuddly teddy bear—he goes with me everywhere." A sigh was heard from someone who seemed to acknowledge the supreme sacrifice of the well-loved traveling teddy.

Sherry could almost hear the wheels turning in Melissa's head as she thought about her own birthday, which was just days away. Melissa almost was born on Christmas Day herself. She would be five years old on the day after Christmas. "I'd give him my *love*," Melissa said firmly.

Sherry was noticeably touched, smiling back at those members of the congregation who turned to her with warm smiles, silently bespeaking, "Oh, isn't that sweet."

Then came Erik's turn. Not known to be shy, Erik had something of an impish edge to him. He liked to tease and play. In a situation such as this, he might be embarrassed and say something cute to make people laugh.

But Sherry noticed how serious Erik was as his daddy, Pastor Paul, asked, "Erik, what would you give baby Jesus?"

Looking directly at the baby Jesus in the manger, Erik turned and spoke boldly and with conviction: "I'd give him my soul."

The tears in Sherry's eyes instantly welled to overflowing. She choked back a gasp as she became aware

of several of the church ladies turning very deliberately to look at her, their eyes filled with tears as well.

Sherry could not help being reminded of the “freeze-frame” incident days earlier—and the horrible message that had come with it. *No!* rang through Sherry’s head so loudly she was certain others could hear it.

She had no memory of what took place between Erik’s declaring the gift of his very soul to the last blessing of the pastor and the end of the service. She was shaking hands with members of the congregation in an altered state of consciousness, stuck somewhere in her thoughts and the confusion she felt.

So many little things happened in the days that followed. Paul took the kids in his van to pick up a babysitter and the driver’s door kept flying open as he drove down the snow-and-ice-ridden country road.

When they returned, Erik came bolting in the front door with glee and excitement in his voice. “That was really, really fun, Mommy! The van spun around and around on the ice—spinning in circles. It was like an amusement park ride!”

Sherry felt her face go white as a sheet.

On the next two mornings, a very unusual thing happened. Totally out of character, Erik arose first and knelt by his mommy’s bedside. Erik was one who did not like to get up in the morning. So Sherry was shocked to see Erik there, kneeling and staring at her. “Honey, what are you doing?” she asked. “Is something the matter?”

“No, Mommy, nothing’s the matter,” Erik answered. “I just love you so very much, that’s all.”

When she got out of bed to fix breakfast on the Saturday before Christmas, Sherry felt so full of love for her little ones. What true blessings they were to have in her life. What a lucky mom she was.

On the next day, Sherry was once again awakened by Erik, quietly kneeling at her bedside. It was the third morning in a row that he had done this.

It was very early on Sunday morning. Paul had left to finish preparing his sermon. It seemed too early to

get up, so once again Sherry asked Erik if anything was wrong.

“I’m so happy you are here, Mommy,” Erik told her. “I just missed you. I love you.”

After a big hug, Sherry suggested that Erik go back to bed for a little while. He asked if he couldn’t just play in the playroom and get Melissa out of bed to play too, since she was awake. Sherry agreed and fell back to sleep.

A little time later, Erik came silently back into the room as Sherry was stirring. “Mom, come here,” he beamed. “I have a present for you.”

He took her by the hand, leading her into the playroom. “Look, Mommy, I made this for you,” he said, pointing to a puzzle he had put completely together on the floor. The picture on the puzzle was that of a single white horse grazing in a beautiful green meadow.

“That’s wonderful. Thank you, sweetie,” Sherry said to Erik, giving him a huge hug and kiss.

Sherry told the kids that it was time to get the toys picked up, get some breakfast, and get ready for church.

“Mom, we can’t put away the puzzle,” Erik protested with concern and feeling, almost as if the horse were real. “That’s your present. That white horse is for you.”

(For many Native American tribes, a vision of a white horse represents Death coming to accompany the spirit to the land of the grandparents. A white horse may also symbolize magic powers, and the enchanted animal may serve as a warrior’s ally in transcending the trials and tribulations of Earth. The Book of Revelation says that Christ shall return astride a white horse, leading armies of the righteous riding white horses.)

With so many other things on her mind, Sherry agreed to Erik’s request. It seemed very strange to Sherry that Erik took such great pride in the accomplishment of putting this particular puzzle together. From the time he was little, he had always been the greatest of puzzle solvers and assemblers. This was a

very simple fifty-or-so-piece puzzle. Erik had put those together effortlessly when he was about three or four years old. He was now eight, on his way to being nine. The sense of achievement that Erik seemed to have with this small, simple puzzle made no sense to Sherry.

Dismissing the paradox, Sherry smiled at the thought of the gift and the love behind it. It was now time to get ready for church—and the weather was formidable. It was sleeting, snowing, and blowing, and extremely cold.

There had already been three or four phone calls from concerned parishioners warning her not to venture out on such bad roads. “Now, don’t you feel you have to come out because it’s Christmas Sunday or because of Pastor Paul or any other reason,” one earnest lady had told her. “The roads are terrible and dangerous. There are warnings to stay inside. All of the other churches in the entire surrounding area are closed. Pastor Paul insists that he have church for whoever wants to make it out since he’s already there. But we don’t want anything to happen to you. No one will think anything of it. Just stay in and be safe.”

Sherry felt pleased with the sincere expressions of concern, but she thought that since she and the kids were all ready, they might as well go—carefully—to church.

Not until she was in the garage trying to open the door to her Fiat convertible did she realize how really bad the weather was. Her car had been in the shop getting a new top, and this was the first time she had gone out to drive it since she had brought it back from the garage. The doors wouldn’t open; they were frozen shut.

Sherry tried a hammer and boiled water. Nothing would budge those doors. After about twenty minutes of failed attempts, Erik said, “Good, Mom. Let’s just go in and build a fire and you can read us a story.”

That sounded like the perfect plan. “Great idea,” Sherry said. “Let’s do it.”

Suddenly, Melissa yelled out, “No, let’s go to church! We can take the jeep.”

Having forgotten that a loaner jeep from some parishioners was still there, Sherry walked over to it, saying, "Well, I have never driven this, and I don't have any idea where Daddy would have the keys."

"Daddy always leaves the keys in the ignition," Melissa said.

Sure enough, they were there.

Sherry turned the keys in the ignition but got no response at all from the engine. After a second and third failure, she concluded that trying to start the jeep was a waste of time.

"Okay, let's go in the house and build a fire," Sherry said to the kids.

For some reason, this decision made Melissa start to cry: "No, I want to go to church!"

Suspecting that the real reason behind Melissa's youthful dedication to church was a normal desire to play with other children her own age in the nursery, Sherry said, "Okay, I'll try one more time. If it doesn't start then, we are going in the house."

Reaching over for the very last attempt, Sherry halfheartedly turned the key. To her amazement, it started.

As she looked over at her two children, half-crouched and half-standing on the passenger side's bucket seat, for the first time the flimsy nature of the loaner jeep became apparent to her. It had been very thoughtful for the family who owned the jeep to loan it to the Hansens while Sherry's car was under repair, but they had not found it necessary to use it.

Focusing on the immediate condition of the jeep, Sherry saw that there were no seat belts! She turned to Melissa and Erik, told them to sit closely together and to get ready for takeoff.

Paul Hansen's farmhouse was out in the country, and since it would take about twenty minutes to arrive at the church, it dawned on Sherry that after all the attempts to open her car door and then her struggle with the jeep, they would probably now be late for the service. The icy roads were so hazardous that the maximum speed she would dare drive would be about twenty-five or thirty miles an hour. But even if they ar-

rived for the last fifteen minutes, at least they would be there.

When they were halfway to church, the passenger door of the jeep flew open. Since they were going slowly, Sherry came to a near stop as Erik pulled the door shut. But it came open again and again. "That does it," Sherry exclaimed. "We are definitely *not* taking this back home."

When they finally arrived at the church, they went to one of the back pews and quietly sat down. The service had been late to start, giving a little extra time for those who braved the bad weather.

Erik and Melissa seemed amazingly loving and playful with one another during the service. Once Sherry had turned just in time to watch Erik take off his cherished Native American Star necklace that he *never* was without. He would sleep with it unless his mom saw that he had it on and made him hang it on his dresser—where he could see it. Erik silently placed his treasured piece around his sister's neck and reached over to give her a kiss on the cheek once the necklace was draped just right.

Melissa responded accordingly. She removed her cherished linked "fish that wiggled" and placed the chain around her brother's neck, positioning the fish just so.

Sherry's tummy felt a blow. What a strange reaction, she thought. Here her kids had performed what seemed to be a sacred act, vowing to one another their love—yet Sherry felt a rush of panic similar to the ones that she had experienced at the school auditorium, at the children's Sunday school Christmas service, upon hearing about the near-spinning accident of the van, and upon viewing Erik's "puzzle white horse" gift.

She continued to let her mind review the events of the bizarre week. That morning she had received at least four warnings by phone that she should not go out. Why had she been so persistent and spent all her energy and time with both her car and the jeep after all the warnings?

She was one who believed that one should pay atten-

tion to signs such as these as possible messages from a Higher Power to communicate assistance and even ward off danger. She suddenly felt guilty, wondering if she had acted irresponsibly.

The service was ending. Sherry was mouthing the final liturgy when she received a strong mental and physical picture of the jeep door flying open on its own. A firm conviction took hold of her. She *could* not take the jeep home.

During the customary shaking of hands at the door, Sherry made her appeal to Pastor Paul: "The passenger door on the jeep kept flying open all the way here. I had to take the jeep since the doors on my car were frozen shut. I am *not* taking it home. I have 'that' feeling. I'll leave it in the church parking lot and someone can pick it up later."

Paul nearly ignored her, as he was concentrating on greeting the parishioners, but then he completely astonished her by stating that she would have to get permission from the family who owned the jeep to leave it in the church parking lot. As if trapped in some incredible drama of the absurd, Sherry spent the next ten to fifteen minutes pleading with the individual members of the "jeep" family for permission to leave the makeshift vehicle in the parking lot. Incredibly, they were all unwilling to grant her this favor.

Paul told her that he could not take her or the kids with him in the van because he had promised to take some of the elderly home and then he had to return to the church for caroling.

With a growing sense of doom mounting, Sherry could no longer hold back tears. Speaking as firmly as her draining strength permitted, she said, "I feel so strongly about this. I insist that the children go with you! They can sit on the floor. If I have to take the jeep, fine. But Melissa and Erik are *not* going to be in it."

Pastor Paul agreed, but with some obvious irritation. He locked the church doors as Sherry made sure Erik and Melissa were in the van.

As Paul hurriedly raced toward the van, Sherry

rolled down the window of the jeep and yelled out, "Be sure you watch out the back window for me. Let's stay close together. Since the weather is so bad, I'll follow you!"

He nodded in agreement and climbed into the van, slamming the door behind him.

The weather had become even worse. Visibility seemed near zero as it continued to snow. The van started up and pulled to the edge of the church parking lot, then suddenly and abruptly came to a halt.

Out came Erik, crying and running toward Sherry in the jeep. "What on earth are you doing?" she screamed, rolling down the window once again. "Get back in the van!"

Shocked, she saw the van pull out of the parking lot and turn right. She watched in disbelief as it headed down the road, leaving Erik behind with her. "No, no, no!" she screamed again and again.

When Erik crawled in the jeep, Sherry noticed that he had been crying hard. "What happened, Erik? Don't you know that you are supposed to be with Dad?"

"I want to be with you, Mom. I want to be with you!"

"Sweetie, we would all be home in just a little bit. You would have been with me then. You know all I went through to have you and Melissa go in the van—not in the jeep."

It was now more than apparent that Paul was not returning with the van. Sherry got out to check the doors of the church, hoping to find one unlocked. As she surveyed the situation, she came to a grim realization that she was trapped into embarking in the jeep with Erik after all. What else could she do?

Sherry told Erik to sit as close to Mommy as possible, yet stay on his own seat. "Hold on to the back of my seat or onto me, just in case the door opens up again. Oh, and push the lock down on the door."

The visibility was bad, and the roads were slicker than ever. Sherry could drive only about fifteen miles an hour. The silence of her concentration on her driving was suddenly broken by what seemed to be a

strong mental message coming from Erik: "It's okay, Mom. I love you."

Suddenly the jeep hit a bump and began to skid. First they went to one side of the road, then back to the other, as something seemed to catch at the right side of the jeep. Then it flipped over in the snow.

Unable to open her door, Sherry rolled down her window and climbed out. Brushing the snow from her long skirt and sweater, she called out Erik's name. It never dawned on her that he could be hurt because they had been going so slowly.

"Erik, are you all right?" No response. Sherry looked around and saw only the spinning wheels of the jeep and the snow and the empty fields.

Walking around to the other side of the jeep, Sherry half-expected her pixie son to be playing a trick on her. Maybe he was hiding, and he was about ready to jump out and say, "Boo."

But still there was no Erik. And now Sherry was becoming worried that something must be wrong.

Slowly walking around the jeep, Sherry suddenly saw Erik's little feet trapped under the mass of steel. "No!" she cried with a mother's deepest anguish.

Desperately, Sherry tried to lift the jeep while still calling to her son. "Erik, can you hear me?" she screamed as she tried with all her might to move the jeep. Erik made no reply.

Again and again she attempted to lift the jeep off of her only beloved son. She had read stories in which such a feat had been accomplished under duress, no matter how impossible it may have seemed to be.

For years Sherry had worked at her faith. The words of Jesus raced through her mind and mouth. "If you just *believe*, you shall be healed."

"*Nothing* is impossible unto you if you so believe."

