

My First Death-didn't take

Note:

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A few weeks after the body cast had been removed.

I have for most of my life, mostly, avoided talking about this. But it, or something relevant to it, comes up more often as new geriatric problems occur every year. In my 70s now; my priorities are different than they once were and referring to it doesn't seem to matter much now. I'll tell/narrate the little story here e.g. where, when, why etc.

I once "[Flatlined](#)".

I will not describe what I did, or did not experience when it happened. If you want to know, ask me in private and I'll tell you. And first you must know that you may be disappointed, and not like what I tell you. [Be careful what you wish for.](#) You must be willing to simply accept what I say. I don't know what it means and I'm not willing to speculate about it.

Stationed at [Constantina Air Station](#) at the time (1960-63), a friend and I went to a party [in town](#) and got real drunk. We decided to drive to Sevilla, which was more than an [hour drive away](#). The first part of the drive was on a winding, mountain road.

My friend lost control of his car, we went off the mountain road and were both severely injured. We were first taken to the [monastery](#) in Constantina by some Spanish workers who found us that early morning. Our base sent a makeshift ambulance (station wagon) which took us to our military hospital near Seville ([Moron AFB](#)).

During this entire time, I was in agony but could not be given an anesthetic (morphine) because, until my condition was diagnosed and I was stabilized, it was dangerous.

In the emergency room, I had an excellent medical team who ultimately saved my life. I continued to be in agony during all this and begged for an anesthetic but they couldn't give it to me. The telegram to my parents said critical, prognosis unknown.

After what seemed to me to be forever (about 8-10 hours), I was eventually stabilized, taken to a room and allowed the morphine.....euphoria.

After a couple days, two doctors and a nurse brought copies of the vital life signs charts e.g. EEG, EKG etc. This was long before computers and digital readouts etc. and the charts were recorded in ink. They told/showed me what had happened within the first couple hours while I was in emergency.

I had flatlined (no heart, no brain, no lungs etc. clinically dead) for 2 minutes and 59 seconds. Considering my condition, I had no reason to doubt them, sedated (morphine) and ecstatically grateful to be removed (complicated) from pain (even more than to be alive), I didn't care anyway.

I was in a body cast from armpits to toes and spent a couple months in the hospital recovering.....complicated. It was not until some months later that I even began to think

about the charts and what the doctors had told me. Even then, it just seemed like part of the whole ordeal e.g. tubes, needles, paraphernalia attached to, or sticking out of me, machines and medical mumbo jumbo all around, the dialog of the medical team (sometimes frantic), and the flatline not anything special or unique.

Still with body cast, but somewhat recovered, friends (e.g. [Pat Smith](#), my roommate) started smuggling in my rations ([Fundador](#)) in a baby bottle, which I kept tucked into my cast.....I had lost enough weight to have room in it.

Over the years I have thought about, and researched it.

Eventually I concluded that it was simply [not my time](#) and stopped worrying about it. I was young and strong then. Our times are [out there waiting](#) for us all and next time will, no doubt, be mine.....next time, it will take.