

WE WANT TO LIVE! *Expanded and Revised in 2005*
by Aajonus Vonderplanitz

“Revolutionary! This is an exciting book. An important book.” Dr. Robert Atkins, M.D. Author of numerous best selling diet books

“...a revelation. It is one of the most impressive books I have ever read.” Rob Strauds, Health writer/editor

“...an impressive addition to any health and medicine reference book collection.” Wisconsin Bookwatch

“...fascinating...absolute dedication to finding answers... many, many peoples lives it will empower.” Leslie Kenton, Author of New Raw Energy; Ageless Aging

“This isn’t just about having disease and trying to heal, [but]...getting healthier. Marvelous! Scott Cluthe, KENR, Houston

Endorsements: Malibu Health & Rehabilitation Clinic, Monika Klein, B.H.Ec, C.N., Clinical Nutritionist, Member I.A.A.C.N., Dr. John Finnegan, N.D., Institute for Internal Healing, Kaumari Research Foundation, Dr. Gene Hummel, Leslie Kenton (Health researcher, writer, London), Dr. Stephen L. Sokolow

WE WANT TO LIVE!
Expanded and Revised in 2005
the PRIMAL DIET™

Through this remarkable but true story of Aajonus' battle to save his son from life-threatening injuries following an automobile accident, we learn how Aajonus healed himself of terminal cancers, diabetes, bursitis and psoriasis. We learn how thousands of his clients have healed themselves of hundreds of "incurable" diseases. All of those miracles were accomplished simply by eating foods prepared in specific ways and in specific combinations. Aajonus shares with us the overall, fundamental premises and practical guidelines that created those phenomenal results.

At last, all of the disappointments and despair that people have endured because of failed medical treatments, "miracle-cure" diets and expensive "magic-bullet" supplements and drug-therapies can be understood and set aside. The revolutionary information contained in this book, culled from over 40 years of medical and naturopathic experience and experimentation, brings new hope and inspiration to anyone who has ever suffered from disease or physical decline, or who wishes to increase their peace of mind, physical and mental vitality, endurance, athletic skills, and happiness.

This book includes a remedy section listing hundreds of diseases and ailments, with specific foods and combinations of foods that people have used to cure themselves. Listed is everything from beauty tips, the common cold and infant problems, to aging, muscular dystrophy, HIV and cancer. Most people who applied the principles of the Primal Diet to their lives reduced their medical bills by at least 90%. Many people eliminated their medical bills entirely. Imagine living a life you control, as well as being healthy and feeling great!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aajonus Vonderplanitz was a sickly and accident-prone child who also suffered autism that caused learning, attention and social disorders. At twelve he survived his first life-and-death situation from peritonitis that was misdiagnosed and treated as appendicitis. His health continued to decline throughout his adolescence. At twenty, he was diagnosed with blood and bone cancers and given less than six months to live. Medical therapies made him semi-invalid with three new “incurable” diseases, along with the medical death sentence of “three months at best”.

His struggle with diseases drove him to pursue the boundaries of health. He studied and explored every alternative: physical exercise, psychotherapy, positive-thinking, metaphysics, religion, dietary regimes, and vitamin, mineral and enzyme supplement therapies. He obtained substantial results from certain diets.

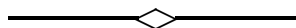
After his health improved significantly, he traveled for three years on a bicycle laden with his sleeping bag and four saddle bags containing books on health, physiology and anatomy. He adventured the North American continent, living outdoors while studying the diets and healing methods of various cultural groups and animals. He discovered a dietary approach that changed his life and all of his diseases completely reversed. He outlives his medical death sentence now by three decades, and enjoys excellent health.

Mr. Vonderplanitz is based in Malibu, California, USA, and advises people on nutrition all over the world. Disney's *Epcot TV Magazine* featured him in an episode entitled “You Are What You Eat” (1983), FOX-6 News featured him in “The Primal Diet” (2005), and *Ripley's Believe It Or Not* featured him in the television episode “No Fear of Bacteria” (2002). He fostered nutritional education on several TV and radio talk shows and children's programs (1979-2005). People all over the world seek his individualized counseling. In 2002, he developed a companion volume of raw-food recipes with extensive scientific support for the Primal Diet entitled, **The Recipe For Living Without Disease**.

WE WANT TO LIVE!

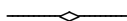
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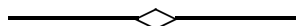
Volume One

Out of the Grips of Disease and Death
(the story)



Volume Two

Healthfully
(the facts)



Aajonus Vonderplanitz

CARNELIAN BAY CASTLE PRESS
Los Angeles

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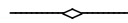
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DEDICATION

(In order of appearance in my life)

TO MOM, Dad, my brothers Donald, Douglas, David, my hundreds of relatives, especially Lanny Sims, to Ann Ergen, Claudia Fieglein, Ann Gablein, Jack Tepker, John Maloney, Mary Linder-Marshall, Margaret and William Linder, my son John Jeffrey, Steve and Elsie Sanico, Pauline Gerber, Steve Flanagan, Dore Freeman, Marvin Paige, Lurene Tuttle, Kathy Hill, Bruno Corigliano, Monica Lauren-Corueil, Terry Costa, Rení Rodriguez, Dr. Jim Rota, Louis Cangemi, Yomi Perry, Susan Stewart-Clark, Tony Plana, Myron Scheinhaus, Paul and Teresita Echaniz, my esteemed colleague Owanza di Mdina, Charles Berendt, Benjamin Stewart, Kathy Pattiz, Beatriz Cervantes, Laura Long, Mary Ivory, Véronique Bertier, Beth Duffy, all my clients throughout the many years, Kate Seitz and Debra Powell for their wonderful help editing this book so many times, Ruth Ross for editing this revision, and my dear friend Paul Kruhm President of Carnelian Bay Castle Press.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OWANZA'S knowledgeable and experimental contributions to diet over the years, and to the remedy section of this book, have enabled me to reach, affect and facilitate healing of many more people than I would have otherwise. Owanza thought of the simple food formula that alters coma. Not only is she wonderfully insightful, she has been one of the three most generous, kind and loving people I have known. My nutritional mentor Bruno Corigliano, and uncle Lanny Sims are the other two. Bruno and Lanny's examples showed me how to evolve to the extent that I primarily live free of anger, resentment and self-pity, except when drama is an element of teaching.

PROLOGUE

Three doctors declared that I would die at age twenty-one after I had received medical treatments for cancer. I began searching, experimenting and exploring other means to gain my health. I discovered that good health most often comes when one eats a diet consisting of foods that supply the most bioactive nutrients; they are mentioned throughout the following pages.

Since I was intent on sharing all that I learned, I became a nutritional counselor and learned more by helping others. The high point of gratification in my work in the health field is the saga that *We Want To Live; Volume One, Out of the Grips of Disease and Death* tells. It is the battle I waged when the doctors said that my son was on his deathbed.

WARNING / DISCLAIMER

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VOLUME

ONE

WE WANT TO LIVE!

the PRIMAL DIET™

Out Of The Grips Of Disease And Death

The story

Several names have been changed.

The efficacy of all of the dietary wisdom in this book is from experience, experimentation, trial and error and does not rely upon whether we chemically understand the phenomenon or not.

Although the author would like to, he does NOT imply or suggest that anyone interfere with medical procedure.

The Appendix contains biochemical, dietary and nutritional explanations that were too distracting to the story but they are important to those with inquiring minds. People have benefited the most by reading the story through to the end, and then reading the Appendix.

Friday, September 26th

"Hi, Mom," I say groggily. "Are you okay? We usually talk on Sundays."

I peer through the curtains above my bed. It's a clear early morning in Beverly Hills, California. I wonder what in the world - or in Cincinnati - happened to get Mom to call on day rates.

"Jeff was in an accident."

"How bad?"

"His car went into a ravine and he suffered severe brain damage. He's in a coma."

"No... I'll be on the next flight."

"The doctors say he won't live through another night," she hesitates. "There's no point in your coming...until it's over."

Why would Mom say such a thing? "If there's anything I can do I want to be there."

"Mary doesn't want you here."

"She actually said that?"

"She told me to tell you not to come."

"If Mary and I could have done what each other wanted we'd still be married. I'll call you as soon as I've booked a flight."

"Okay. We'll pick you up at the airport."

"Thank you. I love you."

"I love you," she replies sincerely and hangs up.

Oh, my God, I'm going to have to face the helplessness I felt when Jeff was an infant and I was seventeen. And the divorce with Mary at nineteen. I feel delirious.

I flip open my personal phone directory and punch in the numbers. The lines are busy. A recorded voice answers. I check my pulse rate. It's faster. Although my heart and mind seem a little frenzied, I notice my adrenals haven't triggered panic in my body. Is my body protecting me from the inevitable? Can't death just leave me alone?

I won't spend energy on that probability. Okay. Jeff will need lots of--

"This is Cyndi, may I help you?"

“Hi, Cyndi, what is your next flight leaving L.A.X. to Cincinnati? This is a life-and-death emergency.”

I wonder how corny that sounds and how often she’s heard that line.

“My son’s been in an accident.”