She directed every fiber of life energy from every cell of her body and mind into each attempt to lift the jeep and free her son. She knew that her faith was strong and she *did* believe.

But no matter how much she strained and pushed and tried, she could budge the jeep only a few inches.

She needed to roll it over and off her son entirely in order to pull him out. She could not seem to do it.

Not about to give in, she ran in each direction, hoping to get a glimpse of a car or someone who could help her. Each time she saw nothing, and each time she returned to the jeep, desperately trying again and again to lift it.

At last a truck that was passing by stopped to assist her. Inside the cab were three stocky men, one of whom was a member of Pastor Paul's church and an off-duty ambulance driver. They had a CB unit in the truck, so they radioed for an ambulance, then proceeded to right the jeep, shouting at Sherry to pull Erik out from under the jeep as they held it off his body.

Calling upon her experience as a nurse, Sherry looked at her son, who appeared not to be breathing, and yelled, "He should not be moved. Just roll the jeep all the way over and off him."

Although she shouted the same order over and over, each time the three men retorted, "Just do it! Pull him out, for God's sake!"

Mired once again in a feeling of helplessness, Sherry finally did as they ordered and pulled her son out from under the jeep. After she pulled her coat out of the jeep window, she sat down in the snow, and put it around Erik. She cradled his head in her lap, and when she saw bubbles coming out of his nose, she knew that he was alive, but that he had lung damage.

Completely immersed in grief, Sherry was at last aware of the ambulance pulling up at what turned out to be well over twenty-five minutes after it had been called. Incredibly, the drivers had gotten lost.

Once on the scene, however, they sprang into action. The familiar van and Pastor Paul were at once present, and Sherry could only hear confusing shouts all around her. Then she realized that they had put her on a stretcher and were monitoring her because they had been informed that she had a hole in her heart, and they feared the effects of the stress of the accident on her heart. They were attending to her as well as work-

ing on her son on the next stretcher—inside the ambulance.

“Leave me alone. I’m not hurt. Just help Erik! Just help my Erik!” Sherry cried out.

A few minutes later, she became aware that she was in a hospital emergency room with all kinds of equipment hooked up to her. She was thrashing and screaming as a Catholic priest friend of Paul’s squeezed her hand while a nurse injected a shot in her buttocks.

“Oh, God, please take me and spare my son. Please, please, please. Take me, not Erik!” Sherry sobbed continually.

In his attempt to comfort Sherry, the priest said, “You don’t know what you are saying. You can’t bargain with God. You aren’t ready. Only God knows. If it is Erik’s time and God is calling him Home, that is not *your* decision; that is the Lord’s.”

Feeling betrayed by any Higher Power and suffused with the desire to sacrifice her own life for that of her only son, Sherry continued to wail in anguish. No effort or shot was able to calm or to quiet her. Her suffering and torment raged at a volume that could be heard throughout the entire hospital.

All at once Sherry was completely silent. She reached out her right hand as if to touch something, and her wails of grief gave way to a smile and laughter.

“What is it? What are you seeing?” the priest asked.

Sherry responded with a voice soothed by a miraculous peace, “It’s Erik. It’s Erik. He just appeared before me and told me he is all right and that he loves me.

“He’s all right,” Sherry repeated, only to shrink back in terror when she saw several physicians and a nurse trailed by Paul bursting into the room. She saw the nurse fill another hypodermic needle, and she screamed out. “No, no, I just *had* a shot. It’s not time for another. I don’t want another . . .”

Sherry’s trailing protest was met with the most dreaded words in the universe: “*I’m sorry. We tried everything. We lost him. He’s gone.*”

The physician said the awful words as tenderly and as caringly as possible, but Sherry would not accept the pronouncement. "No, it cannot be. Erik just told me he was okay."

The silence in the room was nearly deafening. The priest finally dared to break the quiet agony: "Erik is all right. He was telling you that he is all right. He's with the Lord now, and he is truly at peace. God's will be done."

The priest squeezed both of Sherry's hands even more firmly than before. "You are truly blessed to have had Erik appear to you so vividly with such a confirmation."

Since then, as she has reflected upon the sorrowful episode, Sherry has been struck by the irony of the countless times when Erik's life had been miraculously spared because she responded to messages that seemed to have been sent by God's guiding force. Why, during that last week, had she not taken to heart the omens that Erik had been giving her, the clues that he had offered that his time with her, as well as his gift of life, were coming to a close? Sherry knows now that Erik's soul was aware of another calling. One with which he seemed to be at peace.

Sherry has come to understand that the special bond between mother and child is sacred and blessed. She has long been at peace with her son's death, and she has come to realize that she gained a much deeper meaning, design, and purpose to life because of the pain of her loss. Sherry holds dear Erik's favorite poem as a symbol of the transitory nature of life, and she now recognizes the act of physical death as merely the changing of one form to another and a temporary separation from those whom we love.

Here is that favorite poem, which Erik, in his own writing, had written out for his mom shortly before he died:

*The caterpillar, brown and furry,
Caterpillar, in a hurry,
Take your walk
To the shady leaf or stalk.*

*May no toad spy you.
May the little birds pass you by . . .
To live again . . .
a Butterfly.*

Love, Erik

The biggest lesson that Sherry learned to pass on to others and to apply in her own life is that our children truly are a gift to us to be treasured, no matter how short a time they might grace our lives. At any given instant of any given day, our loved ones might be taken from us—or we from them. Knowing this, it seems that the most important thing we could ever do in life would be to live each moment so completely with love and fullness as if it were our very last to be with our loved ones.

If every day when awakening we had the feeling that this is the only day that we might have to be with our son or our daughter, our husband or our wife, our mother or father, sister or brother, how *completely* that would change how we respond to them or interact with them. And that Sherry believes is the real message of Jesus and the most important message of all faiths and religions: *To live every moment in love and caring, selflessly, unconditionally.*

What greater lesson could a mother learn from her child?

*Knowledge by suffering entereth / And Life is perfected
by Death.* —Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Part Six: Forging the Psychic Connection Between Mother and Child

Their Love Connection Began Long before Her Daughter's Birth

*What feeling is so nice as a child's hand in yours?
So small, so soft and warm, like a kitten huddling
in the shelter of your clasp.* —Marjorie Holmes

As her due date drew near in June 1975, Sally Van Buren, of Columbia, South Carolina, knew that she would have a difficult delivery. The doctors had debated whether or not they should take the child through Caesarean section, but they decided to manipulate the breech baby in the delivery room.

Sally, however, would be given only a mild painkiller. They could not anesthetize her because she, the mother, would have to help.

"Then the worst happened," Sally said. "My obstetrician, Dr. Sommerville, was out of town when the labor pains began. He had planned to be back in time for the delivery, but my baby wouldn't wait.

"Never say that things can't get worse, because they can! The pediatrician with whom Dr. Sommerville had discussed my case—in the event that something unforeseen should prevent his being there for the delivery—was in the midst of a difficult surgery and absolutely could not be disturbed.

"The doctor who finally got corralled to deliver my baby was hardly the best example the medical field could offer as a model of the devoted practitioner. He seemed barely interested in the difficulty of the delivery—or in alleviating any of my pain!"

As the dilation neared completion, the birth agony was nearly driving Sally out of her mind.

"I was thirty-eight years old. This was my first child, my first delivery, and I felt that I was losing my sanity," Sally remembered. "I felt a strange whirling sensation, like I was a propeller on an airplane. My body seemed to spin faster and faster—and then, pop! I was floating over the bed in the labor room, looking down on my physical body and the solicitous nurse who sought to ease my pain."

Sally recalled that she was shocked to see how contorted her facial features were.

"At first I thought that I had died in childbirth," she said. "My mother and my sister had been worried that I was too old to endure a breech birth for my very first delivery of a child. I had worried that they might be right.

"But then the body on the bed below me thrashed wildly and let out a terrible cry of pain. I was really baffled. That *was* me down on the bed writhing in what was obviously awful agony. But it was *also* me up near the ceiling watching the scene below and feeling absolutely no pain at all!"

Sally saw the nurse measure her dilation.

"You're ready, honey!" she said. "Now where's that damned doctor?"

Sally followed the perturbed nurse as she left the labor room, and she watched as she found the doctor having a cigarette with one of the interns in the physicians' lounge and discussing that weekend's big baseball game.

The disinterested doctor scowled at the nurse's insistent summons, as if he hated to be interrupted in his conversation just to deliver someone's baby.

Almost at once, after viewing the doctor's distasteful scowl, Sally was back on the bed in the labor room, moaning with the agony of her travail—and wishing that she could go back up near the ceiling where there was no pain.

"I did flip out of my body again during the delivery," Sally said. "I hovered above my physical self for

just a moment or so and saw my face pale and glistening with sweat . . . then I seemed to be somewhere far-away in the clouds . . . or heaven . . . or somewhere out in space.”

Sally was astonished to see a lovely young woman with long blond hair and unusually large blue eyes smiling at her. She was dressed in a red and white pin-afore outfit that suggested a clothing style affected by women during the latter part of the previous century.

“I wondered if she was an angel—and if I had died for certain this time,” Sally said, “but she looked more like a frontier or country woman than an angel.”

The young blonde had a truly beautiful smile, and her words of sympathy were uttered in a strangely jocular manner. “I’m sorry that you’re having such a difficult time, my dear. But remember, it was your choice. You wanted to be the mother this time.”

Sally wanted to ask the woman what she meant, but she was becoming conscious of a tugging, a pulling sensation.

“You’d better get on with it,” the attractive blonde told her. “It’s nearly over. You’d better go back. The child is about to make its appearance.”

Sally seemed to be dragged into some kind of tunnel with a bright light at the end.

“For the first time in what seemed like days, I thought of my poor husband, Marty, sitting in the waiting room,” Sally said. “Just like that, I was hovering over him, watching him play a nervous game of solitaire in the visitors’ lounge. My mother was also there, trying to stay calm by knitting booties for her unborn grandchild.

“The next thing I knew, I was opening my eyes and a nurse was bending over me with my baby in her hands. ‘It’s a girl!’ she said as she gave her to me. ‘A healthy baby girl!’ ”

Sally felt a warm surge of mother love as she accepted the wonderful prize of her daughter from the smiling nurse. It had been a long and difficult pregnancy and an extremely painful delivery. She truly did feel as though she was being presented with a prize, an

award, for courage and bravery befitting a good mother. She knew that she would value her child that much more for having paid such a high price of sweat, blood, tears, and agony.

"We're calling her Amy," Sally announced to the attentive nurse and to the world at large. Even the disinterested doctor nodded his silent approval.

"It would have been Barry if it had been a boy," she added, in the remote possibility that anyone in the delivery room would be interested.

"Hey," the nurse asked her, "where did you go? You left us there for a while, didn't you?"

Sally nodded. "I did. But I surely don't know where I went. No place on this planet, that's for sure."

In the excitement and challenge of motherhood rather late in life, Sally put the strange out-of-body projection during Amy's birth completely out of her mind. And in the ensuing years she found more than enough tasks to divert her attention from that peculiar incident as she sought to balance her career as a corporate attorney with her responsibility as a mother.

It wasn't until Amy was eight years old that the singular experience suddenly came into focus for her once again.

The child had developed a rather high fever, and Sally had maintained a vigil at her bedside long into the night, placing cool washcloths on Amy's forehead and brushing aside the damp strands of her long blond hair.

About three in the morning, just before the fever broke, Amy began to whimper and toss fitfully in her sleep. A few minutes later, she awoke with a start and sat up, her large blue eyes suddenly wide open.

"Here, honey," Sally said, gently bringing a glass to her daughter's lips, "take a couple of sips of water. Your fever has broken. You're going to feel better now."

Amy dutifully took small swallows of water from the drinking glass, then reached up to hug her mother. "Oh, Mommy," she said. "I was having that funny dream again."

Sally wanted to know what dream that might be.

“The one where you and I are all alone in the room with the bright light,” Amy answered. “Where was that funny room, Mommy?”

Although Sally had first assumed that Amy had simply experienced a bizarre dream inspired by her fever, the child persisted in her desire to have the location of the “funny room with the bright light” identified.

After a series of questions—all met and negated by Amy’s serious replies—Sally was about to conclude that the child’s fever had somehow triggered a memory of the delivery room at the hospital at the time of her birth. There had been some medical research, Sally was aware, which suggested that some people did possess actual memories of their birth experience.

“No, no, it wasn’t the delivery room, Mommy.” Amy’s response was once again firm. “It was before that. Before I was born.”

Sally laughed aloud. “What do you mean ‘before that’? There is no ‘before’ birth in a delivery room.”

Amy sat up with an impatient frown and placed her hands on her hips for emphasis. “Yes, there is! We were in that bright room trying to decide who was going to be the mother this time. You said that you wanted to be—and I said, ‘All right. If you want to be.’ Now, *where* was that room, Mommy? I keep trying to remember.”

Sally looked at Amy—the stubborn, determined set to her chin, her long blond hair, her blue eyes narrowed intently—and suddenly she remembered that strange out-of-body projection during the trauma of childbirth.

“For a weird moment there,” she said, “I was seeing the beautiful, blue-eyed blond woman in the red and white pinafore dress expressing sympathy for my discomfort—but reminding me with a slight haughtiness that it was *my* choice to be the mother this time.

“I had never told anyone about the strange experience that occurred to me during Amy’s birth—not even my husband, Marty, or my mother or my sister. I had simply attributed the whole thing to a weird hallucina-

tion brought on by the intense pain of birthing a first child—and a breech one at that.

