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A Moving Experience¹

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Abstract—This is a popular account of the author’s firsthand observations of special subject Felicia Parise’s experimental work at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory and her ability to move small objects apparently by PK. It was originally written as a chapter of a book on parapsychology that was never published. Parise’s macro-PK, which is featured in the article, was inspired by firsthand observations of Soviet star PK subject Nina Kulagina made by Western parapsychologists Montague Ullman, Gaither Pratt, and Jürgen Keil. Honorton describes Parise’s first solo efforts, his own observations, and those of a magician/photographer, Norman Moses, who made a film of her moving objects. Also described is research conducted by Gaither Pratt at the University of Virginia and by Graham and Anita Watkins at the Institute for Parapsychology in Durham, North Carolina, USA. Parise specialized in moving pill bottles and compass needles, and in film fogging.

October 13, 1971. I picked up the bottle and examined it carefully. There was nothing attached to it: no strings or strands of hair; no concealed magnets or other devices. I set it back on the countertop directly in front of me. Felicia, standing a foot and a half to my right, again began silently concentrating on the bottle. I placed my left hand palm down on the counter in order to detect any vibrations on its surface. There were none. The bottle again began moving slowly forward and to my right. Felicia’s fingertips resting lightly on the edge of the counter were nowhere near the bottle. I thought to myself, *The counter is slick and probably not level; the bottle’s just sliding.* Then something happened that forced me to reconsider. The bottle stopped, it started again, stopped, started again, stopped, and started a third time. After traveling a distance of approximately four and a half inches, the bottle suddenly reversed direction and began moving back toward me. Felicia, now obviously very agitated, threw up her hands exclaiming, “That’s it! That’s enough!”

This all started months earlier when Monte Ullman returned from a sabbatical trip to parapsychological centers in Eastern Europe. While in

the Soviet Union, he had personally observed a Leningrad housewife, Nina Kulagina, move small objects without apparent contact. The objects, including upright pen tops, large paperclips, and a box of wooden matches, were observed by Monte to move both independently and together, toward Kulagina, in short jerky movements, about an inch at a time. These observations occurred in Monte's hotel room in Leningrad, on a table covered by a tablecloth. The objects were his.

Kulagina's apparent psychokinetic ability had been under investigation by Soviet scientists for several years before it became known to Western parapsychologists. Among the other Western scientists who have seen Kulagina in action are Gaither Pratt of the University of Virginia School of Medicine and Jürgen Keil of the University of Tasmania Department of Psychology. Pratt is one of the most experienced parapsychological investigators in the world today. An early collaborator of J. B. Rhine at Duke University, his research has ranged from controlled laboratory experiments in ESP and PK to field studies of poltergeist phenomena and trance mediumship. Gaither specializes in the study of persons with exceptional psi ability.

Between 1970 and 1972, Gaither made several trips to Leningrad to observe Kulagina. On one occasion, he and Keil saw a small block of wood which they brought with them move toward Kulagina, "angling slightly toward her left and rotating slowly in a clockwise direction." During this same visit, Gaither gave Kulagina a sealed plexiglass cube containing two dice and some red aquarium gravel. While Kulagina was unable to move the dice, the cube itself started moving toward her.

Along with other Western investigators, Gaither attempted to organize an international, multidisciplinary investigation of Kulagina, and to get the sponsoring governments to request permission from the USSR for such an investigation. The request was denied, and the American sponsoring agency was told that parapsychology was not studied in the Soviet Union.

Monte returned from Leningrad with a 16-mm film showing Kulagina moving a number of small objects without apparent physical contact. She produced large needle deflections on a compass, and a variety of small objects could be seen moving toward her on the table surface. To her right in the film was Eduard K. Naumov, a leading Soviet spokesman for parapsychology, who was a member of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute for Medical Technology in Moscow. Naumov was later arrested and sentenced to two years of hard labor in a Soviet labor camp on a charge of accepting fees for a lecture in a Moscow club. According to "An Appeal to Soviet and Foreign Public Opinion," by the Russian physicist Rev Regelson, Naumov was imprisoned because of his frequent and friendly communication with foreign scientists during a period in which, "for politi-

cal reasons, the Soviet authorities have decided to concentrate research and publication in the hands of compliant protagonists" (*London Times*, Nov. 18, 1974). Naumov has since been released.