“I’m sorry,” she says timidly.

I hear her computer keys clicking away. I drift into memory.

Jeff was one month old. He had my blue eyes and my fairness when I was his age with many of Mary’s facial features. Mary sat in the rocker holding Jeff in her arms. Her thick, dark brown, wavy hair folded on to her shoulders. Her large brown eyes and full lips are flanked by high full cheek bones and jowls. Mary and Jeff rocked. He screamed. He pushed and twisted his face into the blouse covering Mary’s breast. His scream pressed his lungs completely void of air, creating a vacuum. Then he desperately sucked in air as if suffocating. He released another blood-curdling scream and then gasped for air. He screamed again and again. Grieved and frustrated, Mary and I didn’t know what to do for him.

“I’m still searching,” Cyndi’s voice rescues me.

But my thoughts keep churning. I remember Jeff screaming for hours, night after night. I turn my thoughts to life right after Jeff’s conception.

Like normal teenagers in love, Mary and I adored each other. She was a senior at Finneytown High and I was a junior (she was older than I). Our parents were understanding and supportive, which surprised me at the time. We married in another state and hid it from everybody because the school didn’t allow married or pregnant students. Mary did sit-ups, wore sweaters and blouses that hung to hide her pregnancy. She graduated with honors in her sixth month. Within four weeks after that her stomach bulged to the size of a basketball.

Jeff was born the first week of my senior year. Surprisingly, the school faculty changed policy for me. They encouraged me to attend as a part-time student, allowing me to take only the courses necessary to graduate so I could work and tend to my family. Very little in my life was happy until I met Mary more than two years before Jeff was born. All of a sudden, encouragement came from everywhere.

Margaret, Mary’s mother, took care of Jeff while I was in school and Mary was at work. Margaret was strong, fun-loving, attractive and had reddish-blond hair. She hated to be called a redhead. Why, I still don’t

know. After school I'd get Jeff from Margaret. Jeff and I went home to our apartment in a lower middle-class suburb at a very small business intersection. We lived above a "Family Billiards" hall and I remember being comforted by the happy noises of people playing.

After settling Jeff, I'd usually prepare dinner for the three of us. I'd gobble down my share and rush off to work the moment Mary walked in the door from work. She was a prized secretary for the electric company. I breaded and fried chicken and French fries in a short-order restaurant.

I got home from work between twelve and one in the morning. Mary was often asleep in the rocker with Jeff fussing or asleep in her arms. I'd take over, hold him in my arms and rock. On a rare occasion I did some homework while I rocked him. Sometimes we alternated in one-to two-hour shifts, rocking Jeff through the night.

Everybody except Margaret insisted we were spoiling him. Fear of spoiling a child was the mindset back then. So several times we let him cry in his crib. One time he screamed for six-and-a-half hours until we picked him up. We knew his pain was more than a need to be cuddled.

We discovered our baby had severe colic. We gave him baby aspirin. They made him worse when the effects wore off. The doctors prescribed every infant milk formula on the market. None worked. Everything the doctors said and did did not help him. I wish we had known then that if a mother is on a healthy diet, breast-feeding would have resolved the problem.

The doctors steered us away from breast-feeding. The consciousness seemed to be that breast-feeding was unsanitary, primitive and disgusting. Consequently Jeff suffered for twelve months. We suffered with him. It stopped for no apparent reason.¹

"The first available flight is 11 a.m. tomorrow," Cyndi's voice snaps me back.

"Who's going to Cincinnati in late September?!"

"You, sir," she quips.

I asked for that. "Please put me on your stand-by call list for all flights and book me on the first available, please. My name's Aajonus Vonderplanitz."

I spell it and Cyndi's keys clicking away takes me back to when Jeff

¹ See Appendix A, page 127.

was one year old. Mary was aloof. What was it about childbirth that robbed Mary of her ceaseless optimism, humor, joy of life and sensuality? That thought constantly perplexed me. I didn't understand that it was biological. Not knowing enough about anything, I thought it was merely psychological. I pressured her to desire me the way she had before. She couldn't. I said hurtful things to her. It made things worse. All the chores and responsibilities of family life didn't make any sense anymore. After work, I began drinking with work buddies until five or six in the morning.

During the days, I attended a breakthrough computer trade school. I got top grades in something other than art for the first time in my life. I began seeing one of the teachers after school. She was a single parent, divorced, eight years my senior. She was lonely for affection, too.

"Do you want to schedule a return flight?"

"Uh, yes. I have to be back next Wednesday late afternoon." What am I saying? Am I expecting a miracle in five days? I'll have to cancel my performance next Thursday. No. If I can't help Jeff I'll need the distraction.

"Okay, Mr. Vonderplanitz. We'll call you if a seat opens. You'll have about forty-five minutes to get to Los Angeles International Airport immediately after we call. So have your luggage ready. But for now your reservation going to Cincinnati is on flight____"

As I write down the information, I remember Jeff's first portrait-sitting. He was six months old. He sat on a cloth-covered table, clasping a small rubber ball between his chubby thighs. He laughed and giggled. The flash blinded him and he made a mean face. "Just like his father," Mary gibed. I was teasingly blamed for all of his "bad" behavior.

Jeff was a spirited, lively child once he got over colic. He was such a joy when he was feeling well. (But then, most everyone is.) When he got angry he would suck in his breath, puff himself up, turn red as a beet, clasp his fists at his sides and shake. "Just like his father," Margaret razzed. I enjoyed hearing the phrase, "Just like his father," although I never held my hands stiffly at my sides and shook.

Even Jeff's temper tantrums were cute, and ludicrous. We shared the same favorite word, ludicrous, and we gave it a clownish connotation. Actually, it was one of the few words he spoke. By the time he was

two, when either of us tripped we'd laugh and say, "That was sure ludicrous, were you born yesterday?" He had a viable excuse.

Everything was cheerfully ludicrous, except the change in Mary after childbirth. I had never seen Mary violent and now she was spanking Jeff with a flyswatter and yelling at me. Often, I couldn't blame her for yelling at me.

I deserted them. We divorced.

I thank Cyndi and hang up the phone. I begin planning for the battle. The enemy is huge, shrewd and powerful. I must put the enemy at bay so I can use my nutritional expertise to help Jeff heal. The enemy - Jeff's body's enemy - is the medical profession's concepts and methods.

I get up, get dressed, eat and drive to a health food store to get the survival supplies I know I won't find in stores outside of California.²

I reach for a six-pound jar of unheated honey and place it in the hand basket. I know the glucose water that they are pumping into Jeff intravenously has no nutrients for healing. I know that his body is depleting the nutrients within himself, trying to heal. I've experienced that unheated honey has the nutrients to promote healing. I reach for another jar and a woman approaches me.

"Do you have a tribe of sweet teeth?" she flirts (or am I flattering myself?).

She is definitely attractive. Her upper lip is slightly larger than the lower and quivers sensuously, unconsciously, when she's quiet and curls when she speaks. What am I thinking about?! "Just two. My son and I."

"Oh... Have you been married long?"

Boy, is she fishing. I reach for a third jar and smile, "I'm divorced."

"Storing up for the fall and winter?" she asks merrily.

"I eat a jar or two a month."

"Aren't you afraid you'll get diabetes and your teeth'll rot?" she gasps.

Her persistence is charming, relaxing. "If I were to eat heated honeys I'd have diabetes again and dentures," I say.

"Well, whenever I ate Uncooked Raw honey it imbalanced my blood

² See Appendix B, page 128.

sugar level. Like a roller coaster I was full of energy for an hour or two and then I was deep in depression or falling asleep,” she says argumentatively.

Is she a lawyer? I want to turn this back into a conversation. “My name is Aajonus. Pronounced like homogeneous without the hum.”

Caught off balance, she titters, “Aajonus? That’s unusual. I’m Linda.”

“That’s not.”

She finds it funnier than I do and laughs. She has a singer’s airy rich laugh that makes us relax a bit more.

“I buy only honeys that are labeled ‘Unheated’, or that say something like ‘We do not heat this honey in processing’. Honeys labeled ‘Raw’ or ‘Uncooked’ aren’t the same,” I clarify.

She furrows her brow and looks at me as if I were a simpleton. “What’s the difference?” she asks.

I think of the many internal and external wounds I’ve seen heal rapidly with application and large consumption of unheated honeys. And how miraculously unheated honeys stimulate digestion. “Okay, honeys labeled ‘Unheated’ can’t be heated over beehive temperature on a hot day - that’s 92.8° Fahrenheit. On hot days, bees fan the honey with their wings to keep the honey temperature below 92.8° F. In the body, 80-90% of unheated honey turns into enzymes for digestion, assimilation and utilization. Whereas, honeys that are labeled ‘Raw’ or ‘Uncooked’ can be heated to 160° which they do to thin the honey for quicker filtering and bottling for more profits. ‘Raw’ or ‘Uncooked’ honeys mainly turn into radical blood sugar. ‘Unheated’ is the key word with honey. You can eat as much unheated honey as you want, as long as you have a taste for it.”

