

501c. too weak to get hold of the counter pane let alone pull it up. My arms were a dead weight to lift and I had to pull the whole of each arm up the bedclothes in order to move it and then I had to move it off my chest because I could not breathe with it there. I found it very difficult to move at all because my body was so heavy and yet my mind was becoming so alert that it was painfully clear to think of anything. As I lay there several nurses passed my bed and as they looked at me they seemed to be pleased that I had become so still and so quiet. I just could not find the strength to tell them that I was not alright and that I was so cold and that my body was so heavy to move. It seemed so ironic that they were actually pleased that I was the opposite of how I should have been and after they had gone I seemed to get even weaker, so that my body seemed to slide uncomfortably down the pillows and I was so weak that I could not move to be able to lift my body at all.

Soon after that the two mothers who had been with their babies nearby went off to where ever all the mothers seemed to disappear to when they wanted to talk or smoke and had not gone down to the toilets. The ward became almost empty except for the babies in their cots who made tiny peaceful noises from time to time. I should have felt as if I had been deserted by everyone at a time when I should have needed people to be with me most of all but I felt strangely peaceful and a deep sense of hope came over me that I was not alone at all. Even though all the adults had gone when I needed them most, somehow I was not alone because all those babies were still in their cots. Each of them was a whole person and I just knew that if they had been adult then not one of them would

502c. have left me any more than not one of them had moved in their cots. Each of the babies was so peaceful and so good, probably because they had not been in the world long enough to learn to mistrust people properly, and a very strong feeling came over me, as if I was almost seeing into the future, that it was more than that if those babies were adult then they might stay and help me, but that WHEN they were adult then their generation WOULD stay with me. Even though my body was weak and the bed felt so uncomfortable that I could feel every tiny crease in the sheet because my skin had become so sensitive, a kind of peacefulness came over me that I had never ever felt before. I felt strangely light as if I could just float away and only my heart felt weighed down with grief about my baby because I knew that if she died then I would die as well. All of a sudden I realized that I was not just thinking about death as an improbability any more. I was so desperately weak that it was too real to be just a thought any more and as I looked around me and realized just how weak I was, I also realized how close I was to going to sleep and not waking up again at all. The first thing that aroused my awareness was that I saw a grey mist hovering beside the bed that I was in as if it was waiting beside me and behind me ready to gently engulf me. As the grey mist seemed to come around me I heard two people talking from within the mist and I turned my head slightly to the left to see who it was. The

503c. mist was a gentle grey colour and when I looked straight into it, it was like looking into another world, a kind of unspoilt country sort of place that had no buildings and it looked like a warm but damp early autumn morning just as dawn was breaking but there was no sign of anything beginning to decay because everything looked fresh and evergreen and as I looked at it in the mist it looked as if I could step straight out of this world and into the next one which was that one. The two people who I had heard talking were two men who were standing in the mist about fifteen feet away from me and as I got weaker they seemed to come closer and stand waiting near to me. They were dressed in long grey habits like monks and they had large hoods pulled up over their heads but not to hide their faces and they were so good and friendly towards me that there was nothing sinister about them at all. I had a feeling that if they asked me to go with them then I would want to go with them more than anything else in the whole world. It seemed as if those two men were so wholesome and perfect that they were not bothered with the things of this world that people waste their time bothering and fussing about and that I wanted to go with them because I was so ill that I no longer wanted to be bothered with such things either. I knew that these people were so reliable and trustworthy that they wanted to look after me and take me through the mist to a beautiful place where I could be just how perfect as I had ever wanted to be, and suddenly I wanted to be perfect more than anything else at all because I could not be bothered with being imperfect

504c. anymore. It all seemed so simple and so easy and there was nothing in that misty place or about the two men that was anything at all to be afraid of at all. It was like stepping into a very real and beautiful fairytale and even the fact that the two very human men were walking about 18" above the ground as if they were floating through the mist seemed quite natural in that place. The two men were exactly the same two men who I had seen standing in a grey mist and discussing whether or not it was time for him to die just before our dog Timmy had died when I was fourteen years old. They must have been two sort of angels who were allocated to our whole family to come and look after us when we each died but who were different from the rest of the angels who looked after us all. This time it was me who they were discussing and it was me who was dying. I firmly took hold of my senses and deliberately tried to concentrate on the ward that I was in. I kept looking at the curtains around the ward, the walls, the beds, the lockers, the babies in their cots and the flowers in the ward in order to try to fix my attention on each specific object to try to concentrate on keeping in touch with this world and not slipping out of it. There was no one around to talk to and even if I could not move around to touch things in order to keep in touch with this world, I felt that I needed to look at each thing in the room and silently name it so that I recognized it for its part in the

505c. order of the room that I was in as if I was doing a kind of mental exercise to try to keep awake. When I had been doing that for a few moments the grey mist seemed to go and I felt much better. While it was still quiet a nurse brought me two yellow tablets that I found myself taking because I just did not have the resistance left to argue and say that I neither wanted nor needed them. The nurse did not speak to me as she gave the tablets to me and after she had gone I lay there in bed looking up at the ceiling which was straight ahead of my vision because I had slipped so far down the bed from weakness. It seemed to take less effort for me to look at the ceiling than to look around me and so I studied the white paintwork on the ceiling and a beam of metal that ran across it that had been painted white as well. There was a cable that ran across the ceiling that looked as if it was something to do with the electric light in the ward and as I ran my eyes all the way along it I decided in amusement that the paintwork on the ceiling was in a state of good repair. I looked away from the ceiling for a moment and then to my shock I thought that the ceiling was suddenly coming in on me because it felt as if great heavy bricks started falling down onto me and mostly onto my chest. I was so surprised because I had just been looking at the ceiling and it had looked perfectly alright. My eyes shot up to look at the ceiling again and I could not understand how it could still look perfectly alright and yet it still felt as if invisible bricks were coming crashing down on my chest and that each one felt heavier than the last.

The next moment I found myself standing on the edge of a cliff top in a sort

506C. of waste, barren moorland that made me realize that I had gone right into the grey mist that I had seen. I was quite unafraid and I stood alone looking all around me. The sky was a kind of greyish blue as if it was very early in the morning before it was time for the dawn to break but more as if it was a place that never got properly light. As I looked around I saw miles of flat desolate land and some thirty feet away from where I was standing there was a pit that was shaped like a huge concave lens. It was white, only a few feet deep in the middle and about fifty feet wide in diameter. The pit contained a fire of white flames and the flames were gently licking some large number of grotesque looking skeletons that were still alive. The skeletons still had their features so that they were still recognizable and I could see people like Julius Caesar, Stalin, Hitler and other people who had brought about mass murders in cold blood, being burnt in that fire. They could still have moved and lived but they could not move from the fire so they just stood there burning in total endless agony and because the flames were pure white they burnt continuously in a powerful but well contained fire and did not burn out like the red and yellow flames that we usually think of as fire. I suddenly realized that I was looking straight at Hell and that it was so different from what most people think it is like. One of the most surprising things about Hell was that there were so few people there because it seemed as

507c. if the one person who had been the mastermind behind a world of cruelty and the people who had helped them, had been put into that fire for one reason only and that was to stop them getting out to do it again in the next world. Even though the pit of fire was full of cruel men who were obviously in torment because they could not get out, it was not a cruel place. It was clinically clean like a hospital and despite the fact that the flames had the power to burn eternally and would never go out, they were gentle in their extreme strength. It was not the sort of place that pictures of Hell usually conjure up of a place where the Devil can torment the souls that he has won. It was plainly clear that the Devil had not won anything at all because Hell was a place that had been made FOR the Devil in order to put him INTO in order to keep everyone else safe because no one in that fire could do anything wrong again even if it had to be a choice that was forced on them. Hell belonged very firmly to God and his judgement and it was his only prison anywhere at all. There was nothing cruel about the place despite the severity of the punishment and when I saw that, I realized that the Earth really was the most wicked place that existed anywhere at all because even in Hell no one could do the things to each other that they had done on earth.

