

A
Billion
Deaths
Defied

A Billion Deaths Defied
An Adventure in Confronting
Human-Made Catastrophies
and

Eliminating Death on a Massive Scale

An autobiographical novel
based on actual events
where physical death is eliminated,
the planet is preserved, and
the human race is saved
from extinction
By M. Valentine

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Chapter 1

Prelude to a Secret Mission

There is no greater achievement than to save a life. Most of us ordinary folk rarely have the opportunity to save even one life, let alone a large number. I have had the good fortune to save more than most: In the first instance, I saved around a hundred thousand; in the second over 250,000. As you will see, I went on to save millions. Currently, I have a goal of one billion deaths defied. This is not an arbitrary number, but one made from a realistic calculation. My journey toward this goal has brought me from a narrow, personal perspective to a universal, global point of view, resulting in a clearer understanding of life and death.

To understand the process of saving lives on a massive scale, I first had to experience how it is possible to destroy lives on a massive scale. This came about for me from a combination of decisions, opportunities and fate that resulted in an extraordinary adventure.

It is common nowadays to say that if I saved just one life, then I have accomplished a good thing. While this is admirable, it has always been my goal not to save the fewest, but the most. It is important to note that I am referring to

physical lives, not spiritual or emotional. This distinction becomes more important as my story unfolds.

Even at a young age I realized that I was born into in a privileged position. I am male, American, white, reasonably well-off, mentally and physically healthy. What am I to do with this status? I am living better than 98% of the people on earth. Should I devote my energies to living better than 99%?

The ordinary thing to do would be to first find a job that is secure, predictable and lucrative. Then common practice dictates that I marry and with my spouse create someone who is dependent on me to give me a sense of purpose and occupy my time. Or I could manufacture a crisis so as to relieve my boredom. Or I could indulge in artificial danger to simulate excitement. Or I could resort to drugs and drink to ease my pain.

Of the seven billion currently inhabiting the planet, the vast majority of people are struggling to survive. A relative few have attained some degree of prosperity. Those of us who are comfortable with our future must find some greater goal. Acquiring ever more security was not necessary for me. Amassing power and control over others did not appeal to me. Living an average, conventional and unremarkable existence was out of the question.

The US President during my high school years gave my generation some advice that was greatly admired, but which I found to be unwise. He said: "Do not look at things as they are and ask 'Why?'" Rather, dream of things as they could be and ask: "Why not?" It was widely assumed that he was

encouraging civic participation. But it seems to me that he was discouraging skepticism and promoting passivity. A better aphorism is: "Look critically at things to find their cause. Think of alternatives and demand change."

I came to the conclusion that I should do something to make life better for others, on a scale as large as possible. I was able to pursue this goal even though I was brought up in a working-class community with limited resources to change history. Coming of age in America in the 60s, we were living in a high standard of living that allowed us to look at the larger world, to become engaged in it, and to have higher aspirations than living an ordinary life. This goal for me came to pass.

Freedom to me means freedom from social pressure as well as freedom from governmental interference. Some people fear freedom. They would rather be told what to do, follow generally accepted norms, and blend in with the crowd. Admittedly, there is some advantage to being popular and following societal expectations. The risks are great for deviating, but the rewards are also great.

As I was growing up, the world around me was changing drastically, shattering social and political norms. I desperately wanted to become involved. Looking back on it, I was developing something that would come to be known as global awareness and social consciousness. I asked myself what can an average person like myself do to advance humanity?

Human progress seems to have been markedly slow for a species with a highly developed intellect that has been evolving for thousands of years. A number of questions

arise for anyone who studies history and the human race. Why is more progress not being made? Why are billions of people still struggling? Why do poverty and disease continue to be rampant? Why are some groups bent on destroying others?

Those living in normal circumstances seem to have rather modest objectives. They are consumed with what I call the "immediacy" of human nature: immediate feelings, immediate family and immediate surroundings. At an early age I found these to be easily accommodated and lacking in challenge.

In part, this grew out of a sense of security. I did not have to worry where my next meal was coming from. I did not feel vulnerable or exposed to the unpredictability of life. As a result, I was able to be more concerned with bringing my standard of living to the world. What troubled me, and does to this day, was that there was no readily accessible way for improvements to be made beyond the individual. Beginning in high school, and throughout my life, I made it my objective to study the major social systems and the major religions hoping to find answers. I found all of them lacking. They all had something to contribute, but at the same time, did not deal with what I concluded was an existence founded on a number of fatal flaws, perpetuated by unthinking behaviors and habits, and changed little over millennia.

It seems that we were living in two worlds, each trying to destroy the other. Civil wars are common. The American Civil War pitted North against South. The civilizations of the East and West are in perpetual disagreement with the

nexus being Israel. As I was growing up, Korea was divided after a long, bloody conflict into north and south, as was Vietnam. Pakistan was amputated from India. Russia was fractured into pieces. Yugoslavia destroyed itself. Recently, Sudan was split into two distinct countries.