“I had never really thought much about the possibility of past lives or reincarnation,” Sally said. “I have a friend who is kind of into New Age-type stuff and believes in reincarnation, who once said that people sometimes come back to incarnate in family groups for the purpose of completing a lesson left unlearned or to finish some task left undone.

“I know that my great love for Amy began long before her actual physical birth, but I had always believed that I had bonded so strongly with her because of the severe discomfort that I suffered through during my pregnancy and the delivery.

“Who knows, maybe our love connection goes back *long* before her physical birth this time around. Maybe it goes back even long before ‘the room with the bright light where we decided who would be the mother this time.’ ”

A Vision of Her Unborn Son Riding a White Dove Relieved the Anxieties of Childbirth

I looked on child rearing not only as a work of love and duty but as a profession that was fully as interesting and challenging as any honorable profession in the world and one that demanded the best that I could bring to it. —Rose Kennedy

Heather Steile of Alameda, California, remembered those anxious days in November 1959 when she was awaiting the delivery of her second child. Her first baby had died at birth, and she prayed that this time God would allow the tiny life form within her womb to emerge safely.

A week before she was due, she awakened one morning to find that she could not see out of one eye.

“I shook my husband, Phil, awake, and I told him that I could see only whiteness with my left eye. He telephoned Joseph Cardoza, our family doctor, and within an hour or so we were in his office.”

Dr. Cardoza could not explain Heather's sudden loss of vision. He readily admitted that its causes lay beyond his expertise. He suggested that it might go away in a day or two, but if it did not, he would recommend an eye specialist.

"I wondered if the sudden loss of my vision might not be psychosomatic," Heather Steile admitted. "Perhaps I could not bear to 'see' another of my children born dead. I spent two worried days and sleepless nights until I decided to see a specialist and learn his opinion about my condition."

Dr. Cardoza arranged an appointment with Dr. Michaelson, who examined Heather extensively before discovering that a blood vessel was being pinched and was cutting off circulation. He stated his analysis firmly: If something was not done immediately, she risked permanent blindness in her left eye.

"As if I was not worried enough about the safe delivery of my baby in just a few days, I now had the grim specter of blindness in one eye to raise my stress levels," she said.

Dr. Michaelson advised Heather to check into the hospital to receive a series of typhoid fever shots. It was his medical opinion that the inoculations would raise her temperature and open the constricted blood vessel.

"Although Phil thought that we should go at once to the hospital for the shots, my first thought was of our unborn child," Heather said. "Even though Dr. Michaelson kept trying to convince me that the induced fever would in no way harm the baby, I was unable to accept his assurances. I wanted to take no chances of any kind that might in any way threaten our child's well-being, and I could not be convinced that this kind of 'fever therapy' would be nonthreatening to an unborn baby. I left Dr. Michaelson's office declaring that I would rather lose the sight in my left eye than risk the loss of my child."

Heather Steile recalled that she went to bed quite late that night. Although Phil had agreed that the decision to reject Dr. Michaelson's advice was hers to

make, they still managed to get into an argument when he continued to nag her about reconsidering the almost certain risk to her eyesight.

“Sometime during the night, I had this wonderful dream,” she said. “I saw myself floating on fluffy white clouds until I stood before a great golden door in the heavens. I opened the door and saw before me a beautiful green meadow with a dazzling array of multicolored flowers.

“I had not walked for long in the glorious meadow when I saw a ray of golden light streak down from the heavens—and on the ray of light there descended a large white dove with a beautiful golden-haired baby boy riding on its back. The child’s large blue eyes looked up at me with such great love, and I heard a voice that seemed to emanate from the dove, saying, ‘Behold, thy son. Have no fears. Follow the feelings of your heart.’ ”

Heather Steile awakened from the dream greatly at peace with her anxieties and assured that she had received a sign that her child would be born safely and without incident.

“I truly had a new hope and faith,” she said. “I no longer felt like crying, and the old fears were gone. Somehow I knew that whatever would happen with my eyesight would be part of a larger plan. I would follow my inner feelings and do nothing to jeopardize my baby’s well-being.”

On November 20, 1959, Andrew Steile was born alive and healthy. “He had curly blond hair and large blue eyes,” Heather said. “The doctors said that he was completely sound of body.

“And to add to my great joy, I could see clearly once again with my left eye!

“Later, when Dr. Michaelson examined me, he theorized that the rigors of childbirth must have somehow unkinked the blood vessel. When he asked why I had been so willing to take a chance with my eyesight, I smiled and said that a big white birdie had told me that everything would be all right.”

Researching the Dreams of Pregnant Women

A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

—John 16:21

A few years ago, when he was director of the dream lab at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York, Dr. Stanley Krippner told Brad Steiger that a large percentage of pregnant women have dreams in which something will go wrong with their unborn child. Because so many mothers have such dreams, researchers consider them to be natural fears and in most cases do not believe them to be pathological.

Research conducted at the dream lab by Diana R. Schneider discovered that pregnancy, the wish for pregnancy, and the fear of pregnancy actually influence dream content to a high degree.

For example, Dr. R. L. Van de Castle, research consultant to the project, found that pregnant women dream often of architecture—hospital buildings, primarily—family members, doctors, and individuals who are not identified as to gender.

Dreams of anxiety concerning the unborn child are found to be very common, and expectant mothers often describe their babies as being born deformed or possessed of unusual or grotesque attributes.

Occasionally, it seems, a woman may have a dream which accurately glimpses the future in regard to her pregnancy and delivery.

In a study of the dreams of forty-four normal young women during their first pregnancy, one research group concluded that there could be no doubt that the impact of the pregnancy experience was reflected in the dream experience. Nearly half of all the subjects' reported dreams were concerned with misfortune, harm, or environmental threat to the baby or to the mother.

The study further indicated that the group of new mothers who adapted most poorly to childbirth were

those whose dreams were characterized by depression, hostility, and sadomasochistic fantasies—those dreams in which the dreamer takes delight in inflicting pain or in being tormented.

Over his twenty-five years of experience with the nocturnal fears and dreams of pregnant women, Dr. David B. Cheek has formulated a set of criteria for separating the good-risk from the bad-risk obstetrical patient.

According to Dr. Cheek, good-risk patients are happily married and look forward to the delivery of their child. Their previous pregnancies, if any, have been uncomplicated.

The poor-risk obstetrical patients include those women with any one of the following serious primary factors:

Death or divorce of parents before the patient was age five

Serious illness or death of mother at birth

Serious illness of patient during childhood

Gynecological operation prior to pregnancy

Infertility for more than four years

Previous abortion

Stillbirth, abnormal or premature baby

Serious complication in earlier pregnancy.

Contacting the Child within the Womb

The dignity, the grandeur, the tenderness, the everlasting and divine significance of motherhood.

—De Witt Talmage

Early in her married life Sherry Hansen Steiger was told that it would be virtually impossible for her ever to conceive, carry, and give birth to a child. This depressing conclusion was pronounced by a number of specialists after reviewing the many tests that they had administered. To their knowledge, they said, no woman had ever become pregnant with a metabolic reading anywhere near as low as hers—and she had several

other physical conditions which more than supported their deduction.

Sherry knew that when and if something was meant to be, *nothing* would be impossible. Approximately six years from the first time that she was told that she could never bear a child, she miraculously, and somewhat in defiance of the medical ultimatum, conceived.

She experienced an immediate sacred bond with the new life within her, and her deep feelings made her accept the possible truth of what she had once been told was a belief of the Chinese—that a child is already a year old when it is born. Suspecting the uterine walls and surroundings to be vulnerable to “noise penetration” and not at all “soundproof,” Sherry came to believe that everything within and without could affect the development of the unborn child. Her thoughts, moods, and interaction with others; the foods she ate; the books and periodicals she read; the things she saw and heard would *all* affect the developing child within her.

Although at that time her existing obligations and commitments to the “real world” prevented her from being able to act fully on all the ideals of her philosophy, she implemented as much as possible a positive, constructive attitude, as well as the proper food and nutrition for her Erik. She just “knew” that the life within was a male child and that his name *had* to be Erik. Later there were even comments that he was a Viking about to be reborn—and in the later portion of her pregnancy, Sherry joked that he must still be wearing his horned headgear!

As a part of their seminary training at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, Sherry and her husband, Paul, were assigned to undertake a summer ministry in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. This would mean several moves during the time of pregnancy—and about an eighteen-hour workday, seven days a week. The living quarters for the ministers were located in a historic home and consisted of a single room and a porch, with occasional use of the kitchen and a shared

bathroom with the owner of the home, a gentlewoman in her eighties.

The young ministers' major project of the summer was the creation of the *Jawbone*, a coffeehouse that would introduce a new ministerial concept, an ecumenical effort from the ground up—which also meant that it had to be constructed and readied before the ministerial outreach to the area teenagers could even begin. Board by board, they would have to erect walls, ceilings, and the stage, then paint the donated chairs and tables.

All in all, this was a wonderful way to build a service ministry, but not such a wonderful way to build a child. And in addition to her many officially assigned duties, Sherry had taken in her younger brother, Paul, Jr., who was going through a difficult period of rebellion!

Doing the best she could under the circumstances, Sherry continued to talk to the developing child in her womb. She made light of the practice at first. So she would not seem too “loony,” she would make comments like “Erik, did you hear that?” or “Oops, sorry that was so loud!” Soon the kids who hung out at the *Jawbone* were talking to Erik as well.

Sherry received interesting confirmations that the child within her was responding in surprising ways to the various outer stimuli. Thinking at first that it must be coincidence, Sherry noticed what seemed to be kicks to her abdomen in perfect time to the music being performed on the coffeehouse stage. When the kicking continuing with startling regularity, she was soon convinced that the flawless timing of the kicks to match the beat of the music was anything but coincidence.

It didn't take long for the word to spread among the kids, the other ministers, and the lay volunteer chaperones, and they soon were all feeling Erik's “drumbeat” and calling him the prodigy drummer boy.

Erik was born October 9, 1967, one month early. As soon as he was mobile, his favorite toys were pots and pans that he dragged from a cupboard, lined up like a

drum set, and beat on with wooden spoons. Even at the beach he preferred coffee cans, bottles, or shells turned upside down to any toy, and he always beat out a perfect beat to the music he made. It was not surprising that his favorite song was "The Little Drummer Boy."

Is There Such a Thing as a "Prenatal Classroom"?

"While inside the uterus, the baby is able to feel, learn, and tell the difference between dark and light," says obstetrician Dr. F. Rene Van De Carr. "By playing learning games with a fetus, it may be possible to improve the child's intellectual capacity for life."

For the past thirteen years, Van De Carr has been designing and testing what he terms "a comprehensive program of prenatal stimulation." Van De Carr says we can recall our time spent in the womb and that we carry the lessons of gestation to bear on the rest of our lives. In the new book *Prenatal Classroom* (Humanics Publishing Group, 1993) coauthored by Van De Carr and psychologist Mark Leher, the authors give exercises that include techniques for talking directly to the fetus, patting and rubbing the abdomen rhythmically until baby kicks back, shining a flashlight through the abdomen, and even playing music that the fetus can hear. Van De Carr contends that such exercises can stimulate the brain areas responsible for socialization and thereby increase the baby's ability to give and to receive affection.

In *Nurturing the Unborn Child* (Delacorte, 1992), Toronto psychiatrist Thomas Verny calls for examining the relationship between the pregnant mother and her mate in addition to establishing a loving connection between mother and baby.

The notion that the mother's emotions affect the fetus is just beginning to gain reluctant scientific respectability. Tests show that the mother's anxiety increases the baby's heart rate because maternal anxiety causes an increased flow of hormones such as epinephrine,

which constricts blood vessels and interferes with uterine blood supply.

Conclusive research that smoking on the part of the mother *and* father affects the unborn child negatively is no shock to most of us. In one experiment, pregnant mothers who smoked were denied cigarettes for twenty-four hours. When they were offered cigarettes again, the fetal hearts started beating faster *before* their mothers could even light up!

New research shows conclusively that the brain and a preview of its potential may develop far earlier than doctors previously believed. According to Dr. Dominick Purpura, dean of the Stanford University School of Medicine, electroencephalograms of the fetus show brain patterns as early as the seventh month of the gestation period that are remarkably similar to those of an infant who has already been born—thus challenging the previously held assumption that entry into the world is necessary to “turn on” an infant’s brain.

All the phases of sleep, including REM (Rapid Eye Movement), have been recorded in an unborn baby. Ultrasound pictures also show the fetus sucking its thumb, grabbing at the umbilical cord, hiccuping, and smiling. The developing child also kicks, rolls, and stretches.

While most of these activities within the womb are common experiences to a mother carrying a fetus, until the publication of recent data and research findings the scientific community generally considered such reports as old wives’ tales and myths. The notion that it is the act of birth that launches the total life force of the child has been altered. Birth is now recognized as simply a change of environment and the first stage of independence from the mother.

Creating a Psychic Connection between Mother and Child

That best academy, a mother’s knee

—James Russell Lowell

In this book filled with remarkable stories about the psychic bond formed between a mother and her children, it seems appropriate to examine briefly the lives of certain professional psychic sensitives and see just how their mothers participated in forging the cosmic connection that linked them together in ways beyond the normal sensory channels of communication.

Dorothy Spence Lauer of Glendora, California, possessed a high degree of psychic abilities even when she was a young girl. As an adult, she became one of the United States' most talented clairvoyants.

Whenever one of Mrs. Lauer's fans or admirers would ask her if she had been born with a "mystic cross" on her palm or if she was the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter, she would laugh and declare that she was just grateful that she managed to survive the birth experience.