Monte presented the Kulagina film along with his own observations at a research meeting at Maimonides Dream Laboratory in New York City. After showing the film, he presented a slide showing an electrocardiogram (EKG) of a disembodied frog's heart, maintained in saline solution. According to the report he had received in Leningrad, Kulagina had been instructed first to accelerate the heartbeat and then to stop it. This is exactly what the slide showed.

Among those present at the meeting were the magician Milbourne Christopher and Felicia Parise. Christopher is one of the most skilled performing magicians in America and is generally acknowledged to be the foremost scholar of modern magic. He is well-known for his authoritative biography of Houdini and for several books debunking fraudulent mediums and describing techniques for simulating psychic phenomena. He was strongly inclined to believe Kulagina's phenomena were fraudulent, but he demurred when I pressed for a bill of particulars as to her *modus operandi*. Magicians do not like to reveal the tricks of their trade.

Felicia Parise, a medical technician in the Department of Hematology at Maimonides, has been engaged in leukemia research for a number of years. She is a vivacious and attractive woman whose interest in parapsychology began as a result of a series of personal ESP experiences. In 1968 she began volunteering as a research subject in our laboratory. Felicia's exceptional ESP ability became apparent in the first experiment we did together. This was a study of hypnotically induced clairvoyant dreams in which hypnotized subjects were given suggestions to dream, while in hypnosis, about pictures sealed in opaque envelopes. In this experiment, Felicia reported a hypnotic dream about "A room with party decorations . . . No decorations on the floor, they were all on the ceiling and walls . . . Red balloons. . . ." This was an accurate description of the target picture, which was of a Japanese temple with a large red Japanese lantern hanging from the ceiling.

Encouraged by her initial success, I arranged for Felicia to participate in two all-night pilot sessions for a study we were planning on ESP in nocturnal dreams. She was wired with electrodes permitting us to monitor her brain waves and eye movements during the night, and she slept in our electrically shielded, soundproof room, which is located about 70 feet from the room where the sender would attempt to telepathically influence her dreams with a randomly selected target picture.

During these pilot sessions, Felicia was not successful in picking up the target pictures the sender was attempting to telepathically communicate to her. Her mind, it appeared, was literally elsewhere. During the

first night, her most vivid dream was of being involved in a car accident on the Verazzano Bridge between Brooklyn and Staten Island. While this dream bore no relation to the official target for the evening, we learned the next day that a close friend of Felicia's had been involved in a motorcycle accident while crossing the Verazzano the night before.

In the second pilot session, Felicia reported a terrifying dream in which she saw her elderly grandmother sitting unconscious on the floor in a pool of blood. Again, this dream bore no correspondence with our target picture. Returning home in the morning, however, Felicia received a telephone call from a relative, telling her that her grandmother had fallen during the night, cutting her head as she fell. She was found sitting on the floor, dazed, and bleeding from the forehead, but she was not seriously injured.

Incidents such as these occur fairly frequently in the laboratory. They are frustrating because they occur outside our experimental design. While common sense tells us that these events are spontaneous manifestations of ESP and not sheer coincidence or rational inference, they do not provide the same degree of confidence afforded by ESP interactions occurring within the experimental context, where we can safely exclude alternative explanations. This, after all, is the primary reason for adopting an experimental approach, so that we can eliminate all of the factors other than the one we are attempting to study. Yet the experimentalist pays a price for attempting to force nature to play by his rules. These sessions were recorded as failures.

Felicia was more successful in picking up our official targets in a formal experimental study involving eight nightly sessions spread over a period of several months. As in the earlier pilot sessions, she slept in the shielded room, about 70 feet from the room where the sender, looking at randomly selected target pictures, attempted to telepathically influence her dreams. The degree of correspondence between Felicia's dream reports and the target pictures was strong and consistent. They were among the best telepathic correspondences we have obtained, even with exceptionally talented persons, and would be expected to occur by chance approximately once in a billion such experiments. If we repeated this experiment around the clock, that is, in three eight-hour sessions per day, 365 days a year, with only chance results, we would expect results similar to those obtained by Felicia to occur only once in a million years!

