

Micha

A disturbance of lost memories

Aimée



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Aimée

Preface

I will never forget that moment. It was a defining moment, a deciding moment, in my life, although I didn't know why.

In July 1998, my mom and her boyfriend were visiting me in Ottawa, hoping to escape the heat wave in Drummondville. As always, the proximity of my mother stirred up waves of emotion that made me feel something was very wrong with me.

I stood by the door to the master bedroom, looking at her down the length of the hallway. She was so small, petite and yet formidable.

"Mom," I said, "it seems to me that I have to find a therapist to help me to heal my emotions. What do you think?"

For a moment she appeared to recede farther into space, as if suddenly I was looking at her through the wrong end of binoculars.

"Sure, do it," she answered, as if daring me.

We never spoke of this again. They left and I resumed my life with my son. My husband and I had separated in 1992 and he had gone back to Drummondville. Five years later, he passed away. My son was nineteen.

Feeling guilty that our separation had been the cause of Jos.'s death, I had a difficult time as I grieved the loss of both my marriage and the love of my life. I prayed and asked for guidance, and that I would find a therapist who would be the healer I sought.

Then it was October, the first anniversary of my husband's death. Because a friend had asked me to join her for an evening of information, I sat in a small vegetarian restaurant and listened to a lecture given by a chiropractor. I knew I had found my healer. He spoke of Innate Intelligence. He explained that the body has its own intelligence, and that made sense to me.

As the aftermath of a bad fall when I was seven, my neck hurt most of the time. I had recently hurt my coccyx, overdoing a yoga exercise, and the pain in my legs was just about all I could endure. My legs had been damaged by frostbite when I was in my early twenties, and

there were times when the swelling made my legs throb, so seeing a chiropractor seemed just about what I needed.

That same week I made an appointment, and for the next few years I experienced the healing therapies of Network Spinal Analysis (NSA), Somato Respiratory Integration (SRI), and guided meditations. Later I was introduced to a different kind of therapist and a different kind of therapy, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), which, combined with the other therapies, helped me go deep within myself to find wounds unhealed and festering, yet hidden from my memory, hidden from myself and from my day-to-day life.

The following pages contain my notes as I wrote them after each Network adjustment, any related dreams that I wrote down in my diary, and letters I wrote to myself as the little girl lost in me, and to the man I named Hell, as I teetered and tottered, struggling to find balance while I desperately hung on to a bare remnant of sanity.

CHAPTER I

The Beginning

Oct. 19, 1998 (NSA journal entry after adjustment)

Today I felt...uncomfortable. Felt back strain; not used to being on my stomach.

Oct. 21, 1998 (NSA journal entry after adjustment)

Today I felt back strain. No itching or tingling. Very soft. Felt like crying. Choking. Every third or fourth breath seemed to ease the choking.

Oct. 26, 1998 (NSA journal entry after adjustment)

Today I felt as if the top of my head was burning. Back still hurts (lower back). I could not calm my mind today.

Oct. 28, 1998 (NSA journal entry after adjustment)

Today I felt...it seemed there was a pressure, like a coin resting on one particular spot in the middle of my spine (not touched at all in today's session), but pressure felt good on my stiff left hip.

Oct. 28, 1998 (Dream)

Subluxation Release No. 1, or Dead, Deader, and Stainless Steel

I spoke to Hell about subluxation release and asked him to explain it. He said that emotions are energy trapped in the meninges (I think). What I understand is that as he works, or I work, on healing my back, release will happen. He says some patients cry, some might laugh for no apparent reason. I asked if some had reported visions or dreams. He nodded yes, without going into any explanation; asked if I had had a nightmare. "Well," I said, "I wouldn't call it a nightmare." Thing is, I don't know what to call it. I know my dreams and how they behave. I don't know if this was a dream or not and that's what is bothering me. I'm not sure I want more of this stuff.

Today is the anniversary of Eddy and me rushing to Drummondville after receiving a call from the police in Drummondville that Jos. was dead. Actually Eddy took the call and I called the policeman back.

Flashback: I had taken the call in 1959 when my aunt called to say my father had passed away in the night. No matter how hard I try for Eddy not to have the same experiences I have had, there are still too many similarities.

Sunday, I guess, was the anniversary of his death — if I think in days of the week rather than dates. The policeman said he had been dead since Sunday but was only found Tuesday morning. The superintendent of the building where he lived wondered why he hadn't seen him for a week and decided to knock on the door of his apartment, then finally to open it because he noticed a bad smell coming from the place. He found Jos. on the floor, a few feet from the kitchen table, dead. There was a half-eaten plate of spaghetti on the table. He called the police and they called us, because Jos. had Eddy's (our) telephone number plastered all over the place. The sad part is that he never, ever called Eddy.

On Wednesday morning I was at the morgue, and the coroner's assistant handed me a Polaroid picture of Jos. for identification, rather than having me go inside to the slab and identify him in person. Mind you, she knew exactly what he looked like and probably felt the picture was bad enough.

Jos.'s head was huge, big as a pumpkin. The features were hardly recognizable. There was no hairline, the forehead was so swollen. Could not really find the nose, just two small holes where the nostrils were. One eye was open and one was shut in a wicked wink. I don't remember seeing the mouth either. All I have been able to think of since then is Jos.'s big pumpkin head. Very fit for Halloween. The funeral service was held on October 31, 1997. Nice joke, Jos.

When she asked me if I could identify the man in the picture as my husband, I said I could not for certain because this man looked so awful. I was in full denial. She was kind, she didn't insist. After all, the superintendent had identified him. The body was released to the funeral director the next day.

For a full year now I have turned things over in my head, over and over and over. I have gone through that week in January 1992 more

than a hundred times. The day I went to the hospital and told Jos. he was not to come back home.