I found myself going closer to the edge of the cliff edge that I was on and saw that it completely surrounded the edge of a black hole that went deep into the ground like a huge bottom-

508c. less well that you could not hurt yourself by falling into it. As I stood looking at the huge black hole it seemed as if the whole scene suddenly turned around the other way so that I was standing with the black hole behind me and it took me some time before I realized that I must have gone through the hole and have come out the other side so quickly that the black hole must have turned itself inside out around me in order to push me through it as quickly as possible. I found myself standing in an almost identical place to where I had been on the other side of the black hole, only this place had no pit of fire and it was not barren at all. The light was darker but it was a restful kind of darkness and when my eyes adjusted to it I could see very well indeed there. This time I was not completely out on top of the ring of cliff top around the edge of the black hole because I was still about six feet down inside the earth of the hole but I could see all around inside the earth for miles around as if I was looking around a whole little world on its own that existed just before the entrance to the light above and another whole world. The place that I was in was like a huge warm underground cave where it was peaceful and quiet. There was a quiet but constant hum like the gentle buzz of electricity in a railway line and there were people laying down all over the place on things that looked like altar bombs. Everyone who was laying down was peacefully asleep

509c. and there were other very tall people dressed in black who were quietly and busily looking after them. straight away I just knew as soon as I saw it that I was in the Place of Eternal rest. It was what most people think of as Purgatory but it was nothing like it because it was a place of sleep. Total beautiful, peaceful sleep in a place where you could sort yourself out in a beautiful way before going on to Heaven. It was a place where you were gently helped to get better and where you slept to heal yourself and your mind. There was no punishment whatsoever because it was a place for those who needed more time and a second chance. It was the place that Jesus had made during the three days that his soul had descended to Hell while his body lay in the tomb. The whole place was smaller than the size of the earth and if the foundations of the earth had been made in four days then this place was exactly the right size to have been made during the length of time that Jesus had been in the tomb. It was a barren wasteland that had been made into something good and the black hole that I had come through was a bridge between Heaven and Hell. Before Jesus had died there had been a rift between Heaven and Hell that no man could cross and those who were not perfect enough to go to Heaven had been wasted in Hell when all they might have needed was more time and a lot more help. So Jesus had laboured by the power of his Spirit and during his three days of darkness he had made a bridge between Heaven and Hell, and a place where those he loved could have a second chance so that no

510C one would be lost. It was his 'Peace' a gift that he had left to us after he had died in the last Will and Testament of his love. He had left it to us in trust and in a safe place for a time when we were older and could use it properly. It was the second chance that this world did not give and Jesus had been able to make it because there was room in the great Universe that belonged to his Father for another mansion to be built. The Mansion that he had created was a place where those who needed it could rest awhile and sort out their troubles and forget their fears. He had even cleaned up Hell so that only those who really had to be in Hell were left there and after Jesus had been there even Hell was no longer a place of such terrible torment because another way had been created. The first of the people who Jesus had led out of Hell to the place that he had created had been his own disciple Judas. Jesus had gone straight into Hell looking for him and having found him he had greeted him like a long lost friend and led him out of there. After all, Jesus and Judas had so much in common, they had both once been thieves, both of them had betrayed someone they really loved and both of them had lived to regret it because of their conscience. It had been Judas conscience that had led him to betray Jesus and his conscience that had led him to remorse for what he had done. Judas had taken the blame on himself in the only way that he knew how, by giving up his life as

511c. closely and quickly to the way that Jesus had died through what he had done in betraying him. In that action Judas' sins were forgiven even though that was the last thing that he had ever expected when he had hung himself and become the first person to give his life in sorrow for the fact that his sins had crucified Jesus. Judas had also betrayed Jesus in the name of the Poor and in doing that he could never have done anything wrong in the eyes of God anyway. Jesus himself had told Judas that he would not have felt able to betray him if it had not been the will of God that he should do it and out of all Jesus' disciples it must have been Judas who had the most unenviable task that he had been chosen by God to do. It had also been the will of God that not one of Jesus' disciples would be lost, not even one, and that one was Judas even if it had meant that a special place had to be created in which to save him and others like him.

The tall people who were looking after the place that I was in were dressed in black but the black that they wore was not sinister because their long plain black robes were more like the habits that nuns and Priests wore. As I looked at them I knew that they were the Powers, the Angels who had been given charge over the souls of the dead in order to help them and heal them. There had always been Powers in the ranks of angels but as I looked at them I realized that their numbers had actually been increased by the souls of nuns and Priests who had given their lives to God and been very good on earth but who had never properly fulfilled his commandments such as to sell all they had and give it to the Poor before they followed Jesus with nothing to call their own. They had

512c. not been fit to enter the kingdom of heaven when they died but they had been given the task of helping the Souls of the Dead to prepare for heaven. It was not a task that would last for ever but it was one that they were very well suited for and that they certainly did not mind even if they now knew how much better it would have been to have gone straight to heaven.

The people laying down on the low Altar tomb tops were mostly older men around where I was and I saw two men in particular who I was sure had died in Lewisham Hospital on other wards earlier that morning, even though I had never seen them before. Further away from where I was standing there was a man who was up and walking as if he was sleep walking. Three of the Powers were with him and they were gently leading him back to his altar tomb to carry on sleeping. He had come back from the earth where he had been to re-live some moment from when he had been alive when something awful had happened to him that he had found very difficult to accept when he remembered it. In the Place of Eternal Rest it was possible to go back to Earth and re-live such things as many times as it was necessary to in order to accept them or until things were changed in such a way that what had happened to you could never happen again. It was also possible to go back to warn someone else of the same impending circumstances such as a fire or other danger. All you had to do was to wait until the time and the light created the same conditions as there had been before and then you could drift back

513c . in just the same way that you could dream that you were in a different place if you were asleep. At times whole groups of people and animals could go back together to go over something that had happened to them all at a time when they were all troubled or afraid such as in times of war. What people on earth saw as ghosts were the souls of these people and animals 'sleep walking' until they had sorted themselves out because they can not go into heaven if they are troubled or afraid. There is no fear or pain in heaven and all that sort of thing has got to be finished with before someone can enter the kingdom of heaven in just the same way that someone has got to finish smoking a cigarette or put it out before they can go into a building where it says no smoking.

