

## Lucid Dreams and Out-of-Body Experiences: A Personal Case

### FATHER "X"

*A Catholic Monk*

*Editor's Note: The following is from the first of Father "X"'s contributions to Lucidity Letter; the account immediately following is his latest.*

I have just finished LaBerge's book, *Lucid Dreaming*, and was gratified to learn that the lucid dreams of not a few people have similar characteristics to my own. These include:

1. Testing of gravity to reassure oneself that one is really awake in a dream;
2. Varying degrees of lucidity, some so lucid that one fears one will become "stuck";
3. Frequent inability to read any written or printed matter;
4. Need to remain emotionally detached from the dream to prolong it;
5. Experience of lucidity coming over one gradually or suddenly; and
6. Capacity for voluntary action in this dreamworld.

My lucid dreams are tied up with another phenomenon, that of the outofbody experience. . . . The essential difference between [OBE] experiences and my lucid dreams is that I am totally conscious when I enter this other state of consciousness whereas my lucid dreams always begin with a nonlucid dream which then becomes lucid.

How could someone who is totally conscious enter the dream state? All I know is that when the paralysis and vibrations come over me my vision [blurs] . . . but I am still aware of my surroundings. Then I am literally pulled out of my body and off I go. LaBerge seems to suggest in chapter nine [that] the dreamworld possesses some sort of objective existence. Tholey also suggested that the dreamworld seemed to possess an "inertia" and "lawfulness" all its own. As for myself, after having undergone hundreds of these experiences over a period of twelve years, the only reasonable conclusion I can come to is that the content of most of my experiences come from some source other than my subconscious. . . . [One] characteristic of my experiences which convinces me that this dreamworld has some sort of objective existence is that I have never been able to transform the content of my experiences with my conscious mind. The individuals and environment in this world sometimes change dramatically but the changes do not appear to come from my mind.

I was particularly interested in LaBerge's description of the experience of the Indian

physician and editor, Ram Narayana, as he tried to convince the creatures of his dreamworld that they were his own creation. I too have succumbed to that temptation . . . I usually ended up with a fight on my hands. . . . One of these experiences . . . started out as a nonlucid dream which quickly became very lucid.

I found myself walking down a very busy, bustling city street in what looked like a large metropolitan city at noon. As usual, with so many of my experiences, at first glance everything looked normal. All sorts of people walking to and fro, seemingly concerned only with their own personal affairs. The clothes and hairstyles and everything else about them looked more or less modern and normal. There was a lot of traffic in the streets and even a policeman directing it.

'Well, for some reason I was feeling very frustrated and angry so I decided to "let it all hang out." I walked out to the middle of the street and started shouting as loud as I could, "All right you people, listen up! This is my dream and I want to know what in the hell is going on around here!"

\_Well, if I had dropped a bomb I probably could not have gotten their attention any quicker—all at once everything stopped and I mean everything. Everyone stopped dead in their tracks, turned and stared at me. Then they all began moving towards me in a very threatening way; I really thought that I had done it this time as I could feel the panic and fear sweeping over me. Frantically I began concentrating on my body lying in my bed. . . . Finally, just before they reached me, I found myself back in my bed.

Finally, I'd like to relate an experience I had earlier this year, which is a good example of the puzzling nature of many of my experiences. It began as a normal dream and quickly turned into a very lucid dream:

I found myself in an urban setting, standing on a city block, observing all sorts of people bustling about. . . . I saw that I was standing in front of a small building which looked like it might be a library or a museum. I decided to try my luck in there, so I walked up to the door, opened it, and entered. I had fairly good control of my body and my vision was very clear. I am always amazed at my sense of touch in these experiences. I can actually feel the objects I am touching. However, It is not a direct sense of touch—rather it feels like I am wearing heavy gloves on my hands.

It seemed to be a library as there were rows of books stacked in shelves along the walls. I immediately noticed two middleaged men sitting on the floor with their backs leaning up against the bookshelves. They did not seem to be reading

anything, just staring off into space. There were only about five or six people in the place, and they were all clustered around a desk in the middle of the room where a pretty, blondhaired girl in her early twenties seemed to be checking out books. Since so many of my experiences are very short, some lasting only seconds, I thought that if I was going to get any useful information from this experience, I better start right away before the experience ended. I walked up to her desk, stood directly in front of her, and just blurted out the first thing that came to my mind: "Are you people dead?"

The girl behind the desk looked at me in a sort of wistful way and said, "Yes," and without my saying anything else she added this extraordinary statement, "but I am the only one around here who remembers dying."

Before I could ask her anything else, the other people around the desk began pushing me back and started to act in a very threatening way towards me. Next thing I knew the experience ended and I was back in my bed.