"My body was so tiny at birth that there wouldn't have been any room for even one decent pentagram," she said. "I weighed only a pound and a half, and I measured just eleven inches."

Dorothy's paranormal abilities began to manifest themselves when she was but five or six, and an understanding mother helped her to realize that a person with a true psychic gift need not in any way appear odd or strange or behave in a manner different from anyone else.

"My mother gave me sound advice regarding my ability," she said. "Live normally, and do not let this gift rule you. You rule it."

When she herself was a young mother, Dorothy knew that she must fulfill her responsibilities to her children before she could devote full time to her psychic abilities. She kept her clientele very limited until her children were grown, then she became totally committed to helping others through ESP.

Throughout her life, Dorothy had things happen to her that other people labeled as "miracles." She did not consider them as such; she knew these events had occurred because of her own great belief.

“When doctors decreed that I would never have any more children after the birth of my son, I told them that I would have a very beautiful daughter,” she said. “Five years later, I delivered a nine-pound baby girl. Even up to the time of labor, the doctors were skeptical in regard to the birth—and some warned that the delivery would take either her life or mine. But I had no fear.

“Had I taken the word of the doctors and given up the idea of having another child, I probably never would have had one,” she continued. “But to me, this daughter who was born to me was as real on the day that the doctors told me that I would never have another child as she was on the day that they placed her in my arms. I just presented the problem to the ‘genie,’ the ‘knower’ within us, and I knew that this was to be.”

The incredible Olof Jonsson is one of the world’s greatest psychic sensitives, equally famous for discovering lost treasures, locating missing people, divining the identities of mass murderers, and participating in astronaut Edgar Mitchell’s Moon-to-Earth ESP experiment during the flight of Apollo 14 in February 1971. The Swedish-born Jonsson remembers his mother as a woman of a particularly mild and gentle nature.

“She was an inquisitive person with a probing mind, eager to seek the meaning of life, and she always had an intense interest in the things beyond the ordinary—a quality of which I inherited,” Olof said.

“Ever since my childhood, my mother and I were always on the same wavelength. If one can speak of contacts between invisible borders, then they certainly existed between us.

“When Mother died back in Sweden in the early 1950s, I happened to be in California,” Olof stated. “I needed no message from home. I knew the day and the hour when she left her earthly surroundings.

The internationally famous seeress Irene Hughes was born the eighth child of eleven to Easter Bell and

Joe Finger, a hardworking farm couple from Tennessee. Since Easter Bell was half Cherokee, she needed no mysterious inner power other than her maternal instinct to tell her that little 'Rene would be different from the other kids.

Irene and a brother, the eleventh child, were the only towheads in a dark-haired family, so her parents had no trouble keeping an eye on the little blond girl as she worked in the fields with her brothers and sisters. And it was not long before Easter Bell realized that 'Rene shared her mama's "strange feelin's" and then some.

Pretty soon, Joe was consulting his four-year-old daughter about such vital matters as whether or not it would rain that day before he got all the cotton picked. Little Irene always knew.

"The thing for which I am most grateful to my mother was her understanding of my power of prophecy," Irene Hughes said. "She made me know that I was a normal child with a special God-given gift of being able to see what was hidden to others. She never laughed at me or made me feel foolish. She never scolded me or tried to whip the 'devil' out of me."

When Irene was fifteen her parents decided to quit their small farm and move to the outskirts of Memphis. Irene went to live with an older sister in New Orleans, and on a return visit to Memphis she had a most frightening experience.

She was walking to church one Sunday night when she suddenly heard a voice out of nowhere scream at her: "*Irene, get on the tracks! Get on the streetcar tracks!*"

There were streetcar tracks on her left, so she instinctively obeyed the voice and jumped between the steel lines. Once she had made the rapid move, she stopped still and listened to see if there might be further instructions from the unseen entity.

About that time, a car approached her, and in the light cast by its headlights Irene was able to see the coiled, ready-to-strike form of a large water moccasin.

If Irene had continued walking on her self-appointed course, she would have walked directly into its waiting

fangs. As it was, she was not more than a fraction of an inch out of its striking range.

When the driver spotted the monstrous serpent, he swerved his automobile so that his wheels ran over its deadly coils. As Irene watched in horror, the driver worked his wheels back and forth over the body of the snake.

"Would you like a lift?" the man asked after the snake had been reduced to little more than an ugly, bloody smear on the concrete.

Irene shook her head and continued walking on the streetcar tracks until she reached the church.

"Whatever warned me to get on the streetcar tracks is that natural survival mechanism within us that is always kicked off in time of danger," Irene said. "Unfortunately, some people have become so 'civilized' that they do not always heed their own private alarm systems.

"According to those anthropologists who have studied such matters, it appears that the aborigines of Australia always know when danger is near. It seems logical to make the same assumption about earlier primitive humans.

"I, for one, have learned to accept the presence of this survival mechanism within me, and I know that I will be protected no matter what happens."

Although Brad Steiger does not consider himself to be a professional psychic sensitive, he has had numerous encounters with the paranormal throughout his career as a psychical researcher, and, of course, he has written nearly one hundred books on almost every known facet of psychic phenomena.

Brad counts himself among the very fortunate in that he had a very down-to-earth, practical father and a mother who freely participated with her children in fantasy play. Brad and his sister, June, were blessed with a mother who happily transformed their simple Iowa farm home into a castle with spires and moat and their apple orchard into a forest populated with fantastic creatures.

Then, when the play was completed, their mother returned them to standard reality, so they might learn early to distinguish between the two and to become functional in ordinary, as well as nonordinary, reality.

When their mother, Hazel Jensen, was a young girl of eleven or twelve, she and her older sister, Mabel, saw an angel walking on the country road. If the ethereal entity had not left an imprint of its sandal in the gravel—and if Mabel (the practical one) had not been present—the family might not have believed little Hazel, whose incredible powers of imagination were already famous in the Danish community of Rutland. Interestingly, Hazel's situation was the reverse of the one in which Irene Hughes found herself: Hazel was the only dark-haired, dark-complexioned child in a family of seven light-haired children.

The granddaughter of a French girl who had been adopted by a Danish family, Hazel felt entitled to compose her own language made up of French, Danish, and English words—combined with other phrases that were distinctly her own. She still speaks this unique alternate tongue to this day, to the delight of her grandchildren.

From earliest childhood, Brad and his mother have experienced numerous telepathic and clairvoyant episodes. They have often used long distance telephone calls only as a means of adding details to the basic message that had already been received telepathically.

And then there were the encounters with his mother's *Vardogr*, a peculiar kind of phenomenon that appears most often to afflict Scandinavians and Scots—and since his father was Norwegian, Brad got a double serving of the spook.

One Saturday night when he was sixteen, Brad managed to arrive home from town before his parents. He went upstairs to his room and lay down on the bed to thumb through a new magazine that he had purchased that evening at the drugstore in Bode.

He had not lain there long when he heard the doors of their farm home open and close and the sounds of his parents and his sister moving about downstairs.

All the sounds had been quite clear—first the opening of the front screen door, then the individual squeaking of the inside door. The sounds of footsteps mounting the three steps to the inner hallway had been very audible, as had been the subsequent noise of footsteps moving about in rooms downstairs. (Brad's parents and his sister had their bedrooms on the lower level of the farmhouse.)

"Good night!" Brad shouted down the stairs after a few moments.

There came no similar wishes for a good night's sleep in reply. Brad flipped through a few more pages of the magazine, thinking that the other members of the family had not heard him as they prepared for bed.

"Good night down there!" he shouted after a few minutes, a bit louder this time.

Again no answer.

And now it had suddenly become very quiet downstairs. Too silent, if those footsteps had really belonged to Brad's parents and his sister.

His mind was instantly flooded with a variety of startling images. Burglars, thinking the farmhouse deserted and not seeing Brad's upstairs light, had decided to pillage the house. His shouts had now alerted them to the presence of a lone occupant. What would be their next move? Icy fingers traced a slow, deliberate path up the length of Brad's spine.

At the moment that he was reaching for his .22 rifle and preparing to defend the homestead, he once again heard the familiar sounds of his parents arriving home. The noises were precisely as they were before, only this time when Brad shouted down his good nights, the voices of his parents and his sister quickly replied in kind.

Brad had been thoroughly and completely tricked by the Vardogr of his paranormally gifted mother.

Wiers Jensen (no relation to Brad's mother), editor of the *Norwegian Journal of Psychical Research*, wrote a series of articles about the Vardogr as early as 1917. The possessor of a Vardogr unconsciously em-

plays it as a kind of spiritual forerunner to announce his or her physical arrival.

“The Vardogr reports are all alike,” Jensen wrote. “With little variations the same type of happening occurs. The possessor of a Vardogr *announces* his arrival. His steps are heard on the staircase. He is heard to unlock the outside door, kick off his overshoes, put his walking stick in place, and so forth. The listening witnesses—if they are not so accustomed to the prelude of the Vardogr that they remain sitting quietly—open the door and find the entry empty. The Vardogr has, as usual, played a trick on them. Eight or ten minutes later, the whole performance is repeated—but now the reality and the person arrive.”

The second time the Vardogr of Brad’s mother tricked him was no less eerie—and neither were any of its numerous subsequent arrivals.

Brad’s sister, June, fell victim to the Vardogr’s spooky pranks fully as often as he.

One night after Brad had left for college, their parents arrived home to find June in a state of near panic. She had been sitting in a chair in her room with her back to the door. She had heard the front door to the farm home open and close and the sound of footsteps enter the house and approach to the spot directly behind her chair.

As she was engrossed in the book that she was reading, June had not bothered to turn around at the sound of the opening front door. After a few moments had passed, though, she began to wonder why her parents preferred to stand behind her chair in complete silence.

Imagine June’s surprise and horror when she turned around and saw that *no one* was there.

Weirs Jensen in one of his articles notes that, as a rule, the Vardogr announces itself only by imitating the sounds made by inanimate objects, such as the sound of a key in the lock or the stamping of shoes on the floor.

Occasionally, however, the Vardogr may materialize into such an independent apparition that it may be mistaken for a person.

One night when Brad was alone at home during a thunderstorm, expecting his parents and sister to return at any moment, he was once again tricked by the remarkable imitative powers of the Vardogr. He was finally alerted to the fact that it was only the merry prankster at work downstairs when he looked out of his upstairs window and saw the headlights of his parents' car coming down the lane.

At that very moment, however, a nearby lightning strike knocked the lights out in their farmhouse. As Brad went for a flashlight to assist his parents into the darkened house, a loud thunderclap and lightning flash caused him to turn and glance out his bedroom window once again.

There, clearly silhouetted against the window, was the unmistakable form of a human being about the height of Brad's mother. It seemed to wave its arm in momentary confusion—and then it disappeared. The mischievous Vardogr had at last been caught in the act.

Forging the Link Seneca Style

Her children rise up and call her blessed.

—Proverbs 31:8

Twylah Nitsch, Repositor of Wisdom for the Seneca tribe, once described to us how Native Americans carefully attune the psychic bond between mother and child. The comfortable home in which she resides on the Cattaraugus Reservation, about thirty miles south of Buffalo, New York, was her birthplace and was built by her great-grandfather in 1858. On this day, Grandmother Twylah, as she is reverently addressed, illustrated her spiritual connection to her own children:

“When our son Bob was in the navy, he played in the service band. One day I had a vision of him on a ship at sea with sirens sounding all around him. I could see that there was trouble—but I could also see that Bob would be all right if he stayed right where he was. I kept projecting to him, ‘Bob, you’re all right. Don’t move. Stay right where you are!’

“Weeks later I got a letter from him saying, ‘Mother, you were so clear. I could see you, and I could hear you saying, “Stay where you are!”’

“Bob had seen my image and heard my voice, and he listened to my instructions—and everything worked out fine. A fire had broken out on board the ship while he was playing in the band. While others panicked, he just stayed right where he was until things were once again under control.”

Grandmother Twylah stated that even today Bob will pick up a telepathic impression from her, then telephone her and ask what she wants. “He knows when I am thinking about him, wanting to talk to him. My son Jim also speaks freely of such things.”

Descended from the great Seneca chief and orator Red Jacket, Twylah has quite obviously inherited his marvelous teaching abilities.

“One of the greatest lessons my grandfather, Moses Shongo, ever taught me was a discussion of the principles that were followed to promote happiness among the early Seneca,” she said.

“How well one communicated was considered of utmost importance,” she told us. “Communication is understanding. Understanding leads toward peace. Peace of mind leads toward happiness. Happiness is communication.”

“When problems arise in life, the blame can very often be placed on a lack of communication. A breakdown in communication will very often cause four reactions: anger; withdrawal from the person or the situation that influenced the breakdown; flight, running away from the person or situation identified with the misunderstanding; the creation of excuses for not facing the situation in order to solve it.

“Parents play a vital role in developing faith patterns in their children,” Twylah said. “Because some parents do not inject faithful characteristics in their daily lives, they tend to tear down, rather than build, faith in their children. Parents must take the time to evaluate the home environment that establishes a child’s way of

life. Successful communication depends on self-understanding and a reasonable amount of faith.”

The traditional Seneca people accepted the kinship of all creatures, and they believed that all entities were equal in the eyes of nature, each using its specific talents according to its abilities.

The Seneca sensed a powerful force flowing all around them. Some were able to feel the force; others were able to see it. They called the force the Great Mystery, and they recognized that its essence penetrated every soul and thus made every soul a part of it.

Teaching the importance of personal identification with all creatures and plants of nature was the first step in helping Seneca children to see the problems that all beings must overcome in order to stay in harmony with nature. The children learned the individual differences between the creatures, but they understood that the same spirit flowed through all of them.

