



AN ARCHANGEL HELPS ME save people's sight

When top eye surgeon **Dr Veerle van Tricht, 49**, from Carlisle, Cumbria, enters the operating theatre she has divine help with her vital work

'Scalpel,' I said, holding out my hand. As a nurse handed me the tiny blade, I bent over my patient on the operating table. He stared up at me, eyelids held open wide with metal clamps.

He was in to have a cataract removed – an operation I'd performed more times than I could remember – on a day just like any other at the Scottish hospital where I worked.

Leaning over the man's body, ready to start, I caught my breath in surprise.

I couldn't see the lens of his eye anywhere.

Bending closer, I saw it had slipped to the back of his eye, where it wasn't supposed to be.

My heart thumped like crazy in my chest.

As an eye surgeon with over 17 years' experience working in hospitals all over the world, I knew how serious this could be. If I didn't remove that lens from where it was, and quickly, it could cause permanent damage to my patient's retina,

even leaving him blind. This was no longer a simple 10-minute cataract operation.

Taking a deep breath, I steadied my nerves and reached for an instrument to gently tease the lens out from behind the back of my patient's eye.

'Slowly does it, Veerle. Take your time...' I muttered to myself under my breath.

It didn't matter how many complex operations I'd successfully performed, or how skilled and experienced I was, this unexpected turn to the surgery had made me nervous.

'Help me save his sight, help

me...help me...'

I pleaded over and over in my mind. I had no idea who I was praying to, but I was desperate for someone to answer.

Carefully easing my instrument into the patient's eye and closing in on that lens, I saw something out of the corner of my own eye; a shimmering purple glow that was growing brighter and

brighter, until I was squinting and almost blinded. But this wasn't coming from one of the operating theatre's powerful lights.

Suddenly my body was bathed in heat, just as if I'd stepped into bright sunshine, and I felt soft feathery wings, slip around my waist.

My hand froze but my lips began to tremble, as love and peace flooded my body, along with a feeling of absolute certainty that the patient's sight would be saved.

I had to keep focused on what I was doing, and although I couldn't look up, I knew exactly whose wings were surrounding me.

Archangel Michael had returned to me!

As a child, he'd visit me during difficult times, his presence making me feel calm, safe and like everything was going to be okay. Now he was back, supporting me in the operating theatre.

I could feel his familiar loving energy in my hand and fingers as they moved almost involuntary, skilfully removing the cloudy lens from my patient's eye, and replacing it with a new artificial one which would enable him to see again.

As I wrapped up the operation, I felt Archangel Michael's presence disappear, his work was done here, just like mine.

A 10-minute routine op had turned into an hour-long procedure, although it had felt like minutes, thanks to my angelic helper.

But glancing at the three nurses in the room, busily clearing away equipment and chatting amongst themselves, I knew they'd seen nothing out of the ordinary.

'Best keep my angel helper to myself,' I thought, as I peeled off my scrubs. 'My colleagues would think I was crazy if I told them what had happened.'

At the end of my shift, I drove

home smiling, my head full of happy memories of my winged protector.

It had been such a long time since I'd seen Archangel Michael.

The years rolled back as I remembered our first meeting, when I was a little girl in Belgium.

I was six years old and Mum hadn't turned up to collect me from my piano lesson. I was left standing, scared and sobbing, on the street.

Then I'd felt a warm hand slip into mine and turned to see a tall, slim, beautiful man with golden blond hair and wings, radiating an amazing purple glow.

I recognised him from the illustrations in my children's Bible at home, it was Archangel Michael.

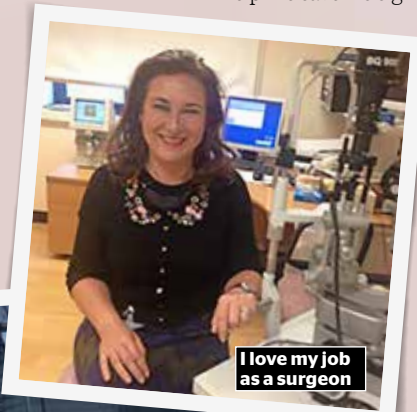
My fear dissolved as he cloaked me in a feathery embrace and led me home.