“As one gets fatter and fatter,” she scoffs.

“That depends on what you eat and what the honey helps you digest and utilize. There is nothing wrong with being fat as long as you are healthy. But do I look fat?”

“Your metabolism is different,” she retorts.

“I used to get fat very easily and I would have to exercise four hours five days a week to stay as fit as I am now. I haven’t exercised in seven years, so I can’t take credit for my fitness. Except that I eat right for my body.”

She looks at my naturally developed body disbelievingly.

“Linda, I have to go. I’ll give you my card. I’ll be tied up for a couple of weeks.”

“Sounds like fun. Can I play, too?”

I must seem naïve because I’m turning red. I hand her my business card. She reads it and says, “Now I understand, you are a nutritionist.”

“Yes. I’ve enjoyed talking with you but I must go, Linda. Bye.”

“Bye...”

I walk over to the dairy section and remember that I’m supposed to speak at a group meeting tonight about my experience with cancer. I consider canceling as I place eight one-pound packages of unsalted certified raw butter in the basket. I decide to go to the meeting, so time will pass faster. The distraction could relieve some of my anxiety about not being able to get to Jeff sooner.

I glance over my shoulder and spot Linda watching me. As I walk past her she joins me.

“How much raw butter do you eat?”

I chuckle, “You don’t want to know.”

“Four tablespoons a day?”

“You asked for it. Eight to sixteen tablespoons a day.”

She gives me an are-you-a-pathological-liar look and starts to say something but I intercede. “Like unheated honey, although the labeling requirements are different, ‘Raw’ butter hasn’t been heated above a cow’s normal body temperature. Raw fat, like raw butter, cleanses, lubricates, protects and fuels the body easily. Whereas heated and pasteurized fat often store as cellulite or other hard-to-use or non-utilizable waxy fat.” I place the items on the checkout and pay. “Call me in a couple of weeks if you want to try my nutritional logic and see if it works for your body.”

“I think you are out of your mind,” she says utterly deadpan.

“Is that a compliment, Linda?”

Outside of the store, I punch in my voice-box number on the pay phone. It plays back a message, “Hi, sweetheart, I got your message about Jeff,” Beatriz’ voice says and pauses for the right words. “I’m sorry. Call me from Cincinnati and let me know how he is. I’ll miss you. I love you. Bye.”

I feel as if my muscles, like my thoughts, are stirred up. I can't sleep. I thank whoever invented flannel sheets. The softness feels comforting. The digital clock reads 1:02 a.m.

I rise and go to the kitchen. I pass by my packed luggage at the door. A tinge of fear rushes up my chest. The lonely luggage makes the unknown so foreboding.

I spread a slice of French bread with a 4 tablespoons of unsalted raw butter to calm me down while thoughts of Jeff keep coming.

It's been nine years since I've thought about Jeff this much. How little I know him. I left Mary for the second and last time a few months after Jeff's first birthday. For the next year, Jeff and I were together on Sundays, or for weekends.

I graduated from computer-programming trade school, and in September, two months after the divorce, I moved to Los Angeles to pursue a degree in architecture. I'll never forget the day before I left.

Jeff's second birthday was six days away. I had bought him a swing and slide set. Mary and Jeff were living with her parents in a two-bed-room house in a lower-middle-class neighborhood. Willy, Mary's father, and I were building the set in the backyard. Willy, or "Pawpaw" as Jeff called him, was about five-feet-four-inches tall with black hair receding on either side of his widow's peak. He was very shy, a gentle man. When he smiled with his large mouth, his head tilted shyly, playfully.

Jeff loved to swing and slide. He bounced, danced, laughed, shrieked and giggled around us because he couldn't wait for Willy and me to finish building the swing. Finally, when it was built, Willy, Margaret and I stood watching Mary swing Jeff. She pushed him too hard once and Jeff swung too high. His eyes opened wide, his arms stiffened, his hands gripped the chains tighter and his mouth made a donut shape. He lost his breath. When he swung back down he giggled, relieved he'd made it okay. He dragged his feet enough to slow himself down and took a deep breath.

"I guess that was too high for you, huh boogie?" Mary said.

Jeff nodded dramatically. He swung forward again and his mouth

took on the donut shape fearing that he might sail too high. He didn't and he laughed. Mary did too. We all laughed. Mary and Jeff had similar mouths and they had the largest smiles, after Willy's. Once again I wanted to ask Mary to come with me to California but I knew she'd refuse. No one could guess which way I wanted things from one week to the next, especially me.

It came time to say good-byes and I stooped down to Jeff. "You're the man of the house now. You take care of Mommy, okay?"

"You be back, Daddy. Soon." He smiled real big.

"No, sweetheart, Daddy's going to the other side of the world, sort of. I'll only be able to see you about every six months or so. I'm going away to school in California."

He cried. I cried. Even Margaret cried. We all hugged and I left.

I didn't return for two years.

I rise from the dining table and return to the kitchen. I have a taste for something sweet. I get some unheated honey, fresh strawberries and cream to help my digestion and raise my blood sugar level to a happy balance. I take a drink of the raw cream, dip a strawberry in the honey and take a bite. I remember that Jeff and I had been together on only four separate occasions since the swing set and we rarely spoke on the phone.

I recall that the first of the four occasions was in August. Jeff was four. I had a form of leukemia called multiple myeloma (cancer of bone and blood).

I had already undergone surgery for an ulcer. Three months later I received radiation therapy because the scar was keloidal.³ Four months after radiation I was diagnosed with leukemia. I was told that I would die by Christmas.

I was supposed to have begun chemotherapy that August. I postponed it until September because my family was having a reunion. I didn't want them to know about my illness because: back then most people were afraid that somehow cancer was catching like the Black Plague; Mom had a weak heart and had suffered a heart attack when I was ten or eleven (telling her I was dying could have killed her); and men in my family were expected to be strong and tough. Because I had always

³ A keloid is an overgrowth of a scar, that is a fibrous tumor forming hard, irregular excrescence upon the skin.

been sickly, I put on a tough front.

The clan gathered in Cincinnati from all over the continental United States. I thought I was seeing everyone for the last time. I hid the radiation therapy burns under my clothes.

As I was driving to get Jeff to bring him to the reunion, I noticed a tall dark-haired father holding the hand of his golden-haired son. They walked along the sidewalk. Drops of joy filled my eyes because I would soon be holding Jeff's hand.

The father was a giant compared to his son but gentle. He carefully moved at the pace of the boy's little steps. I held back more tears. I thought red eyes would look unattractive and immature to Mary.

I arrived at the large apartment complex, parked and walked to Mary's apartment. She greeted me courteously. We both felt awkward. I was especially uncomfortable because I hadn't had enough time to adjust to the fact that Mary had remarried over a year ago. Mom wanted to protect me and had told me only a week ago. I blushed, facing Mary and thinking that several months ago I had asked her to move to Los Angeles so we could be together. Mary didn't tell me then she had remarried. I hid the pain, but, oh, God, I was wounded.

"Jeff'll be here any minute. He and Ben went for a walk," Mary said.

The door opened behind me and in walked the gentle giant and the golden-haired boy, Jeff.

"This is Ben," Mary smiled proudly introducing her husband, and Jeff's new father.

My heart sunk.

Ben must have been six-foot-four inches, dark, rugged-looking and very handsome. I felt like drab wallpaper.

Ben immediately let his head drop shyly, painfully. He left the room without a word. I could see the fear and hurt he felt with me coming to take Jeff for the day. Jeff called him Dad now. My presence was changing all of that. I felt like a schmuck.

"Do you remember him?" Mary asked Jeff as I crouched down to greet him.

Jeff's face winced as he tried to remember but didn't. I was crushed.

"Here is a change of shirt in case he makes a mess," Mary jested to break the awkward moment.

"No bag with diapers and bottles and all," I said playfully. I tried to

appear unaffected.

“Yes, it’s been a long time,” she said somewhat scolding me.

But I could see she was relieved that Jeff didn’t remember me. In my mind I could hear her telling Ben as soon as we walked out the door, “See? Jeff didn’t even remember him.” And knowing that Jeff’s not-remembering me was going to mean some solace to Ben, gave me some solace.

At the reunion, I set Jeff free to play with several cousins, aunts and uncles. Then, when I thought I was emotionally detached enough, I played with him. We tossed a ball and frisbee. I tickled him. We giggled. I swung him around and laughed, until we were exhausted. It was time to drive him home but he wanted to stay. That made it a great day.

We parked in the lot outside Mary and Ben’s apartment. Jeff wanted to get out with me on the driver’s side. Just as he was about to put his arms around my neck for me to lift him, he said, “You helped Pawpaw put up my swing!” A wave of joy passed through me. He hugged me very tightly.

“It appears Jeff’s head went partially through the driver’s side of the windshield when his car flew down the ravine and hit a tree. The car spun and jolted him back inside. The car hit another tree and Jeff’s head went through the passenger’s side of the windshield. The car spun and hit the ground at the rear end, jolting him back into the front seat. Finally the car smashed into another tree on the passenger’s side. His head went completely through the passenger’s door window. His body was found draped over the car door,” Mom’s words echo in my head.

