My friend and long-time paralegal has the nickname "Cookie"--- not only because she is always cooking, but she is always feeding everyone. This goes beyond simply offering coffee and tea and cookies--- literally --- but in offering knowledge and insight and hard-won research, advice and kindness and true concern.

Despite the often overwhelming nature of what we have all taken on and the sheer numbers of people in distress throughout this country, I have never known Cookie to turn away from anyone and leave them without help. It is her nature to defend and to help and to try no matter what the odds are.

If that weren't true, she wouldn't have come through all the "many waters" with me and stood strong through all the trials and adversities we have taken on together. She has suffered along with me, and I think sometimes that she has suffered more, because her heart is simpler and more open.

She hasn't had the buffers of certain hard experiences and conflicts and training and so much else that went into making me --- even as a sword is forged in fire, and the temper of steel is folded in flame--- instead, Cookie has undertaken the work as an Innocent, a paralegal who knew that "something was wrong" and who followed her instinct to find the truth of the whole monstrous fraud.

I remember the day when it finally all hit home and she realized with certainty that yes, it really is as bad as she ever thought, and worse than she ever imagined.

This is what I call the "Run Screaming Into the Bushes Moment"---- the inescapable moment when the monstrous nature of the Great Fraud comes home and outrage and despair and confusion and disappointment and helplessness all fight together, seeking to find some overall result.

She just stood there, transfixed, like we used to do as children playing a game of "Statue" --- half way between my kitchen and my living room, coffee cup in hand.

We hadn't been working together all that long, a little over a year, before it all took shape and she understood what we were fighting against-----and for. There was a long, long moment before she moved again, lifted her head and looked me right in the eye and said, "This is for real, isn't it?"

I knew how she felt. I nodded. "Yes, it's for real."
The Monster Under the Bed. The things you don't want to think about. The shadowy Bogey Men stealing children. The corruption of everything you believed in. Your country, your church, even your own sanity assailed.

I waited. I didn't know what to expect. I knew there was an even-odds chance that she would just quietly go her own way, back to her known world and a job with an admiralty law firm, a secure paycheck and a fat health insurance policy and all the things I certainly couldn't offer her as a land jurisdiction judge.

But she looked it right in the eye and after those few moments of grappling with the terror and the enormity of the fraud, she shook her head a tiny bit and straightened her shoulders unconsciously, and seemed to sink her feet more firmly into the carpet. That's when I knew she wasn't going to run.

She walked over to the table and took a big, fat stack of paperwork, files, letters and research questions, turned around to me, shook her head and said, "When do you need these back from me?"

And that was that. Cookie, my Paralegal, has been with me ever since. Through thick, through thin, up hill, down dale, and every where in every season since we have slogged and slaved and shared it all together.

Those of you who have had a close working relationship with someone that has deepened over time into a true friendship--- the kind of friendship where you don't have to say anything to be understood --- can understand why Cookie is important to me, personally, but I don't think I can explain all the ways that she is and has been important in the overall struggle.

My name has become famous and some would say, infamous. Her name is hardly known at all, but it is because of her hard work and her "bird dog" instincts that so much that is useful to me and to the overall result, has come to light. It's the endless hours she has spent, the days nose down doing legal research, digging through piles of old law tomes in archives and book repositories, libraries and micro-fiche collections..... that has built the bulwark and provided the confirmation of so much of the evidence that we have nailed down.

I want to thank all of you who are sending your "Cookie Jar Money" to help provide the extra funds needed for her diagnostic care. I know that many are making a sacrifice to do so, and doing it anyway. Be sure that Cookie has been the most generous and hard-working helper I could ever ask for and your prayers and donations are very, very greatly appreciated.

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Editors note: If you want to help her financially with this diagnostic care here is the address.
Anna Maria Riezinger, c/o Box 520994, Big Lake, Alaska 99652
or via PayPal to avannavon@gmail.com