

Strange Places: One Step Below Silence

by Gloria Heather Dixon

An account of a missing time experience in West Yorkshire based on the original transcript

Date: 15th July 1995.....

Place: West Yorkshire

Time: 21.40

Just over nine years ago on a warm summer's evening four people, husband, wife and their niece and her boyfriend, were enjoying a barbecue in the back garden of the niece's home on a small housing estate, when they experienced some bizarre and mysterious events. Prior to this incident all four people reported feeling a strange atmosphere and that *all familiar sounds seemed to cease*.

A Silence descends ...

The back garden of the house was surrounded by a six foot privet hedge and the neighbours on both sides of the house were out for the evening. The four people concerned ate beef burgers and watched the lottery draw on television and then returned to the garden. Music was playing on the stereo and the weather was warm and fine. Both husband and wife were sat on a small bench outside the back door and generally 'messaging around' as the husband put it. He looked to the right of him over the hedge and at about an estimated quarter of a mile away, he observed some flashing lights for a few seconds. That was his first sighting. He then remembers his second sighting when he described something above him with a black door, high up with a vapour across it. It opened and a beam of light shot out. The husband then observed an object, which was at a slight angle and appeared to be in front of his eyes above the trees with light shining through the trees. He describes lights in a triangular shape on the top and four lights on the bottom. The top lights were moving in the opposite direction to the lower lights.

His next memory of these events were watching his wife and niece running over to the privet hedge where he observed the object appear to drop down behind the trees between some nearby houses. The object then appeared again and shot a beam of light out towards a house, moved up and disappeared, reappearing suddenly lower down the valley. The husband comments that it didn't move, but was suddenly not there, and then visible again lower down in the valley. He then saw the object move down the valley and across the bridge out of view.

To give readers a feeling of what occurred next, the husband comments in the following way...

Then later on was the moon thing – it was low in the sky. It was a funny moon though. I didn't really recall that until later on, when they said there shouldn't have

been a full moon that night. (Astronomical information indicates that the moon would not have been visible before 11pm) I always thought I was sat on the bench all the time this was happening, but I was sat on the bench and my wife wasn't next to me, she was standing. The object was going down by the trees and everything was in slow motion, you couldn't hear any noise. I could see the side of her face and she was talking or shouting her head off – but I couldn't hear her voice. There was no sound there and that is when I thought this is important and I had to get up because this was my wife and I stood up – just to get up

There were other things while this was happening – the silence. It wasn't a proper silence, it was like one step below silence, as though you were really somewhere else, like up in space. That is what I mean by the silence. Then there was a slightly warm feeling. I remember when I was sat on the bench at one point looking over my right shoulder, looking at what I thought was the house wall, it was all light. Thinking about it now, the houses are redbrick and this looked like white sandstone. That is when I heard a sound. I was the only one who heard this, but I told the others.

When it had all finished things came back to me and everything was all mixed up. It was like backwards, forwards, time was missing. It started at 9.40pm; we all know that. I had mentioned to my wife it was twenty to ten, then a few seconds later, it was 10.50pm. When I saw my niece running towards the barbecue in slow motion, that was in my mind and my wife seemed to be chasing her, then my niece was coming back towards her and then just disappeared. There were other things too like when my niece's boyfriend went into the other garden and then he came out of the house. It was all mixed up and doesn't follow on with any continuity. My wife and I thought things were strange before all this happened (All four people report a strange atmosphere prior to the events that occurred)....

An Eerie Moon..

His wife gives the following account of how she perceived what occurred...

I was sat on the bench with my husband and it (the object) was just above my head and very big. It was low and I felt I could have jumped up and touched it. I ran over to get my niece's boyfriend asking him to look at this object and when I turned and looked again it wasn't there, it had moved further down the valley. There were rotating green, red and blue lights on top like an arch, but not flashing. I don't know how long I was looking at it, but then it moved down the valley and that is when the big moon came up. I said to my husband that this couldn't be the moon because it was too big. It was unreal because it seemed to be as though daylight was all around it. As the object went toward the 'moon' it was as though it broke apart and then the object was gone.

Then we just sat outside talking about it. I can't really remember what happened, but I was on the bench and my niece was in the middle of the floor, but my husband remembered her being near the back door. Also the radio seemed to go off unless it was still on, but we couldn't hear it. We could hear nothing whatsoever. My husband said I was shouting and I've got a loud voice so I couldn't understand why no-one else came out, as there are a lot of houses around there, but nobody else had seen

this. It was as if there were just four of us out there. Nobody else existed, just us four, it was just so weird.

