

Secret Journeys of the Soul

Down To Earth

It all began on the day I was born. For something to begin, something else had to end, for that is the way of things but that ending and that beginning still leaves questions of such awesome proportions that despite even my extraordinary awareness, much is left unanswered.

The awareness I have, is that of Self, of an intelligence operating now within a human frame, within a structure known as the race of man, inhabiting a planet known as Earth. That same Self had operated in some other life form, on some other planet, in some other time.

I recall as if it were yesterday, just how excited I had been. A pure intelligence in transit, needing no form, moving and living for a space of time in a cocoon of soft white light, a sort of soft but solid energy, completely happy as I knew I was nearing the end of my journey. I had no particular thoughts on my future, all directional mental activity being suspended and normal consciousness dimmed as my new life experience drew near, leaving me only with a high anticipation of a bright future as I eagerly awaited my new incarnation.

I was in a state of complete relaxation, the soft white light holding me enigmatically half way between yesterday and tomorrow. A state which was about to change dramatically, as in the final descent

Secret Journeys of the Soul

I felt myself gently rolling over and over until I was there, somewhere, waiting; my expectations rising as I anticipated the Great Event. Excitement mounted as I awaited the first sight of my new surroundings, anticipated my first feelings at the beginning of this brand new life form. For some little time I experienced a stillness in my protective cocoon, the soft white light surrounding me with its peace, giving me a sense of suspended animation, as I waited for the light to roll back and my new life to begin.

Then I sensed a change. A sense of nothingness, a flatness, a no-movement sensation which went on for far too long and began to concern me more than a little as I lay at the edge of this new dimension. Just as I began to think that I could contain myself no longer, a corner of my white enclosure peeled away and for the first time I could see out. And what I saw horrified me. This was the planet Earth!

There had been some terrible mistake. This was surely the earth plane. My mind just could not grasp the notion that I was on the planet earth. It was impossible. Not here, not ever again. I knew that I had never ever considered returning to this world. Who in their right mind would ever wish to? The earth was a bleak and a dismal place whose peoples were dominated by ignorance and self-destruction. A place way out in the galaxy, far far away from my home and even farther from my mind when I had set out on my present quest. Still operating as an intelligence rather than as a body I was able to see with my extended vision that which surrounded me as the protective shield peeled back, giving way to grim reality. Everything was grey, colourless, mean.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

I was in a small room where three people, two men and a woman sat at a table eating a meal. Another woman, bespectacled and wearing a crossover sleeveless pinnie over a dark dress stood at one corner of the table, dishing the food out. There was no sound, just this brief scenario. People, walls, furniture, all dull and drab and depressing. A few seconds later, in another room in that little house, I was drawn into the life form awaiting me, that of a tiny new born baby. But from that moment on I was conscious only of a great and overwhelming desire to leave this plane.

I had arrived in the middle of a war, the violence and noise impaling my sensitivities but then, when hadn't there been a war raging on earth. I was in shock and the wet cold of the planet seemed to hold me in its embrace. I who had flourished in beauty and colour, joy and love, peace and exploration now found myself in this dismal outreach. I still couldn't quite take it all in and I deliberated between wondering if this had been a deliberate act on the part of my mentors as some sort of challenge or, more probably, negligence in the directional mechanisms. There was no way that I could accept that this had been my intended destination. There was a distinct feeling that, in today's parlance, someone back home had pushed the wrong button and in so doing, my whole future had been compromised.

I knew of Earth. Who didn't! Knew that I had lived on earth before as many of us had for one reason or another but I knew just as surely that I had not intended another incarnation here. This was a young planet whose peoples had not travelled far in their evolution; whose leaders much preferred to govern the masses through ignorance and superstition despite help which had been repeatedly sent to them

Secret Journeys of the Soul

through highly evolved Others returning to earth to show them the way. A world whose people were hell bent on conflict; seemingly trapped in an endless cycle of mental and physical suicide, dying before they could graduate to the spiritual arena which all beings had to attain in order to achieve spiritual evolution. They seemed doomed to concentrating their efforts in self-perpetuating myths, unable to raise their sights and their ambitions beyond the third dimension. Spiritual to me did not mean godly or holy, simply that which transcended basic physical consciousness.

I then began to wonder again if I was simply kidding myself and that everyone felt like this when taking on another incarnation on earth. There was a terrible sense of confusion whilst my mind raced along fielding a variety of possibilities. It was possible of course that I was no different to anyone else but the knowledge that I had travelled from another place out in space overwhelmed me and I still believed without a doubt that I had been bound for another place in another time.

As always my immediate thought was to the Father, my constant mental companion and confidante in any and every crisis. The Father was not a man but was a male influence, as far as I am aware without form as we know it; who directed my spiritual path, connecting with me on all levels at all times. There was no religious connotation here but He was the Being on whom I relied totally.