Felicia has also reported numerous spontaneous precognitive experiences. In another laboratory dream session in July, 1973, she was awakened and reported a dream in which she saw a coworker looking at a picture of a collapsed building on the front page of the *New York Daily News*. After giving her dream report, Felicia said to the experimenter, Steve Goldfinger, "Mark this one down Steve, it's precognitive." Two weeks later,

the old Broadway Central Hotel collapsed and the *Daily News* carried a picture of the wreckage on its front page.

Around the time we finished the eight-night dream study, I began encouraging Felicia to exercise her “psychic muscles” in a variety of informal ways, such as trying to pick up information about people by free associating to personal belongings, such as a ring or a watch. She was very hesitant about this at first, but she gradually gained confidence in her abilities as she received positive feedback about the accuracy of her “readings.”

Although she had herself never experienced psychokinetic phenomena, upon seeing the Kulagina film and listening to Monte’s account of his own observations, Felicia was immediately and totally convinced that Kulagina was genuine. She was noticeably irritated by Milbourne Christopher’s vague dismissal of Kulagina as well as my skepticism. I had expressed reservations based on the fact that Kulagina’s object movements always seemed to occur in the direction one would expect if they were guided, say, by a strand of hair: Kulagina’s objects (in the film at least) always moved toward Kulagina.

Unknown to me or to anyone else, Felicia set about quietly to see if she could herself produce psychokinetic movement of small objects. Initially, she tried to induce movement by entering a relaxed, meditative-type state. When this failed, she attempted to induce a state of anxiety and to project the anxiety onto the target object. This also failed.

During this period, Felicia was undergoing a great deal of emotional turmoil. Her grandmother, whom she loved very much, was slowly dying in the hospital. One night after returning from the hospital, Felicia decided to try to psychokinetically move a small, clear plastic pill bottle. The bottle, partially filled with denatured alcohol, served as the nocturnal resting place for her cosmetic eyelashes. Just then the telephone rang. It was a message from the hospital: Come quickly, your grandmother is dying. As Felicia reached for the bottle to put it away, it moved away from her.

In the weeks that followed her grandmother’s death, the movements became more frequent and more controlled, though always accompanied by stress and exertion. Felicia told no one about this for more than a month following the first, spontaneous, movement. She was afraid her eyes were playing tricks on her. She wanted to be sure in her own mind that what she thought she saw was really happening.

During the summer of 1971, I was in Durham, North Carolina, at the Psychical Research Foundation, where I was working with another talented psychic practitioner, Sean Harribance. One day I received a letter from Felicia saying that she had, after several months of consistent failure, succeeded in psychokinetically “zapping” a small alcohol bottle. After returning to New

York, I went to visit her. I jokingly asked how much of the alcohol she had to drink before she saw the bottle move, and I wondered aloud if the movement was similar to what I had occasionally experienced after a third martini. Felicia was not amused. She promptly invited me into her kitchen.

She placed the bottle on the formica countertop, about a foot from the edge. I could clearly see that while her fingertips rested lightly on the edge of the counter, she was not otherwise in contact with either the counter or the drawers beneath it. She silently peered at the bottle for several minutes. Her concentration appeared to become more intense. Then she exclaimed that the bottle had moved. I had not seen any movement. She repeated her silent vigil for several more minutes. I then observed the bottle move an inch and a half or two inches to the right and toward the back of the counter, away from Felicia. When it came to rest, she said, "OK. That's enough."

It wasn't enough for me. It was at this point that I picked up the bottle and examined it. Before the second set of movements described earlier, I said to Felicia, "All right, let me try it." She stepped away as I set the bottle in front of me on the counter. I waited for it to "slide" again, but it remained stationary until Felicia reappeared and resumed her concentration.