“Faith was the first stepping stone that led toward love, work, and eventually pleasure,” Grandmother Twylah said. “Faith gave a strong feeling of belonging to something or someone. In the beginning, that was Mother Earth. All the tribes had faith in Mother Earth.

“A small child nestled in its mother’s protective arms feels the first level of faith,” she continued. “The physical contact of mother and child causes faith to flow between them as feeling. Feeling needs to be present in order to express the first stages of faith.”

Medicine woman Ann Underwood, a Cherokee, provided her comments about tribal relationships and pointed out that each person, from tiny child to the oldest individual in the tribe, had his own function, his own place, and “he never lost touch with nature.” In Mrs. Underwood’s opinion, the tribal method of child rearing was “a lot better than Dr. Spock’s.”

According to her evaluation, “All children were taught that they were persons, each with a respected place in the tribe, clan, and family. All children were told that they had certain responsibilities, that they must revere and respect their parents, their grandparents, the elder members of the clan and tribe. They

were taught to reverence the Great Mystery. From the time they were born, the children knew exactly who they were, where they were, and exactly what was expected of them. The children were accepted on those terms, without ridicule, without being put down.”

Grandmother Twylah said that the Seneca had four very simple questions which served both children and adults as guidelines for self-discipline: “Am I happy in what I’m doing? Is what I’m doing adding to the confusion? What am I doing to bring about peace and contentment? How will I be remembered when I am gone?”

When disciplining a child, Grandmother Twylah advised, “Ask him if he is happy doing what he is doing. If he is happy doing the naughtiness, he may answer yes. Then explain to him what will happen if he continues. Let him know that he alone will be responsible.”

To the traditional Seneca, to “go into the Silence” is to meditate, to realize spiritual love, to feel the rhythm that blends all creatures into complete harmony.

As Grandmother Twylah states it: “[The traditional Seneca] listened and *heard* the Silence; listened and *saw* the Silence; listened and *tasted* the Silence. He closed his eyes and felt the Silence deep within. The woodlands became his chapel; his body, the altar. In the Silence, he began to communicate with his Creator—and he received peace.”

In the cosmology of the traditional Seneca, the purpose of going into the Silence was to establish a personal routine that would become a regular experience for spiritual enrichment in one’s lifestyle.

“The preparation for this solitary meditation is so important that it should be done as carefully as one prepares his or her food,” Grandmother said. “Spiritual nourishment is the result, and it provides a guideline for one’s very existence.”

Develop Your ESP Abilities to Become a Truly Amazing Mom

*Don't aim to be an earthly saint, with eyes fixed
on a star. Just try to be the fellow that your Mother
thinks you are.* —Will S. Adkin

Experimental psychologist Dr. Stanley Krippner is one of those researchers who feels that the scientific establishment will eventually have to revise its images of humankind on the basis of telepathic evidence. At present, Dr. Krippner observes, psychology and psychiatry view each person as an entity separated from everyone else, as an alienated being.

We are certain that Dr. Krippner would agree that the telepathic transfers that we describe in this book of amazing moms are additional proofs that in the basic fabric of life everything and everyone is linked, that all humans are continuously enmeshed, that we are all an integral part of life on the face of the earth.

Achieving Telepathic Contact with Your Child

It is best to sit quietly for a few minutes before attempting a telepathic transfer.

Visualize the vastness of space. Reflect upon the meaninglessness of time.

See yourself as a circle that grows and grows until it occupies the Earth, the galaxy, the universe.

Now visualize the child with whom you wish to achieve telepathic contact. See the child clearly. Feel the child's presence.

In your mind, speak to your child as if he or she were sitting there before you. Do not speak aloud. Speak mentally.

Breathe in comfortably deep breaths; this will give added power to the broadcasting station of the mind.

Mentally relay the messages that you wish your child to receive from you. Ask your child to call you or to get in touch with you.

Transmitting Thoughts of Healing and Self-Improvement

You may also send healing thoughts to your child when he or she is ill. You must understand, of course, that it is not you who heals but your act of tuning in to the Infinite Mind that does so.

If you are concerned about a child who has a very bad habit that needs correcting, you may send mental pictures to your child that contain images of the habit that are so loathsome that he or she of free choice will give up the disagreeable practice.

A word of caution must herewith be expressed: When you transmit healing energy to a child who is ill, you must visualize that child as being *completely* healed. You must not permit yourself to see the child as he or she is at the present time, miserable in the throes of the illness. You must actually see your child in the desired state of perfect health and *know* that it will be so.

Likewise, when you visualize a child who is plagued with a bad habit, he or she must be seen as triumphant over the annoying practice. You must imagine the child as having completely forsaken the habit. Only by seeing the bad habit as negated will it be discontinued.

The most vital point in telepathically healing or helping is this: You must actually *see* the desired conditions and *know* that it will be so.

Olof Jonsson's Simple Technique for Developing Telepathic Prowess

Olof Jonsson, whose tribute to his mother appeared earlier in this chapter, may be the most powerful psychical medium in the world today. Here is one of his easy-to-master exercises for developing telepathy:

Erase everything from your mind. Forget all those petty things that are troubling you and relax your mind.

Attain peace and calm. Achieve harmony. Do not think!

You must release the irritations in your mind and

banish from your consciousness all things that disturb you. You must tell yourself to become calm and peaceful.

You must command yourself to react to no outside disturbances or distractions.

Do not think! That is the difference between the way your conscious mind and your unconscious mind work. You must remain absolutely calm at the time your conscious is controlling your actions.

Fill a glass of water and place it on the table before you. The glass of water is merely a physical object on which to focus your attention and to permit the unconscious to rise above your conscious mind.

Stare at the water for five minutes or so and erase all thoughts from your mind.

Do not think of a thing. Just look at the water.

Once you have achieved the proper conditions, you will feel psychic energy and *knowing* build up within you.

Once you have blanked out your conscious mind by focusing on the glass of water, you will find it easy to achieve the altered state of consciousness necessary for the transmission of your telepathic abilities.

Attuning Oneself to the Divine Mother Aspect of God

We have no intention of splitting any theological hairs here. In an earnest attempt to offend no one and to be as ecumenical and nondenominational as possible, let us make clear to the readers of this book that they should feel free to employ their individual concepts of God the Creator in experimenting with the following techniques.

We will suggest that God, All-That-Is, may in reality be an eternally powerful energy source, but we completely understand that it aids us to achieve the transfer of that divine power if we visualize God as an individualized presence, such as the image of a loving father or mother.

Many spiritual traditions refer to the feminine creative principle and the masculine guiding principle as the twin energies that compose God, the Source, the Great Mystery. As Paramahansa Yogananda, author of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, phrased it, the Divine Mother is that aspect of God that is active in creation and that represents the Lord's loving and compassionate qualities.

The feminine creative principle is thus often referred to as the Divine Mother or the Great Mother, the Magna Mater. For purposes of visualization, we will employ such terms in certain exercises. Those who wish to practice these techniques may accept the concept of the Divine Mother or employ their own concepts with equally successful results.

How to Recall a Dream Message or Teaching

There may be occasions when you will awaken in the night and know that you have been receiving messages or teachings in your dream that have been transmitted to you by a higher intelligence. You may feel distressed when you become aware that you are unable to retain the full importance and meaning of the dream.

Do not allow yourself to become angry or frustrated with yourself for having permitted the great lesson or urgent message to be lost to your waking consciousness. Call out to your guide or your angel to help you recover the full understanding of that information or warning which the Source wishes you to know. Ask that you receive again the full power of the vision that has just been transmitted to you.

Take three comfortably deep breaths, holding each for the count of three. Feel at one with the essence of the divine that will blend with you.

Visualize a golden flame of Mother Love within your heart chakra, which is one of the seven energy centers of the body in Yogic and esoteric tradition. In your mind, travel a ray of golden light from your heart

to the Divine Mother, the feminine creative aspect of the Source of All-That-Is that exists above you.

Feel yourself coming closer to the Divine Mother. See points of violet light touching every cell of your physical body as your golden light begins to connect with the creative mother principle.

Begin to sense strongly a closeness, a unity with the Great Mother energy of creation. Feel your consciousness melding with the love of the Divine Mother and ask that the dream message or teaching be repeated for your good and your gaining. Eliminate awareness of your physical body as much as it is possible for you to do so.

Visualize yourself holding open hands to the Divine Mother as if you were about to receive some object of a material substance. With such an image secure in your mind, allow yourself to fall back asleep.

If you should not be able to recall the dream message on that particular evening, awaken that morning with the resolution that you will reclaim it on the next night.

Prepare yourself during the day with transmissions of love to the feminine creative principle of the Source. Then, before going to sleep, call upon the Divine Mother to send her blessed energy into your consciousness. Charge yourself to bring back the vital substance of the dream teachings that you shall receive anew.

Dissipating the Negative Energy of Disturbing Dreams

If you should awaken some night and feel that you have been bombarded with negativity while your psyche was open to receive a dream of guidance or inspiration, deal with the chaotic energy in this manner:

Visualize your head filled with a glowing violet light. Imagine that you are focusing the creative energy of the Divine Mother principle through your brain.

Expand the violet light, the highest spiritual vibra-

tion, to shine beyond your bedroom. See it shining forth upon your children, your loved ones, your neighborhood, your city, your nation, your world. Then visualize yourself suspended in space, watching your love energy touching the heart of the universe.

See that your own heart has become a violet-colored star, whose cosmic energy can transmute negativity into love. Continue to hold that positive concept in your mind until you fall back asleep.

Learn How to “Read” Objects

Dorothy Spence Lauer, whom we introduced earlier in this chapter, became quite famous for her ability to psychometrize, that is, to “read,” objects such as rings, necklaces, and bracelets and to receive impressions from them. The development of such a talent could certainly assist any mom to become even more amazing than she already is.

Dorothy recommended that when you first begin to psychometrize an article, you should speak spontaneously. Do not hesitate to say exactly whatever comes to your mind.

There is no need to concentrate, or even to think hard; in fact, the secret to developing the ability to psychometrize—and to developing all psychic abilities—lies in just being spontaneous, immediately saying what comes to you. Sometimes this can be a little embarrassing if something of an intimate nature should come to you, but if you truly feel the urge to speak frankly, you should do so.

You may begin your exercises by psychometrizing for yourself. Take an object that belongs to you, something that you have worn or used for some time, such as a ring or a brush.

Sit quietly, holding the object. Do not force ideas or attempt to concentrate.

Have a pad and pen at your side, and as fast as your thoughts come to you, write them down. There will be times when you think, “This sounds impossible”; still,

write it all down. Do not continue this exercise for too long a period, however.

By psychometrizing for yourself, you will find that you receive insights that can guide you in your daily life. Infinite intelligence can channel through you at this time.

Do not take credit for this information or become egotistical in your work. Remember the words from the Bible: "I, of myself, can do nothing."

The power that guides you will disappear if you become smug and arrogant. You must remember that you are an instrument tuned to receive.

When you psychometrize for your children, you may tell them your impressions rather than jotting them down. To experiment further and to increase your psychometric abilities, ask friends to lend you their old letters from people whom you do not know. Request objects that they have received through family inheritances and the like.

Remember that you are an instrument. Permit the messages to flow through you in a spontaneous manner. Understand that there will always be a *knowing*. You will not guess. You will not waver. Never doubt your impressions once you learn to distinguish the sensations of the *knowing*.

Become Your Own Prophet

You need not visit Madame LaZonga to have your fortune told or sit around waiting for a premonition to strike you from out of the heavens. You can learn to become your own prophet and to make your own predictions. Here is an exercise that, properly and regularly practiced, can strengthen your prophetic muscles:

Get a notebook in which to keep score of your ability to predict according to your rational level and according to your intuitive level.

Draw two columns on a sheet of paper, labeling one column "Intellect," the other "Intuition."

Sit, lie, or assume a meditative posture of complete

relaxation. Use your rational mental processes to make an intelligent prediction about the following future possibilities:

1. A request, remark, or statement that your child will make the next time you see him or her.

2. Two events that will occur at your home involving your children—one negative, the other positive.

3. Two events that will occur to your children away from the home—one negative, the other positive.

4. Seeing or hearing from a person from whom you have not had contact for a long period of time.

After you have made these intelligent guesses, be certain that they are all recorded in your "Intellect" column.

Now, as completely as possible, permit yourself to enter an altered state of awareness, a daydreaming, trancelike state. Clear your brain of all distractions. Imagine before you a blank white screen and permit images to form.

1. Imagine what comment or request your children will make the next time that you see them.

2. Imagine two events that will occur to your children in your home—one negative, the other positive.

3. Imagine two events that will occur to your children outside of your home—one negative, the other positive.

4. Imagine a person you will soon see or hear from with whom you have not had contact for a long period of time.

Record these meditative image predictions under your "Intuition" column and give both columns about one week to be fulfilled. The time allotted may need to be adjusted somewhat depending upon the ages and the proximity of your children.

Remember also to record predictive images that may come to you in dreams.

At the end of the week or the time limit you allotted, mark the outcome of the number of foreseen events that came true. See if you predict better by hunches through your intuition or by reliance on your intellectual processes. If both columns correspond to a large

degree, you may have learned to develop an excellent bridge between your psychic and your mental abilities.

Here is a supplementary exercise using the daily newspaper as a tool to improve your precognitive ability:

1. Note the major political events in the newspaper. Attempt to predict their outcomes by both the "Intellect" and the "Intuitive" methods.

2. Try to predict by both methods the subject matter and the exact wording of the major headlines in tomorrow's newspaper.