There are no suitable words that could convey my meaning in this three-dimensional world, for the Father is way beyond this and many other dimensions. I was and am locked into that Being for all my

Secret Journeys of the Soul

foreseeable time. Although as a being I am way below Him in terms of evolution I am nevertheless a fundamental, integral part of Him. My urgent wish was to have Him extricate me from this mess before it was too late for in some inexplicable way I knew there was a time limit if I was to be able to return to my home. Quickly I began sending out vibrational signals into space in the hope that I would be heard, recalled, that a blessed darkness would descend heralding my return journey but to no avail and I began to fear that it was already too late. I was not going to be taken back. I was in this alien place and here I must stay.

As I lay there in total disbelief, I pondered on how this mistake could have happened. Who had been meant to come here and had they arrived at what I had considered to be my appointed destination. And what had been their destiny and would I now have to fulfil it? My mind went round and around over these matters, sometimes hopefully, believing that everything could still be put right but deep within, I had the sinking feeling that now I was here, I was here for as long as it took.

The Father was silent and the silence was ominous. He would never interfere, never intervene for that was not the way of things. Resolve not intervention was the way of all karma but I had hoped for some explanation and the fact that He was silent seemed to me a very powerful message. I was on my own. There would be no turning back and it would be a long time now before I knew just what had happened. As the days went by I was quite convinced that had I been intended for this plane, I would have met by now a member of my own group soul who was also part of the Plan. One who would greet me.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

One whom I would instantly recognise in their spiritual aspect to confirm, reassure, and make that connection which would set all the other wheels in motion but no one of that nature appeared. Day after day I scrutinised every newcomer and day after day I became more despondent. There had to be a Plan and Players and a Script and instead there was a very real sense for me of being an outsider, a mere spectator of other people's plays which held no interest for me. A visitor from any other world could do as much and then return with the knowledge but I was not a mere visitor.

Taking on another incarnation meant that different Laws were in play, Laws which could not now be altered. Laws that I would have to abide by. I worked it out that my mother had become pregnant and an incarnating soul had chosen her as host, not I, but in the mix up I had to take on that role and the other soul had taken on mine presumably. I was not evolved enough to pretend to know everything but balance has always to be maintained both in the micro and the macro worlds. Mistakes can happen everywhere, nothing is foolproof, that is part of our evolving universe. It was of little comfort for me to acknowledge that in the aeons of eternity which lay before me all things would be put right. Here and now I had to concede that eventually I had to get on with being here.

What the future might hold for me on this strange hostile planet I neither knew nor cared, my mind always occupied as to how I could leave it. Locked into my own sense of oblivion, I did not contemplate the life which might await me. Did not see the future outside of the immediate. I was not to know then that my life could and would consist of fantastic, amazing adventures, not just in and

Secret Journeys of the Soul

concerning this world but in others too. There would be journeys into other dimensions, experiencing other bodies, giving rise to much speculation, contemplation and not a little confusion.

All this was yet to come, my immediate dilemma concentrated my mind on much more pressing problems. Being on your own in an alien place turns you into the alien and the effort of living with this knowledge was to take every ounce of my strength in those early days.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

Early Days

My arrival naturally evoked much interest within what turned out to be a large, close-knit family. For those around me, my birth was yet another problem in a war torn world. Another mouth to feed, days and nights to be up, caring for this new little body and wondering perhaps, if it would survive the poverty, the disease, the war. They were not to know the spirit which had come amongst them; the intelligence that could look out of tiny eyes and read their very hearts. They saw only a tiny form, a baby totally dependent on them in every possible physical way and thus, in their eyes a limited intelligence too.

During this time I had no interest in who my parents were or where they were for that matter. I was to discover later that my mother had almost died in giving birth to me and had stayed unconscious for three weeks. My father was a regular soldier, away at the front.

Day after day I watched and waited, hungry for a sign of recognition from one of those who would come into my orbit but matters only became worse. During those dreadful days, when men and women lived their lives against a backdrop of daily suspense and the promise of sudden death, especially for those at the front, I would listen to people. People talking, crying, confiding, confessing. I grew weary and would switch off to everything going on around me. There was no one I could recognise, no one I could turn to. As time went by I would lay for hours

Secret Journeys of the Soul

watching, observing the people around me, seeing them only as barbarians, closing my eyes in contempt at their mean little claustrophobic lives. Their dreariness threatened to swamp me, each day a joyless repetition of the chores of the day before, accepting what was because they were ignorant of what could be. Nothing changed and the awful thing was, that as things stood, it wasn't destined to.

There was no bonding with this mother I had not seen and there never would be. The woman who cared for me was this other, much older woman, always busy working whilst others came and went; the sometimes bespectacled lady who always wore what I suspected was a floral overall but the colours came across as faded grey and brown. It would be a further two years before I saw colour as colour, so great was the difference between the colours here and the colours I had known.

My grandmother, for that was who the lady in the floral pinnie was, attracted a great many people to her, usually those in need in some way, who every day visited her home. One by one they would peer into my pram and stare at me, shoving their faces into mine making strange gestures with their mouths and even stranger noises. I was not amused. They actually thought that because my physical form was small that I the Self within was small, young, unknowing. I wanted to scream and shout at them. "Look at Me. Really look at Me." But even if I could have spoken, what would be the point. When you cannot see, you cannot see.