I became quite familiar with Felicia's kitchen that night. She went off into the living room to do some household chores while I played detective in the kitchen. I examined the counter, the drawers, and attempted to repeat the bottle movements I had observed by pressing gently, then firmly, against the sides, top, and underside of the counter. I forcibly jarred it. I moistened the counter surface and the bottom of the bottle by spilling some of the alcohol. All of this was to no avail. I was completely unsuccessful in reproducing the movements that had occurred earlier in Felicia's presence. After half an hour of intense, frustrating, and, at times, paranoid detective work, I sat down on the kitchen floor, wet from perspiration, exhausted, and confused. My mind reeled back and forth between the only two logical alternatives: Either I had been deliberately deceived and was at a loss to discover the mode of deception, or else I had witnessed, for the first time in my parapsychological career, genuine large-scale psychokinetic effects.

I had known Felicia for about three years by this time. I had observed her exceptional ESP ability under carefully controlled conditions in the laboratory and *prima facie* spontaneous ESP in informal conditions outside the laboratory. She had never given me the slightest reason to suspect her honesty. Yet . . . I looked up and saw Felicia standing in the entranceway peering down at me with an amused expression on her face. We looked at one another for a long moment, and then she said, "Okay, Mr. Wise Guy. How much of the alcohol did *you* have to drink before *you* saw the bottle move?"

I had trouble sleeping that night. I had been doing parapsychological research for more than six years prior to this experience, and although I had obtained statistically significant evidence for PK in controlled laboratory experiments involving influences on delicate electronic equipment and had even been a successful subject in such experiments myself, I had never before observed large-scale, observable effects that did not require statistical analysis and that were not produced by obvious fraudulent manipulation or self-delusion. I had observed a lot of that.

The entire history of gross-object PK, from the table-rappers of the 1850s onward, was filled with fraud and malobservation. While some of the effects produced by physical mediums early in this century [20th century], such as Eusapia Palladino and Rudi Schneider, appear from the written reports to have been competently investigated, the frequency of detected fraud made it easy to discount them entirely and to retreat behind the protective walls of the laboratory where it was possible to observe effects that, while less dramatic, occurred under conditions I could adequately control.

And even though I knew both Monte Ullman, with whom I had worked closely for five years, and Gaither Pratt, one of my early mentors in parapsychology, to be cautious, critical, and highly experienced investigators, I realized that I had not taken their reports of Kulagina very seriously. In the world of the senses, seeing is believing, and as the critics of parapsychology have repeatedly demonstrated, no amount of statistical evidence will carry the impact of one direct, observable, personal experience. "Statistical evidence," someone once said, "is something about which everyone is always very polite." The irrationality of this has always bothered me. Time and again I have encountered serious scientists who were either skeptical or indifferent to controlled experimental research in parapsychology, but who would confide in me after a lecture: "But you know, my grandmother was psychic. One time she had a dream that . . ." And so it would go. Now I had to confront the fact that I myself shared this irrational ambivalence, but in my case the prejudice was reversed. I tended to ignore or dismiss the more dramatic, large-scale phenomena that occurred outside the laboratory.

I realized that if what I had witnessed in Felicia's kitchen was genuine, I could no longer maintain this rather smug, albeit comfortable, position. I also realized that just as I had not fully accepted Ullman's and Pratt's observations of Kulagina, others would not accept my observations of Felicia. It would be important to have others observe it for themselves, and, if possible, to get it on film.

During the months that followed, I was able to repeat my initial observations under similar conditions on numerous occasions. Felicia developed

the ability to deflect the needle of a compass. In working with the compass, she frequently placed her hands around the sides of the compass, about six inches over its surface. She was occasionally able to deflect the compass needle a full 360 degrees, although more frequently she produced smaller deflections, between 5 and 90 degrees. While observing this, I developed a habit of unexpectedly taking her hands and passing them directly over the face of the compass. This was to ensure against the possibility that she had concealed metallic shavings underneath her fingernails. In no case did the compass needle deflect when I did this. I should add that Felicia's head never approached the compass as would be expected, say, if she had concealed metal in her mouth or hair. (This possibility has been suggested with regard to another psychic practitioner who deflects compass needles.)