The Powers were leading that man back to his place to sleep again and there was such a beautiful atmosphere in that place as if everyone was there helping people to get better or being helped to get better with such kindness that you could have thought that they were actually in heaven if you had not been able to see that heaven itself was actually the next place further on. There was nothing horrible in that place and even the awful things that you had to come to terms with, you did not have to do alone and there was no hurry to do anything. There was just lots and lots of sound sleep in a kind of beautiful restful quietness that seemed to do you ever so much good and yet despite the rest and peace the whole quietness of the place seemed to be listening excitedly and expectantly for the sound of a trumpet to break through the gentle hum of silence and

514 C. at that moment every one of those people would joyfully awake up for ever and go straight to heaven.

As I stood there feeling quite bewildered at how I could have found myself so wide awake in such a place of sleep, two of the women Powers saw me and came towards me to welcome me warmly and take me to be washed and got ready to go to sleep. As they came towards me they seemed to suddenly recognize me and a look of terrible concern came over their faces and they rushed towards me. The strangest thing was the way that they recognized me and the way that everybody in that place seemed to know me very well indeed. but although I felt bewildered by it all, I did so in a happy fearless sort of way. The two women Powers who came towards me were ever so tall, about 7ft tall, and the one on the right as I looked at them who was slightly taller than the one with her, was very concerned about me and she moved very quickly indeed to take charge of the situation at once. Being so close to the two women when they came up to me I got a very good look at them indeed and most of all I noticed the long dresses that they wore. They were made from very good quality black cloth like linen and the material struck me as being so full of power that it would never wear out. The bodices of the dresses had five large folded back pleats, long loose sleeves and long plain skirts to the dresses. Under the hem plain black rubber shoes like wellington boots without the long leg parts could be seen and around their waists they had really

515c fine silver chains which they wore like a belt and from which hung a much longer chain with a small silver censor on the end of it. They used the censors in their work with the dead and as soon as I saw them I realized that it was one of those censors that St. Bernadette had seen Our Blessed Lady wearing at Lourdes and not a rosary. They looked so similar that it was only when you were so close that you could see the difference.

The Power on the right was moving very quickly and in a state of great alarm. She said to me ever so kindly "You can't stay here, You've got to go back". and she pushed me quite firmly in the top part of my stomach with both her hands. She pushed me with a lot of determination but she did not do it nastily. It seemed more like the way that I would have pushed someone if I had been catching a tube on the underground and had seen a man who was blind and deaf getting onto one of the trains too late because he had not heard or seen that the train doors were already closing on him. I would have seen that he was going to be seriously crushed and I would have rushed forward and pushed him safely and gently into the train even if it had frightened him, because I would have had no way of explaining to him what was happening and even if it had been my own hands that had been crushed instead. It seemed as if that was what the Powers were doing to me but as they tried to push me back towards the black hole the Power on the right stopped for a moment and looked at my face very quickly as if she felt so sorry for me that she wanted to give me a gift of something. She seemed to think that I was going to have a terrible time after I went back and that she wanted to give me something that I

516c. could keep for my own but she was  
worried that I would not understand what it was worth. She seemed  
to hesitate and then decide to do what  
she wanted to and give it to me all the  
same. She took my right arm at the  
fore arm and she gently and quickly  
pulled me back into that place  
for a moment. She gently pulled me  
in front of her so that I was more  
in the middle of the place that  
we were in and as she held my arm  
with her left hand she raised her  
right arm so that her long and  
beautiful arm which was still  
covered by the folds of the loose  
sleeves of her black dress was up  
at a sharp right angle from her  
shoulder. Then she raised herself  
up to her full height and as she  
stood there I realized just how tall  
she was. She had been tall and  
huge enough when I had first seen  
her, the sort of person you could  
walk side by side with through  
the creepiest, loneliest cemetery  
on the darkest loneliest night.  
She was the sort of person who  
could turn night into day with  
her authority and she was only  
one of hundreds of those Powers  
in that place. Then when she spoke,  
what she said was so and all  
in utter obedience and loyalty to  
God. Yet even though she had so  
much power, she was so amazingly  
friendly with it, she was so good  
natured, practical and used to  
very hard work. I stood there  
and as I looked at her my eyes  
followed the right angle of her  
shoulder right up to the single  
long beautifully manicured  
finger of her huge hand to where  
it pointed straight upwards

517c. Leading my eyes above the edge of the round place that we were in to a beautiful sky and masses and masses of strong white brilliant and glorious light that was coming from a place that was the equivalent of the place on the other side of the black hole that I had just come through. As the Power spoke out loud her voice sounded as if thunder was echoing in reply to each eloquent word she spoke, but even the authority of the thunder sounded friendly as she said "but you will come back here again (and she said that as if it was a very rare thing indeed for anyone to go back to that place a second time) and when you do, THE BELLS OF HEAVEN WILL RING 'FOR YOU!'". And then in the midst of all that brilliant white light I saw a beautiful city. It was like an early eighteenth century village but a large one with no walls around it from where I was looking. There was a very nice green hedge for miles around it that was very neatly trimmed and the way into that lovely city was not through any pearly gates but through an open space in the hedge that was deserted of people because there was nobody there at all. It was the sort of place that children would find to get into a fete that was being held in a field if they were too poor to have any money to pay to get in and if nobody really minded and it was the sort of place that sheep would find to stray out of, but strangely enough it was the main entrance and not any back or side entrance by any means at all. There was a fairly straight and very smooth narrow path of some two or three miles long that went down to the

518c. city from the low grassy hillside  
that I seemed to be standing on  
but it was not a path that made  
you feel that you had come such  
a long way and that your feet  
could hardly carry you the last  
few miles to get where you wanted  
to be. Instead it was a smooth  
path that was easy on your feet,  
the lovely sort of clean path that  
made you feel that you wanted  
to take your shoes off so that you  
could feel the sun on your feet  
as you walked along. for miles  
around the beautiful country-  
side that made me think of  
England years ago but without  
any deprivation for the poor,  
or any winter with its hardships,  
was so quiet, restful and peaceful.  
There was nobody about because  
everyone had gone down to the  
city and even though I was still  
standing in the place of Eternal  
Rest with that lovely Power standing  
beside me and firmly holding onto  
my arm, it seemed as if my spirit  
rose up into that light and  
travelled along that path until  
I got to that beautiful city. As I  
reached the city I saw a huge  
crowd of very orderly and gentle  
people excitedly come forward  
to meet me and I realized to my  
surprise that they had all stopped  
what they were doing and had  
come to wait for me. They were  
all so happy and as I looked among  
them I began to recognize them as  
all the different saints. St. Francis  
was there with St. Clare, St. Bernard,  
St. Margaret, St. Bernadette, St.  
Martin, St. Anthony and hundreds  
of others. The ones that I had prayed  
to most were right at the front