I lie down on the still warm flannel sheets. Will I be as unable to help Jeff as I was when he was an infant? Will I become hostile wanting to help but not knowing how? Will I be able to confront the medical professionals who’ll think I’m a fanatic? Jeff is an accident victim! I haven’t dealt with any serious accident victims. Yet, healing is healing, I remind myself. I know what the body needs to heal itself.



I'm in a tornado like Dorothy in "The Wizard Of Oz." Four doctors, who are circling around me, direct me to go with them. I sense I'll meet death. Their voices sound like the ringing of only one giant gong. The deep-echoing sound emanates from all four of their mouths, quadraphonically. It makes my heart pound until I think it'll burst from my chest. It's odd that the ringing doesn't disturb my ears and head, only my heart.

I refuse to go with the doctors. Suddenly they all wilt and die. I am happy I didn't go with them. But the ringing continues and my heart pounds. I become aware that the phone is ringing and I reach for it. I anticipate that the airline has an earlier flight. Then I realize it is already morning.

I lift the receiver. I remember my dream and the fear of death. I dread what the voice will say.

"Hello."

"This is your mother."

"Hi," my voice cracks.

"It's pouring here and I thought you should bring your boots and a raincoat. I have lots of umbrellas if you need one."

"Please! Mom, don't greet me with, 'This is your mother' ", I want to say. She seemed apprehensive, as if she were going to tell me Jeff is dead. It scared me! I take a deep breath and calm down.

I recall her umbrellas being flowered, bright and feminine. "Thanks, Mom, I'll bring a coat and my own umbrella." I take another deep breath, "Have you seen Jeff at all?"

"I'm waiting until you get here and we'll all go together. I called the hospital and talked with the head nurse. She said the doctors all agree his signs are worsening. Too much water has collected in his brain and there's no hope he'll pull through with this kind of brain damage." She takes a breath, "I just want you to be prepared. We'll see you this afternoon."

We say good-bye.

I have avoided Jeff since he was two-years-old. I have been afraid of getting attached and losing him again. Have I lost all chance to get to know him?

The alarm goes off and jolts me back to the physical world. I rise and go to the couch. I stretch and lean my head against the arm. I cross my feet tightly. I hug a pillow.

Okay, okay. Mom's a nurse. Like most nurses what she knows is what the doctors know. Whether from illness or injury, medical science believes that virus and germs, like bacteria cause disease. That is their "germ theory". They believe that germs are enemies of healing.

The standard approach is to attack virus and germs (bacteria and other microbes) with medical drugs and poisons to stop them. These drugs simultaneously attack, destroy and deteriorate the body. Drugs are like bombs, they most often kill, cripple, harm or destroy everything within their influence. They cause subtle or obvious mutations. The least harm that they do is create imbalances.

Medical science ignores that bacteria inspires healing and that drugs kill bacteria, and therefore, that drugs prevent healing.⁴

My approach is that bacteria, yeast, mold and virus are all part of a natural process for detoxification. Bacteria, yeast, mold and virus decompose body obstructions, such as dead or weak cells and tissue. When the body has too many obstructions, it has disease. The body encourages the detoxification process so it can cleanse itself of accumulated wastes that cause weaknesses, or damaged tissue in cases of injury. They also dissolve and eliminate foreign substances, like rust from taking iron supplements. That is, if the body is fed the proper nutrients during and after the detoxification processes.

For example, colds and flu are like changing the oil and flushing a car's radiator. If the body is allowed to take its course with colds and flu several times a year, or whenever necessary, an increase in health is the natural result. That is, if at the same time one feeds his or her body good nutrients. For instance, oranges and/or bananas blended with raw eggs, raw dairy fats and unheated honey; a smoothie. However, if these cleansing and renewing processes are interfered with or stopped by using medication, the body advances faster toward deterioration, aging and disease. I remind myself that instead of attacking the body, I

⁴ See Appendix C, page 129.

nurture it.

I feel comforted that Jeff's doctors' prognosis isn't based on what I know. And that Jeff is still alive. I will work with Jeff's body to cleanse the dead and damaged tissues, and to regenerate new cells to replace them.

I am sitting at a window seat not far from first-class on this early morning flight to Cincinnati. I am facing the partition wall that separates the classes. It reminds me for a moment of the wailing wall in Israel. I feel a little claustrophobic. Will I celebrate life? Or will I be wailing for the dead? I have to stop thinking like that.

I feel excited by the gravitational pull as we climb. I notice outside the portal window that the smog isn't too bad on this golden sunlit Los Angeles morning. With amusement, I take it as a good omen. We loop over the Pacific Ocean. The plane levels off in the direction of our destination. The flight attendants push their carts down the aisles.

It's Saturday, four days from October, a time that marks a measurable decline of tourists in Los Angeles. The thought comes that I am a tourist visiting Earth. Whenever I talk to someone who doesn't know me about my view on health and my life-style, I'm considered bonkers.

I look around me and I see so much bodily suffering. I feel compassion for the people I see who aren't happy because they lack health. An unhappy-looking woman wheezes, then swallows three pills. At least seven people are already drinking or being served alcohol.

I recall when years ago I drank to relax and feel good. I couldn't go to sleep at night without drinking a bottle of bourbon or gin.

I was nineteen years old and had been living in Los Angeles six months. I was making good money. I yearned for Mary and Jeff, even though I knew I was too emotionally distorted to make family life work to anyone's benefit. So I partied a lot and enjoyed freedom from all responsibilities except work and child support. I wouldn't admit alcohol was affecting my work and studies and I ignored the symptoms that it was hurting my body. It relaxed my memories and guilt.

I think about Jeff being in the hospital and I recall my advent into cancer. It was a Sunday night in March, one month from my twentieth birthday. I had just returned from a weekend in Tijuana, Mexico, with

friends. I was dizzy from drink. I stood over my toilet to urinate. I became dizzy and nauseous. As I collapsed to my knees I whacked my penis on the cold porcelain (I remember I had been accident prone as a child). A surge from my stomach curled my body and put my face in the toilet. Blood trailed with the vomit.

The doctor pointed to a very dark spot on my X-ray, "It's probably only an ulcer. You're too young and strong to have cancer."

"Don't let looks fool you. How do we find out?"

"It's an ulcer," he decided, "and we'll treat it."

After six months of drinking bottle after bottle of Maalox, I decided I should have stock in pharmaceuticals. Instead of being addicted to alcohol I was addicted to chalky Maalox. Maalox didn't have the good taste and didn't give me the feeling that alcohol did. I was sure that if I died a chalk factory would make a fortune with my remains.

In November, I was looking upward from an operating table. The ceiling was blurred and I was becoming unconscious from anesthetic, going into surgery to remedy my stomach ulcer. After "recovering enough" from surgery (the doctors had said), I received radiation therapy for five or six...or was it ten weeks. (My memory went into a slump during my year of cancer therapies and has never fully recovered.)

After returning from the August family reunion, I underwent chemotherapy for leukemia for my blood and bone cancers. With each chemo session I got sicker. Finally, after three months of the treatments I wouldn't tolerate it. That was eighteen years ago. I was only twenty-one but I remember as if it were yesterday.

"The cancer's not responding to the chemotherapy either. We'll try again in three weeks," Dr. Goldman said matter-of-factly.

"Doctor, I seem to be missing the point here. Let's retrace what's happened to me. I had a stomach ulcer. I had surgery to correct it. As a result of the surgery, I haven't been able to digest anything very well. Food seems to just sit in my digestive tract. I have lost my sexual drive. If I happen to have an orgasm it can be extremely painful. How in the world was my penis effected by stomach surgery?"

"I don't know," he said.

I thought for a moment and then continued, "I have terrible acne (the one common problem I have never had before). My waist line has gone from twenty-eight to thirty-four inches. And I have redeveloped very

painful muscle spasms around my heart.

“Then I had radiation therapy to stop the keloidal tissue from growing. As a result of the radiation, I have burns that are mainly scar tissue. My spine is cauterized and I can barely turn to either side and I am always painful. I now have psoriasis and bursitis. I have inflamed, sore and bleeding gums. I have come down with chronic weakness, exhaustion and joint pains. I couldn’t, and still can’t even lift a large dictionary with my right arm because my shoulder and elbow ache so badly. My knees ache, too. They are always cold and numb--”

“We’ll continue the treatments because there’s always a chance we can stop the cancer from doing any more damage,” he said.

“Please, listen, I’m leading to something. Then I was diagnosed with cancer of the blood and bones. I am receiving chemotherapy. As a result, I’m as pale as a ghost. I vomit no matter what I try to eat. I can’t be away from a toilet for five minutes without a diaper. I’m bloated from head to toe. My acne is so bad that a film-director friend described my face as looking like raw hamburger. I have only a few sparse patches of hair and it’s graying like I’m an old man. My teeth are rotting. My diabetes is worse. Homicidal and suicidal thoughts plague me--”

“Your anxiety and anger are side effects of the chemotherapy. It’s normal,” he interjects.