I have never had the slightest reason to doubt Felicia's honesty. She has always been cooperative and amenable to reasonable suggestions for improving the conditions of observation. She was very much aware of the extreme incredulity surrounding claims of this type, and she fully understood and appreciated the need for extreme caution.

The sessions were always a strain for her. She would become very intense, perspire freely, and have great difficulty responding coherently to speech for several minutes after a successful session. She often developed a runny nose, runny eyes, and trembling, which frequently accompanied these other physical effects. Her effort obviously involved a high level of psychological arousal. The same is true of Kulagina. The Soviet investigators report that Kulagina's pulse increases to a rate of 150–240, and she often experiences pain in her upper spine and neck, an increase in blood sugar level, and weight loss of up to two kilograms, within an hour of a session. Felicia assures me there are less strenuous ways to lose weight. She describes herself during a session as trying to develop rapport with the target object. She focuses her attention on the object until, "that's the only thing there." She picks a spot on the object and fixates on it until everything else seems to disappear. She speaks of "pitching," that is, working up excitement to a point where "I want to make it move more than anything else."

A film was made in March, 1972, in Felicia's kitchen. Below is a description of that session by Norman Moses, the photographer. Mr. Moses, unknown to Felicia at the time of the filming session, is an amateur magician who is acquainted with the techniques through which psychic phenomena are simulated in the branch of magic known as mentalism:

On Monday, March 27, I arrived at Felicia Parise's apartment at approximately 6:00 p.m. I set up my equipment, which consisted of a Kodak Super 8 motion picture camera, tripod mounted, and a quartz iodine light source. I requested, and received, permission to inspect the objects to be used in

the PK experiments. They consisted of a few small corks, some pieces of twisted aluminum foil, an empty plastic pill vial, a similar vial partially filled with water, and a pocket compass. Since Felicia does most of her experimenting on her kitchen work counter, she felt that she could best recreate the conditions for success by performing the experiments in this familiar location. This made it necessary to take all the photographs from the side and slightly behind the subject.

The first try was with the empty vial. It moved almost immediately. Unfortunately, I was still in the process of setting up the gear, and was thus unable to record this particular movement on film. The next objects tried were the corks. These were placed on a disk of black paper (to enhance their visibility), and then covered with a very heavy glass bell jar. [Pyrex glass, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, 12 inches high, 12 inches in diameter, five gallon fluid capacity, 15 pounds.] Movement was achieved after about two and a half minutes [and] consisted of a rocking motion of one or more corks. At no time did the corks move in unison, or all at the same time, as would have been the case, for example, if the counter had been jarred or kicked. The next objects were the strips of foil. The results were better than with the corks. The movements were crisp and rapid. The pieces of foil seemed to act as though they were charged with electricity.

The water-filled vial was . . . next. . . and here Miss Parise achieved her best results . . . The vial moved several times, changing direction from time to time, and at varying speeds. I would estimate that the vial covered a total distance of between six and ten inches.

The final experiment was with the compass. This, again, was covered by the bell jar. After about two minutes, the needle began to move. The arc it described kept increasing, until, finally, it made a complete revolution. . . . I observed that these experiments had a pronounced enervating effect on Miss Parise. In fact, this film, with a total running time of ten minutes, took about four hours to shoot. After each try, it was necessary for Felicia to rest for about fifteen minutes. During these experiments, she perspired freely, and developed a runny nose. After each try, she seemed confused and exhausted, and had difficulty in comprehending and answering questions for about ten minutes.

Another interesting note, was the effect of these experiments on Felicia's dog. Alpha, a miniature poodle, is a very friendly, playful little dog. Whenever Felicia was conducting the experiments, however, the dog would begin to whine, and would not stop until the experiment was over. Whenever Felicia succeeded in moving an object the dog would become quite agitated, and commence furious digging movements on the kitchen linoleum. From his vantage point on the floor, it was impossible for the dog to have seen any of the objects moving.

I have been an amateur magician for some years, and am fairly well versed in the various methods by which magicians might manifest such phenomena. I made a fairly thorough inspection of the countertop upon which the experiments were conducted, and failed to find anything which might conceivably have been used to produce these effects.

