

## THE GREAT PERHAPS

by Nancy Martz

Someday I may go into the Great Perhaps. Perhaps I will see my family and friends who will greet me with warmth and joy, and if so, that will be Great. When my loved ones die, I can't possibly say "Good bye." Good bye is very likely inaccurate and anyway, it's too pessimistic and depressing. I say, "Let's keep in touch" and "I'll see you later" and "Don't forget to visit me once you get situated and learn the ropes." I've had some personal experiences with death that have encouraged me to think death is not so final and dreadful as the ashes and grave sites imply. Therefore, I choose as my favorite words about death "The Great Perhaps," "See you later," and "Don't forget to visit," and I outright reject the words "Good Bye."

The evidence I've experienced is not unlike experiences of religious people, except that where they implore deities and their representatives, I seek the help of Dad, my sister Sandy, my friend Sherry, my other beloved relatives, and most of all, the love of my life. For example, a friend who regularly prays for me to be saved had a contrite washing machine on an inconvenient day. She needed clean linens, so she laid hands on her washer and prayed for Jesus to fix it. In no time, her washer started up. She thinks Jesus fixed it. I think it wasn't broken to begin with or that one of her deceased relatives who continues to care for her gave it a thump.

So the difference is just that I seek comfort and assistance from people I've known well during my life. Whenever a beloved person in my life dies, I feel them sitting down on my bed to bring a greeting and they provide me with a meaningful dream that helps me cope by knowing that they are O.K. there in the Great Perhaps. Perhaps I err in thinking they are with me, but if that's the case, I am as happy with my illusions as religious people are with theirs. Maybe more so because I don't have to worry about anyone's salvation.