As soon as I stepped onto our porch, he disappeared, but that wasn't the last of his visits.

For the next five years, he was with me on my weekly walk home from piano class. Other times he sat with me at home.

I confided in my parents but they didn't believe a word of it. ▶

'I felt something warm and soft, like wings, embrace me'



I love my job as a surgeon



At work in the operating theatre



On a family holiday

Divine guidance

So, I continued to see Archangel Michael, but never spoke of him.

Instead, aged six, I began astral travelling and would meet my winged friend in the universe at night, where we would fly through the sky hand in hand. I must have been the only kid in town who actually loved going to bed!

Then, when I was 12, I was sent to a convent school where the nuns were mean and cruel.

My feelings towards Archangel Michael changed as I began to associate him with the church and, maybe because I shut him out, he stopped visiting me.

I grew up, pushed my childhood angel adventures to the back of my mind, and by the time I graduated from university, where I'd studied medicine, and got my first job, Archangel Michael's visits seemed like a lifetime ago.

Occasionally, as I worked, I might feel his loving energy around me, often when I was carrying out surgery, but I never *saw* him, so wondered if maybe I was imagining his presence.

The years passed and in 1997, I met my soulmate Mark. We married in November 2002 in Knysna, South Africa, and went on to have our three children; Matthew, now 13, Thomas, nine, and Isabella, seven.

Still, Archangel Michael kept his distance, until tragedy struck in 2012. Aged just 45, my beloved husband passed away, one month after he was diagnosed with stomach cancer.

During this time of grief and desolation I did sense Archangel Michael draw near again. I could feel his loving energy around me, in the weeks and months after Mark's death. Comforting me through the sorrow and loneliness, his presence



helped to reassure me that I would eventually get through this terrible time.

But I still hadn't *seen* him since I was a little girl – until now, when that simple surgical procedure had taken such a dramatic turn and I'd sent out my plea for help.

Back home, though, I struggled with my conflicting feelings.

I felt joy that my angelic friend and guardian had appeared to me again, after so long, but I also felt fear. I was worried what my colleagues and friends – logical, practical, medical people – would think if they knew I'd been helped during surgery by an angel.

I decided that talking about my experience wouldn't do me any professional favours.

Yet, unlike me, Archangel Michael didn't keep quiet. He continued to make himself known while I was in theatre, appearing as a purple flash that I'd spot out of the corner of my eye whenever

I needed his help, like if something out of the ordinary cropped up during routine surgery. And the unexpected happens more often than not in theatre. Not that that worried me any more, because I had my right hand man Archangel

Michael by my side to help operations go smoothly.

When I moved with the kids from Scotland to Cumbria, for a fresh start, in February 2016, and started work at Carlisle Infirmary, Archangel Michael came with me.

I'd often feel his feathered wings embracing me as I performed operations.

I still hadn't told a soul about our special bond when he came to me one night and said I shouldn't keep our friendship a secret any longer.

Others needed to know about angels, he explained. They are there for us when we need them and we should never feel that we are totally alone with them by our side.

'You need to share your story,' he said.

But it was a big risk.

Would the medical world think I was mad? Would I even keep my job?

However, I trusted Archangel Michael. He'd never let me down before.

So, I started writing my story down and, in December last year, I published my book, *My Surgeon Talks To Angels*.

I was totally right to trust Archangel Michael, as I've had nothing but understanding and support from my colleagues.

I admit, I've been more than pleasantly surprised by their reactions.

Now, every time I pull on my scrubs, I feel blessed to have my angel guide beside me.

When I open the door to the operating theatre, I call on Archangel Michael to help me during surgery and instantly feel his presence there, keeping a watchful eye. ■

'His presence helped reassure me that I'd get through this terrible time'



WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

For more information about Dr Veerie's angelic experiences, visit mysurgeontalkstoangels.com

AS TOLD TO KATE DELAMERE