519c. but no one was anymore significant than the next, they just seemed to have been waiting at the front so that if I saw the ones I knew first then I would feel more welcome and at ease in this new place. On my right I saw three saints who I noticed particularly because I knew that they were not yet canonized: St. Padre Pio, St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Leopold Mandic. I recognized them because I had seen their pictures on small picture cards that my mother had got at home. My Mother had told me to pray to them because the process of their canonization was under way. I had done so and had always had my prayers answered but when I saw them in that place someone had already canonized them all by then. As I looked at them I realized that they were all wearing different coloured clothes. They and all the saints were wearing long medieval type robes with lovely gold crowns on their heads but the difference between them was in what colour their robes were. They looked like fairytale Princes and Princesses and as I looked at them I realized that they were Principalities. Then everything that I had seen in the previous few days made sense and I knew that I had been meeting each order of Angels rank by rank. The ones that I had seen on the hillside on my way to Mrs. Duffels house had been ordinary Angels, the more human looking ones who had come right down to me inside my suffering on the delivery table had been Archangels, the monk-like men at death's door had been Virtues and I had known the Powers in the Place of Eternal Rest for what they were as soon as I saw them. Now I was looking at the Principalities and I realized that the general name

520c. for the group of people who I was looking at were the Principalities and not the Saints. Some of them were Saints and those were the ones who had been able to use the senses that belonged to their souls during their lifetimes. They had been the ones to see visions, hear voices, smell beautiful aromas of heavenly flowers and taste the honey sweet taste of the food of heaven. Most of all they had worked miracles with their hands and healed the sick and if they had done it all in the name of God then they were living saints. The other Principalities were martyrs and Doctors of the Church who had given their lives and good works to the glory of God and had served the poor in the name of Jesus Christ. None of the martyrs or other people were any less important than the saints and no one at all had got in there without having actually given food, drink, clothes and shelter to the poor with cheerful kindness, but they were not all saints, they were all Principalities and being a saint was something quite special. It was as if being a saint was a way that had been lost for a time and it was only by looking at the clothes that the Principalities wore that I could see quite clearly which were which. The long robes that they all were wearing were made of very fine linen in pale pastel colours that looked 'light' as if each one had been made from one of the colours of a rainbow when the sun had shone through it, in lovely shades of green and yellow and blue and as I stood there it was a mixture of all of them who came around to take care.

521c. of me. In front of me, the other side of the crowd of people around me, was a lovely building which I thought was a church but when I looked at it I realized that it was God's house and on the flight of steps that led up to it God my Father was standing at the bottom waiting to take my left arm and lead me up them. All I had to do was to walk in a straight line from where I was to where he was waiting for me and as I began to take a step I found that all the Principalities closed in tightly around me and then parted in front of me one at a time leaving only one small clear space in front of me for me to walk into. They seemed to move in sequence like the coloured stones in a child's kaleidoscope that move at a turn to form a different but equally pretty pattern. It was as if they were performing a kind of walking dance around me but I realized that they were leading me forward to God in such a way that because they were so closely packed around me I had no alternative but to walk in the only space that they left for me and that space was along a straight line leading straight to God, one step at a time. After a few moments I forgot to look at where I was walking and I just looked straight at God and walked towards him which had the same effect. On the steps standing with God were Moses and Abraham and a great many other prophets and they were all dressed in deep rich mulberry red robes which seemed to compliment the older type of building that we were all going to go into. The robes of the Principalities would not have looked out of place inside that building and it made me think that once they got in there with all the prophets

522c. in their rich dark robes they would look like lights amongst them as if someone had lit hundreds of candles in a church or as if all the stars had come out on a starry night. God was wearing the long pure white robes that he always wore but he did not have a crown on his head. He did not need one as his hair was shining so golden in the sunlight that it looked like strands of pure gold until I realized that it was not that the sun was shining on his head but that light was streaming from his head. I found that I was dressed in the same clothes as all the saints but of pure brilliant white and I did not have a crown either. Everyone was so happy, as if they had waited a long time for me to come back and they were glad to see me. The only person who remained unmoved in all the excitement was God because he looked the same as he always looked. He showed no surprise to see me and as he looked at me it was as if we had never been apart in all that time and I vaguely remembered from somewhere in the past that once he had given me a look to say that he hoped I had enough courage but now he was looking at me with such a look of gentleness that said that he had known that he could trust me. There was a kind of service about to begin inside the building that we were going into and inside the building Gods son was waiting, dressed in pure white robes the same as God and I. There was no hurry as we had plenty of time and as I looked into the beautiful sky I heard the sound of millions

523c. and millions of gloriously tuned cathedral and church bells pealing out for all they were worth across the whole land as if there was going to be a royal wedding or a coronation or something. Somehow amidst all that splendour it was the smaller bells that I thought were the sweetest because they were joyously ringing with all their might even though they were so tiny. They reminded me of fat little rosy-faced children and because they had all been christened they seemed to have a life of their own and could ring of their own accord. I had never heard so many bells ringing for all they were worth or anything so beautiful but even then I did not hear it fully because I only caught a whisper of it in the wind. somehow it was so beautiful that if I had listened to it fully I could never have come back to finish living this life as it would have taken me into it there and then and in the most beautiful way would never have let me go as if that holiness loved my soul so much and it wanted to give me so much happiness that it could not let me go back to any kind of unhappiness. Yet even as I saw and heard all that, I knew that I was not ready for it all. I knew that my time had not yet come and that I was one who was lucky enough to be sent back to Earth for another chance.

As the next few seconds flashed past I was aware that the Powers thought that I had seen enough and that the two of them and several others, men and women Powers, who had rushed across to help were quickly and safely guiding me back to the black hole at which they lifted me up horizontally in their

524c. arms so that I was lying straight out and shot me back through it as quickly as they could. I was aware of the two Virtues catching hold of me and rushing me towards my bed and then I opened my eyes in the ward to see a nurse anxiously trying to rouse me. When I opened my eyes and looked straight at her she asked me quickly and anxiously if I was alright. I replied very politely and said "Yes thank you" because I felt so good and holy that all I seemed to know was total politeness but she took no notice of me and ran down the ward to the office. She came running back with two sisters who paused only to collect a trolley from beside the ward door before running to my bed. As they hurried to my bed they called to another nurse who had appeared, that they thought I was going to have a cardiac arrest and to make a crash call but when they saw that I was alright and alert they called her back again. The nurse who had run to get them was explaining that my face had been completely grey when she had found me and that I was not breathing at all and the sister who was taking my blood pressure kept telling me that it was not too bad as if she was trying to calm me down when it was her who was in a flap over me. I was very calm indeed and in fact I felt that if I had been any more calm I would have been soundly asleep in the Place of Eternal Rest. The sisters seemed to realize that I was genuinely ill and not being a nuisance and as they read my blood

525c. pressure and said that it was not too high  
I struggled to remember the words to tell  
them that my blood pressure was  
normally very low and so if they found  
a normal reading that was average  
for most people then it was high for my  
normal reading, but I could not find  
the words to say so and I felt so calm  
and sleepy that I seemed to feel as if it  
was quite alright to keep what I wanted  
to say to myself and not tell anybody.  
By that time another more senior Sister  
had joined the two Sisters and they decided  
to telephone the Houseman to come. One  
of the Sisters said to the others that  
she was beginning to wonder if what  
the nurses were saying was true and  
that I did have a Cardiac Arrest in  
the Labour ward. She went off to the  
telephone and came back absolutely  
horrified and said that the Doctors  
had refused to come. She said that  
she had never known anything like it  
and that they had been told not to  
touch me at all because I was under  
my G.P.s care. The Doctors had told her  
that either he was to come in to see me  
or else I was to go home. The other Sisters  
were furious and said to her that I was  
far too ill to go home and she agreed  
with them. She said that the Doctors  
were insistant that I did not like  
hospitals because my G.P. had told  
them so. They had said that it was  
being in hospital that was upsetting  
me and so I was to go home. The  
Sisters came right round my bed  
and asked me if I wanted to go home  
and if it was being in hospital that  
was upsetting me. I said no and I was  
nearly in tears, I said that I definately  
did not want to go home because I  
wanted to stay until my baby came  
back. They looked at each other as if  
they could not face me about that and