3. Foresee who will be in the most important pictures in tomorrow's newspaper—men, women, children, celebrities, politicians—and envision what they will be doing.

You may wish to conduct these exercises with a friend or a relative so that the two of you can cross-check one another. Continue these techniques for a month. The serious student will keep a running dairy in order to obtain the most desirable results.

A Final Tip: So often those people who are just beginning to develop their ESP abilities expect to see clear and distinct images at once.

Sometimes, especially when you are just beginning, you will *feel* rather than see something. You will *feel* that your daughter is trying to contact you. You will *feel* that your son should not board that particular airplane and take that particular flight. Seeing often comes later, after your psychic "muscles" have become better developed.

We never make sport of religion, politics, race, or mothers. A mother never gets hit with a custard pie. Mothers-in-law—yes. But mothers—never.

—Anonymous

Part Seven: The Amazing Power of a Mother's Prayer

He Was Pulled Back to Life by His Mother's Prayers

All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.
—Abraham Lincoln

Some men and women remember vividly a near-death or out-of-body experience in their childhood when the only thing that brought them back to life on the physical plane seemed to be their mother's earnest prayers.

In 1947, when Joel Devers of Glendale, Arizona, was eleven years old and lived with his parents in Queens, New York, he suffered a severe attack of bronchial asthma late one afternoon in January. Before his mother could summon a doctor, Joel felt himself slipping into unconsciousness.

"All at once I felt peaceful and completely relaxed," he said. "The *real* part of me just seemed to float above that poor wheezing kid on the bed, and it didn't seem to bother me at all that the physical me couldn't breathe. I had never before—or since—experienced such a wonderful sense of freedom. I had a sense that I was dying—or at least the physical me was dying—but I was remarkably untroubled by that awareness."

Joel said that he later learned that he had been in a kind of coma for nearly forty-five minutes, but he seemed totally free of the confines of time and space. "I can remember that I just seemed to hang around my room, kind of floating here and there. I don't remember seeing any angels or the white light that I have since heard other people mentioning."

He has a vivid memory of seeing the doctor come

puffing into his bedroom. "Oh, no," the real me thought. "Now he's going to do something to make me breathe again, and I'll have to go back to that scrawny, sickly, wheezing body!"

The doctor shot a powerful jolt of Adrenalin into Joel's unconscious body, but the lad tried his best to resist being pulled back into the lump of clay that was so susceptible to disease and physical ailments.

"I really didn't want to go back," Joel said. "I mean, I was what today's kids call a nerd. I was a skinny, sickly, bespectacled bookworm with chronic asthma, always coming down with one illness after another. I really felt that I was much better off being a ghost or spirit or whatever I was. And I truly felt that it was my decision whether to go back to my physical body or to remain in that state of nonphysical being."

Then Joel became aware of his mother praying at his bedside. "Right there in front of the doctor, Mom started praying out loud for my life to be spared, for me to come back to them. Then she started to cry. Dad had come home from work, and when he entered my room and heard my mother's prayers, tears ran down his cheeks.

"I really felt torn by a moment of decision. Mom was telling God how much I meant to her and Dad, how much meaning I gave to their lives. I was really touched to hear her prayer. I guess I had always felt that they were as disgusted with my illnesses as I was."

Joel stopped struggling and allowed himself to be pulled back into his body. "I opened my eyes, took a deep, shuddering kind of breath, and was at once conscious of terrible pain in my chest and back."

Joel recovered from the severe attack, but he continued to suffer from his asthmatic condition.

When he was twelve, his sister Naomi was born, and when it appeared that she, too, was asthmatic, Joel's parents made the decision to move to Arizona where the dry, desert air was recommended for their children's health.

"I have learned to value my time here on this physical plane," Joel said. "My health improved almost at

once after our move to the Phoenix area. I'm now in my late fifties with grandchildren. Life has been good to me, and although I have never forgotten the near-death experience that showed me that to die is to enter a free, spiritual state—neither have I forgotten the power that lay in my mother's prayer for me to be brought back to life."

**Green Apples, a Terrible Stomachache,
and
Out-of-Body Eavesdropping**

*You may give them your love but not your thoughts;
for they have their own thoughts. You may house
their bodies but not their souls; for their souls
dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you
cannot visit, even in your dreams.* —Kahlil Gibran

Marian Johnson, 43, of Bakersfield, California, told us of an out-of-body experience during intense pain which she had as a teenager. She awakened about eleven-thirty one May evening in 1966 with a terrible case of indigestion as a result of having eaten too much unripe fruit. She described the pain as "absolutely unbearable."

"Even though we had strict parental orders to the contrary, my kid brother, Jake, and I never could resist munching on the green apples from the trees in our yard," Marian said. "He was spending the night with a friend, and I was glad that he wasn't home to squeal on us. With his cast-iron stomach, I doubted if he even had gas pains—and there was no way that I was going to tell our folks that I had once again gorged myself on green apples."

"But then Mom's diagnosis of my symptoms convinced her that I was having an appendicitis attack, and she called our family doctor, Dr. Silverman, who, in those days, still made house calls. I felt really bad that we had to bring him so late at night."

As Marian lay thrashing about in agony, her thoughts began to fixate on the possibility of being

somehow able to escape the pain that had seemed to fill every corner of her being. How wonderful it would be to leave her pain-wracked body, she said mentally.

A spasm of pain doubled her over, and the sudden movement seemed to shoot "the thinking part" of her up to the ceiling.

"I could actually see Mom fussing about, and I could see me—that is, my physical body—tossing about on the bed, whimpering and crying," Marian said.

"But the *real me* couldn't feel a thing. Miraculously, the pain somehow stayed down on the bed with my physical body. I remember feeling kind of ashamed and embarrassed about the way the physical me was behaving like such a baby. I decided that I really should go back and be grown-up about my stomach-ache.

"Just like that, I was back inside my body, howling and tossing about in pain. It really hurt in my body, and since there was absolutely no pain when I was outside of my body, it didn't take me long to decide where I wanted to be. I doubled over and moaned like I did before—though I really don't know if that had anything to do with it—and I was back up floating on the ceiling."

It wasn't long before Marian discovered that while she was in this altered state of consciousness she was completely free of the normal physical restrictions of time and space.

"I wondered when Doc Silverman was going to arrive, and I was suddenly inside his car as he stopped at a traffic light," Marian said. "'Why the hell do they keep these darn things going all night?' he was mumbling. 'Why don't they just keep them flashing on yellow?'"

Marian rode along with the doctor for a while, then she thought about her mother and about her physical body back in her bedroom.

"This time when I shot back to my room, my body was lying very still—and Mom was crying. I could see

why. I looked terrible. My face was kind of a greenish-gray, and my mouth was hanging open.”

It was at that moment that Marian was startled to hear her mother begin to pray to God to spare the life of her only daughter.

“I had never thought of Mom as the spiritual-praying type, Marian said. “We only went to church, like, maybe every other religious holiday. But then I remembered Mom talking about how she had grown up in this little town in Iowa where they went to church twice every Sunday. She surely had not forgotten how to pray. She really impressed me with her eloquence. God would have to be listening to this prayer.”

As Marian beheld her physical body’s stillness and the grim pallor of her complexion, she began to wonder if she was dead.

“My God,” I thought. “What if I died that last time when I left my body. So this is what it is all about. People always talk about death and fear death—but there is really nothing to it. You just sort of ‘pop’ out of your body and that’s it!”

By this time, Marian’s father had at last been roused from his sleep by the apparent seriousness of his daughter’s illness.

“Dad was standing by Mom. He was very sober-faced with concern, and he felt my pulse. He told Mom that I was not dead, but he wondered why in thunder Doc Silverman hadn’t arrived.

“I thought again of the doctor, and I could see him pulling up in front of our house at that very minute. I followed him up the walk, and I was able to see him ring the bell. At the same time, I could see my father running down the steps to answer the door.”

Marian still wondered if she might be dead, regardless of what her father had said about her pulse.

“At first I felt really sad. I thought about the junior-senior prom coming up, and I wondered if my date, Danny Emrick, would be sorry that I had died. I wondered if he would cry.

“I thought about my two best girlfriends, Bobbi and Joanie. I knew that they would cry and be really upset.

“Then I started to worry about Grandma Phillips. I wondered if she would be able to withstand the shock of my death. I mean, we were really close and all. Maybe she would be joining me soon.

“Then I thought about Danny again, and I seemed to know that if I wanted to, I could be right in his room in his home. That made me feel like a Peeping Tammy, though, so I didn’t do it.

“Below me, Mom started crying, and Dad put his arm around her to comfort her. I thought again of the terrific prayer that she had asked of God. I mean, she really said how much I meant to her and how she had always been true to her inner belief in His glory and His power. She had literally begged God to let me live.”

From her unique all-seeing perspective, Marian could “see” or know what Doctor Silverman was thinking.

“He frowned, and he took a syringe out of his bag. I could hear that he was saying to himself, ‘A good jolt of this should bring her around! She’s been into those damn green apples again!’ ”

At the same time Marian was startled to hear her mother’s thoughts: “Please, dear God, don’t take my daughter’s life. If you must have a life, take mine instead. Or take ten years off my life, twenty years. Whatever you want, I will barter it for my Marian’s life!”

Marian was totally shaken by her mother’s offer to barter her own life to God in exchange for hers.

“There was no way that I would let Mom do such a thing,” Marian said. “I’ve always hated to get shots from the doctor, and even though I knew that I wouldn’t feel it, I didn’t want him to stick that big needle into my arm. It was like I took a running jump for my body, and I actually heard a thump, like someone hitting a mattress hard with an open hand. I guess that my arms and legs straightened out, and I halfway sat up. I startled the doctor, as well as Mom and Dad.

“The doctor gave me a shot anyway though, only this time it was for the pain. And I didn’t refuse it!”

Marian recalled that she did try to tell her parents and Doctor Silverman about her strange out-of-body experience. "No one seemed to believe me, but Doc Silverman did give me a funny look when I told him what he had said at the stoplight. I decided not to say anything to Mom about having heard her prayer."

Instead, Marian embraced her mother and told her how much she loved her.

"I was seventeen, and I think that I had really become kind of a pain in the neck for Mom that year, my junior year in high school," Marian said. "My out-of-body experience—and hearing Mom's prayer and all—really made me shape up. We became really close.

"And we still are. Mom is nearly eighty years old, and I've made her a grandmother three times—once more than my brother, Jake. I'm glad that God let me come back without accepting the terms of Mom's offer for my life and that He allowed both of us to have a lot more years to love each other."

Dr. Bruce Greyson, associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Connecticut Health Center, says that eight million Americans have had a near-death experience similar to the ones described by the percipients in this chapter.

According to the research of Dr. Antonino Aldo Sodaro, chief surgeon at Rome's main public hospital, 40 percent of people who reach the threshold of death undergo a near-death experience in which they leave their physical bodies during a medical crisis.

In a 1992 study of four hundred adults who nearly died, Dr. Melvin Morse, associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington in Seattle, states that many of those who have near-death experiences are transformed by the event and feel convinced that they have received proof of life after death.

Her Prayers and Songs of Sorrow Brought a Daughter Back from a Journey into Death

*It takes a hundred men to make an encampment,
but one woman can make a home.*

—Robert G. Ingersol

Although we have often stated that the kinds of stories that we are sharing in this present book are as old as humankind and are familiar to all people and all cultures, there are still those readers who are quite likely assuming that tales of people who return from sojourns in the afterlife are more or less contemporary, inspired and abetted, perhaps to some degree, by similar reports in the mass media.

For purposes of comparison and contrast—and for an excellent cross-cultural reference—we include this interesting account based on a narrative that first appeared in *Hawaiian Almanac and Annual* for 1892. It will be immediately apparent that the psychic mechanisms involved in this hundred-year-old account are the same as those applied in our contemporary reports of near-death experiences, and even the casual reader will be able to transfer the Polynesian symbology and cosmology to his or her own spiritual or religious context.

Early in 1892, so the account goes, a young woman named Kalima, who lived in Kona on the big island of Hawaii, became stricken with disease. She lay suffering for several weeks until it became apparent that her illness was a mortal one.

When Kalima passed away, her mother responded with frightful grief and continued a nearly incessant chant of sorrow. While Kalima's friends and family gathered around the body, venting loudly their own expressions of love for her in life and their distress at her death, the elderly woman was thus involved in singing over her daughter's corpse. It was left to other family members to prepare the body of Kalima for her final resting place in the grave.

When all the preparations had at last been com-

pleted, each of the mourners came forward to view for the last time the rigid form and ashen face of the beloved one who had once graced their lives.

Kalima's old mother sat on the mat-covered ground beside her child, refusing to accept her loss. The thought of her daughter being lowered into the ground was more than she could bear, and as she sat by Kalima's lifeless form, brushing away the tears from her cheeks, she sobbed the following lament:

"The gods know that she was a good girl. She was kind to her aging mother; she loved and cared for her husband and children. Now who will care for them?"

The old woman interrupted herself with a heartrending wail of sorrow.

"Why did the gods take her and leave me?" she implored of those family and friends who still encircled the grave.

"I am heavy with years. I can no longer work, and I am too old and weak to fish in the sea. There are no pleasures left for me. I can no longer dance and feast under the stars. But Kalima loved all these things and was happy with life. Why is she taken away, when I, so useless, remain?"

The elderly woman's mournful cries pierced the hearts of all those who heard them. Yet, they wondered among themselves, what comfort could any of them offer the disconsolate mother?

Then, as a few close friends and family members remained, sitting quietly on grass mats and listening to the lament of Kalima's mother, a most astonishing thing occurred: The corpse of Kalima moved.

