“Elanor, we should go for a walk. There is someone who needs our help.” The speaker was a slim well dressed man who appeared to be in his early thirties, good looking, with hawk like Egyptian features.

“Your help don’t you mean?” Elanor smiled at him. She was becoming used to Luke’s sudden decisions to go somewhere. Elanor was a tall woman of African appearance who spoke with a clipped English accent. She stood almost a hand span taller than Luke.

“This person needs more than human help, that’s true, but I cannot give that unless you ask me.”

“You mean there’s nothing supernatural? So you can do no more than I unless I ask you?”

“It is one of the constraints on my avatar. I am not supposed to interfere in ordinary human matters unless I am asked, or I act purely as a human. With training you could do what is needed, but for now someone must ask me when we assess the situation.”

“Yes - like that time you rescued that child from traffic.” They’d been walking along a busy Paris street when a child had darted into the traffic. Luke had leaped in front of a car and thrown the child to her. He’d been struck by the car, disappearing beneath the wheels. Somehow she had caught the child, the traffic had stopped without a major pile-up, and Luke had emerged unharmed from underneath one of the cars.

“Exactly - I had to operate as a human.” Luke smiled. “Now if you’re ready we should go.”

“I’ll just grab my bag.”

Luke took her hand and they stepped forward into a rainbow swirl. A moment later they stepped onto the roof of a building. It was dusk, there was a cool breeze, and nearby a young woman was standing on the parapet, holding onto a support that was probably used by the window washers.

“Please help her Luke. Do the best you can.”

“Between you and I we will save her.” Luke smiled at her. Then he tapped her forehead with his fingers. Her perception changed - there were lines and swirls of light everywhere - the energies that flowed through the world, while Luke and the woman were sheathed in ligh. Luke’s aura was brilliant pure colors, the woman’s dirty agitated swirls with an odd shape like a large growth on her left side. That’s odd, she thought.

“Yes, she looks like she is possessed, but that is not an evil or malicious entity. I will talk to her first, but you approach behind me. At some point she will stumble and you must catch her. Watch what I do.”

With that he began to glow, becoming a luminous being of translucent light that floated in the air. His hair and skin lightened and huge wings appeared at his back. He was now a figure of unearthly beauty that made her heart ache to look at. His feet and lower legs merged into a cloud that stretched away into the distance, growing larger the further away it was. The angelic form before her was merely the tip of a little finger compared to the rest. The girl would see only the angelic figure.

Luke moved toward the girl, Elanor following behind. “Child, what are you doing here? Come away.” The musical voice sent shivers down her spine.

“Leave me alone, I want to die.” the girl did not look around.

“Everything that lives dies eventually. But if you take your own life it will go badly for you on the other side.”

“I don’t care!”

“You should care, because you will have to go through this again and again until you get it right. There is a better way. I can help you.”

This time she turned to look at him, and gasped. “Who? What?”

“I am the Archangel Lukeios. If you let me I can help you.”

Elanor saw a second angelic figure, a pale echo of the first. “I am also talking with the entangled spirit, but she cannot see that.” That was Luke’s ordinary voice in her head.

“My baby’s dead. You can’t help. I want to die!”

“If you kill yourself now it will go very badly for your daughter. Her spirit is entangled with yours.”

The woman began to cry, softly at first, but they became huge racking sobs, threatening her precarious balance. Luke stretched out a hand into the woman’s aura, while the second angel stretched a hand to the blob. “Be ready.” Luke cautioned. The second angel pulled on the blob, and it looked to Elanor like nets of light parted. The blob pulled free, and settled into the likeness of a young girl.

The woman gasped and lost her balance. Elanor darted forward, catching her and then using her strength to lift the woman bodily from the parapet, and cradle her like a child. The woman howled against her breasts, Elanor made soothing noises and rocked her from side to side. She began to sing as African women do to quiet an upset child.

Within a few minutes the woman quieted, her sobs ceasing. She turned to look into Elanor’s eyes. “I’m so sorry! I don’t know what happened! I don’t want to kill myself now, I feel much better.”