This object could have been there all the time, but not lit up, because when I saw it, what attracted me in the first place were the lights and the shape of it, a bottom part with this thing on the top. So if that was above us people would be able to see it.. When my niece's boyfriend saw it, he remembered it as being just black. It was summer people were out having barbecues and it was twenty to ten. It was just going dark like sunset, because it was pretty light when it happened and then it was pitch black and it was gone.

Why didn't anyone else see it – that moon- we've never seen a moon like that. It was as though the object just went directly into the 'moon'.'

And then there were none.

His wife then goes on to say that they had not had much to drink and that her glass kept disappearing. She comments on this in the following way...

I sat down and my glass was there and then it was gone, so I went into the kitchen for a fresh glass and poured myself another one and put it under the bench and then that had gone too. The glasses just kept disappearing all the time. My niece ended up with no glasses in her house the following day. There was also a strange atmosphere there all night.

After Effects, investigation and concluding comments.

At 11pm everyone was very confused about their memory of events that evening and the two women fell asleep on the lounge floor while the husband was violently sick. All four people felt very unwell following this incident particularly his wife, who suffered from headaches and a fear of closing her bedroom curtains for a long period of time afterwards.

They had also informed the police after these events and although they were very helpful there was nothing reported or logged that would have been relevant to their experiences.

The investigator into this case in 1995 is a paramedic and he made the following observations in his report about the family...

“My impression is that both husband and wife are honest and truthful. Their story has not changed, nor has it been embellished in any way. Both are sincere in attitude and do not wish to profit or make any money from this incident. Quite the opposite, they merely seek an honest explanation of what happened to them and why. They do not wish their involvement in this incident made public, but hope that BUFORA (British UFO Research Association) may be able to offer an explanation, so they can carry on with their normal daily lives in peace. “

From the information available there appears to be no rational explanation for their confused memories. As far as can be ascertained no drugs were consumed and neither did they drink more than normal during this social evening. The husband describes his own memories of that night as imagining that it was *all recorded on a video tape, cut into lengths of a few seconds, dispose of many segments and splice the remainder together in the wrong order.* A very graphic description!.

It seems that no conventional aircraft or hallucinatory experiences played any part in this incident.

The witnesses do not suffer from epilepsy and neither have a background of anomalous experiences. Both husband and wife feel that whatever happened to them was very real and extremely frightening and neither one have experienced anything like this before and do not wish to experience anything like it again.'

These extraordinary events occurred to an ordinary hardworking family in their early thirties with two children and have made a deep and lasting impression on them in the way they view our perception of reality. Each individual view of reality is different and therefore very subjective, resulting in different interpretations of experiences that we do not have the capacity in images or language to coherently explain.

There were also a couple of interesting things, which occurred after these events. The husband had developed a severe form of psoriasis in February of that year particularly on his hands and feet and his GP diagnosed that he would have it for the rest of his life. His feet were so bad that sometimes he couldn't walk with it. After these events his psoriasis completely cleared up and has not returned to date. This could, of course, be entirely unrelated and independent of these events, but it is a factor in recording this case.

Husband and wife also experienced two inexplicable events one week later after the barbecue.

Having been connected with this case over a long period of time, I feel that something curious occurred that evening, and both husband and wife have not changed their version of events that they perceived that night. Extensive checks were carried out as to weather conditions, astronomical information, air traffic, geology of the area and of course it is odd that neighbours did not observe anything unusual that evening. The original transcript of the investigator's interview with the witnesses is a lengthy report and therefore this article is a synopsis of these events incorporating the significant issues that maybe relevant to how these events were experienced.

Of course the question that is very relevant here is whether a hoax was involved? There is certainly no evidence to suggest this, but it is always a possibility in high strangeness reports such as this one. However, having been in contact with both husband and wife over a period of years, it is my opinion that this is unlikely and that they were utterly puzzled and confused by their experiences on this night and came to BUFORA in order to seek answers, or at least support, that other people had experienced events of this nature, which may have been recorded by BUFORA. For experiencers of these high strangeness episodes, the desire to establish whether other

people have undergone similar incidents is essential to their sense of well-being that they are not alone.

Hypnosis

Another feature of this case that should be recorded here concerns another UFO organisation, which investigated this case using regression hypnosis as a method to retrieve further memories of these events. The result of the hypnosis has deliberately been omitted from this article due to the controversial and problematic nature of hypnosis when used as a method to elicit an objective and truthful account of missing time experiences. Unfortunately too, one of the witnesses suffered some trauma because of the hypnosis, which appeared to trigger a deepening anxiety about her experience.

This case continues to remain unexplained. If any reader is aware of further information from this date and in this area, please feel free to contact me.