

Dark Night or Misty Morning

By Anna Von Reitz



This past week I have received all sorts of strange correspondence, including several letters from Satanists cackling with glee over the thought that my faith has been destroyed and taking great pleasure in the pain and damage they've caused by corrupting the churches.

But wait....

Let me explain....

Soren Kierkegaard is a Danish philosopher most famous for mapping out what he called "the dark night of the soul" — the existential crisis and experience of the Abyss, that all those who truly love must face.

I read Kierkegaard as a college Freshman. I sat in the back row and listened to my classmates as they struggled to comprehend what he was even talking about.

They had never been in the Abyss, where all lights fail. They had no context for his words.

But I knew it all well-enough even then.

As a young woman I watched my beloved Father die a day at a time, very slowly, very painfully, over the course of fifteen years. The only certainty in my life was the inevitability of his death and all the questions I had to ask of our Creator were fundamentals:

Why do you allow such suffering when you could end it?

Why do you allow disease while you express perfection?

Why should such a good man suffer and the wicked prosper?

What is the use of living, if it only ends like this?

I sat in the back of the classroom, hunched into my chair, swaddled in the Abyss. It had become a familiar darkness. I said nothing at all.

There was no shoulder to cry on. No security at all. I was fully cognizant of being alone in my own private despair being torn apart by unanswerable questions.

At the end of the class I trudged wearily homeward through the dying landscape of autumn. I listened, but there were no answers.

Very well, then, I thought, I do not need a God with no answers. I felt like a fool, caught believing in nonsense, asking the empty air for answers to unanswerable questions.

Why did it have to be my Father stricken with this loathsome disease?

Why not some venal, selfish, violent scum of a man instead?

Is there some mathematical Quotient of Suffering that must be met and extracted like a tax from Mankind?

And even when the suffering ends, the physical suffering, that is — what then?

Then all searing memories remain like a branding iron on your brain, marking you forever.

I was eighteen. I had, though I didn't know it, seven more years of this dread and agony to endure, this numbness of emotion, this Abyss to cross through.

Encased in its grip I had little care for earthly things. All the niceties of conversation and the company of other young people, all of it seemed stilted, uncomfortable, and meaningless.

I wanted to stop talking about mundane things and shout the news, "Hey, listen, you Dumb @\$&/)\$@s! We are dying. Every moment we live we are dying!"

I didn't even notice the sudden appearance of my College Mentor on the deserted Quadrangle. If I had looked up and seen him, I would have been grimly amused.

He was a man who had it all, for he was healthy and handsome and rich, the perfect wife, the perfect house, the perfect life. Even perfect kids. And all the other students he mentored that dark autumn were, more or less perfect, too.

I never once imagined that he had anything of value to offer me, the Black Sheep, the Token German awash in a sea of healthy, happy Scandinavians, Ole and Lena jokes, and Team Spirit.

Though I didn't know it at the time, he had glanced out his office window and seen me making my slow and dismal progress across the vast expanse of dead soggy leaves and dying grass.

I didn't know that he had thrown on his coat, a great flapping British raincoat, and rushed down the stairs two at a time to intercept me. I almost walked into him, I was so lost in my own thought.

When I did finally look up, he was within arm's reach. My glance shot upward and to my amazement I saw tears running down his face, just before he caught me up in a bear hug. He cradled my head against his chest and wept hard enough that I could feel his sobs.

"We have two kinds of students here," he said hoarsely. "All the innocent Norwegian farm kids, and those who are jaded early in life by the suffering they have already known."

No need to ask which group I belonged to.

"Come on," he said, "it's cold and starting to rain. I'll drive you home."

So began one of those friendships that you never can predict and which, from the outside, makes no earthly sense.

Slowly, like an anchor dragging behind a ship, he brought me back to the normal world, up and out of the Abyss.

That was my first plunge into existential crisis; it was hardly my last. From time to time I have been taken away into the Primal Darkness and wondered how I could return again?

Through it all, each and every time, I have been resurrected as someone new and made better by the experience.

We are all on a hero's quest to be the masters of our own lives. I suppose the Satanists are, too, just approaching the Crux of Creation from a different point of view.

This latest realization about Baal Worship embedded in the Church is another hammer blow among many, and yes, the familiar Abyss may gather round me, but remember that I have traversed the Abyss many times.

Always, I emerge from the Refiner's fire, a stronger, wiser, and better version of myself, more at peace, more alive.

No pain, no gain, they say— all such knowledge comes with a price. But I affirm that a faith built on falsehoods is no faith worth having. And this bitter pill, too, shall pass.

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