“Normal? Yesterday, I heard one of the biology professors say that radiation, especially radiation therapy, transforms certain body substances into toxins that are cancer-causing. Why would you treat keloidal tissue with a treatment that causes cancer?”

“It’s like fighting fire with fire,” he said smiling.

“Isn’t that like burning down the forest to save the forest?”

“There is no other way to stop the formation of keloidal tissue or cancer. Disease is not nice, you can’t treat it nicely,” he argued.

“I also heard the professor say that for every one cancer cell that chemotherapy kills, at least one billion healthy cells are killed. I thought about that statistic and derived this analogy: If four humans were declared cancerous to the human race, the medical profession would be willing to kill four billion people - the entire population on Earth - in order to destroy only three or four individuals. That’s an extreme and barbaric perspective, don’t you think?”

"I'm trying to give you more time to live," he said, annoyed.

"Doctor, as a result, I have cancer. I didn't have cancer before receiving the cancer-causing therapies. I merely had an ulcer. I feel like the walking dead. Food doesn't taste good. Nothing pleases me anymore. Why didn't you tell me my quality of life and disposition would be miserable; that I'd be a semi-invalid as a side effect of the treatments? Why didn't you stress that the side effects would be a hundred times worse than cancer when you frightened me into taking your therapies? And now I'm going to die anyway."

"I'm sorry. It isn't possible to predict how anyone will react," he said belligerently.

"That doesn't make sense. Yesterday I studied the side effects in the Physician's Desk Reference and books on radiation research. All of mine and a hundred more side effects are listed. You never showed me any list. And the Physicians Desk Reference is right there on your shelf. Do you admit that the radiation treatment for keloidal tissue gave me blood and bone cancer?"

"Look, there's still a small chance that your cancer will respond to the chemotherapy."

"Did you hear what I just said?"

"I know how you must feel," he said.

Finally I realized that medical methods are barbaric. Surgery is butchering. Radiation is burning. Chemotherapy is poisoning. Why didn't it dawn on me before?

"Doctor, have you ever been cut and burned and poisoned to help you get well from cancer?"

"No."

I threatened to sue because the doctors didn't tell me that the therapies would kill much more of me than would any cancer. I would have taken my chances with cancer. Several attorneys said the doctors would all testify that I was dying anyway and that I had signed a release. How can they get away with that?! I wondered.

One month later, I discovered several successful alternative methods for healing cancer. All of them were pleasant by comparison. But because the doctors had said all the alternatives were hoaxes, I hadn't bothered to investigate them.

Education, religion, the media and government taught me to revere

doctors. The doctors could deceive and frighten me, slowly and painfully kill me, get paid handsomely for it and go to heaven for “good” intent. It didn’t make any sense.

Because I was left disabled, I couldn’t afford child support. Ben adopted Jeff.

“Please fasten your seat belts. We are beginning our descent to Cincinnati Airport. Thank you for joining us and we hope___”

I ignore the pilot as I look over the rain-glistening, rich green landscape of Kentucky. I wonder why it is called the Greater Cincinnati Airport when it’s across the river at Stringtown, Kentucky. I suppose that if it were named the Stringtown Airport no one would ever fly there.

The sun emerges through the passing rain clouds.

I’m so close to Jeff, a tingling rushes over my heart and into my spine.



Saturday afternoon, September 27th

I see Mom and Dad smiling, standing just beyond the crowd as I follow the procession through the terminal gate. Ever since Mom and Dad stopped worrying and began trusting me to make the right decisions for myself, I have been relaxed and happy to see them.

I’m surprised at how much they have aged since I saw them two years ago. Or does it seem more so because most of the people I see regularly are more or less on my type of diet? Raw diets slow down the normal aging process or reverse it altogether. (Gad, I wonder, would that have sounded pompous to anyone who hadn’t experienced it?)

Or do Mom and Dad look older because I have been reliving my past and remembering them much younger?

Dad looks - and always has looked - inherently physically stronger

than Mom. I imagine him as a child on the dairy farm where he grew healthfully with fresh food, raw dairy products and hard work. He is definitely healthier than his father, who was raised in Brooklyn in the mid 1800's when it was difficult to get fresh foods in large cities. Grandfather suffered crippling arthritis and strokes, and died in his sixties.

Amazingly, Mom's wearing slacks. This is the first time she's greeted me informally at an airport. I'm delighted she feels that relaxed. Looking into her eyes, I realize she has always had a stronger balanced will and more self-esteem than Dad. I deduce that's because, as a girl, she successfully raised six of her twelve brothers and sisters while Viola, her mother, tended their drugstore where Mom's father was the pharmacist.

Mom and I embrace and her hand automatically pats my back. I recall being an infant receiving that caring touch. Her perfume hides the nice smell of her body that I remember loving as an infant. Her salt-and-pepper Orphan Annie hair tickles the side of my face and I giggle. The hug ends and I become an adult again, instantly.

I turn to Dad and see that his wavy gray hair still has a trace of black remaining. Apart from his large stomach he looks fitter than most of his peers. We hug and his squeeze feels encouraging, different from when I was a child. But, then, I can't remember him hugging me after I was three. I was probably somewhat of an embarrassment to him. I think the first time he was unforgettably impressed with me was six years ago. He watched me give an eight-hour seminar on nutrition.

As we drive by downtown Cincinnati nothing looks familiar to me. I try to keep my mind from anxious thoughts about Jeff. I notice autumn settling in. The leaves are turning.

Ten miles farther, we pass the exit that would have taken us to Finneytown. I lived there from ages seven through eighteen.

I remember how grueling the cold weather was on me here. Like a hibernating bear, I would have slept through it if I could have. When I got a cold or flu, it lasted one to three months. Daily, I would fill two to five handkerchiefs until they were sopping wet. They made my pockets wet and me colder.

I realize how much I enjoy cold weather now that I am healthy. And when I get a cold or flu, it lasts only thirty minutes to three days.

"Is there a health food store on the way to the hospital?" I ask. "I'd like to buy some eggs, papayas and bananas."

"I don't know if they carry eggs," Mom says apologetically.

"Could we stop and see, please?"

"Sure," Dad encourages.

We do. They have eggs and the fruit I need.

Mom points to Mercy Hospital. It's a small modern four-story building alone near the top of a green rolling hill. We pull into the parking lot. In a matter of moments we will be facing Jeff. I seem to be ready for the battle ahead. Surprisingly, I feel calm and strong. Maybe it is my years. Also, because I no longer see doctors as my enemy. Doctors have not had power over my mind and body for one and a half decades. But they see Jeff's body as a battle ground. They are attacking it. I will defend him.

It dawns on me that Jeff is Mom and Dad's first grandchild. I look at them and they look rigid, like foot soldiers wearing armor. They are protecting their feelings. I wonder if my wisdom and strength are enough to protect mine.

I leave my blender and food in the car and we walk toward the hospital. The smell of wet grass and drying pavement remind me of the damp day I entered a hospital for my first traumatic stay. A chill passes through me.

It was early spring, the week before my twelfth birthday. I had had a near fatal reaction to my final polio vaccine.⁵ The vaccine caused an acute intestinal infection, "deadly" peritonitis. The doctors misdiagnosed my condition as appendicitis. I underwent emergency surgery. The doctors found my appendix normal. They removed it anyway. "In case it would cause you problems in the future," the doctor said.

Now was the third night after my appendectomy. The doctors hadn't properly diagnosed my problem. They never did. I still had fevers of 104-106°. They packed me in ice - an agonizing process - to bring down the fever and prevent brain damage. I was in tremendous pain from the shots I received every three hours for infection or pain. Already I had had eight shots in each arm, seven high in the left gluteus maximus and

⁵ See Appendix D, page 132.

eight high in the right.

I was sore on all sides. My front had surgery soreness and peritoneal pain. My left, right and back sides had the injection soreness. I wasn't able to lie on any side without severe pain. I couldn't sleep more than fifteen minutes before the pained area exceeded the painkiller's influence. I had to turn onto another side. My sleep was irregular and sparse. There was no escaping pain or the hospital.

It was 10 p.m. when the nurse entered with her tray and needle. She rolled me on to my right side. It hurt and I screamed. I pleaded for her not to inject me again.

"It's for your own good," she preached and scolded.

I watched the needle coming toward my bottom. I used every measure of energy I had to turn and knock the syringe out of her hand. The syringe hurled through space twisting and turning as if in slow motion. In my imagination I heard a wonderful crescendo of music. The nurse lifted the syringe, wiped the floor and left. I fell asleep only slightly more relaxed.

In deep sleep my hip began to burn and cramp. I remember thinking, I am not sleeping on my back, nor on that hip, why is there that much pain? The pain increased.

I woke and felt the last fluid of an injection entering my hip. I cried, "The medicines aren't working! You're killing me! You're making the pain worse and worse." The nurse gave me a disbelieving smile. She proudly put the needle back on the tray. I remember how amazed I was that this Florence Nightingale could be so proud of her insensitivity and ignorance.

"Have a nice night," the nurse said and walked out.