526c. one of the Sisters said to the other two Sisters "See, its quite the opposite of what they think". They asked me if I was frightened in the ward and I said no, and then they asked me if I was frightened of the nurses in their uniforms and I said no. They asked me if I was quite happy to be in hospital and I said that I was because I knew that I was certainly better off with them than I was at home and I was so grateful that there was not any work for me to do in hospital that I was too tired to cope with. They said that I was too ill to go home and that they were going to tell that to those Doctors, and when they had seen that I was quite comfortable they went off back to the office.

After a while a nurse came along with some more tablets and she said to me that I could stay in hospital as the Doctors had said that I could if I had changed my mind. I tried to think of the words to explain that I had not changed my mind but it was all too much to explain. All I had been afraid of was of coming into Hospital for the birth of my baby because I had been having such an awful premonition that something awful was going to happen but it was too late for that because it had happened and I had not been wrong, but nobody seemed to understand that or that I needed help and not to be sent away now.

I slept for a bit and then as the dinner trays and tables were being laid ready for the dinner to be served there was a small commotion of people at the door of the ward by the Sisters Office. After a while a

527c. nurse came along the ward looking at the charts at the end of each of the beds and some of the mothers who were back on the ward for their dinner asked the nurse what was going on. She told them that the porters had brought some reporters along and that they were looking for the mother who had given birth on Friday night and the dials on her gas and air machine had gone berserk. She said to them that it had happened when some Uri Geller had sent 'Britain bending' and that the reporters were looking for the mother and baby. The nurse stood there in the ward looking perplexed because she could not find it written on the charts and she asked the mothers which of them had given birth on Friday night. The other mothers pointed me out but the nurse seemed to have deliberately missed out looking at my charts as if she knew it could not be me and she said to them "no, not her, who else?" The other mother who had been in the next room to me in the labour ward said to the nurse "There is only her. There was only one person who gave birth on Friday evening." She told the nurse that she had been the only other person on the labour ward and that her baby had not been born until the early hours of Saturday morning. The nurse listened to her and then looked at me in disbelief and said out loud "You! of course! that's what's happened to you!" The nurse had been on the ward when the sister had discovered that I did not smoke and she went away as quickly as she could to find her and tell her.

Meanwhile one of the pupil midwives from the labour ward who had brought the reporters and porters down to the ward came up to my bed and asked me

528C. if she could be the nurse to have her photograph taken with me to go in the newspaper. She said that some reporters had come to take some pictures of me for the newspapers and they did not mind if one of the nurses was photographed with me. My horror of being photographed, of men seeing me in my nightdress and of details about me being made public rose inside me and I said "no, no, don't let them near me!" I was nearly in tears about it and at first the pupil midwife was surprised that I was not pleased about it and then she became really alarmed when she realized that my horror was genuine because she had not meant to upset me like that.

The Sister who had just been found by the other nurse came rushing down the ward to my bed and asked the Pupil Midwife what on earth was going on. The Sister looked at me saying "I don't want them to see me in bed" and without waiting to let the Pupil Midwife explain she told the nurses off. She demanded to know what was going on and how reporters had got in here. She said that she wanted to know what the Porters were doing in her office when she had only been across in the ward opposite for a moment helping the Sister in there to do the drugs. She said that she had been called back to find Porters going through the patients medical files in her office which were confidential and they had no right to. She told the nurses furiously that NO ONE was to be allowed to ask for details of the patients medical history and be given them which the nurses had done. The Sister

529c. was furious about it but the nurses seemed surprised as they had thought it was alright for them to do it as the Press quite often photographed a Mother and new born baby in a hospital bed for a newspaper. The Sister said that it was alright when it was someone famous but people like that did not come to this hospital and if it was me they wanted to photograph then she wanted to know what on earth was going on because that was a very different story from what my parents had told her. She said that the reporters were to go and that if I did not want to see them then the hospital Authorities could remove them by force since they were certainly upsetting me. I felt relieved but as she went to the door and firmly told the reporters to go, one of them tried to insist that he see me. He said he would see for himself if I refused and he said that he would talk to me himself because he wanted to see me and he said that he could probably persuade me to change my mind or at least get himself some kind of story. I was in a state of terror and if he had come up to my bed with his camera I would probably have gone completely mad. The Sister argued that I was too sick to see him and she would have stopped him getting to my bed at any cost. He was really cheeky and he said that if I was that ill why wasn't I in Intensive Care. He said that he knew the Intensive Care and that he had been in there before as the staff were very good about letting him in to see people. The Sister was furious and she told them all that they had no right to be in the hospital and that the hospital Authorities could get the Police to remove them if necessary so they had better go quickly and so

530c. they went off very reluctantly.  
She came back to my bed with several nurses, she checked the charts on my bed and spoke to the other patient asking her if she was sure that I had had a cardiac arrest on the Labour Ward. When she said yes, the sister asked me if I had. I thought about it and I said "Well, my breathing stopped," as if I was sure it was nothing more than that and I said "It was the injection they gave me, everything went black." She listened to me and then turned furiously to the nurses and said "I wouldn't put it past them upstairs (meaning the Labour Ward Staff) to do something like that and then send her down here (meaning to the Maternity Ward) as if nothing had happened. I bet something HAS happened. They've done this to her and said nothing and we've been down here looking for her wheelchair!". She asked me if I could usually walk normally and I said yes. It was only then that I realized fully that because I was so weak and my legs were so numb they had thought that I was normally some sort of severely handicapped person and that was why they had asked about my own wheelchair or if I used crutches and why they thought I should not have a baby. No one had even dreamed that I had been alright until I had walked into the hospital. No one from the ward I was in had seen me arrive at the hospital and no one from the Labour Ward had either. It was on the journey to the labour Ward that I had become unable to walk and I had only found out when I tried to stand at

531c. the Labour Ward door. Even the student nurse who took me up there had not seen me walk into casualty because the ambulance men had sat me in a wheelchair straight away. It had been so quiet for a Friday night that there was just no one who had seen me when I was alright and my parents had apparently told the staff that I was always like that because they always said that. I was just devastated because I could not prove to them that I was normally perfectly alright although they did believe me. The Sister was very doubtful about the whole thing and she went to the ward opposite and brought the Sister from that ward back with her. They stood by my bed while the Sister explained the whole situation to her saying "Look at her, we thought she came in here like it". She said that a rumour had apparently gone round the porter staff who had heard it from a domestic that the dials on my gas and air machine had gone berserk and they had told the local newspaper. She said that it was disgusting that even the local press had found before they, who were supposed to be looking after me, found out what had happened. She said that apparently metal had bent and clocks stopped all over Britain on Friday night and so the reporters from the National Press had come looking for me to see if anything else happened because this Uri Geller was about to do it again. She said that it was only the arrival of the reporters that had made them suspect that anything at all had gone on upstairs in the Labour Ward and that the Labour Ward Staff had sent me down to the ward without saying one word about it. She said that there