(Signed) Norman Moses

In the summer of 1972, I took Felicia on a trip down the Eastern seaboard of the U.S. We stopped first at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville for a short visit with Gaither Pratt. At first Felicia did not want to perform for Gaither. When he asked if she would like to see his films of Kulagina, she became enthusiastic. Watching Kulagina again, Felicia became very excited. Almost before the Kulagina film had ended, Felicia asked Gaither for a compass. He produced one that he had used successfully with Kulagina. This further increased Felicia's interest. Gaither placed the compass on top of a small Parson's table on top of the large library table. The compass was almost at Felicia's eye level. We could view the compass from all sides, including the underside of the Parson's table. Felicia did not use her hands this time, but merely concentrated on the compass, standing in front of the table. She obtained deflections of the compass needle almost immediately.

In Durham, North Carolina, I arranged for a session at J. B. Rhine's Institute for Parapsychology with Graham and Anita Watkins. The Watkins had been conducting well-controlled, ingenious experiments related to psychic healing. They would render two mice unconscious with ether, then have a psychic come into the room, look at the mice through a glass partition, and try psychically to make one mouse awaken before the other. The mouse designated for psychic wake-up service was chosen on a random basis after both were etherized, in order to avoid bias. In a series of experiments, Graham and Anita accumulated strong evidence that the mouse concentrated upon was the "mouse that roared" first. Their findings were later independently confirmed by another team of investigators.

It was about 97 degrees in Durham that day, and the humidity wasn't lagging far behind. The air conditioning in the Institute's basement laboratory was out of commission. Felicia had to completely disrobe in the presence of Anita and another female lab assistant in order for them to attach EKG and other physiological monitoring devices to her body. This also provided them an opportunity to satisfy themselves that Felicia was not concealing magnets or other devices that could be used to simulate PK. Felicia was becoming noticeably uncomfortable and irritated as Graham and Anita began pasting EEG electrodes to her scalp. Looking at Graham, with his long full beard, and Anita, with her pixy-like face, and all those wires reminded me of Santa and his helper decorating a Christmas tree.

Felicia had no success with either a bottle or a compass placed on the opposite side of a glass partition. She tried very hard, and it was obvious to everyone present that the strain was very great. After nearly two hours of consistent failure, Graham moved the compass to a chair in front of Felicia. It was placed inside a magnetic field detector (similar to those now used to

prevent unscheduled detours to Cuba in all of our airports), on top of a carefully sealed packet of unexposed photographic film. Other film packs were placed at various distances from the compass, which was tested for proper operation. The magnetic field detector was connected to an audio oscillator which produced a constant tone over a loudspeaker.

After a few more minutes of intense concentration, Felicia started getting deflections of the compass needle. As the needle began to move, there was a distinct change in the sound frequency of the magnetic field detector, which finally shattered completely as the compass needle reached its maximum deflection of 15 degrees. The needle movement was slow and steady and reached its maximum deviation from north over a period of two minutes.

The needle remained 15 degrees off north, even after Felicia stopped concentrating on it. It was totally unresponsive to either a knife blade or a bar magnet placed directly over its surface. When Graham picked up the compass and carried it about four feet from the area of concentration, the needle returned to north and was normally affected by the knife blade. But when he returned the compass to the area of concentration, the needle again moved 15 degrees off north and was again incapable of being influenced by either the knife blade or the bar magnet. The needle gradually returned to north, over a period of almost half an hour, and was then normally responsive to the knife blade. The Watkins had earlier observed similar "lingering" effects in their etherized mice experiments.

The film pack beneath the compass was found to be almost totally exposed, and the other film packs, which had been spread at various distances from the area of concentration, were partially exposed. The degree of exposure decreased in proportion to the distance between the film pack and the compass.

Had we, with this crude instrumentation, detected an unknown energy flow between Felicia and the compass? Later tests with the field detector showed that the shattering of the tone, which had accompanied the compass needle movement, could only be simulated by placing a very large metal mass (a two-pound roll of solder) inside the field coil. It appears that some invisible force penetrated that electrical field.