If I had had the strength at that moment to kill her, I probably would have. I wanted to. But instead I lay there crippled by pain. I cried for two and a half hours. I fell unconscious from pain.

In the morning I gave the doctors and nurses such a conniption that they didn't give me any more medication. Consequently, I got the sleep I needed. I faked being well enough for 24 hours. They let me go home the next morning.

Mom, Dad and I reach the elevator. It opens as if waiting for us. We enter and Mom pushes the third-floor button. We don't look at each other or say anything as it ascends. With the motion of the elevator I

drift back into my experience in the hospital when I was twelve.

An intern stood towering over me. His manner was impatient and gruff. We had gotten off to a bad start two days earlier. He had asked if I had been farting. Since my puritan upbringing had taught me that the word fart was taboo, I was shocked to hear it come from a doctor. I stuttered and without judgment I asked if he meant did I pass gas. He thought I was a snob and turned malicious. I was afraid to try and rectify the misunderstanding because of autism and my experience that doing so merely compounded resentment.

“Sit up,” he ordered like a sergeant.

I moaned in pain as I sat up very slowly.

“Don’t pull that sympathy trick on me. I’ve seen too many appendectomies. I know the pain doesn’t last more than a day and a half after surgery. You’ve been pulling this for four days now.”

He pushed hard on my lower abdomen. I screamed in pain.

He smiled and said, “Look. Your buddy over here came in two days after you. He was up and running around the day after his appendectomy. He doesn’t scream when I push on his stomach. And he’s going home today too.”

“I can’t help it, it hurts. Even when I move.”

It only made him angrier. He took my right arm which had the I.V. needle inserted in it. He gently pulled one end of each of the four strips of tape that held the needle in my arm. He took firm grip on those ends, looked me in the eyes, smiled, and ripped the tape from my arm. The roundness of the needle pulled my flesh until the force tore my skin. I cried.

“You act like a girl,” he said.

I intuitively knew he wouldn’t hurt me more, so I continued crying to release the pain and frustration while he put gauze and tape over the bleeding gouge to stop it. Two hours later I was out of the hospital and on my way home.

The elevator stopping sends a wave through my stomach. We step from the elevator and Mom leads the way toward Jeff. I feel nauseous. My heart misses a beat and then speeds up, pounding.

The halls are empty, except for a couple of staff personnel. We pass many doors. Only a few patients have visitors. The patients are all connected to machines. Of course this wing is eerie, I realize, this is

intensive care, numb skull.

“Numb skull”? I haven’t used that term in ages. Numb skull was something my parents called me. And probably what their parents called them. It never did help my self-esteem. Strange how old patterns surface when I’m back here.

Mom stops at room 317. Jeff is steps away. For the first time I visualize his cuts and bruises. I see him thrust and banged around inside the car. My adrenaline rushes. My heart pounds like a great symphonic drum sounding the battle charge. I take a slow deep breath and enter the room after Mom. I wonder if it would have been polite to enter before her.

We pass through a small dressing room-like foyer. It has a large picture window fixed with lavender Venetian mini-blinds. This is the room where loved ones wait and watch while emergency personnel work. This will be my supply room. On the wall is a locked medicine compartment. There is a counter and sink where I can put my blender to make food formulas for Jeff when he recovers from the coma. Am I deluding myself?

I see the end of the bed, the shape of Jeff’s feet and legs under the covers. My blood rushes faster as the drumming of my heart pounds harder, louder and faster.

I see Jeff’s arms and hands taped to boards so he can’t bend them. Tubes run everywhere. A catheter empties his urine into a plastic container. An I.V. drips sugar water and chemicals into his right forearm.

I feel queasy. I want to stop for a moment to settle down. I keep trooping behind Mom. I remember Jeff’s face from the last time I saw him when he was eighteen. His smile was big and his complexion ruddy.

The image disappears when I see two machines monitoring his body. Mary stands on one side of the bed, at the head, facing me. A nurse stands opposite her, obstructing my view of Jeff’s face. They lean over him.

Now I see his chin. His mouth gapes open. His lips are gray-purple. Oh, my God, he looks dead. Oxygen tubes are strapped to his head and up the nostrils. His eyes are closed and recessed in unconsciousness. His skin looks waxy, ashen except where tubes enter his body, irritating him. Cuts spot his face. A long cut streaks his forehead. Another parts an eyebrow. The abrasions from the plunges through glass are swollen

and inflamed.

I take it all in for a minute. I use positive thoughts to settle myself. I think: Jeff's not missing part of his head, brain or limbs. I'm thankful for that. My heart continues to drum frantically. I wish other instruments would join in so no one would hear it. It could expose my sensitivity. I want to look totally in control. The enemy will know that I'm not as strong as I want to be.

"Jeff! Wake up, Jeff! You've been asleep for six days now, wake up. Your mother wants to talk to you," the nurse shouts as if Jeff were deaf.

I guess she wants to shock him from his coma. Okay, I guess, if it works. But it doesn't. Jeff's head seems to roll slightly as if he were trying to tell her that her shouting hurts. Or is that my wishful thinking?

"Six days?" I whisper to Mom.

"Mary didn't call me until the night before I called you. You weren't home and I didn't want to leave that message on your answering machine," she says firmly.

"Why did she wait to call you?" I ask with a trace of anger. Fortunately, Mom does not take it personally.

"She figured there was nothing we could do. When they told her Jeff was definitely going to die, she called."

I wonder why Mary still hates me after twenty years.

"Jeff! Wake up!" screams the nurse.

He gives no response. I sense his coma is partially from medication. I know the shouting must hurt Jeff's ears. It hurts my ears and I'm eight feet away. I want to grab the nurse and scream in her ear to stop it. I feel helpless.

"Jeff! It's Mom. Wake up," Mary mimics the nurse but not nearly as loudly.

I look at Mary. She would not be considered cover-girl material but she still looks beautiful to me. She wears jeans and a plaid blouse. I realize I'm still attracted to her. I see she is strong-willed like Mom and compassionate.

"Hi, Mary," I say gently.

She gazes a moment, gropes and finally wiels to our presence. She turns and looks over at Mom and says, "Hi, Doris," and then to Dad,

“Josef.”

Finally, she manages to look straight into my blue eyes.

“Hi, Dick.”

Oh, that nickname. All the reasons I changed to a Greece-Roman-sounding first name that I liked, flood my head. No matter how “Dick” was said to me, the innuendo was prevalent. It was like wearing a bright name tag with “scum” printed on it. My brothers, classmates, and some teachers often used it to patronize me.

“As you can see, Jeff isn’t with us,” Mary says bluntly.

I see the strain in her face and body. I want to hug and comfort her but that is out of the question. Instead, empathic tears fill my eyes. Seventeen years passed before I stopped dreaming about her.

Mary turns to Jeff. “Dick is here to see you. Wake up, boy,” she says, trying to humor and ease her new tension because of my presence.

Oh, geezus, I’m going to break down.

“Jeff. Jeff, it’s Aajonus,” I say softly. My voice cracks.

He doesn’t move.

“May I see his charts, please,” I politely ask the nurse.

She is stunned and then derisive, “Are you a visiting doctor?”

Mary chortles and jokes, “No. He’s from Los Angeleees, California.”

She gives it the sneering tone that she gave the nickname Dick.

The nurse chuckles, then settles, confused.

“This is Jeff’s other father,” Mary explains.

The nurse and I introduce ourselves.

“When is the soonest I can see Jeff’s X-rays?” I ask kindly.

“You’ll have to speak to one of his neurologists.”

“How many does he have?”

“Four.”

“Lead me to one of them.”

“Dr. Braisley just left the floor and none of the others are expected until morning.”

“Can we talk in the hall a minute, please?”

She scrutinizes my patient but determined stare. She realizes I could be trouble. She turns and we walk into the hall.

“Debra, I’m not here to make your job difficult. I’m here because my son is dying. I want to do everything I can to help him live.”

“Are you a physician?”

My inclination is to mimic her patronizing attitude but that wouldn’t be constructive, “I’m a nutritional counselor. And I’m Jeff’s biological father. I have the right to see all of his records upon request. Would you be kind enough to make that as easy and as soon as possible? Please?”

“I can’t do that. One of his doctors has to, and I don’t know if Dr. Braisley is still on rounds,” she says in a friendlier tone. “You’ll have to wait until morning. Okay?”

“Would you give me his number, please? I’ll have his answering service page him and have him call me here.”

“I’ll call his service,” she relinquishes.

“One more thing? When he calls and you tell him my request, if he refuses please tell him I would like to speak with him. Will you do that for me and my son? Please?”

She relaxes, shrugs and snickers, “Okay, sir.”

“Thank you. And would you pass the word to all the doctors and nurses that Jeff’s biological father is here, that I will be taking an active part in his recovery?”

She is slightly impressed and amused but her reaction says she thinks my ego is larger than my brain. There are times when I would agree, but ego has nothing to do with this.

“The doctors all agree that Jeff isn’t going to--” Compassion, I think, restrains her from finishing.

