“Butterflies Bring Healing” by Lynda Lambert

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In the spring time a myriad of flowers begin to scatter themselves over the acres of wild meadows and fields; along the rural roadsides; in meadows overlooking swiftly moving waters of the creeks. This is our annual dance of life forces, when the earth becomes warm and every living thing bursts forth in celebration. The movement of this dance comes forth in living color; in Western Pennsylvania.

Months later, the dance of the butterflies and flowers comes to an end. The days will once again bring in the crisp mornings; the clocks will be turned back; the grass grows slick and cold; there eventually will be no more flowers or butterflies. There was one exception to this though, as I think about it today. I remember one miraculous afternoon in January, 2008. On that day, I watched quietly while two butterflies played together in the air; it was perfectly normal.

When I see a butterfly it brings back a specific memory for me.

It was over five years ago. I had just lost most of my sight. I had not yet had any help, and did not yet know about technologies that would help me, nor did I yet know of rehabilitation for the blind. I had no white cane; no way of doing anything I had done just a couple months before. Overnight, my entire life was transformed into something that was new and unexpected. I could not use the elevator; could not see the buttons to press; didn’t know on what floor it had landed. Simple things like that, we took for granted, but those simple things were now a mystery to me.

It was at this very time that my second daughter, Heidi Melinda, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Now, I stood at her bedside in the IC unit in a Pittsburgh, PA hospital. Her surgery to remove the tumor that had spread to a stage 3C cancer was completed a few days before. But nothing had gone well, and within a couple of days she was near death. They had put her in an induced coma to try to give her sick lungs the opportunity to begin to heal.

Day after day, it was one step down after another.

Even though I could not see very much, I was staying at the hospital day and night. I could find my way from the waiting room, to the bathroom, and to my daughter's room. I slept for short periods during the night, sitting in a chair in the waiting room of the IC unit. Then, I would walk back to her room, to sit by her bedside.

She was kept in a coma for over 2 weeks. Nurses and doctors were at her side or directly outside her room working on the monitors and computers continuously, monitoring her, searching for the right mix of drugs to help her. We waited there in limbo as each day flowed into the next in this netherworld existence. There was nothing we could do but pray and wait. Family members came and went, all helpless.

One afternoon I sat in the chair at the bottom of her bed with my eyes focused on her laying there with tubes and apparatus all over her body. The hospital staff had named Heidi, The Sleeping Princess. On this afternoon, the Sleeping Princess had two unexpected visitors. They did not come in through the door.

As I watched Heidi, two enormous butterflies were there. They emerged from the base of her feet and they flew back and forth, playing with each other as butterflies do when you see them in a field. The two butterflies were a deep red crimson and they were the size of my hand. They were bright and very large. As I watched them, it was the most normal scene I could ever have seen. Heidi's body was the field over which they were zig-zagging back and forth over as they moved towards her head. It felt like I watched them for quite awhile. I believe it was probably only seconds. It was like an eternal moment, when time did not exist, and I had been a witness to timelessness.

The butterflies had emerged from another dimension, it seemed. The two had made themselves visible to me. They gave me new hope for my daughter. I knew they were a pictorial symbol of the Holy Spirit. A Spirit made visible.  I recognized that the Holy Spirit had come to visit the Sleeping Princess that afternoon and that this would be the afternoon when Heidi would begin to recover. I was assured at that moment when I saw this vision that my daughter would heal and that she had experienced a miracle.

Today, after five years following surgery, Heidi remains free of ovarian cancer. This, in spite of the tests done in surgery that had shown the cancer cells were throughout her entire body. She undergoes tests and scans all the time in Pittsburgh. She has an entourage of doctors who are keeping a close watch on her.

Heidi has lasting side effects from her surgery and her long recovery time. Her body remembers the trauma; is still responding to it. It is clear to me that our bodies do carry memories. Those memories in the entire body continue to have a response to the trauma it went through.

Heidi is an artist. She has a studio in the woods, on a mountain top. She actively works at her art, and is in exhibitions including an international invitation one that her work is in right now.

Shortly after she recovered, she organized The Sleeping Princess Team with her friends. The team raises money for the Ovarian Cancer Coalition of Pittsburgh. Last fall was the fifth year that the team and her family walked with her in the sunshine at the “Walk to Break the Silence.” Our little team has been able to raise over $20,000. in funds to contribute to the cause.

Yes, butterflies are harbingers; of renewal; transformation; healing; Divine presence; gratitude.

This joyous dancing dyad of large crimson red butterflies, were a reflection of the Creator who sent them to me on a bleak winter day. It was a message that came at the darkest moment of my life; right on time!