Soviet investigators of Kulagina have reported film-fogging effects similar to those we observed with Felicia. Based on this and other effects associated with object movement by Kulagina, one of the principal Soviet investigators, University of Leningrad neurophysiologist Sergeyev, has newly conceptualized a form of biological energy, which he calls *bioplasma*. According to Sergeyev, bioplasma is concentrated in the head region. He speculates that PK involves a laser-like polarization of the bioplasma, which acts as a material force on the target object.

Such theories are problematic. The kind of energy required to push around a plastic pill vial or a cork is presumably different from the kind of force required to spin a compass needle. Bioplasma would have to be an ecumenical energy form; electromagnetic on this object and gravitational on another. It would presumably have to be converted into nuclear force in order to influence electrons in the electronic PK experiments we discussed in the last chapter. Perhaps there is an ecumenical, undifferentiated energy, currently unknown, and capable of conscious direction, which can manifest in whatever form is appropriate to the occasion, appearing as electromagnetic influence on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as gravitational influence on Mondays and Wednesdays, and as a nuclear force on Fridays and Saturdays. (All that conversion presumably requires at least one day of rest.)

Perhaps. But in spite of some provocative and tentative findings, bioplasma and other psychic energy theories are still premature. Until we learn to produce psychokinetic effects more or less on demand, we will be unable to reach definitive conclusions as to its mode of operation.

The session in Durham took its toll on Felicia. She became moody, withdrawn, even hostile. She refused to speak to me during most of our stay in Durham. She was through, no more demonstrations, I was using her, only interested in the PK, insensitive to her feelings. I regret to have to admit that she was right, at least to some extent. Since that first night in October, I had been pushing her. In my eagerness to firmly establish the genuineness of her PK ability, I ignored the increasing indications that it had become too much of a strain for her. I failed to appreciate what a profound impact the development of this ability had on her. She had begun to wonder if she was some sort of a freak. "Is it really me? Am I really doing this?" She had gotten into it in the first place to satisfy her own curiosity as to whether she could herself do what she saw Kulagina do. That curiosity had long since been satisfied. Now there were all these incredulous people making demands on her to perform, telling her by implication, "We trust you Felicia, but you must understand that what you are doing is absolutely incredible. We must eliminate every conceivable possibility that you're cheating." The tolerant amusement with which she had earlier greeted skepticism now changed to impatience, frustration, anger, and, finally, to rage.

Felicia was (and is) convinced that she must work herself into a hyperactive state in order to exert a PK influence. She nearly always was physically exhausted after a successful session. I suggested to her that this hyperactive state might not really be necessary: that Kulagina had been her model and Kulagina gets worked up, so Felicia thought she must too. She did not accept this at all, even after an episode in the laboratory that strongly suggested it.

Several months prior to our visits to Charlottesville, Virginia, and Durham, North Carolina, Felicia was in my office. I prodded her to “zap” my compass, which lay on the corner of my desk. She was in a hurry to return to her own lab where she was running an important blood test and didn’t want to get worked up for PK. I persisted, however, and as she was about to leave, she jokingly waved her hand in the direction of my compass and said, “Abracadabra!” The compass needle immediately deflected 90 degrees. (When I then took her hand and placed it directly over the compass, the needle remained perfectly still.)

The Durham experience brought to a close Felicia’s career as a PK subject. She had her own life to lead and a position of respect within the medical center. She had no desire to be a sideshow attraction for a group of parapsychologists who sat around at cocktail parties passionately debating the relative merits of the *t* test and the critical ratio of the difference. She continues with success to explore her ESP abilities in the laboratory, but she has, she insists, retired forever from PK. Felicia hung up her compass, and the alcohol bottle has again become the nightly depository for her eyelashes.

Notes

- ¹ We are indebted to Donald McCarthy for this paper, which he says was originally written as a chapter in a popular book on parapsychology that Honorton was thinking about writing in the early 1970s.—Ed.
- ² Minor points in this paper have been emended by two referees, and it has been minimally edited in line with standard APA *IJASPR* style.—Ed.