5

Finally, Mary and I are alone with Jeff. We ease into light conversation for a while. I mention that I am a nutritional counselor. I say a little

about my nutritional point of view. I ask her if she would like to care for Jeff at home. She gives me a look of astonishment and absurdity. She tells me she wouldn't even consider removing Jeff from the hospital. She vacuums the mucus oozing into Jeff's throat so he can breathe without choking.

"The mucus is good. Through it, his body dumps dead cells and debris from the brain quickly. More will go to his bowels and dump there," I say.

"How do you know all of that stuff?"

"Remember when I said I was disabled from a car accident and couldn't pay child support? I had cancer. I didn't want anyone to know. I was disabled from the therapies. A kind, wonderful and intelligent man named Bruno tutored me for three and a half years in nutrition. I've spent most of the last seventeen years researching and experimenting with diets and health."

She frowns and looks at me curiously.

"I'll tell you about it later. Did all of the doctors tell you that Jeff's going to die?"

Mary nods, "They said if he hadn't responded by Wednesday, he'd die any time soon."

"I know you think I'm a California nut cake, but I'm asking you to put that judgment aside for Jeff's sake. Let me try nutrition."

"I know you mean well, Aajonus." She stops to take a deep breath, drained, then teases, "But he's not exactly able to eat."

"We can feed him under his tongue," I say handing her a canning jar. In it are equal portions of unsalted raw butter and unheated honey mixed together.

I explain its properties and I conclude by saying, "His salivary enzymes will dissolve it. Some will be absorbed directly into his blood through his mouth. The rest will drain down, soothe his throat and eventually, his stomach. In the blood, the nutrients from the butter/honey mix will go to his brain to protect living tissue and carry away the bruised and dead for elimination. I would like to put a teaspoon under his tongue at least every forty minutes."

A little hope sprouts and gives her strength. "Okay. If you think it'll help."

I am astounded. And relieved. Happy tears fill my eyes. I hold back

though. Mary might think I'm weak. I must appear in complete control to defend Jeff.

I put some honey/butter mix under Jeff's tongue. I ask Mary if I may tell her about some of my nutritional work so she will know my perspective on nutrition versus medical methods.

"It beats just sitting here," Mary says.

"One day I arrived home at 9:30 p.m. from one of those exciting evenings in traffic school."

Mary chuckles, "Still speeding?"

"U-turn. I couldn't seem to comprehend that a residential-apartment-complex neighborhood was not a residential area. Anyway, it was a Tuesday in January, 1973. I was twenty-six at the time.

I walked through the courtyard toward my Hollywood apartment. There were no lights on in the apartment. I wondered where Monica was. I took my keys from my flared-bottom jeans. I inserted one in the lock. My neighbor, Lien, heard me and came bursting from her apartment. She was panting, not from hurry but horror.

"Aajonus! I took Monica to County General Hospital about two hours ago. She was having terrible stomach cramps. She came crawling over to my door, screaming. I, we, just panicked. I took her to Emergency."

"She didn't say anything about her stomach four hours ago. What is it?"

"They said it would take a while to do all the tests. But they thought it was appendicitis."

I felt panicked. But I concealed it.

Monica was still in Emergency when I arrived. I was relieved that she was not on an operating table. She laid on a gurney looking drugged and in pain. The doctor stood analyzing the lab reports.

"Monica," I teased, imitating Bell Lagosi portraying Count Dracula, "let me take care of you at home, my dear. Your body probably won't like the chemicals they'll pump into--"

"They haven't found out what it is for sure," she said, cutting me off.

The doctor stepped toward us and said, "If you're not a relative, please leave. Monica, you have peritonitis, which means that your intestines are infected, and possibly perforated and bleeding. It's serious."

"Excuse me?" I said. I feel badly about it now but I had little patience with doctors' scare tactics after my experiences. I mirrored his arrogant, patronizing attitude, and asked him, "Have you every had peritonitis?"

"No," he said as if my question were absurd.

"I have. Would that make me more knowledgeable?"

"I've treated forty cases of peritonitis and if she leaves she'll die," he asserted.

"How many of those forty patients died?" I asked.

The doctor stammered but quickly recovered, "Twenty-four."

I motioned for Monica to listen.

"So at worst Monica has a 60% chance of dying in here, is that right?"

The doctor nodded.

"That's something they won't normally tell you," I said to Monica.

"Without treatment she has no chance," he countered.

"How many cases do you know in which someone had peritonitis and treated it with wholistic methods?"

"None," he said firmly.

"Then how would you know that she would die without medical treatment?" I asked, putting him in checkmate.

"Common sense," he retorted.

"Do only doctors have this common sense?"

"These are ridiculous questions. If you knew the seriousness of this infection, you would be embarrassed."

"Excuse me? Which of the two of us had peritonitis?" I asked.

"I'm not answering any more of your questions." He turned to Monica, "Are you going to listen to this character and put your life in danger? Or do you have some sense?"

"Monica, he's trying to play you like an untuned piano inside a yoyo."

Mary laughs, "Did you really say that?!"

“Yes. Monica laughed but the doctor didn’t. Then I said to Monica:

“According to R.B. Pearson’s research and statistics listed in his book *Man’s Correct Diet*, you have a 93% chance of living if you let me care for you nutritionally. Come on, honey, let’s go home.” I turned back to the doctor and said, “I’m sorry. I know you mean well but your logic is off.”

Urgently, he raised his voice, “Don’t you get it? If the infection isn’t stopped she’ll die.”

Monica’s drug-intoxicated state had the side effect of lowering her blood pressure and heightening paranoia. She was terrified. She looked back and forth between the doctor and me.

“Sweetheart, listen to his reasoning. He’s going to treat you with antibiotics to kill the infection. That will also kill your intestinal flora. That will destroy your ability to digest food and synthesize your own proteins and B vitamins. If you can’t properly digest the nutrients you need, you won’t detoxify and heal properly.”

“I’m warning you, if you don’t stay here and stop the infection you’ll die for certain,” the doctor countered.

I wanted to suture his mouth. And I’m sure he wanted to suture mine. The fear on Monica’s face advertised that the doctor’s unsubstantiated scare tactics had won the debate. I was saddened. I was angry. But I decided that I should argue no further. I had been introduced to an ideal concept called unconditional love a few years ago. It meant respecting Monica’s decision even if her life were at risk. It was her life and her will be done.

Twenty-four hours later, I stood looking down at her. On her arms and thighs were badly bruised dome-shaped swellings the size of quartered tennis balls.

“Monica, please take a look at the blackness around your sunken eyes, and your sallow complexion. They treat you not knowing how you’ll react to chemicals,” I cried out.

Drugged, she looked in a hand mirror and laughed, “Don’t be silly. It’s okay. I’m okay, really. I love you too.”

I couldn’t bear looking at her in that state and keep my mouth shut. I drove home.

The next morning she had two more bruised swellings on her

arms. Dr. Pine, the young intern assigned to her, looked over her chart.

“Doctor,” I said gently, “Monica needs live nutrients including various strains of lactobacillus to aid her digestion. I’m going to take her home where I can feed her properly.”

He shook his head and gave me a look that said, Oh, you’re one of those misguided health fanatics. Then he said aloud, “Eating will exacerbate the infection. I’ll give her a prescription for all the vitamins and minerals to be added to her I.V. Don’t worry, we’re taking good care of Monica.”

“Why does she have these lumps and bruises all over her body?” I pleaded, and then added, “They aren’t healing. They’re getting worse by the hour.”

“She was allergic to penicillin and three other antibiotics,” he said.

“It took you seven shots to discover one she was not allergic to?”

“Yes.”

“You just said not to worry, you are taking good care of her?”

“Now everything is under control.”

“She has a hundred times more ailments to heal than when she came in here. Why are you saying you have everything under control?”

“Everything is okay now. I’ll put the vitamins in her I.V. and she’ll be fine,” he said testily.

“She’s betting her life on your expertise. Will you bet your expertise on her life?”

“We’ll do the best we can for her. We can’t promise anything,” he said.

“Doctor, please, you just said you had everything under control now. Why won’t you put your expertise on her life? I’ll put my wholistic logic on her life. I’ll even put my life on her life. Why won’t you?”

“We’re not miracle workers. Will you excuse me, I have many patients in this hospital who need my help,” he said unnerved and briskly walked out.

I tried to convince Monica to leave but she was too intoxicated and drowsy.

In the evening of Monica’s fifth day in the hospital, I stood over

her. Her entire body was sallow with areas of black and blue. She had a milky stare that I had seen in animals just before they died. I realized I had to act.

“Monica,” I pleaded, “you have to get hold of yourself. You have to become sober so you can examine yourself.”

She was so drugged she didn’t care.

“You have to refuse your sedatives and painkillers so you can make a clear decision about whether you are being helped or damaged. The nurse is due to give you your 8 o’clock shot. Refuse it, please. Just until the doctors get here in the morning. Please, baby, please.”

She smiled. I placed in her hand a jar full of liquefied raw foods.

“This will aid and soothe your intestines,” I said.

“What is it?” she whispered.