As I lay locked into this little life form sometimes in it's pram, sometimes lying swathed in a shawl on an easy chair I would watching

Secret Journeys of the Soul

the comings and goings of daily life. No one tried to communicate with the essential me. No one knew that it was possible even. Although I am now ashamed to admit to it, I held them all in complete and utter contempt. As yet I was still a small baby very much operating in my astral body and withdrawing into that body meant that I slept a great deal. Withdrawing into my astral awareness enabled me to venture to another spot, rather more ethereal, away from the streets of terraced houses that I never seemed to leave. Living in this other world was automatic for me and I was quite safe. I would be in a state of separateness, surrounded by colour, away from all fear.

When I decided to remain physically conscious but use my astral facilities I was able to use my astral sight in quite a different way. I was able to see others and myself, physically and astrally. Whereas the physical body has two receptors for sight, the eyes, the astral body has receptors throughout, so one can see in all directions at once. I could also will myself 'out' and look 'into' myself. On one occasion I looked within myself to see what they would see if they could use their own astral faculty to see me. What I saw was not what I had expected. It gave me quite a jolt.

As I looked deep into my own physical eyes, I saw a very old woman, whose face despite her age was quite unlined. A strict authoritarian personality looked back. I saw her head and shoulders as in a portrait. She was dressed in black with a large white collar, a tight fitting white headdress that completely covered her head, coming to a

Secret Journeys of the Soul

point at the front. She was 94 years of age and I suspected a Belgian influence. Now who on earth was this I wondered. She had appeared in my vision as one of two possibilities. Either she had been a past incarnation, perhaps someone from the Low Countries by birth, or she was me as I would be when this incarnation was over. That thought, of staying here that long, gave me no comfort at all and I returned rapidly to seeing in my limited physical being. I did not wish to even think of staying here for such a period of time.

The weeks and the months passed by and I felt weary of the comings and goings of people. My grandmother was akin to the community nurse, always on call, the kettle always on the boil, no one ever turned away. She was the confidante of the whole neighbourhood, combining the roles of assistant midwife, counsellor and first aider when people couldn't always afford to go to the doctor with minor ailments. During these times I could be relied upon not to interrupt, winge or distract the adults in any way. People would comment on what a good baby I was. Little did they know that I was hardly ever there! My own astral world was preferable to anything here.

There were many who would come to her after receiving bad news from the front and she was always ready to listen and give support, saying little but always it seemed that which was needed. In between times she worked constantly at her household chores, fiercely houseproud.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

I recall one day when a young woman came into the room and began to tell her tale of woe, her tears falling as grandmother gave her a cup of tea and settled her down. Her story was not unique. Her husband was at the front and she had been seen out with another man. She had been accused by her in-laws of betraying her husband's trust, of adultery and now she was an outcast in her own family. I listened incredulous as the tale unfolded and more tea was poured, my grandmother giving her the benefit of the doubt, drying her tears, holding the woman close, dispensing her own particular form of wisdom.

The woman was lying and she was lying most of all to herself. She was determined to believe her version of events, as she could not accept herself what she had done. Sadly she was missing the opportunity to make a clean breast of it to someone not immediately involved with her family and who might have been able to get her back on track. She went away smiling and never came back again. It was all so dreary. Why didn't these people ever learn? More karma and future upset which could have been dealt with, had been put on hold to grow and fester within her heart and mind and no doubt she would continue lying to herself and believing her lies no matter what.

This woman had been determined to fool the deeper self but that couldn't be. One day the deeper self would offer it up again to be resolved and who knew how much damage it would cause in the meantime. And would the woman recognise how much damage the past could inflict on the future, even the distant future. I feared not.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

I would look at my grandmother who refused to judge anyone. She was nobody's fool and knew more than most that the whole truth was seldom a guest at the wedding and probably recognised the lie just as I had. But as always she had not been found wanting in her compassion, her willingness to help and she had done all that was humanly possible. The terribleness of war made people behave out of character sometimes; could make fools of us all. My poor grandmother. Two world wars, seven children, an eighth who had died after a few months and now me who, unlike her, continued to judge my fellow beings and switch off when they annoyed me with their foolishness. Me who was only marking time until I could return home.

But time was marching on. On the physical side I was quick to adjust, walking and talking at ten months and as time went on people thought me such a clever child. Clever but quiet. I would sit for hours with a book on my lap but once again I wasn't there. I would withdraw to far away places. Grandmother for her part was always happy for me to be at rest, behaving myself, no trouble in a world that promised trouble every time the postman knocked and shuffled his way down the narrow lobbies of the little houses. The kettle was always singing on the hob in her little house at eleven o'clock every morning just in case there was bad news for someone in the street.