With a mixture of horror and awe, the mourners watched Kalima stir, take a deep breath, then open her eyes.

At first the miracle of Kalima's return from the dead inspired a great deal of fear in the villagers, but their joy in their dear one's odyssey back to life soon replaced their apprehensiveness.

Her mother raised her eyes toward the stars and with a look of rapture on her face exclaimed, "The gods

have allowed her to return! They have listened to my prayers! How the gods must love Kalima!”

Husband, children, and friends joined the elderly woman at Kalima's side, rubbing her hands and feet, offering what they could in the way of comfort. Before long, Kalima had recovered sufficiently to say that she had something very strange to tell them.

It was several days, though, before she was strong enough to embark on the long narrative. Then she called her friends and relatives to her bedside and told them a most remarkable tale.

It was true, Kalima said, she had died some days past. Her spirit body was separated from her physical body, and she could stand beside it, looking at it.

Kalima stared at the body that she had worn with pride and a large degree of vanity for quite some time, then she turned and walked away.

She left her home and her village and went on to the next village, and as she walked, she noticed that her new spirit body was truly magnificent—so lovely and graceful that to compare it to her former body would be to compare a beautiful flower to a lump of mud.

In the next village she found crowds of people, so many more villagers and houses than she knew lived there while she was in the body. Some of them Kalima knew, and they spoke to her—though this seemed at first quite eerie, for she knew them to be dead.

Everyone here was happy. No worries seemed to trouble their brows; nothing seemed to disturb them.

Soon Kalima felt compelled to leave these people and to continue on to the next village.

“I did not tire,” Kalima told her audience of friends and family, “for it seemed no trouble to walk.”

Again she met dozens of people, all immeasurably happy, many of whom she had known while they were still in their bodies.

It was about this time that Kalima realized that some force was drawing her to Mauna Loa, the volcano where the Goddess Pele lives. “I realized that my feet were leading me right to the volcano. I could not stop, though I wanted to very much.”

All along the route Kalima traveled were many houses and people existing where she had never known anyone to live. But everyone was filled with joy, and their happiness was infectious. Soon Kalima was so happy that her heart sang within her, and she was glad to be dead.

At last she reached the volcano Mauna Loa. There were only a few people here—tall men dressed as warriors of old and tall women who looked like goddesses. Each of these godlike people appeared to glow with love and happiness, but they sternly told Kalima that she must return to her village and to her body.

Kalima did not wish to return. She begged and prayed to be allowed to stay with them.

“But it is not your time to die,” one of the most powerful of the ancient warriors told her. “Listen to your mother’s song of sorrow. Listen how stricken she is with grief. Hear how she rails against the gods!

“She has challenged the Ancient Ones, and it has been decreed that she is correct. It is *not* your time to die!”

As if from a very faraway distant mountain, Kalima could hear her mother’s chanting and her prayers.

One of the goddesslike women approached Kalima and issued an ultimatum: “You must return to care for your children, to look after your mother in her old age. If you do not return willingly, we will make you return.”

When Kalima began to weep and said quite adamantly that she intended to stay, the tallest of the warriors made a threatening gesture toward her.

“I was sent back over the road I had just traveled,” Kalima said, “back through all those happy people. They were still joyous and happy, but when they learned that it was not yet my time, they, too, turned on me and told me to return to my body.

“Then I was back here in my own house, looking again upon my physical body,” she continued. “I looked down on it and hated it. I asked myself if that was really the body that I had once held so dear.

“It seemed a loathsome thing to me now. I had seen

so many beautiful, happy people—and my own body was so lovely and graceful in that other place. My heart recoiled at the thought of living in that ugly thing again.”

But the great warriors told her that she must reenter her body of her own volition or they would do it for her.

When Kalima continued to resist the command to return to her body, the ancient ones grabbed her spirit body and pushed her head foremost into the big toe of her physical body.

“I struggled and fought, but could not resist them,” Kalima said. “They pushed me again when I tried for the last time to escape. When my spirit body passed the waist of the physical body, it finally occurred to me that it was no use to struggle further—so I went the rest of the way myself. Then my body came to life again, and I opened my eyes.

“Oh, but I wish I could have stayed with those happy people,” Kalima wept. “It was cruel to make me come back. My other body was so beautiful, and I was so very happy.”

It was said by those who knew her that throughout the rest of her long life, Kalima never ceased to regret returning to her body—and she never stopped yearning for the day when she would be permitted to rejoin the “happy people” and complete her strange and wonderful voyage into the afterlife.

The Mother's Prayer That Produced a Well during a Drought

*What is a home? It is the laughter of a child, the
song of a mother, the strength of a father. Home
is the first school, and the first church where
they learn about a loving God.*

—Ernestine Shumann-Heink

Back in the mid-1920s there was an awful drought in much of the Midwest. One stifling hot night in July, Mrs. Emma Hardt knelt down in the privacy of her

kitchen pantry to pray for a well of cool water nearer their farm home.

“What in tarnation is your ma up to, Quentin?” Fred Hardt asked his four-year-old son. “I can hear her mumbling and mumbling back there in the pantry.”

“She’s praying for a well of cool water, Papa,” Quentin answered with the simple directness of a child.

Fred laughed, not unkindly or in mockery, but rather to release the stress of his anguished awareness that the well in their back yard had dried up two years before. Whatever water did seep in between its walls now was not fit to drink. He, too, yearned for a well nearer their home, so perhaps his laugh was a bit defiant, to deny the terrible realization that the soil that he had worshiped since he was a farmer’s child was drying up and dying all around them.

“Well, son, let’s hope your ma can pray us up a well real soon,” he said, envisioning a tall, cool glass of freshly drawn well water. “I could use some of that good cold water right now.”

“Me, too, pa,” agreed Malinda, their twelve-year-old daughter. She was now big enough to carry pails of water from the well at the cattle tank, a little more than half a mile away. Malinda was learning that life was not always easy on the farm, especially during a drought. A half a mile was a long way to carry heavy pails of water.

That night, after her prayer vigil had ended and Emma Hardt was settling in beside her loudly snoring husband, a lovely figure in white appeared at her bedside and, through hand signals, bade her follow him outside.

Just a few feet beyond the front porch, the entity pointed at a spot in the burnt, dried-up lawn and bent down to touch the soil. The ethereal visitor then smiled and stepped back as clear spring water bubbled forth.

The next morning, Emma Hardt found herself back in bed. She tossed back the thin sheet that covered her, jumped up, and dashed outside—but she could find no sign of the blessed spring.

"I surely am disappointed," she admitted to her husband, who, half-dazed and still groggy from sleep, had followed her outside after she ran from the house without explanation. "I surely did expect to find a cool spring bubbling up right here in our yard."

Fred yawned, nodded appreciatively at the pleasant image.

"And why did you expect to see such a blessed sight in our front yard, Emma, my darling wife?"

Emma told him about the lovely figure in white who had led her outside and showed her a spring gushing up right near their front porch.

"Anyway, Honey," she said, kneeling on the crinkled, yellowed lawn and pressing a forefinger into the hard, baked soil. "Here is where he showed me to dig. Can we start digging right away?"

By now, Quentin and Malinda had been awakened by the unusual morning activity in the Hardt household. In answer to their puzzled queries, Emma repeated the story of her encounter with the angel and showed her children the spot where the heavenly visitor had declared water to exist.

Fred listened seriously to the whole story once again, but he had to protest that he saw no indication of water at that spot.

"I respect your dream, Sweetheart," he told her. "But I honestly feel that I would just waste time and energy if I should attempt to dig a well at that spot where you said to dig."

Emma Hardt's vision was repeated on the next two nights; but on the third repetition of his presenting her with the instructions to dig at the indicated spot in the yard, the angel did not return her to her bed. Instead, he turned and disappeared into the trees.

When she awoke the next morning, Emma found herself lying on the ground, and she cried out in fear.

Malinda was soon at Emma's side, kneeling in her nightgown with her arms around her mother, hugging her tight. "Mama, Mama!" she shouted. "What has happened to you? Are you all right?"

By now Quentin had also emerged from the house,

but the confusion was too much for him to deal with first thing in the morning, so he began to cry, thereby expressing himself in the only way that seemed truly appropriate at the moment.

"Fred, you've got to dig here," Emma was herself sobbing now, quite freely, something she never permitted herself to do in front of her children. "For three nights now the angel has told me to dig here.

"For three nights the angel has pointed to this very spot and told me that we must dig a well . . . right . . . here," she said, emphasizing her conviction with strong jabs of her forefinger into the baked soil.

"Do it, Papa!" Quentin shouted around his sobbing. "Dig the well! Dig the well for Mama and the angel!"

By now Malinda was also on the verge of weeping. "You must, Papa," she pleaded, tears flowing over her red cheeks. "You must heed the admonitions of the angel that has come to Mama. Remember what happened to Lot's wife when she disobeyed the angel of the Lord. We don't want Mama turning into a pillar of salt!"

There was nothing that Fred Hardt could do against such highly charged emotional arguments. He promised to dig at the spot where three times the angel had indicated to Emma that a well should be dug.

Amazingly, Fred had shoveled only a little way into the ground when he struck a spring of clear, cool water.

Even more amazingly, the liquid proved to be a kind of mineral water which soon gained the reputation for containing properties beneficial to one's health.

At first all the neighbors came to try the water—and almost at once some folks claimed some rather miraculous healings from imbibing the "angel's well water."

Word of the miracle soon spread well beyond the area, and it was not long before strangers were coming from great distances to obtain jars and flasks of the water.

Eventually a sanitarium was built in connection with the mineral water, and many men, women, and children testified that they benefited from drinking water

from the well that had been revealed by an angel—an angel who had been summoned by a mother's love and by her earnest prayers for a well nearer to her family's farm home.

A special *Newsweek* report, "Talking to God" (January 6, 1992), cited the research of Father Andrew M. Greeley, the priest-sociologist-novelist, which found that 78 percent of all Americans pray at least once a week and more than half (57 percent) pray at least once a day.

Using the findings of Father Greeley's social science research center together with Poloma and Gallup polling services' "Varieties of Prayer" as its sources, *Newsweek* stated that 91 percent of all American women pray, as do 85 percent of men. Thirty-two percent regularly feel a deep sense of peace; 26 percent regularly sense the strong presence of God; and 15 percent feel that they regularly receive a definite answer to specific prayers.

Her Prayers Brought a Ghostly Nurse to Save Her Baby's Life

A rich child often sits in a poor mother's lap.

—Danish proverb

On a cold January night in 1985, Julia Cantrell, 13, of Columbia, Missouri, sat vigil with her mother, Ida, as Buddy, Julia's four-year-old brother, lay in a coma. The doctors at Memorial Hospital had told them it was unlikely that Buddy would live through the night.

"Sister," her mother said in a voice that was warped with emotion, "I have been praying for your little brother's life for hours now. You've got to join me in prayer, and we just have to pray him through this terrible time. Doctors aren't always right. And God can always work a miracle."

"I have been praying, Momma," Julia assured her mother. "I've asked God to please forgive anything

wicked or nasty that I have ever done and to please, please not punish little Buddy for anything that I did.”

For the first time that evening Julia saw a flicker of a smile tug at her mother's lips. “Child, what wicked or nasty thing have you ever done? You're a good girl, and your prayers are going to touch God's heart.”

“I just wish Daddy was here to pray with us,” Julia said. “He can make such big, powerful prayers.”

“You know that he is praying himself hoarse in that big old truck of his,” her mother told her. “And you know that he will be here just as fast as that old rig will carry him. Come now, let us bend our knees, bow our heads, and pray together for little Buddy.”

The two of them got down on their knees beside Buddy's hospital bed and folded their hands. Ida Cantrell led them in the Lord's Prayer, and Twenty-third Psalm, and then began an earnest, heartfelt, personal prayer of supplication.

About 4:45 A.M., a tall nurse with a warm smile walked into the hospital room, removed Buddy's covers, gave him an injection, then gently stroked his face.

As the nurse turned to walk away, she touched Julia softly on the shoulder and told her not to give up hope. She reached into a pocket and gave Julia a handkerchief to dry her tears.

Miraculously, a short time later, Buddy began to cry. He had emerged safely from his coma.

“Praise the Lord, the angels, and all the saints in heaven!” Ida offered her thanks through her tears of joy.

Lonnie Cantrell, hollow-eyed from lack of sleep and from pushing his rig far more miles a day than he should have, arrived just in time to join his wife and daughter in fervent prayers of thanksgiving.

The doctors were amazed at the child's subsequent rapid recovery, and three days later Buddy was discharged.

As the family was leaving the hospital, Julia wished to thank the kind nurse and return the handkerchief that she had loaned her.

The soft linen bore the monogram “MAT,” but the

head nurse said that none of the nursing staff had such initials.

And when they checked Buddy's records, there was no indication that any nurse had visited him at 4:45 A.M.—and no injection of any kind had been authorized by the doctors.

The Cantrell family's confusion was resolved when a cleaning lady overheard their questions and informed them that a young nurse named Mary Ann Taggart had been killed in a car wreck as she left the hospital many years ago. Mary Ann had dreamed of becoming a doctor, and many of the older members of the hospital staff believed that her spirit lived on by helping very sick children.

"I can't swear that I know the whole truth of what happened," Julia Cantrell said. "But my folks and I like to believe that Momma's prayers touched God's heart. We like to think that maybe He permitted the spirit of Mary Ann, the loving, caring nurse, to come back and help Buddy pull through. Momma always says that prayer really can move mountains."

A Mother's Cry for Help Brings an Angel with Muscles

An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy.

