

She was at her grandparents' house. She loved the smell of it--all boiled chicken and gas heat and his cigarette smoke and the pine air freshener for the bathroom--and the dark woodwork and antique furniture and the heavy, swinging wooden door to the kitchen. How practical, she thought now. If your hands are full with food you can just lean against the door and pass through and it closes behind you.

Something had told her to look in the attic, so, there she was. Up the narrow carpeted stairway, past the bedrooms, to the door on the right. Funny, when they were kids, there was a door there that they were never to open, because it went nowhere. They could have fallen from the second story. There was a deck now. They must have built it when she was away at college. She looked through her uncle's dresser drawers, the fraternity paddles, the sen sen candies, the monogrammed handkerchiefs. He had somehow decided to leave them behind.

Where was everyone? She went back downstairs and tried to find a familiar face. Grandpa? Mom & Dad? No one was around. Suddenly she heard a key in the back door lock. She darted into the dining room, behind the swinging door. She could tell by the voices that it was no one she knew. Was someone breaking in?

She wondered if she had a minute to grab a candy. Grandma always kept her favorite candies, Neapolitans and Coconut Bonbons. But just then the door swung open and she held her breath. The two young adults that came in acted like they belonged there. She had no idea who they were. They walked right past her, looked straight through her, and went for the candy dish. It was not her grandmother's dish. There were no coconut bonbons but instead Lindt truffles. The fright of being caught trespassing awoke her, and she realized she had been dreaming.

She was sweating and couldn't figure it out. Why would she dream that? Her grandparents had died years ago and someone else was living in their house, the house she knew intimately and had played in since she was a child. She wondered if it was these people who had bought the house.

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The dream came back to her throughout the day. When she went to work, she parked in her usual spot but she walked down the 1/3 mile hallway to the cafeteria to get a cappuccino. She said hello to Tracy, and to Jody, but they looked right through her as well. Had she indeed turned invisible overnight? What on earth was going on? She had met so many nice people at the automotive plant office. Walking back to her office, she felt herself seeming to float. She had often wondered what it would be like to roller blade down the long hallway, but now she was actually floating or flying. When did she learn that, she mused? Wait a minute--is this another crazy dream?? People can't actually fly. The realization awoke her once again, sadly, as she really would like to be able to fly.

That evening, in their favorite restaurant, she and her husband sat near a window on the fifth floor and watched the sunset. They talked about their days and held hands across the table. They had enjoyed dining here for years and it was still just as good. It was connected to a unique hotel and they enjoyed staying in one of its unusual rooms on special occasions. Each of the rooms was different. It was a little surprise to explore each new room they stayed in, with its environment-protective furnishings and materials, like bamboo woodwork. They sat there for a very long time, it seemed, and no one waited on them. In fact, it seemed no one even realized they were there. She told him about her dream the night before, but he just looked at her, not understanding.

When they left, they walked for a few blocks like they usually did, past the shops of the downtown. They decided to resist the frozen yogurt shop this time, and continued on to their car and then home. She wondered if this was a dream too. Just then, her husband disappeared into thin air and she grasped at the air where he had been. He had just slipped right through her hand. She tried to scream out, but no one turned to look. No one heard. She had the keys in her purse, so she went and sat in the car for a while, thinking he would come back, and yet he did not. What was going on? Finally, she drove to the police station. But when she went inside, people seemed to react with fright when she opened the door. It was as if they could not see her. When she pulled the car out of the parking space, it was as though she was trying to back it over a narrow bridge. Suddenly, she heard a knock on her car window and turned to look, with

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relief, thinking it was her husband, but it was another man, holding his arms open, as if to beckon her, but he too disappeared.

From then she lived, it seemed, behind a wall. She could no longer wake up from the dreams. No matter where she went, no one noticed her. She visited her old summer camp from childhood. She walked the halls of the elementary, junior high, high school, and college she had attended. She couldn't find her husband anywhere, nor anyone who could see or hear her. After some weeks of this she was in despair. At home, she walked the halls, up and down the stairs, putting things away that were out of place, as if she would find him under a sofa cushion or in the blankets of their bed. He wasn't in the garage. She even dreamed--or was it a dream--that she was still married to her horrible ex-husband. At least, she was living in their house. He couldn't see her either. It was enough to drive her mad.

At times she was in different jobs she had held through her life. She went to Panama, to Grand Cayman Island, to Hawaii. Everything looked familiar, and yet nothing did. All she wanted was to go back to her normal life. Instead, it was as if time had become unstuck. She wasn't stuck in the 70's, or in her childhood, or anywhere. She was everywhere at once, and everything kept changing. Almost like events were flashing before her eyes.

Suddenly, she was somewhere she was quite sure she'd never been. It was very bright, and winged creatures were greeting her. They formed a chair with their arms and picked her up to fly into the sky. Amazing, she thought. But I really must be mad.

Soon, they arrived somewhere. They appeared to be up in the clouds although there was solid ground to walk on. There was a gigantic gate that looked like a pearl. When it opened, there was a man standing there. He was standing with his arms opened wide but she could hardly look at him for he was brilliantly glowing, and she suddenly realized--her life had been flashing before her eyes as she was dying. Now she was home, in heaven, and this must be Jesus.