

My Nightstand



By Anna Von Reitz

My Nightstand is large, indeed, capacious for a nightstand. It has room to hold a lamp, a clock radio/CD player, water decanter, and lots of books. There is room for the Bible to have its own space with no other books below or on top of it, and room for a stack of ever-changing books of other kinds.

I try to keep a variety of books in that Big Stack. There are currently books about mathematics and medicine, law and journalism, Christian commentary, botany, mineralogy, early American History, and British History on my nightstand. They vary in difficulty from weighty and dense, jargon-filled tomes to light popular reading that keeps me connected.

Thank God I learned to read and to write and --miracle of miracles, considering my eye-hand coordination-- also learned to type.

There is always some new wonder or insight to discuss and share, some reason to be lost in contemplation. The whole glory of creation opens up, even in a jail cell, even in the loneliest and most remote place, if you have the companionship of a book. Late at night you will find me reading my share of the Bible and then trying to find a few extra minutes to address the Big Stack.

Life being life and things being what they are, some books stay in the Big Stack for months as I gradually macerate them a few pages at a time. Other books are there and gone like a spark from a bonfire. I devour "light reading" like a box of bon-bons--- and mostly with the same kind of pleasure.

A friend recently sent me a copy of Howard Storm's book, *My Descent into Death*. I recommend it. As I was hurtling through it I had to stop several times as the words on the page so perfectly and succinctly described my own experience of "Near Death" and the awareness I was given.

Coming so very near to death changes your life in ways you don't even begin to imagine at the time it happens. It opens doors and insights that were hidden before. It expands your capacity to feel and to love and to be connected. Isn't it strange that death can be a portal to new life and purpose? And yet, it is. It was for Howard Storm. It was for me, too. And like him, I feel compelled to say something, to raise my hand and share the experience.

Just on the other side of the veil separating the living from the dead, the Truth is fully known. There's never any reason to lie or keep secrets, because every tiny detail, every motivation, every circumstance is fully known. And not just about your life, about every life. It's all recorded on eternal Memorex.

If I can share nothing else and convey nothing else to people about that blessed intimacy with God and the Angels that we are all invited to share, regardless of our sins and regardless of our religions, let it be that there are no secrets. There are no lies.

So you have no reason to be anything but upright in your lives. You are free to be absolutely honest about all things, at all times, and it makes no sense to live your life any other way.

And if I am gifted to share any other insight with all of you, let it be that every effort you make to be good and to love the Earth and to love other people increases the joy of all creation. Love is never wasted.

Every time you choose good over evil, every time you make the thankless effort, every time that you sacrifice to help someone, every time you let your love extend outward -- it matters. So let those moments and gestures and efforts increase and let those sacrifices be made with faith and heart, to please Our Father in Heaven, to bless those struggling along with us, and to make our Choice for the future certain.

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