The biggest problem was that there was no one for me to communicate with, not physically but telepathically. No one understood me. More to the point, they all ignored me as an intelligent being that is,

Secret Journeys of the Soul

and life was extremely lonely and frustrating. I was about fifteen months old when I first began to get sick. Not surprisingly my inner conflict now began to manifest in my physical body. Not surprisingly it was concentrated in my chest, the heart center. Pleurisy, pneumonia, double pneumonia, bronchitis. I remember it was extremely painful and I would become extremely hot. There being no antibiotics in those days for this condition I would have to stay in bed day after day until the crisis passed and all the time my grandmother would be with me, day and night.

I can recall clearly when I was two and again going through a crisis. People were around the bed and in the gloom of a single nightlight I could see my grandparents comforting each other. Some of those present were crying and one of them said to my grandfather, "I don't think she'll make it this time Joe. She's going to die." And she burst out sobbing. The rest followed her example. I did not understand what was meant by dying but it was obviously not to be recommended and I was not too impressed. As always I turned to the Father. "Oh Father, please, please take me home. I don't want to die. It sounds terrible. Please, please take me home." I was terrified. A couple of days later and I awoke again. I was still here. At least I hadn't died even if He hadn't taken me home, He had done half the things I had asked. Life would continue. I sighed and went back to sleep.

My mother and I never bonded. All her thoughts were for my father who had been parachuted into Arnhem which was understandable to a point. Perhaps the difficult birth had played a part in her rejection of

Secret Journeys of the Soul

me or perhaps she just wished that I had never happened. Whatever the reason behind it all, a solemn faced, blue-eyed child with platinum curly hair falling about her shoulders couldn't reach her, then or ever after.

My grandparents were the ones I had to turn to for help and love and food but my depressions returned and with them my illnesses. As I grew older, into my third and fourth years I would be taken for a special trip into the town but I was always 'fainting' and they would end up having to get a bus and bring me back. Although I was gradually being absorbed more and more into my physical body I could still leave at will or when I became tired of the adult world around me. Of course they did not know this and the good doctor only knew what they told him of my physical symptoms as they perceived them, so now the doctor feared that I had a heart problem too and ordered bed rest. Poor man. He did his best but there was nothing they could find physically that could be treated any other way. My grandmother was informed that she would never rear me. I was a fragile child and needed much attention. I didn't understand all that. What I did was natural and I couldn't understand what all the fuss was about. I also knew that I could not explain to anyone because of their limited understanding. I truly believed that they would have put me away as some bad person or they would become very fearful of me as a strange being in their midst. As always with ignorance at the helm, the seas of superstition were the only ones travelled.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

It was about this time that I began to fall down stairs with monotonous regularity. At first I thought I must have tripped and then I realised that I was having a problem with my loose etheric body. After this had occurred a couple of times I carefully observed what was happening. I noticed that as I approached a particular stair, for some reason my foot was going through the stair, etherically that is, on each occasion, causing me to stumble. I could both see and feel what was happening.

The etheric is the double of the physical so it looked just like my physical foot and it felt as if my foot was penetrating cool water as the etheric foot went through the stair tread. At the same time I could see my physical foot resting on the stair tread. This double take meant that I did not concentrate fully on maneuvering the steep stairs and so in the resulting faltering hesitation, I would stumble and fall. Having done this a few times I tried to walk down two stairs at once, thus avoiding the difficult one but my legs were too little and I fell anyway.

It took me some time to work out why this particular stair was causing me problems and then I realised the power of the mind had a big part to play even in this dimension. After the first time I fell, I was waiting for it to happen again, imagining it happening again and of course it did. I was creating my own reality. After that I made sure that my thoughts as I began my descent of the stairs were of complete oneness in my energy fields and the tumbling stopped.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

My grandmother however had an idea that I was somewhat of a fey child. She knew that I could read although I had never been taught. She also knew that I could 'see' but not just what. She believed very much in a life after death and of the power of loved ones who had passed on being able to communicate. She had seen in that way herself but her deep devotion to the catholic faith ensured that she never spoke about such things unless in 'safe' company, just in case anyone got the wrong idea.

In the days when television was unheard of and the war was still being reckoned, many tales were told around the fire in the evening, of strange dreams and events that had saved someone's life or predicted a death. Grandfather would speak knowingly of the Angel of Mons and grandmother would speak quietly of the people who she and her sisters had seen before each death in the family, when they were small.

Once, her late father had returned to warn her of her mother's impending early death. Another time it had been a nun dressed in the habit of the home of the Little Sisters of Mercy who appeared on the stairs as she and her sisters went to bed and later on that night, a knock had come at the front door and there had stood a nun to inform them of the death of a relative in their Home. Everyone listened intently, each having their own interpretation and questions, remembering others who had had similar experiences. There was always a house full as in any large family and I was able to stay up, usually in hiding under the table or behind a large armchair doing my usual impression of a mouse, which meant that they usually forgot I was there.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

After one of these evening sessions my grandmother accompanied me to my bedroom where she bade me listen carefully. I stared at her solemnly whilst she spoke. She was most concerned about my future in some way. She went on to tell me that I would 'see' one day and that when I did I should not be afraid. 'The dead never came back to harm anyone. I should just listen to them and take heed.' She left me then and went downstairs. I nearly died! The thought of someone dead appearing to me was almost more than I could bear. I got undressed and jumped into bed pulling the covers over my head, sweating with fear. I still hadn't understood that the dead they spoke of were those I knew as just ordinary people now living in another dimension busy getting on with their real lives. I didn't really know what they meant by 'the dead' and like anyone ignorant of the true concept behind any situation, I panicked as my imagination took over. It was a long time before sleep claimed me that night.