Why does this bifurcation happen and what can I do to prevent it in the future? This quest to find the cause of and eliminate mass murder made me examine the essence of life. The need to minimize and eliminate suffering and death led me to controversial conclusions half the world finds shocking and unacceptable.

It bears repeating that I am referring to the physical properties of living, not the emotional and spiritual. This distinction was to play a major role in my evolving investigation into human existence and my goal to understand life and defeat death.

I was born and grew up in a small town with parents who provided a stable and loving home environment. Neither of them had gone beyond college, but both worked outside the home, which brought me a sense of material security and well-being. Because I had no worries about my future, I was able and willing to focus on the trials and tribulations of the larger world. As I became more aware of the human condition, I needed to find a way to relieve pain and suffering for the greatest number possible. Where would I start?

My early life was focused on acceptance to college. Once there, I was surprised and disappointed. I had selected a large, rural university with over 20,000 kids. They seemed preoccupied with themselves and each other, isolated from

the rest of the world. Disappointed that there was apparently little interest in working on large and serious issues, I dropped out after only two weeks.

After leaving college, I was confused and frustrated for a number of months trying to decide what to do. Odd as it may seem in 1967, the concept of social activism was not widely practiced, at least in my social circle. I needed to get involved somehow. The only way I could think of was by joining the military. This turned out to be a fateful decision that would launch me into a prominent role in history.

My parents both enlisted in the military during the Second World War. My father was a Marine in the South Pacific and my mother served in the Women's Army Corp. in Europe. When I enlisted, the Vietnam war was raging and my parents were naturally wary for my safety, but nevertheless supported my decision. I was not happy to be part of a war, but I needed to see close up where human conflict comes from and why it persists. It is a lesson that set me on a path to discovery I could not have imagined.

I passed the five tests that the Air Force administers for enlistment. The recruiter asked me if I was interested in any particular field. Having an interest in most everything, I replied that I could not decide. So, since he had a quota and claimed that I needed a good future, he suggested the field of electronics. My answer: "Sure, why not?"

Chapter 2

Military Mysteries

Amarillo, Texas, is a small, flat, dusty town in the middle of the Texas Panhandle where, when I arrived, an Air Force base was located that provided basic training for recruits. After being bussed in from the airport, we assembled in the middle of the night, a group of disheveled, uncoordinated, and anxious young men from all over the country and every walk of life. We were assigned to old wooden barracks, issued ill-fitting uniforms, and had our heads shaved. We proceeded to learn the rules and traditions of the military way of life. We were roused early every morning to march in formation, spent afternoons in classrooms, and the rest of the day in various physical activities. One of my least favorite tasks was mopping the long, enclosed hallways that connected one building to another.

Eventually we learned to march as a unit under the command

of a drill instructor who was the stereotypical DI, ram-rod straight, wearing the flat-brimmed hat, barking orders, and enforcing discipline. He yelled cadence that sounded like: "Iuf, Iuf, Iuf, Right, Iuf." This was the Air Force so rigorous physical obstacles were not part of the drill. Lack of survival training was to put me at a life-threatening disadvantage in the future.

After six weeks my squad began to work as a unit, leaving our individuality behind. Those who had no stomach for the demands dropped out as time went on. On the final day of testing, I ended up being the last recruit to cross the finish line after running through an obstacle course. When I looked up, the group was cheering me on as I barely made it. I am no fan of running. I tend to move slow, think slow, react slow. This exercise taught me that I was capable to move at a quick pace and helped motivate me on at least two occasions when I would need to run for my life.

Having passed all my written and physical tests, I, along with everyone else, was waiting for my next assignment when I was ordered to report to the drill instructor. With some anxiety, I proceeded to the second floor of the barracks where the offices were located and saluted him. He informed me that I had done quite well and that I was outstanding recruit. Because of that, he said that I had been selected for special consideration. He ordered me to report to a side office where I found two fellows waiting for me. Oddly, they were not in uniform, and their longish hair and slumped posture suggested a non-military involvement. They told me to relax, repeated that I was an outstanding airman, and asked me if I would be willing to volunteer for a secret mission.

Being someone who likes to think things over, I tend to hesitate when something is sprung on me out of the blue. In addition to being slow walker and a slow learner, I am also slow to react. They demanded an immediate answer. All I could think of was the old admonition common to the military that you should never volunteer for anything. This, however, seemed to be a slightly different situation in that I was being asked to volunteer. More than that, I was being asked to volunteer for a mission whose objective was not being revealed.

They waited impatiently for my decision. Feeling somewhat annoyed and frustrated with the military and its attempt to eradicate my individuality, and having what might be called a rebellious nature, and not being adverse to doing something special, I made a decision and said "Sure, why not."