“I blended one raw fertile egg, one tomato, 2 tablespoons unsalted raw butter and two heaping tablespoons of unheated honey. It also regulates fever.”⁶

“It doesn’t sound very tasty,” she whispered.

“Will you give it a chance?”

She sipped it. Then, I guess because it was the first food she had in days, she gulped it. My immediate thought was to stop her. But her gulping was instinctual.

I put the empty jar back in a bag. When I looked again, she was asleep. I stared at her frightful appearance. I remembered how beautiful her blushing color and pretty skin had been.

An hour passed and the raw tomato/butter formula had sobered her enough. She argued with the nurses against taking any more medication that night. And she won.

The next morning, I said to Monica, “Sweetheart, look at yourself.” I pulled the covers down to her ankles and lifted her gown.

She looked at herself in horror, “Oh, my God, I’m going to die.”

“Not if you let me take care of you.” I wondered how I knew that.

“I’m scared, Aajonus.”

⁶ See Appendix E, page 137.

“I’m afraid, too. Yet, I’m certain that excellent health and raw (live) foods are as connected as falling and gravity. The doctor said if you ate anything it would make you worse. Your abdomen didn’t swell and bruise from the raw food mixture. It has given you strength. God, I love you Monica. Don’t die on me, please. Please let me help you?”

I explained the three different food formulas I devised to get her well.⁷

“Did you marry her?” Mary asks.

“No. We were together five years.”

“Haven’t you found anyone you wanted to marry?”

“It took me seventeen years to stop dreaming about you. How could I have stayed married while dreaming of you?” It’s an awkward moment for both of us. I continue the story.

Monica agreed to go home. I gave her another jar of the tomato and butter mixture to drink. I went to the nurses and asked them to remove Monica’s I.V. and catheter. They refused.

While I analyze how to remove Monica’s catheter, three security guards, two nurses and three large male orderlies hurried into the room, stopped abruptly and stood watching me. If I had caught it on film it would have looked like one of those old black-and-white Buster Keaton films with that sudden stop-and-go motion. I covered Monica. Immediately following came three doctors with the same comical go-and-stop motion. One of them was the intern, Dr. Pine.

With the humor inspired by the moment I turned to Monica, “They’re having a going away party for you. Isn’t that sweet?”

“She can’t leave here. I won’t release her,” said Dr. Pine.

The gall these guys have is amazing, I thought. I laughed, a short breathy laugh that was enough to insult him. That was not my intention but it happened.

I turned to Monica again, “Do you want his permission to go?” I knew I was irritating the doctor. I had mixed feelings about it. I

⁷ See Appendix F, page 138.

was still angry at doctors, in general.

“She can’t leave this hospital unless I release her. And I won’t.” He turned to a nurse, “Call her mother right away.”

“Dr. Pine. You’ve been really kind, and thank you. I’m leaving here now. So, if you don’t remove this tube for me, Aajonus will,” Monica said so diplomatically and maturely she seemed like a wise old empress.

Her manner affected everyone. They all turned to Dr. Pine. He seemed alarmed that his authority was being challenged.

“I won’t release you. I won’t be responsible for whatever happens if you leave this hospital,” he said.

“I accept what you say. Now will you, or a nurse help me remove this, please?” Monica firmly implored.

Again everyone looked at Dr. Pine. He stood there staunchly.

“Help me, Aajonus,” she ordered.

I pulled down Monica’s covers. I looked around at everyone, “This is not a show.” I started to lift Monica’s gown but Dr. Pine stopped me, “Wait. A nurse will remove it. Let’s talk about this. This is a life and death infection. Do you think some voodoo will save her?”

“Whoa,” I said. “You thought throwing vitamins and minerals into her I.V. would help. It didn’t. We will cure her with foods. That’s all I have to say. If at some time in the future you are interested in what I feed Monica, I’ll gladly tell you. Thank you.”

Just then a nurse returned and blurted out, “Her mother says she is not to leave this hospital.”

Her mother’s voice rang through my head. I dreaded her intervention.

“Do I look underage, Dr. Pine?” Monica said growing angry.

Her mother’s order had the opposite effect of what I had feared.

“Monica,” Dr. Pine paused, “Please, take a few prescriptions I’ll write for you.”

Monica and I simultaneously raised our surprised eyebrows at each other; the fascist air had thinned.

“Give me whatever you want me to take,” she said.

“You must take an antibiotic to kill the infection or you won’t have a chance. I’ll give you a painkiller to take as you need. Call

me here everyday between nine and two and I'll do whatever I can to help."

The tension was still so high that the phone ringing startled all of us. Monica looked at me. We knew who it was.

"Hi, Mom. I'm just about to leave the hospital. Call me at home in about an hour, okay? I'm walking out the door, call me at home," Monica said.

She looked at me. She curled and twisted her smiling mouth, warning me. She tried to hand me the phone. Exaggeratedly, I shook my head and waved no. Monica laughed the way she did when I had been unintentionally acting silly.

"It'll be easier on all of us later if you can make some sense to her now," Monica said still laughing.

I was amazed at how much energy she had gained from the last tomato and butter drink. Reluctantly, I took the phone, "Hi, Ruth." Monica's divorced mother insisted I call her Ruth. It seemed to remove the generation gap. I liked that and we liked each other.

"It's you forcing Monica to leave the hospital, isn't it?"

"I've only fastened a chain from my car to her ankle."

"This is not funny."

"Ruth. You've seen Monica's condition since she's been in here. I'm certain she'll do better at home."

"The nurse said she'd die if she leaves the hospital." Ruth's blood pressure was rising.

"What would they say if she died in the hospital? 'The treatment was a success, we stopped the infection. We're sorry Monica's dead, and here's the bill.'"

Dr. Pine gave me a look.

Ruth argued parroting the doctor's every word although her concern was genuine.

"I understand that perspective but it doesn't make it right just because a doctor says it. You think lawyers are a big rip-off, right? Well, doctors are well-educated like attorneys," I countered knowing it was a cheap shot.

Dr. Pine and the nurse glared at me.

"If my daughter dies," Ruth paused. "I'll kill you."

"It's just something you say in a fit of passion," Mary says.

"It sent a chill through me because she meant it."

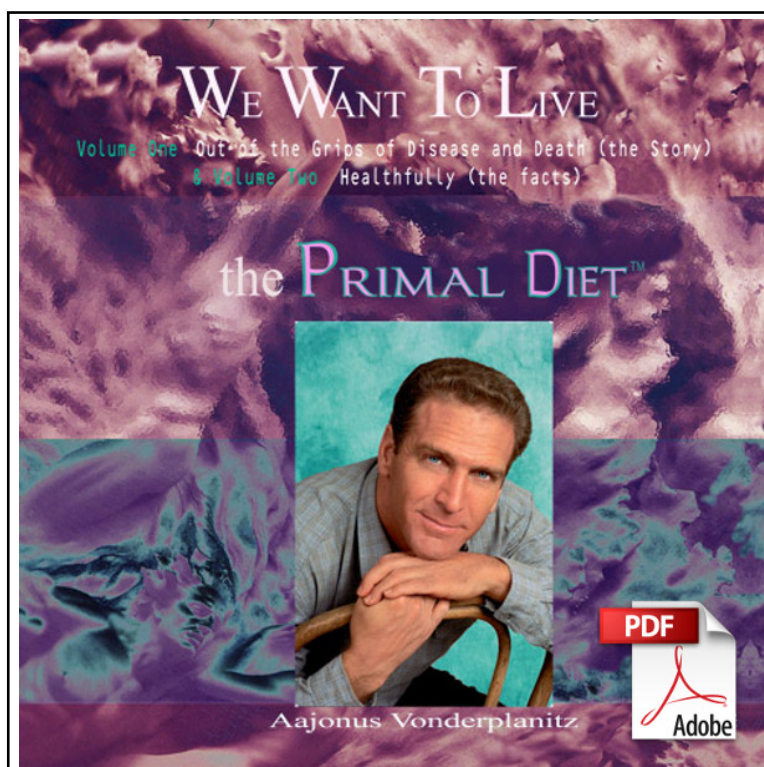
The nurse's voice announces through the intercom above Jeff's bed, "The doctor is on the phone about Jeff's X-rays."

I am delighted. I get up, feel Jeff's forehead and put some honey/butter mix under his tongue. I tell Mary a quick conclusion to the story. "Monica left the hospital in a wheelchair and was bedridden. I convinced her to flush the antibiotics down the toilet. Her mother threatened to skewer me on a clothesline. I fed Monica the mixtures. Within five days, Monica was on her feet and blending the food mixtures herself. In six weeks she was back in ballet classes. That was seventy-two weeks sooner than the doctors said she would if she survived in the hospital. I was so astounded by her rapid recovery that I vowed to eat only raw foods."

Mary seems impressed and hopeful.

The fear that I might let her down suddenly hits me. Even so, I must advance into battle or lose Jeff. "Jeff needs to be off medication. He needs to be conscious to eat and recover," I say.

Mary looks pensive and doesn't answer. I leave her to think about it.



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