My family were also friendly with a man and his son who were Spiritualists, beautiful people, loving and gentle, who showed my family how to communicate with spirit by 'rocking' the table. On occasions everyone would sit round and place their fingertips on the heavy oak table and concentrate on making contact with those 'beyond the veil'. Someone would ask a question and the table would rock once for yes, two for no. Now this was a stout oak table and it really did move. I would stand there, my head just reaching above the table and watch with interest, no real understanding of what they were doing. I recognised

Secret Journeys of the Soul

what they were trying to do of course but I didn't understand why they went to all that trouble.

Invariably when questions were asked and the answers did not immediately describe the 'entity' communicating, I would pipe up and tell them who it was, although of course these people had returned long before my arrival and I had never met them. All I had to do was tune in telepathically and pass on their information. In this way I learned that the people of earth were moving on a little but as always I expected too much of them. I assumed that they now did believe that contact was possible with those in other dimensions but they didn't really, it was more wishful thinking than anything else. I believed in my childlike way that they would realise more about me after these sessions too but they seemed to ignore the fact that I always 'knew' who was there. Instead they would dismiss it as strange, their eyes narrowing as they studied me before shrugging it off.

But beyond all this my grandmother knew. She wasn't sure what she knew and how much I knew but that I did know hadn't escaped her. Everything she did for me she did with true love. I was very special to my grandparents and she in particular formed my future values. This was the lady who had been with me from the outset and whom I had rejected so determinedly as yet another 'barbaric' person. Someone I had not recognised, yet was now growing to rely on entirely. I loved her very dearly and I grew never to question the wisdom of her words. From now

Secret Journeys of the Soul

on she would be my shining star, whose tinsel would never tarnish, whose flame would never diminish, whose memory would never fade.

My father had returned from the war, leaving the army he had chosen 16 years earlier. I believe this was because my mother would not move away from her roots and that decision was in time, to create a perpetual atmosphere of bitterness and recrimination within their home. I remained living with my grandparents, most people even calling me by their surname. At first, when I knew that my father was returning and that my mother had sorted a house out, I had looked forward with great excitement to joining them. My grandmother had taken me to see the house and I had sat there proudly in a new fireside chair, looking at all the shiny new furniture, thinking that this was to be my new home too. As always it was my grandmother who had to let me down gently. I caught the smirk on my mother's face as my grandmother explained that I had to stay with her and grandfather for the time being. A knife seemed to be twisting in my tummy. My mother was congratulating herself on getting her own way. She would have my father to herself. I was not a part of her future plans. She actually enjoyed seeing my bitter disappointment and confusion. She was jealous of me.

As the taxi took us back home, for I was recovering yet again from another bout of pneumonia, I realised with a great sadness, that my mother didn't want me. Although very young I could of course see into her heart and the shock was truly great. As indeed was the hurt. How could they not want me? A product of their love surely. I knew that I was

Secret Journeys of the Soul

what was classed as a pretty little girl and yet they didn't want me. What would have happened had I been handicapped? I felt cold for a long time after that.

When I was five years old I became so depressed that I could not eat, I had been very ill yet again but this time my recovery seemed never to be. I could see the worry on my grandparent's faces but despite my love for them I so desperately wanted to go home. A bed was always brought downstairs for me when I was ill, ensuring that I was kept in the same temperature day and night. It also meant that I was never alone for a minute, so deep was their concern.

Early one morning as my grandmother prepared breakfast in the kitchen, my grandfather came downstairs and as always, asked her how the night had gone. My grandmother just shook her head, tears on her face. I looked away not wishing to see her distress acknowledging to myself that I was being thoroughly selfish in my own desires but the emotional pain I was going through seemed just too much to bear. My loneliness had reached breaking point. The only thing which concerned me, was my existence in this realm. I was here all alone and for what reason? Everything was still beyond my understanding.

My grandfather went through into the yard and I assumed he was going to the outside toilet. Lost in my own thoughts I did not hear him return until he called my name yet again. "Madge, Madge... What do you think?" What did I think about what? I sighed deeply and turned and

Secret Journeys of the Soul

took the proffered plate of toast from his hand. But soon I pushed the plate away. Food was not what I wanted or needed.

I heard my grandmother's hushed voice from the kitchen. "What's happening Joe?"

"She's not bothering lass," He sounded so low. I looked at him again. "I'm not hungry." I turned my head to the wall. "But what do you think Madge?" I just looked at him whilst my grandmother hovered at a distance.