“Can you walk? I might put you down.” Elanor set her gently on the roof. “What happened to get you into such a state? I’m Elanor by the way.”

“I’m Sonya.” She paused, collecting her thoughts. Her face looked sad, drawn. “About two years ago my husband and daughter were killed in a car accident. I was devestated. She was my world! Everything just fell apart!”

Elanor put her arm aroung Sonya. “I know what you mean. My husband died when I was twenty four, and pregnant with our third child. I wanted to die, but I had the children to look after. Eventually I got through it, though it took me a long time to heal. There comes a time when you have to let them go.”

Sonya nodded meaningfully. “I didn’t have any other children, and I just went to pieces. I feel as if someone has lifted a heavy weight off me.”

“That’s because your daughter’s spirit is no longer tangled in your aura.” Luke pronounced. He was in his normal human form now, though the other angel and the spirit of the girl were still there. “I’m Lukeios, or Luke for short.”

“Like the angel I saw.” Sonya’s voice trailed off. “What did you say about my daughter?”

“Your husband moved on after the funeral. He is fine, he will be reborn eventually. Your daughter was terrified by her death and very confused, and tried to cling to you as the only stable thing left in her world. She followed you around.”

“How do you know? I felt her following me around, I could see her out of the corners of my eyes, and I would dream about her.”

“I’m psychic.” Luke responded with an angelic smile. “But what happened after that? You did something that caused her spirit to become entangled with yours.”

Sonya looked bewildered for a moment. “Oh, I went to see a medium. She told me Anna was with me, and that if I opened myself up I would feel her and be able to see her. She did some ceremony to help open my aura. At least that’s what she said. But it only made matters worse.”

“That so called medium did much harm. She entangled Anna’s spirit with yours, and that put both of you completely out of balance, and neither of you could move on. That’s why you wanted to kill yourself.” Luke explained. “But if you had killed yourself, you would still be in the same mess, and both of you would be doomed to haunt the earth until someone like me came along.”

“What do you mean?”

“When you die, someone comes to collect you. Normally your spirit hangs around the physical world until the funeral, sometimes a few days more. Then you move on into the afterlife.” Luke explained. “But in your condition, neither of you would be able to move on, so you would stay as earthly ghosts until you managed to untangle yourselves. That could have taken hundreds of years, or longer. I have untangled you and your daughter. She is waiting to say goodbye before she moves on.”

“How? What are you?” Sonya looked from Luke to Elanor and back again.

Luke smiled benevolently. “I am not an ordinary human. I can do these things. Now see!” He tapped her forehead with his fingers. She gasped and looked around.

The angel came forward, leading the spirit of the girl. “That’s the angel I saw before! And Anna? Is that Anna?”

“Yes mama, I was your daughter while I was alive. Are you all right now?”

“Oh Anna, I think I’m fine now. Are you all right? Let me hold you, let me hug you.”

“Mama, you can’t, I’m a spirit, you’re physical. When I died I was terrified, I didn’t know what was happening. I wanted you to hold me, I wanted to be alive, but all I did was cause you pain. There were other spirits trying to help me, but I ignored them or chased them away. Then you went to that medium, and she let me into your aura, and I was trapped! And you picked up my distress and became suicidal. I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean that to happen.”

“Anna, Anna, I’m fine now, are you all right now?”

“Yes mama, the angel is going to lead me into the afterlife. Can you forgive me?”

“Of course! There’s nothing to forgive. I just wish I could have helped you sooner.”

Anna smiled. “Then it’s time for me to say goodbye, mama. You take care.”

“Wait! Will I see you again?”

Anna looked at the angel. It spoke in that musical voice. “It is time for Anna to move on, you will not meet like this again. But she can visit in your dreams from time to time. You will be together in a future life.”

“Oh. Goodbye Anna. Take care, visit me in my dreams sometimes.” Sonya looked both happy and sad.

“Goodbye mama! Be happy!” She took the angel’s hand, and grew into a young woman. They faded out. Sonya was smiling, tears streaming down her face.

