

When the **sea gulls** *soared in the night*

*How I found physical healing
through prayer*

BY LYNN GRAY JACKSON



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A FEW YEARS AGO, while on vacation, I was at a hotel that had a wonderful view of the ocean. During the day I enjoyed the ships and boats sailing past my balcony, and in the evenings the sounds of barges coming in, blowing their whistles. The ebb and flow of the waves washing upon the shore has always comforted me, and sometimes I'd just sit on the balcony, carefully listening to all the sounds.

But on this trip, it wasn't a sound that would give me the strength and comfort I was seeking. Instead, it was a sight—one that I felt was a message from God. One evening, after a few full days, I began to feel very ill. The discomfort was tremendous. I couldn't relax or sleep. Things got worse as late night became early morning. I prayed, silently and aloud, for some relief and to feel God's ever-comforting presence.

During times like this I've learned that turning to God in prayer opens my thought to the divine message that heals. And, although this seemed difficult for me to do at the time, I persisted. I stepped out onto the balcony, expecting to see nothing but blackness and hear a few whistles blowing in the distance. Yet what I saw brought home a spiritual lesson I've never forgotten: sea gulls soaring in the night.

There they were. Flying over the harbor, up and down, not going anywhere particularly, but soaring. They would come close to the balcony and then soar out over the open sea and do it all over again. The darkness didn't seem to mat-

ter to them. It certainly didn't hinder their freedom. They didn't need the sunlight, the warm air, or the soft breezes. That's the lesson I learned. No matter how dark it may seem in our life, *we* can still soar—expressing the freedom and joy that God provides us.

I could feel my God-given freedom and peace midst this bout with sickness. In this dark hour, I, too, could be joyous. Why? Because, as I was learning, my health and my freedom from this oppression didn't depend upon my surroundings, atmosphere, or my proximity to home and family. Rather, health and freedom are qualities of thought that are reflected from God, good. They are ever present, just as God is, and they are uninhibited by material conditions.

Well, the sickness and fear didn't dissolve the moment I saw the sea gulls soaring. But that image stayed

with me throughout the next few days. And as I understood more during that time, I felt more freedom and peace until I was completely healed.

Here's a brief explanation of what helped me out of this period

*No matter
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of suffering. It's a statement from the *Miscellaneous Writings* of Mary Baker Eddy, a woman who turned to God constantly for her own peace and health. Referring to man's "indissoluble bond of union" with God, she writes, "This is the Father's great Love that He hath bestowed upon

us, and it holds man in endless Life and one eternal round of harmonious being" (p. 77).

We each have this indissoluble bond of oneness with God, our Father-Mother. Our inherent oneness with God keeps us safe in His arms—holds us forever in endless Life, in harmonious being with Him. We learn that no matter how difficult things seem to be, we have God's power upholding us.

So, if you feel surrounded by darkness, sickness, gloom, think of the sea gulls—soar in the night by turning to God in prayer. You'll find that there is no darkness that can possibly hinder you. Then you'll really be soaring. ♦

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