Eddy and I...I could not take more of this. Jos. was totally and completely out of control. In my stupid little head, I thought if he went to Drummondville and stayed with his sister, his brother-in-law being a doctor, maybe, just maybe, he would stop drinking. So on January 25, 1992, I took him to the bus terminal in downtown Ottawa and put him on the midnight bus to Drummondville with one suitcase and the Royal Doulton figurine *Tender Moments* I'd bought with my Christmas bonus.

He could barely walk because his feet were still incredibly swollen from frostbite — the result of his escapade that fateful Sunday when he went out to drink and his legs gave out on him. He was found in the middle of the street, one shoe missing as he had worn no boots. He had no gloves on, no hat. It was one of those freaky days where the temperature plummeted to -35° Celsius. The people who found him called 911 and Jos. was saved. His hypothermia was severe and he was so drunk that he hallucinated. He was released after a week in the hospital, but he did not come home. My survival and Eddy's depended on his getting well before we could even consider being together again. The blisters on his hands were still as big as olives, filled with yellow liquid. There were gaping wounds on his knees and he could barely walk. And some people think I'm a nice person. Ha!

And now he's dead. He died alone. After he moved to Drummondville, the few times I saw him at Christmas and in July, he was still drinking. He was on lithium. He drank. He took lithium, Antabuse, and heaven knows what else. The autopsy report said there was no alcohol in his system. Of course not, he died on the 26th, two days before his welfare cheque was to be deposited. He had no more money for alcohol, not until his cheque came in, and I supposed the cycle would start all over again. When I went to his apartment, there were empty two-litre wine bottles and just as many empty beer bottles. Jos. was a long way from the days when he drank a 40-oz. of Scotch on a daily basis.

And so, I think of Jos. and his pumpkin head. I think of what could have been. I think sometimes yes, I did the right thing. All I have to do is look around and see how my own reality has changed and it

has to be because I did the right thing. I like my life so much now. I like who I am. What I have become. Eddy is growing into such a fine young man. Then I think, oh God, Jos. died all alone!

I imagine him still with his pumpkin head, walking about the apartment, not knowing what's going on. He didn't believe in life after death. He said that when you died all there was, was this big black hole. I thought I was so close to him, yet I had no idea how sick he was. I thought all he had to do was stop drinking, not take that next drink, just postpone it indefinitely. I was shocked by the doctor's report.

In the end, Jos. was everything that he despised. He despised people on welfare. He despised drunks who went to AA meetings. He despised drunks who had lost their family and wept and felt sorry for themselves. He despised hypocrites. He especially despised sick people. In the end he was all of these things. So now I think he is just there in the apartment, still drunk, walking around the place with his big pumpkin head, not going anywhere, not knowing where to go. He was alone. He is still alone, I think.

This Sunday, my radio came on at 7:20 a.m. and, since I had a whole hour to spare thanks to Standard Time, I decided to read in bed and opened Shakti Gawain's book on visualization. Then I noticed I was crying; nothing to do with the book, just crying. I thought of what Hell had said and I thought okay, I am going to go with this and see what happens. I won't ignore it. I'll just go with the flow (of tears).

I closed the book and closed my eyes. Did I fall asleep again? Was I half asleep and into that state where one is not truly conscious yet is aware of the surroundings? I probably have forgotten quite a bit, but how this starts is I see some hands wrap around my back. I am lying on my side and the hands are making adjustments on my back. I can feel the adjustments. I would say three of them most particularly. The next thing I remember is seeing Jos.'s face, or rather his big pumpkin face. Both eyes are shut. There is no wicked wink. The face is so swollen that the closed eyes are just small slits. They are barely visible. Then I see Jos. as he was the last time I saw him, all swollen from the pills. But the flesh is dead flesh, almost black ash. I touch him on the arm and dust falls off of him. He is decomposing or, rather, becoming mummy-like. Kind of like what you see in documentaries when they uncover remains and they touch them and they just collapse into dust.

Then the next image is of his arm (the one I touched?). This arm is coil-like. Kind of like the adjustable arm you often see on lamps. It is bright stainless steel. I don't remember seeing the hand at the end of the arm, just the stainless steel coil attached to the shoulder. Finally, what I remember last is my being upright and having Jos.'s back to the wall of my bedroom, yelling at him and pushing him and shaking him. I was angry. I was so angry. I don't remember what I yelled but yell I did — something about, "How could you have done this to me? Why did you have to be such a drunk? I was waiting for you to stop drinking. Why didn't you...why couldn't you..."

I don't recall Jos. saying anything. Mind you, all he ever said when I yelled at him when he was alive was, "I'm allowed to drink if I want to." And so he did. I think then I woke up very upset. I cried until I finally started doing my Sunday housework.

I did not mention the anniversary to Eddy. Earlier in the month I had asked Eddy if he wanted to go to the cemetery to visit his dad. He said he would think about it. I said I would not mention it again, and I haven't.

So I don't call this a nightmare. But what do I call it? Three adjustments, three subluxation releases, three Jos. — dead, deader, and stainless steel.

Not until today, during my treatment at the clinic, did I associate the stainless steel coil with my spine. But how the two are connected I don't know.

Nov. 2, 1998 (NSA journal entry after adjustment)

Today I felt that middle spot again, aching. Pressure in my lower back. Strain. Pressure where the opposite side was hurting.

Nov. 4, 1998 (Computer Journal)

Subluxation No. 2, or pushing too far

So now I am home. I had three pieces of toast and a glass of soy milk for supper. Not because I was hungry, but because it is a good way to push down those feelings and keep them down. Can't eat and cry at the same time.

Yes, I went to Hell's clinic because I strongly felt this is the way I should go. I have been thinking and looking and searching for a place

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