"She can't see it Joe, she's lying down and she can't see it." Grandmother was twisting the tea towel in her hand now leaning against the doorjamb. "Can you not see it Madge? Here, lean up and see what I've brought you." Grandad's face was a mixture of eagerness to get my reaction and a desperate longing for everything to be all right. Warily I leant on my elbow, propping myself up, staring up into his face. "No Madge. Down here, on the floor." His finger pointed downwards. I could see my grandmother, clutching the kitchen towel to her chest, now, holding her breath. I looked and could not believe my eyes. There, sitting on the floor was the tiniest most beautiful cocker spaniel puppy, no bigger than the size of his hand. 'He's yours Madge. What do you think?"

Delight flooded my heart, my eyes I knew shone with love and excitement. Here was another with whom I could communicate and the bond between us was immediate. "Lift it up onto the bed Joe then she can feel it," whispered my grandmother and my grandfather placed it gently

Secret Journeys of the Soul

as any woman, on my lap. I can still recall the exquisite pleasure I felt that morning. It was pure joy. I reached out for my plate of toast. I now had something to live for. Later as I watched my grandfather preparing for work my love for him just flowed. Here was a man's man and no mistake. A man who had won the George Cross in the first world war for bravery beyond the call of duty, still smoking Captain Full Strength despite being gassed in the war and whose career in the army he loved so much had been stopped so completely, still capable of loving and caring. I watched as he wrapped his muffler about his neck and put on his bicycle clips. His job as a storekeeper down at the docks was a lowly one for such a proud man but he was not so proud that he didn't realise that his money was essential no matter how little. No one could ever take his medals from him and the George Cross! Well, he could always hold his head up high and my grandmother never stopped worshipping him.

He had won the George Cross when, despite coming under heavy fire, he had not left his post. His post being that of being in command of the ammunition wagon pulled by horses. He had stuck it out and desperately needed supplies for the soldiers had got through. He wouldn't have left his beloved horses either to fend for themselves. Such was the measure of the man. No wonder my grandmother adored him.

From that day on, my obsession with leaving this vale of tears receded and Queenie, my little soul mate, as my grandfather named her, after consultation with me of course, was the focus of my life.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

Grandfather had trained horses and dogs in his time in the army and farm collies outside of it and the animals obviously adored him. Soon Queenie was able to perform so many tricks, she was almost human. That of course was my tongue in cheek thought which I kept firmly to myself. But she and I would sit together by the hearth on many a winter's day, perfectly happy in just being.

When my grandfather went anywhere, we would both follow. He took great pride in teaching me how to look after his animals and birds. He bred chinchillas and had an aviary of brightly coloured budgies and canaries in the yard. By this time I could see colour and the war had ended. The brightly whitewashed yard containing the aviary of brilliant greens and yellows was a good place to be. I thought that I was completely secure in my physical body and whilst I still had no answers as to the why's and the where fore's of my existence here, I had finally accepted that which couldn't be changed.

There came a day a couple of years later when my wishes to return to my true home were nearly fulfilled. The day had dawned cold and damp and I had been allowed to stay in bed due to a bout of tonsillitis until members of the family had all gone off to work, when I was taken downstairs by my grandmother to have a bath in order to 'freshen me up and make me feel better.' She had locked the front door to stop anyone walking in on us and flames from the fire were dancing up the chimney in front of the tin bath awaiting me. Taking off my nightclothes she proceeded to wash me with a sponge and lots of soapy

Secret Journeys of the Soul

water. I hadn't actually stepped into the bath because that would be to sit in dirty water she reckoned. Better for me to have a good wash through in the living room than in the cold back kitchen. I remember feeling extremely tired and flopping back against an armchair close by the hearth.

I knew no more until I awoke slowly, aware only of icy cold air on my naked body. Forcing my eyes open with great difficulty I could see my grandmother across from me trying to get up from the chair she had collapsed on and my grandfather swearing loudly as he rushed around opening doors throughout the house. In his fright he was calling her severely for her stupidity. Apparently the fumes from the built up coke fire had built up in the room and enveloped us. If he hadn't returned to collect the lunchbox he had forgotten, probably the only time ever he had left his lunch at home, we would certainly have died.

As I regained full consciousness, my grandmother with tears pouring down her face, dressed me. When I realised what had almost happened I didn't know whether to laugh or cry but prudently did neither. My grandfather was shaking at the realisation of how close we had come to real tragedy as he took the coke off the fire with a shovel and threw it into the yard. Then he took his wife into his arms and hugged her tight, reaching out for me and together we held on tightly to each other. For the first time I accepted unequivocally that I was here to stay.

Settling In

Secret Journeys of the Soul

As the years rolled on by I became more absorbed into the physical and led the life of a normal child, still pretty fragile but never really at death's door again much to the delight of my grandparents. My ailments of childhood, the pain and the torment, dropped away. I no longer scanned those around me and although I knew that I was terribly different in my perceptions of the world, I was as most children are, brainwashed by those around me. The church school that I attended was most assiduous in this direction. I learned about a God I had never heard of and what I learned I did not like but accepted completely that which my elders and, I was assured, most definitely betters, drummed into me.