532c. were rumours flying around the whole hospital about what had happened to me, that the sister had made a mistake and let the nurses give me a massive drug overdose that had all but killed me, people were saying that I had actually been certified as dead when a nurse saw that I was still breathing, that a technician who was nothing to do with the Hospital had been found tampering about with my drip and that the Registrar had allowed a lot of people from the party that was on, into the delivery room to see the birth like they had come to see a blue film. She said that this was a hospital and rumours flew around like wild fire but even she was beginning to wonder what had gone on. After the sister from the other ward had looked at me and looked very seriously at my face and the way my arms were laying on top of the bedclothes she and the other sister went off to see about it and they told some nurses to come over to me. The nurses who arrived at my bed were really kind and explained gently that if I had had a cardiac arrest in the Labour Ward then I needed to be monitored as soon as they found out about it from the Doctors. Further down the ward quite a few people had gone into the office and it was obvious that there was an argument going on in there even though the office was outside the ward. In the midst of it all the Sister came out of it and walked up the ward as if she was really

533c. annoyed about it. She told the nurses as if she was furious about it that the Doctors would still not come to see me. She said that my G.P. had been specific about it that he alone would deal with me. She asked me if I minded if they got my own G.P. to come into the hospital to treat me as he was quite willing to do so and had specifically asked that no one else treat me. I felt sick with revulsion at the thought of him coming into the hospital to see me because I could not bear him near me at all. I said no I did not want him to come and that if I needed a Doctor to see me then the hospital ones were alright. I was suddenly afraid incase the baby had died and they were trying to get someone I knew to come in to tell me. A suffocating feeling came over me that they could not tell me face to face straight away, but I still had a picture of my baby being alive in my head and I was quite sure that she was still alive. I asked "IS the baby alright". and they said "Yes" as if they did not really know but they were saying it because it was not that which they were worried about. The colours around them were in harmony with what they were saying and so I knew what they were saying must be true. The Sister said to the nurses "see all she says is 'the baby, the baby, the baby' that's all she wants and all this is worrying her excessively. If only the Doctors would come and see her for themselves but they won't do it. The G.P. has given instructions that he will deal with her himself. Apparently theres been trouble during her pregnancy that went as far as the Local Executive

534c. Council because she was terrified of Hospitals. Her G.P. says that she will only trust him and he will see to her as he has dealt with her for years but when you talk to her it's completely the opposite! She told the nurses that I needed medical attention but the Doctors would not even monitor me in case the machines frightened me as I was so against orthodox medicine. They had been told firmly to give me no treatment at all although they said that it might be better if I was kept in for a day or two in case anything happened and that they were going to speak to my parents about it all again. She had to go back to the office again and she left the nurses looking after me. I knew that it was MY MOTHER who was so terrified of hospitals and who was so against orthodox medicine and that the Sister's version of the trouble with the Executive Council seemed to me to deviate from the truth. I did not know how the Hospital had found out about all that as I had not wanted them to know about any trouble as I had wanted my baby to start life with a clean record on her file, and no trouble on it. What had happened was not my fault during my pregnancy. I had only written to the Executive Council because I had a genuine complaint and I had not actually complained. I had only been terrified of coming into hospital because I just had a terrible premonition that I was going to die; I did not have the hysterical terror of hospitals that my Mother had as she would have been hysterical.

535c. ages ago and would have been really abusive to the nurses. I was not afraid of them at all I was only worried when, for some reason that I was really mystified about, they seemed to be accusing me of what had gone wrong when I would not have expected them to even though I was so used to being blamed whenever anything went wrong at all. The nurses who were with me were really sweet and friendly to - wards me when they realized that I really did want my baby, and that there seemed to have been some kind of mistake because they had been told the wrong thing. They sat me up quite willingly and tried to find me some more pillows so that I would be more comfortable as the back rest on the bed did not work properly, but as there were no spare pillows on the ward and none of the patients had as many as they needed they just had to make me as uncomfortable as they could with just the two pillows I had. It seemed so stupid that the Hos- pital had expensive drugs and equipment that had wrecked my body but that they did not have a simple inexpensive pillow to make me comfortable. If I had anything to say about orthodox medicine it was that perhaps the one simple injection of Pethidine they had given me would have been alright for anyone else but because I had never ever been allowed any kind of medi- cation whatsoever by My Mother, what the Hospital had given me had completely knocked me out because my whole system was completely clear of any drugs even so much as ever having taken an aspirin and so what they gave me had such a powerful effect on me that my body

536c. had fought it. That was what it all felt like anyway and so perhaps it would have been better for them not to have treated me during my labour but now that it was too late and the damage was done, it was too late to give me no treatment now. I needed some kind of help but it seemed that if I got any it had to be from my G.P. and I could not stand him near me. I had asked for a woman doctor in the first place and if I had been able to get one as I had tried to I would not have been in the position that I had tried so hard to avoid.

The nurses left me when they saw that I was alright and for about twenty minutes after that there seemed to be a lot of people going in and out of the Sisters Office and an awful row going on in there. Amidst all the confusion and obviously an argument that was going on with the Doctors in the office, The black midwifery Sister who had been on duty on the labour ward when I was admitted, came along the ward to my bed with a group of Pupil Midwives. She had obviously been sent for and looked as if she was in a state of great anxiety. She brought the Pupil Midwives right up to my bed and she told me in a voice that she was obviously trying to keep calm that these were the nurses who were with me when I had my baby as if she was introducing them to me. She said to me "Say hello to them, Don't you remember them" I looked at them and knew that they were not the nurses who had been with me either when I

537c. arrived on the Labour Ward or at any time, including the delivery, that I had been in there. These nurses were sort of Chinese as there were a lot of Chinese girls doing midwifery at that time and although the nurses at the delivery had worn masks and I had not been able to see their faces I still knew that none of them were Chinese by their eyes as their masks did not cover their eyes. These ones had 'Chinese' eyes and their skin was different colour from those who had been with me at the delivery. These girls were also smaller. Although the room had been crowded with people, I knew that no one as small as these girls had been present at the delivery, and I knew by the height of the bed. The bed that I was on had been the same height as the trolley they had brought me down from the Labour Ward on and the trolley had been the same height as the delivery table. I knew because I had climbed over from both without any help. If they had been at different levels I couldn't have managed it at all so the bed was the same height as the delivery table and these nurses standing beside my bed were just not tall enough to have been the people in the delivery room. All the people who had stood around the delivery table had been much taller and the shortest of all of them had been the Registrar who had taken charge of the delivery and when he had stood beside my bed with the consultant and the Houseman on the Saturday morning he had been taller than these girls. Straight away one of them spoke to me very simply as if she was speaking to a child and as if she was saying exactly what she had been told to say beforehand by the sister, because she

