

"Breaking Under Pressure"

by Scott A. Myrdoulet

At 46 years old, divorced, relapsing heavily, hiding the full extent of my sickness, in the midst of a weeks long binge, suffering from self-loathing and severe depression, I purposefully intravenously injected one full gram of cocaine into my arm. It was pretty cut up, but still... This resulted in a 25-minute-long grand-mal seizure and an out-of-body experience I will never, ever forget.

As I desperately clung to the nearest piece of reality, a closet door, to keep from falling, the seizure increased in intensity. As my arms uncontrollably jerked back and forth, I repeatedly smashed the edge of the solid oak closet door into my face. At the same time, I became disassociated from my body and a great calm spread through my thoughts. I began seeing myself from above myself, watching as I finally released the door, fell to the ground and, like

a fish out of water on hot dock boards. did the herky-jerky on the hallway floor. The corner of the hallway where I lay seemed to get farther and farther away, although I felt as though I never left my ceiling vantage point.

After awhile, the flopping stopped, but when I tried to get up, it started again. So, I lay in the hallway, face down on the dirty carpet for quite a time. Eventually, I was able to crawl into the front room, up onto the couch, and have a cigarette. Some time later, I had a cold beer. You would think that that was the end, but you would be wrong. I never went to the doctor, and I was at it again the next night.

A year later, I experienced this same out-of-body sensation. Although I felt nothing, I again became disassociated from myself. Drug free, but under extreme emotional duress, it was as if I was once again outside my body, looking down on the sentencing I was receiving. My back to them, I watched

the drama unfold and saw the hate and the smug satisfaction of my accusers. I know I deserved this, but I was sad to see the malicious delight in their eyes.

This time only lasted seconds, as my public defender drew my attention to the papers I was agreeing to sign. I never fought them.

END