“Where are they going?” Sonya turned to Elanor, then Luke. “What happens after death? Will I see her again? Why did she turn into a fully grown woman?”

“I have seen my dead husband in my dreams. Spirits are born over and over, so what you think of as your little girl was a fully grown woman before. She may have been your great grand mother, or an aunt or something like that.” Elanor provided. “Luke can explain it better.”

Luke smiled gently. “Life after death is a very big topic. I think we should take you home, we can discuss things along the way. How did you get onto the roof?”

Sonya nodded. “I feel a lot more positive now. I’m still sad, but I know she is all right, and we said goodbye. There are stairs over there. Erm, there might be security guards at the bottom. How did you find me? How did you know what to do? How do you know angels?”

“Let’s just say I am not a normal human. One of the guides told me you were on this roof, so we came here as quickly as we could.” He led the way to the fire stairs. “I will go first, Elanor last. Fortunately we arrived before you did anything. Now, death and the afterlife is a very big topic, you spend years in school studying geography, history and social studies, but you spend almost no time on death and the afterlife. Of course, religions have most of it wrong anyway.”

Luke flexed his shoulders as they walked down the stairs. “Firstly, when someone dies, it can take a while before they realise they are dead. Often they are confused, possibly terrified, especially if they died suddenly. If you die of old age or a long illness, you are better prepared, because helpers will visit in your dreams and explain things to you.”

“Helpers?”

“Yes, spirits of others who have passed on before you, normally relatives like grandparents. In an accident like what happened to Anna, it may take a little while for helpers to arrive, and they might not be known to her.”

“All her grandparents are still alive. Some of my grandparents are still alive.”

“Yes, when helpers arrived, she did not know them. Normally when the helpers arrive, they explain that you are dead. That may take a little while to sink in. Most people realise by the time of their funeral. The funeral is very important, that is the ceremony where the living say their farewells to the dead person, and the dead person realises it is time to move on. That doesn’t always happen though. Sometimes people will hang around for years as disembodied spirits.”

“Ghosts?”

“Not all ghosts are departed spirits, but departed spirits that hang around the physical are ghosts. Once you move on into the afterlife, you firstly deal with what you expect to happen. What you believe from your religious upbringing will have a big effect on what happens once you enter the afterlife. Once you have dealt with that, you can heal from all the issues that plagued you while you were alive. You would usually hang around with friends and relatives and like minded people. You can learn things, you can help others, and so on. Eventually you will be reborn amongst your kindred spirits, with a plan for lessons to learn in your new life.”

“So what religion is the right one?”

“Oh, none of them and all of them. They all have many things wrong, and all have some things right. Stick with the one you were born into - it is right for you in this life. Do not believe blindly, be open to new ideas, but always test new ideas to see if they contain a grain of truth. Above all, try to do no harm, and you will be on the right track.”

“It seems I should have a lot of questions, but I can’t think of any. I feel a bit spaced out at the moment. I want to know more though.”

“Yes, you have been through a very traumatic time, but it has ended well. You will see us again, we can talk more about this next time. For now, the best thing for you is rest, lots of rest, and a good meal afterwards. Do you have relatives or friends you can visit?”

“My mother will be happy to see me. I might go and stay with her for a few days. Can I tell her I spoke with an angel? Did I really speak with an angel?”

“Angels and guides do exist.” Luke said carefully. “You can tell your mother you spoke with one, as long as she will not think you crazy. Tell her you finally said goodbye to Anna, and now you and she are at peace.”

Elanor and Luke walked Sonya to her apartment. They fed her and settled her in a comfortable arm chair with her cordless phone. Before they left, Luke tapped her on the forehead again. “Be at peace.”

They walked toward her front door, through a rainbow swirl and into Elanor’s apartment. “I feel good about that!” Elanor said to Luke. “Will she remember everything? Will she be all right on her own?”

“I restored her to her normal perceptions, everything before will seem like a dream. I think she will be fine now.”