538c. looked at the Sister carefully before she said "Hello Anne, we were the nurses who were with you when you had your baby. Do you remember us?" I knew that they had not been there but the Sister glared at me as if she was trying to keep control of herself in a very desperate situation and I was terrified of her. The Sister said to me insistently "These WERE the nurses who were with you WEREN'T they?" as if she was trying to force the words out of my mouth. I reluctantly said "yes" to be polite but it was obvious that I didn't really want to and that I was only being polite because she was forcing me to. The Pupil Midwife who had spoken to me looked surprised as if she had expected me to say no and that she did not quite approve of the way the Sister had been rather forceful. She seemed to think that the Sister should have let me decide whether to say yes or no, and it struck me as if they were trying to get me to identify who had been present at the delivery and who had not. The Sister said quite firmly to the nurses that they could see for themselves that I was unable to recognize who was there and who was not if I was saying that they had been there. Then she made the nurses that she had brought with her leave my bed and go straight away and I have never seen anything like the way she quickly hurried them away from me and out of the ward down to the office without so much as saying another word to me or letting the Pupil midwives have any chance to speak to me which

539c. was not what they seemed to expect. After they had gone some of the other mothers asked what was going on and they were told that they had been trying to see whether I would be able to recognise the people who had been present in the delivery room, and no one seemed to approve of what was going on. After a while the Sister came onto the ward to serve the dinner from the trolley and one of the nurses asked her what she thought about it and the Sister looked across at me and said to her that she thought that something HAD happened to me but there was no way of proving it and the only thing left was to wait and speak to my parents again, but she did not think much of them.

Dinner was served and I ate from a tray beside my bed and left most of it because I could not seem to feed myself properly. After the dinner things had been cleared away the ward went quiet again because some of the 'mothers' had gone to see if the shop was open so that they could buy some cigarettes. A nurse came along to my bed and brought me two yellow tablets which she told me to take and then she told me that my baby was fine. She said that Great Ormond Street had telephoned and said that they were not going to operate because they were going to pass the blockage through without an operation. She seemed very cold as she said what she seemed to have been told to say but the colours around her seemed to move around her uneasily as if she herself was uneasy about what she was saying to me and although I believed her I

540c could not forget what I saw around her. Some minutes after I had taken the two yellow tablets that she gave me I felt my body feel suddenly weaker, heavier and more difficult to move again but my mind became able to think more and more clearly in a strange sort of way. A baby started crying in its cot and I began to feel tears running down my own cheeks too. Its mother was not on the ward and I thought of my own baby in Great Ormond Street. No one came to see to the baby that was crying and I wondered if any one would go to my baby for me if she cried in Great Ormond Street. A nurse did come along to the crying baby after a long time and she took a bottle of glucose and water from a trolley on the ward and pushed the baby in her cot along to the nursery to give it to her and soon the crying stopped.

After that the ward was even quieter and I could hear the tiny sounds of the other babies in their cots around the ward. Most of them were asleep, cosily wrapped in their white cot sheets and lying on their sides in their transparent cots. Just occasionally one of them stirred and they were beautiful to watch. How I loved every one of those tiny new born babies because each one was so beautiful but it was my own baby who I loved in a very special way and my heart ached and ached to be with her. Pictures of my baby floated into my mind as I thought of her and I 'saw' that she was in a different place from

541c. where I had 'seen' her before in Great Ormond street as if they had moved her incubator and something was going to happen. At that moment my head jerked sharply and quite involuntarily towards the clock in the ward where I saw that the time was exactly two o'clock as if that memory was planting itself on my mind so sharply that I would never forget it. In the picture that I was watching at the same time in my mind which also had a clock that said two o'clock, I saw two women in white gowns give my baby an injection and then move her in her incubator which must have been a portable one. Far from what the nurse had told me that my baby was not going to have an operation I knew that my baby was being given an anaesthetic for an operation.

Moments later a dizzy sort of feeling came over me. Even though I had never experienced an anaesthetic before I instinctively knew what it was and I felt that I was actually physically experiencing exactly what my baby was going through. We had been so close with her inside me, day and night for eight long months so that so soon after being separated, distance was no object for me to feel exactly what was happening to her. It was like the pains from a phantom leg after amputation and far from both hospitals trying to keep from me what was happening, I then watched her whole operation on a kind of film screen with coloured pictures in my mind. Also because I was so weak from having been sedated I could not move to get up and go and find a

542c. nurse to talk to. I was too weak to talk anyway and so well sedated that where my body could not move, my mind stayed utterly alert and I was unable to turn it away from what it was showing me. Even then I did want to know every detail of what was going on with my baby. I wanted to know how she was and I was also scientifically interested in what was happening. I was not at all squeamish about operations but whether I wanted to watch it or not my mind was fixed of its own accord on my daughter's operation and I saw every detail of it whether I wanted to watch it or not. The people concerned with operating on her seemed very efficient and very capable but one thing struck me about the whole thing and that was that they had a job to find anything wrong with her at all. The most awful thing about seeing it was that no one was aware that I was seeing it. Certainly the people operating had no idea that the Mother of the child they were operating on was invisibly present and watching every move they made and certainly no one in the ward I was in would ever have guessed that I was watching something that no one there could see and that I was not even supposed to know about. It was like being in two places at once and seeing what was going on in both places at the same time as if it was quite normal to do it. If the Doctors had been open with me and told me what was going

543c. on, they would also have been more understanding and then someone might have had a moment to sit and talk to me instead of leaving me quite alone with it all. They thought I was sleeping and resting but instead of that my mind was working over-time in my relaxed body and if only I had been able to talk to someone I could have tried to explain what I could see. Instead of that I was so utterly alone and even the nurses seemed to try to avoid even looking in my direction as they passed my bed as if they were afraid I might call them over or something. I felt too ill to move or speak to ease what I was going through and on top of all the worry I had about my baby I knew that the nurse had lied to me and that she had told me directly the opposite of the truth about my daughter's operation which hurt me more than anything.

Right down at the end of the ward the Sister and a nurse were settling a baby when into the ward walked Mr. Auckland my father's vicar announcing himself to the Sister loudly and importantly as Canon Auckland and saying to her that he was the Dean of Lewisham and that he had come to see Anne Maple. He asked her how I was and she spoke to him at some length in a low voice. I felt furious because he had no right whatsoever to know any details about me as he was no relative of mine and I did not want him to know any of my business at all but at the sound of his long name the Sister became very respectful as if he was the Lord Mayor or something and from the way that he presented himself at the ward and asked with some authority to be

544 c. told how I was she just supposed that he had a right to know and told him. He asked her where I was and I expected her to say that it was not visiting time or at least to ask him to wait outside while she came and asked me if I wanted to see him or not and to give me a moment to pop out to the loo and to do my hair and cover my shoulders with my dressing gown out of decency but she just pointed me out and indicated that he was free to come up to my bed. Even as she pointed me out his eyes had quickly looked around and found which bed I was in and he was standing looking at me while he finished talking to the Sister which annoyed me as I would never ever have wanted that man to see me in bed and I felt that it was so unfair that people could just walk into hospital wards and see anyone in a situation that would normally be quite private. I managed to slip further under the covers so that they came up as high as possible to my neck but my shoulders were still showing as the Jumble Sale where I had bought my nighties had not had any with sleeves and there was no chance of reaching my dressing gown without getting out of bed which I could not do and which would then have let him see even more of me in only a nightdress anyway. As Mr. Auckland came nearer I could see that his attitude towards me had changed considerably since our friendly chat that morning on the telephone and

545c. from the look on his face I could see that he was determined to be quite firm with me. As he walked up the ward dressed completely in his long black clerical dress and coat he looked just like the Devil as his clothes swirled around him as he walked and I knew for certain that whatever he said or did to me could never hurt me because I belonged quite surely to God and he had no power over me.