They did not however manage to remove the Father from my every waking thought and it was to Him I turned for help to get me through most every day. I could not be but afraid of this other God who was petty and picky and who saw my every deed and thought and who would punish me for my childish misconceptions. I seemed to spend my whole life trying to get it right and as one so often does when one tries too hard, getting it hopelessly wrong.

I still hadn't learned that others could not read my thoughts, could not therefore know my intentions as they went about in this solid, dense world. I on the other hand, knowing theirs, would be streets ahead in a conversation, albeit in telepathy and this could lead to much confusion. There was a time when I resorted back to telepathy, resulting in my hardly ever speaking, just looking at people when they spoke to

Secret Journeys of the Soul

me. For me this was quite normal and a much quicker way of communication but it caused much alarm in my home for a little time. They thought that I had lost the power of speech and were concerned that my earlier illnesses had left their toll on my brain. Then life rolled on again and I remembered to speak when I was spoken to but my mind to this day leaps ahead too often, chattering away whilst my tongue is stilled. Thoughts are so much more expressive than words and so often there is not a suitable word for that which I would convey.

By this time I was being taken to my parents home for small periods. I now had a younger sister, six years my junior who spent all her time with our parents. My mother had given birth to her at my grandparents house. I recall being awakened at 7 O'clock one morning with the exciting news that the baby had arrived.

During her pregnancy, my mother had plagued me with dire threats of being thrown under a bus when the new baby arrived. I presume she was under duress at the time. Not unnaturally at that time I believed her and I began to fret as the time for the birth drew near. I could no longer face food and my small mind was filled with horror every time a bus went down the street. My grandmother, ever alert to the feelings of others brought her attention to my condition. I recall my mother taking me into the parlour and questioning me as to why I would not eat. I explained to her that it was due to my impending demise, whereupon she smirked and said, "Don't be so silly." " After some thought she made me promise not to tell anyone what I had told her and

Secret Journeys of the Soul

in return she promised me that she wouldn't go ahead with her dreadful plans.

She then took me back into the living room and told everyone that I had just been silly and that she had sorted the matter out. Much relieved that I was not going to be thrown under a bus, I recovered my appetite and awaited the coming of the baby with much excitement. My mother had suggested that the baby would be the doll I never had and I had asked her for a black one, so on that morning I ran eagerly to a fireside chair and waited. The midwife duly arrived from the next room where my mother had given birth and placed the tiny bundle in my arms. Pulling back the shawl I gazed on the tiny form. "Oh" I wailed, "It's white." I looked up at the bewildered midwife. "Take it back," I cried. "I don't want a white one. My mummy said it was going to be black." The midwife's face was a picture. My family of course, put me in the doghouse for a week.

Despite my lack of schooling due to illness when very young, I managed to pass my eleven-plus and attended a convent run by nuns. The education was good but I was not terribly interested in most subjects. For a time I appeared to be normal again. It was here I discovered that nuns could and did lie which was an enormous shock and was the beginning of the end for me with the catholic religion. Then puberty arrived and once again I found myself quite often more at home in my astral body. So much so that sometimes when walking to school with my friends I would walk out of the physical as I was busy chatting away and I would hold

Secret Journeys of the Soul

my breath in despair until the physical caught up. I always felt that it was wrong to do this but it just happened and I would look aghast at my friends, waiting for their condemnation and disapproval but they never mentioned it and just carried on as if nothing had happened.

I didn't realise of course that they had not been aware of what had happened. Everything unnatural was so very natural to me. Even though I knew that those around me were not aware of spiritual matters to the same extent, it never really went into my consciousness, as it should have done. I would think about it as I did my homework. Why didn't they see me stepping out of my body? After all it is quite a big thing and quite unusual and they are spirit too. How could they not see? I would spell it out to myself...Everybody.. is.. spirit.. occupying.. a.. physical.. body. No matter how low the consciousness, that was a basic premise and that at least they should know instinctively if not intuitively. Whether it was my hormones that brought about this confusion with me or whether I became so lonely in my own knowledge, I cannot tell but I would spend hours agonising over the differences between me and them.

Another problem for me at this time was that of becoming very aware of people from other dimensions around me. I could feel them sitting next to me, hear their breathing and generally understood that I was never alone. This I didn't like. Seeing that I had to stay here and continue with my life on this plane, I couldn't see the point of forever being reminded that there were better places to be and a better life to be

Secret Journeys of the Soul

had elsewhere. It wasn't so much that they were visiting me as much as I had inadvertently opened the door so to speak into their world.

I tried telling my mother about these experiences but she told me not to be silly, as usual. In her opinion, there were things one spoke about and things one didn't. Other worlds, a bit like sex, were taboo, didn't exist and were figments of my imagination. This only served to make me feel even more isolated as I pulled the covers up tight about me in bed as these 'visitors' paid their nightly respects. Having had seven years without incident, spiritually speaking, makes one forgetful of other worlds as this one takes over, so feeling someone sitting on your bed was not conducive to a good night's sleep. After all I couldn't see them and this made me afraid as I remembered the usual ghost stories people had told. I used to pray like mad for help but the pressure on the bed would get worse. It was much later in life when I realised that the extra pressure was help at hand, a reassurance, if you like, that there wasn't a problem but at the time it was scary.