—Spanish proverb

"Oh, God, help us!" Estelle Santos cried out in anguished prayer. "Send us a miracle and help us lift the station wagon off Ray before he dies!"

With that heaven-sent supplication, two women and a girl sought to lift a 3,500-pound station wagon off the unconscious teenaged boy being crushed underneath its unrelenting bulk.

Ray Santos, 17, had been repairing the transmission of his 1978 Chevrolet in the yard of his home in Las Cruces, New Mexico, when the car slipped off a jack and pinned him.

A steel cross brace under the steering column

pressed heavily, agonizingly against his chest. The pain was unbearable.

Ray tried to take a deep breath, but couldn't. He had the grim realization that if he didn't get the pressure off him, he would be crushed to death.

Every time he shouted for help, he let air out of his lungs, and the deadly weight on his chest increased. He feared that any second he would hear the awful sounds of his ribs cracking.

The last thing he remembered before passing out was asking God to forgive his sins.

Sixty-six-year-old Felicita Madrid heard Ray's faint, frantic shouting. When she looked out of her window and saw a pair of shoes sticking out from under the station wagon, she knew that someone was being killed.

Mrs. Madrid's cries for help summoned Ray's mother, Estelle, their neighbor Roberta Gavarette, and her eleven-year-old daughter, Rita.

The two women and the girl grabbed hold of the station wagon's bumper, and, at the count of three, tried with all of their strength to lift it. The bumper raised up, but the wheels would not leave the ground.

Estelle prayed aloud for God's help before they tried once again to lift the car off Ray.

"That's when the man ran up to us," Estelle recalled. "He was not a very tall man, but he was stocky and powerfully built. His nose was crooked, like it had been broken. There was something about him that was fierce and wild, but his brown eyes were kind.

" 'Let me give you a hand!' he said.

"We figured that he was some stranger who just happened by and saw our trouble, and we were grateful for any help that we could get.

"I counted to three again; and when we lifted the bumper, the big man's muscles bulged—and the car rose completely off the ground. The station wagon now seemed no heavier than a feather."

The powerful man told Felicita and Rita to pull Ray out from under the car while he and the two women held the car up off his pinned chest.

"Somehow in all the excitement of the ambulance

arriving to rush Ray off to the hospital, the stranger disappeared," Estelle said. "Ray was very lucky. He was treated at a hospital, but miraculously suffered no broken bones or internal injuries. Ray was thankful to God for letting him stay around a while longer, but he was upset with us that we didn't get the stranger's name so he could thank him for saving his life."

That night, Felicita Madrid startled the others when she told them that she knew the man who had appeared so fortuitously at such a desperate moment. At first, she said, she had not been certain, but after she had thought more about it, she was positive of the stranger's identity.

She explained that twenty years before, when she and her late husband, Ramon, had first moved to the neighborhood, the Santos home had been occupied by a man named Emilio Sanchez, a powerfully built man who had wrestled professionally under the ring alias of the Mexican Mauler. Felicita remembered vividly having watched the wrestler working out with barbells in the back yard, and she recalled the night he had been killed in an automobile accident.

"Emilio was a gentle giant," Mrs. Madrid said. "He loved people—children and young people, especially—and I have often felt that I have glimpsed him in the neighborhood. He was always there to help when he was needed."

Although Felicita Madrid's explanation for the sudden appearance—and disappearance—of the stranger with the strength of a Samson seemed eerie at first, Estelle Santos summed up the feelings of everyone when she said, "God heard our prayers and spared my son Ray's life. He granted us a miracle. Who can say that God did not send us a spirit to give us a helping hand from beyond?"

An Angel Visited the Prayer Group to Save Her Daughter's Life

*Mother is the name for God in the lips and hearts
of little children.* —William Makepeace Thackeray

Delores Baca of Anaheim, California, told of the remarkable angelic visitation which occurred during a meeting of their church prayer group and explained how it miraculously helped to save the life of her daughter.

“Our priest had instituted a wonderful home enrichment plan in August of 1984,” Mrs. Baca said. “Those of us who wished could gather in one another’s homes in prayer groups and join with like-minded people who felt strength and unity in prayer.

“One night in November, when it was my turn to host and to conduct the prayer circle, I had a sudden frightening vision of my daughter Linda, who was away from home on an automobile trip. I had been very concerned about her safety, and I was at first fearful that my anxiety had forced a negative image of Linda into my mind. At the same time, I knew that I did not have to be embarrassed to ask my prayer partners to pray with me for my daughter’s safety.”

Mrs. Baca said that she next received a terrible picture of her daughter approaching a very dangerous stretch of highway. The vision seemed to acquire a life of its own, as if she were watching a motion picture beyond her control. She gasped aloud, hoping with all her soul essence that she was being prompted by an image of an alternate reality, not true reality—for she saw her daughter’s car being struck by a large truck at a desolate intersection and being nearly demolished by the violent impact.

Delores Baca got quickly to her feet, and in a voice trembling with a mother’s love and concern, asked each of the twelve women assembled in her living room that evening to begin to pray for her daughter Linda’s safety.

“It was at the very moment that I declared my heart-

felt plea for succor that the miracle occurred," Mrs. Baca said. "As I spoke the last word of my request to pray for Linda, an overpowering spiritual influence seemed to envelop the entire room and everyone in it.

"Then before all of our eyes, a beautiful figure clothed in gold and white light walked through the very midst of our prayer circle and commanded: 'Pray!'

"Everyone understood that she was to pray for Linda as she traveled on the highway," Mrs. Baca said. "Each of us bowed our head in prayer, and we continued our supplications for about thirty minutes. At that time, we all heard a voice say: 'It is past!'"

Late the next afternoon when her daughter returned from her automobile trip, she told her mother of the harrowing experience that she had undergone. According to Linda, she had been crossing an intersection in a desolate section of the highway when the brakes of a heavily loaded truck failed and sent it roaring unchecked straight for her car.

"It should have struck me broadside," Linda said, shaking her head in bewildered memory of the near-fatal experience. "I should have been history. But somehow my car gave a sudden surge of power and literally propelled me out of the truck's path. It almost felt as though my car were some kind of living thing that had the ability to jump out of harm's way."

When Mrs. Baca informed Linda of her vision and the combined prayer power of the group, she was very moved.

"That would have been at exactly the time that I was approaching the intersection," she verified.

And when Mrs. Baca told her daughter of the mother love that had summoned an angel to add additional energy to the prayers of the group of devout women, Linda crossed herself and set out at once for church to light candles and to offer prayers of thanksgiving.

"I can't explain why the heavenly being chose to answer my pleas and come to lend its energy to our prayer group that night," Delores Baca concluded. "I

have not always lived an exemplary life, but I shall be everlastingly grateful that the angel overlooked my trespasses to save my daughter's life."

Her Prayers for Healing Received Instant Results

As one whom is mother comforts, so will I comfort.

—Isaiah 66:13

Sherry Hansen Steiger has had many experiences which have demonstrated the power of prayer in her life. One dramatic incident which involved her son, Erik, occurred in 1972.

After dinner one evening, six-year-old Erik complained of not feeling well. At first Sherry noticed that he had only a slight fever, but when she rechecked his temperature about an hour later, it had escalated to 102 degrees.

As an attentive mother, she was torn between attending her weekly prayer group or staying home to minister to her son, but her husband, Paul, insisted that she go to her meeting. Since Sherry already had the kids ready for bed, he would tuck them in at the usual time, then continue to check on Erik.

Sherry agreed, then added that she would sit in the prayer circle for Erik and ask that the whole group pray for his healing. She asked that Paul "lay hands" on Erik at the preappointed time during which the group regularly focused their collective prayer. Paul confirmed the exact time with Sherry before she left for the prayer group.

The group's evening discussion became far more lively than usual. As things turned out, the "normal" time for the healing circle was quite altered by a long discussion on healing.

When the discussion finally concluded, Sherry sat in for her son. As the group began to lay hands on her, the thought struck Sherry that Paul would have followed the previously agreed-upon instructions to lay hands on Erik much earlier. Then, dismissing any anxiety over the time difference, Sherry focused on the

healing energy and directed it to her son, consoling herself with the knowledge that a Greater Power than she was at work.

When Sherry arrived home, Paul, who had been asleep on the couch, sprang up with tremendous excitement to share his story. It seemed that Erik's temperature had shot up to 104 degrees while Sherry was gone. At first Paul panicked, but then he had a powerful feeling that God would heal Erik through the prayer circle. He consoled himself so thoroughly with this thought that he fell asleep on the couch.

When Paul awakened, he looked at the clock and saw that he had slept through the time when he was to lay hands on Erik, and he felt a huge pang of guilt. Erik, however, who had been sleeping beside his father, got up and began to make his way up the stairs. Startled, Paul demanded to know where Erik was going and insisted that he come back immediately to lie down.

"It's all right, Daddy," Erik told him. "Mommy's prayer healed me. I'm all better now. I'm just going to get my toys."

Paul immediately got the thermometer, and when he took Erik's temperature, he was completely astonished to see that it was normal.

When Paul relayed his story, he included his concern about his having missed the time when he was supposed to have put his hands on Erik. He looked his watch when Erik was on his way up the stairs after the fever had broken, and he saw that it was about an hour and a half later than the time when he was supposed to have lain hands on his son.

Miraculously, however, that was the actual time that the prayer group and Mommy had intervened on Erik's behalf.

Another extraordinary demonstration of the supernatural power of prayer interceding on behalf of a child in need occurred in 1976 when Sherry and her daughter, Melissa, were living in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Sherry had worked overtime in her advertising/public relations position in Chesapeake. After she took the baby-sitter and six-year-old Melissa to get some dinner, Sherry opened the door on the passenger side for them to get into the car.

It seemed to take a little longer than usual for the baby-sitter to get Melissa adjusted on her lap, so Sherry walked around and got in on the driver's side, leaving the passenger door open for the baby-sitter to shut when she was comfortably situated.

As Sherry started up the car, she glanced at the baby-sitter as if to signal her to close the door. When the baby-sitter finally slammed the door shut, Melissa let out a blood-curdling scream.

Sherry had already entered highway traffic, and she became frustrated with what could be troubling her daughter. She was getting nowhere with an answer from Melissa or the baby-sitter, but the child's screaming was becoming more intense by the second.

Sherry pulled over to the side of the road and parked. When she looked toward Melissa to see what was wrong, she noticed that her daughter's hand appeared to be smashed in the closed door!

"Open the car door! Melissa's hand is in the door!" Sherry screamed over and over, to no avail. The baby-sitter seemed unable to understand her above Melissa's cries of anguish.

Sherry got out of the car and ran around to open the door. Near panic now, she realized that her daughter's hand was completely crushed.

She returned to the driver's side as calmly as possible, then headed straight for the nearest hospital emergency room.

The attending physician diagnosed immediately that all of the fingers on Melissa's right hand were crushed.

While they awaited the results of the X-rays, Sherry and the baby-sitter tried to console Melissa, who was still crying in pain. At the same time, Sherry was comforting the baby-sitter, who felt completely responsible for having shut the car door before noticing that Melissa's hand was still holding on to the door post.

Melissa's unceasing screams pierced her mother's heart with agony, and Sherry was given the idea of praying over her daughter's hand.

She asked the baby-sitter to join her in prayer and told her to hold one of her hands while she placed the other hand over Melissa's crushed fingers. Sherry prayed intensely out loud for God to touch and to heal her child's hand.

All of a sudden Melissa stopped crying. The baby-sitter broke down in tears, releasing her tension and fear. She told Sherry that she had never really prayed before, and she asked if sometime later Sherry would explain more about God and prayer.

How could the young woman not want to know more about the power of prayer? Right before her very eyes, Melissa's crushed hand suddenly appeared normal—and apparently the pain had also left Melissa with the instant healing.

Just then the doctor walked in to report that the X-rays confirmed his visual diagnosis: All of Melissa's fingers were crushed.

A few moments later he was the one who seemed in need of an attending physician when Sherry told him that Melissa was healed!

Astonished, he examined Melissa's hand and cried out, "It's a miracle! It truly is a miracle!"

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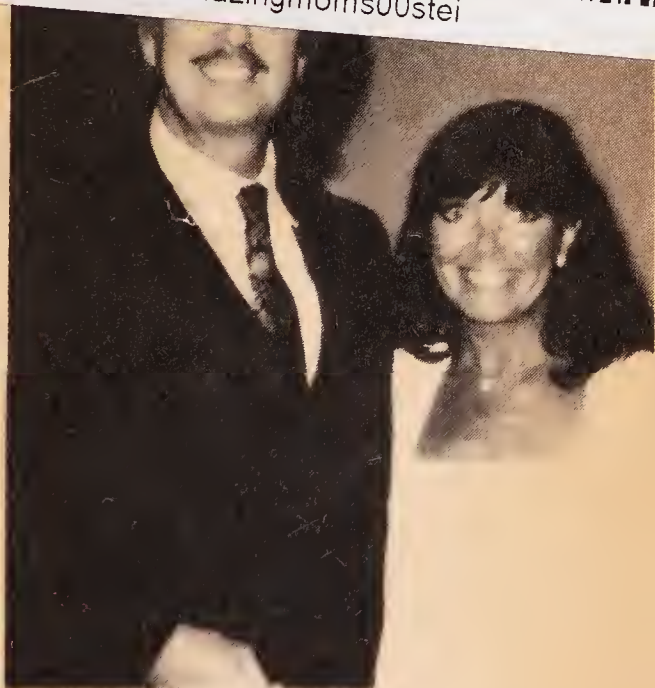
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