After expressing satisfaction at my response, they went on for some time emphasizing the need for secrecy and the grave consequences if I revealed anything about the mission. This was not only confusing, but a little troubling. Usually, I am good at keeping secrets, but this could have easily slipped out. And what exactly constitutes a "mission"? What could I say and not say? Years later a lawyer who specializes in these things would clarify the law for me. But, at that moment, I was uneasy with the vague nature of my responsibilities.

They went on to inform me that I would be contacted at my next assignment where I would be given specialized training. The last thing they told me was that I was to recognize a legitimate contact as someone who would ask me the question

"Do you know a Patricia Lynn?" I was to answer "Yes, she is an old friend of mine." The significance of Patricia Lynn would not become clear to me for many years.

I came away excited, scared and confused. But I had little time to contemplate what I had done, or had been done to me. In a matter of minutes, I learned of my next duty station. I was to report to Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, for basic and advanced training in electronics with a specialty in heavy ground radar. My future, at least for the next eight months, lay ahead.

Chapter 3

Training for the Mission

Keesler Air Force Base is a sprawling installation just outside of Biloxi, a small town on the Gulf coast, now known for weathering Hurricane Katrina. The living conditions were much better than at Amarillo. We were housed in modern concrete barracks, four airmen to a room. The barracks were actually referred to as "dormitories". The atmosphere was less strict than basic training, somewhat like a subdued (all-male) college campus. We still had to arise at an early hour, but we only had to endure inspection once a week.

A typical day consisted of classes in the morning, various duties in the afternoon and an occasional marching drill. One of the duties was kitchen patrol. Since I got lost and was the last to locate the dining hall where I was to work, I was assigned the least desirable task of washing the dishes, pots and pans. This taught me to plan ahead and be certain of my route, a lesson that would serve me well.

After attending daily classes and fulfilling other duties, we were free to leave the base, unlike Amarillo where we never had the opportunity to visit the local area. As is common of many towns hosting a military base, there were a number of bars just outside the gates. After a while, I gave in to temptation, and visited a few of the establishments. I was reluctant to drink heavily as I felt I was probably being watched to determine my ability to keep my secret mission a secret, even though I had no idea of the details.

While I was attempting to control my alcohol intake, I was still a nineteen-year-old away from home for the first time

(college really didn't count), so one evening I had a bit too much to drink. Staggering back to the room I shared with three others, I somehow managed to vomit on the so-called inspection tiles we were to keep spotless at the entrance to our room. Maybe there was some unconscious reason for me to do this, but it was quite embarrassing and not a little distressing, as I worried that it, like every other misstep, could possibly disqualify me from my future covert assignment. In my mind, my fellow airmen all had the potential to be monitoring my behavior.

Shortly after arriving, we were allowed to venture to downtown Biloxi where there wasn't much to see except for a few "Whites Only" signs still remaining. To continue my investigation into the human experience, I stopped at a bookstore and bought "Stranger in a Strange Land" by Robert Heinlein (Ace/Putnam 1961). The lead character is a Michael Valentine who comes to Earth after being raised by human parents on Mars. His perspective taught readers the value of objectivity and distance when contemplating the human race. This nurtured my natural desire to view the human condition in a holistic and global dimension without bias or provincialism. Understanding and seeing an extraterrestrial's viewpoint would serve me well in the future.

After a few months, the classes in electronics became routine and I was less apprehensive about strangers who might be "secret agents" approaching me. Just as I was becoming more at ease, a young man sat down next to me at a bar where I was waiting for some friends and asked me if I knew Patricia Lynn. After getting over my initial shock, with some hesitation, I gave the expected answer. He informed me that I was to report the next day after my normal class to a classroom he indicated to begin what he referred to as my

"specialized training". He then abruptly got up and exited, leaving me to contemplate my future.

The classroom was down the hall from those where I was taking my "public" classes. The next day I entered the room with some apprehension. A solitary fellow in civilian clothes instructed me to take a seat. He proceeded to repeat all the warnings that I had previously been given about not revealing anything to do with my mission. He informed me that my classes with him would take place one day a week for only thirty minutes so as to avoid any suspicion of where I was. This coincided with a free time period when no one would notice my absence.

I looked forward to the next class with great apprehension and an enormous amount of curiosity. For the next seven days, I started to feel like I was leading a double life. This schizophrenic mentality would be with me for many years to come, and actually inform a philosophy I was beginning to formulate.

When the time came, I reported as I was told. The instructor (it was always the same individual) began his presentation on the operation and use of a nuclear weapon.

He began the first lesson as if it was routine. I was shocked and amazed. To think that I was to become knowledgeable of one of the most destructive (and highly classified) weapons in human history! I could barely concentrate on what he was saying. He stated that I was to focus exclusively on just one model in the smaller mega-ton range. That particular model is no longer in the arsenal, but I have not and will never reveal its exact specifications.

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