I never did discuss anything with my father. I disliked him as much as he appeared to dislike me and his life in general. Leaving the army had been the worst decision of his life, one from which he never truly recovered. He too had won medals for gallantry and trophies for shooting and life in a small town must have been dreadful after all the military action he had craved and participated in around the world. After brief periods of living with my parents I would return to my grandparents home with scarcely contained delight.

Secret Journeys of the Soul

As a teenager I began again to scan people. I would do it automatically, spontaneously and then I decided to practise more and more. When I was on buses, waiting for buses, walking down the road. I used it as a relief from boredom until it suddenly occurred to me that knowing more than I might otherwise do about people gave me an unfair advantage and somehow it was like an invasion of their privacy. When I realised that whilst my experiments were completely innocent, the whole idea of scanning could be seen as something unpleasant, I stopped. It had also become extremely boring, as most people's lives were pretty much the same.

The same themes were repeated. Lies, deceit, cheating, broken love affairs, suspicion, worry. But then I lived amongst people who were poor, many of whom had had little in the way of education, opportunity or luxury.

I was back now living with my grandparent's full time and these themes were not repeated in our large family. Little lies perhaps but deceit and cheating, no. My grandmother had always insisted that money was not the root of all evil. Lies were. 'You have to lie to do all the other bad things successfully.' she would say and she insisted we all lived by this dictate.

I believed people to have very small lives, little or no expectations, which I found very sad and so I gave up my addiction to scanning. There was never anything new, never anything earth shattering

Secret Journeys of the Soul

or amazingly uplifting. Individuals showed tremendous courage in adversity and I had nothing but admiration for those in the human race who keep on keeping on, but on the whole, life on this planet was remaining true to past form. About this time too, I began to become more aware of the needs of my physical body, of the role it had to play and how we had to co-exist or one of us would be very unhappy. I didn't work with my body at this time in the way I realised I had to do later, but I did take great physical care of it. On the basis Lives I have many - Bodies I have one I took a great interest in ensuring as far as I could that after a very dodgy start in this life, my body needed to be strong for the future. I didn't know why but I just went with the urge to become very fit. I had already played tennis and hockey at school and now that I was working I would walk for miles every Sunday with a local walkers club, spending every weekend in the beautiful Lake District.

Then I stumbled on a book about Yoga and Yogic breathing. This fascinated me as I had a particular condition which from time to time gave me a great deal of pain and nausea and for which medicine did not have an answer. I began to practise faithfully the exercises in the book for deep relaxation, rushing home from work to spend an hour or so in the privacy of my bedroom learning the art of this deep relaxation. After a couple of weeks this annoying condition occurred again and I put myself to the test. Day after day I tried to put into practise what I had learned so far. It was wonderful. Even though the pain was severe, my earlier concentrated practise was paying off. I was able to relax my body

Secret Journeys of the Soul

until one day I knew that I had come out of sync. with my physical body and was floating, sort of half in and half out but not totally out.

As this took place, I became aware of the change in what I was feeling in the physical body. The sensation of pain changed to that of colour, a dark grey colour in the region where the pain originated. As I continued, the colour changed to sound that in turn changed in timbre to a dull note that in turn faded away as I withdrew further from the physical. In this conscious state I was completely relaxed and happy. I had no intention of coming out of my body completely but would have allowed this to happen had it happened naturally.

The condition was to return again and again but each episode was better than the last until I lost the condition completely and I realised that I had been healed by this method of deep relaxation. The depth of relaxation had allowed my bodies to separate and realign and so I had inadvertently triggered off the healing mechanism within me. When I went nursing a couple of years later I learned that my condition had been muscle spasm and hormonal imbalance which had been corrected simply by relaxing the body in a deep and conscious way, always in control whilst nevertheless going with the flow. I was to remember this many years later when more serious conditions manifested and my understanding of self-healing was made clear to me.

At this time in my life I turned my attention towards a career. There was very little to choose from in my mind. Helping the sick, working with orphaned children. It was my ambition to run a children's

Secret Journeys of the Soul

home. To this end I would enter the nursing profession. Although I was to marry, unlike most women I never gave marriage more than a passing thought. Life for me was about work, about helping others, about making things happen for others, especially children who were handicapped or rejected. Surprisingly, I did not relate at that time to any parallel within myself. I just never considered any other future.

For a few years I lived with these aims in sight but events were to overtake me time and time again. Life seemed to get in the way and I like everyone else had to bow to the inevitable. Life on Earth. Good times, bad times. But I seemed to have to concentrate solely on my everyday lifestyle. Altering as it often did from year to year, the spiritual and the mystical gave way to the normal day to day existence the majority of us have to deal with. Marriage, divorce, children, work. I tended to believe that whatever had to be done would be and that I like everyone else would just have to get through it all as best I could. I had no intimation on a particular day in Spring that once again changes would take place in my life and the spiritual and the mystical would once more beckon.