One of the nurses who came out of the nursery fetched a chair for him and brought it and put it beside my bed as soon as she saw him come into the ward and before he had said who he was or asked for me, as if the nurses knew that he was expected on the ward. I had only spoken to Mr. Auckland on the telephone that morning and I had not said anything to anyone on the ward about it but it seemed to me that Mr. Auckland must have telephoned the ward and made an arrangement to come outside visiting time without anybody having asked me about it which I thought was a cheek. I felt quite desolate about it because I was too tired to be bothered with his visit but I made up my mind to use the opportunity to get him to understand that I wanted no involvement with Norman or the Clark family at all. As he sat down I saw that he did not look pleased with me at all, he said that he had been to see my parents and had told them that he was coming to see me. He said that they would not be coming in to see me that afternoon because they had got to go out somewhere. He paused as if he expected me to ask him where they were going but a suffocating

546c. feeling came over me and I was not going to let him make me beg to know something and give him the chance of deciding not to tell me. He was not going to get the upper hand over me and so I quietly replied that I knew they were not coming, without letting him know whether or not I knew where they had gone. He looked even more annoyed with me when I said that and he asked me what the hospital had told me about the baby. I said that they had told me that she was not going to be operated on but that they were going to pass the blockage through without an operation. He smiled at me as if I was a bit simple and he said that was right that she was not going to be operated on. I knew that she was being operated on right at that moment because I could 'see' it and from the colours around that vicar I knew he was telling lies too!. He seemed to be getting an immense satisfaction out of keeping the truth from me but I just said nothing about it to him and placed all my trust in God. Mr. Auckland sat there and began to try to be firm with me again by saying that he wanted to know when Norman and I were going to get back together again, and he spoke as if he was making a firm statement about it and not asking a question. I replied firmly that it had all been over months and months ago and that I was absolutely finished with Norman. I told him that I wanted nothing more to do with the Clarkes at all and he began to look alarmed when he realized that I was quite serious about it and he told me

547C. that I was talking utter rubbish. He said that Norman was the Father and that he had rights to his child, and that I was going to have to face the fact that the Clarks were going to have to be involved. Panic started to rise inside me when he said that and I said that they were not. I said that I had already been to see about getting an injunction to stop Norman coming near me or my baby. Mr. Auckland looked annoyed and asked me where I had gone to see about it. I told him that I had gone to Greenwich Magistrates court and asked about it there and he was furious and said that I should have gone to him about it. He said that was what the church was for nowadays and as he was my vicar he would deal with that sort of thing because the new role of the church was to take a greater part in peoples lives especially in welfare work. I told him that he was not my vicar because if I had ever gone to church it was to my mothers Roman Catholic Church and I said to him that legal work was for a solicitor not a clergyman. I felt worried because I knew that Mr. Auckland had spoken up for people in court before by using his position as Dean of Lewisham and that he had got them let off whatever they had done. This time it was Normans side that he was on and I knew that I would not stand a chance if Mr. Auckland started making his voice heard in a court. Someone might think that as a vicar he was in a position to know what was best for both families but because he hardly knew me he did not know anything at all about what was best for my baby and I. Mr. Auckland was quiet for a moment because he knew that what I had said was true and then he tried to threaten me again by saying that even if he was not my vicar, he was still my fathers vicar

548C . and Norman and his families' vice. He said that my father was actually the babys next of kin as he signed all the medical forms legally in the place of me having no husband. I said very firmly that I was my babys next of kin and that I had signed her forms but Mr. Auckland just smiled and said "So that's why they had to call your parents to the hospital was it?" Then he shook his head with a sneer on his face and said "You made your mark on the paper but your parents had to sign it!". I knew that was not so and I said so but Mr. Auckland seemed to think he knew better than what I was telling him. Mr. Auckland told me firmly that my parents were my babys next of kin now and that I was to do what was right for the child and hand her over to my parents to bring up, if I would not marry Norman and let his family bring her up. He told me that it would not be too hard for me to sign the forms to hand her to my parents and that it was not like adoption because I would still be able to see my baby unless I did not want to and then he could arrange for her to be properly adopted so that I did never see her again. I told him very firmly that no one else was going to have my baby and that there was no question of anyone else bringing her up. He looked at me as if he thought I was being very difficult about it and he said that my parents had been very, very good to me and that I had been a difficult burden to them that they had borne patiently for many years together. He said that I was

549c. very lucky that they would not only take over my baby and look on her as their own but they would overlook all the trouble that I had brought them and take care of me as well. I listened to Mr. Auckland and knew that everybody who knew my parents thought the same simply because that was what my parents kept saying to people as an excuse to cover up their own lives but I knew that it was no use trying to explain that to Mr. Auckland. Panic and frustration rose in my heart and head with a physical pain that made me find it hard to breathe because talking to him was like coming up against a brick wall as he would not budge an inch to consider my point of view and I was having to use energy that I was too ill to spare to try to keep talking to him. Even then talking was not easy and I felt that his insistence was pushing me over the limit of what I was well enough to endure.

Mr. Auckland said that he had spoken to my parents himself that morning and that they had spoken for a longtime about the situation. He said that if I did not want my parents to have my baby then I must marry Norman so that he could supervise me with the baby or I would not be allowed to have her and he would see to that himself. I told him that it was Norman who needed supervising near little girls and I said that for my child's sake I would never marry him. Mr. Auckland looked furious and asked me what I meant by that and then without waiting for a reply, he told me not to dare to start saying a word against Norman because he came from a very decent family. He said that Norman was a very kind and understanding person who was ready to provide a home for my baby and I because he cared about being a father

550C to his child. I was so determined that I really never wanted anything more to do with Norman and his family and I told Mr. Auckland that Norman could not actually prove that he was the father and that he did not have any 'rights' to us. I told him that anyone trying to involve themselves or the Clark family in mine or my baby's affairs could find themselves in serious trouble and that Norman could find himself faced with a rape charge too. I said that I had signed a declaration at the DHSS that I was going to have nothing whatsoever to do with my baby's father and that it had been whether or not I had been raped that everyone I had gone to for help had been concerned with. First Mr. Auckland looked furious and asked me who had given me any such advice and then he looked puzzled and annoyed and said that he would be the first person to defend Norman against such accusations, but when he said that he looked as if he was beginning to doubt his own words. He looked at me seriously as if he was beginning to wonder if he should consider my side of what had happened because I had stuck firmly to what I had said since the beginning of the whole affair. Then he seemed to reconsider it all and he said to me quietly and firmly that it was not me who counted anymore, it was the baby and the baby needed two proper parents at any cost. He asked me where all the love had gone that I had previously had for Norman and he repeated "Where has that gone?". I firmly told him that I had