

## Six Conversations That Led Up To The Perfect Gift

Master Marinee knew her death was imminent. Her health had been steadily declining since last spring. She told no one and no one suspected that her health was failing. She seemed to have her usual vigor. She was a very active woman and enjoyed taking long walks everyday. She often walked alone and enjoyed communing with the internal and external environment. Her walks in the last week were more and more of a shorter duration. The last few days she ambled only a few yards and sat on a flat rock by the river.

The river; how she loved the river. She loved walking in its waters and she loved the spirit of its flow. She also loved the rocks and boulders that were worn down by the rivers constant flow. She thought of her body as a rock that was worn down by the flow of the river of life. She thought of her life – the performances she had been called on to play. Yes, there was the child, the wife, the mother, the spiritual aspirant (one of her favorite roles), the spiritual teacher/artist/friend and finally as the final curtain call was to occur: 'The Master'. She had earned the title of Master by having given everything to 'The Life'. What she meant by 'The life' was her work of serving what was unaware of its true Self – those that call themselves 'the other'. She served 'the other' by making them her loved ones so they could learn to release what they were so proud of. And they were proud and knew not their real condition of humility. They were even proud of the flaws they had and the mistakes they had committed. They knew not about love but only about their entitlement to pleasure. At first, before they lost some of their pride (through her skillful means), they scorned love as weakness and stupidity. She was very patient and lived with them; suffering all their ordinariness and everyday bad moods. Slowly, and it took many years, they were unable to defy her any longer and their tantrums quieted down. They adjusted to her and her wisdom and released their foolishness of special me; entitled me. They couldn't imagine ever leaving her. She was their bloodline; their current of life – the River that nourished them. So, their sense of 'other' softened and broke apart like the boulders cracked by the rivers constant wearing down. And they began to feel that they weren't the special one; the separate one – the significant other, instead they were flowing in the Big Heart of their Master. They loved their life in Her. They were aging; advancing in years and a few of them dissolved completely into her flow and let go into the forever. Forever free. This is the work of a Master and that is what Marinee is.

Marinee knew that her time on Mother Earth was almost finished. Her body was well worn down. It ran on what she called 'her impulse' – attracting energy power. She always followed what attracted her. It was her way of loving and her way of loving knew no borders. She was as passionate as a blazing sun but her passion only burned impurity. Passion drove her and attraction showed her where to go. On her passionate drives, she met an everyone and an everything and always registered 'the need'. The need – was it great? Or modest? Or ignored and largely hidden? If it was great, she

would put her car into park and stay awhile. If it was modest, she gave a clue; a positive sign – perhaps a healing and then, she was on her way. If she parked her car in your garage, you were very, very lucky. Your need would be fulfilled far beyond your comprehension. You would become perfect and you would be on your way to earning the humble title of Master.

She was contented with her loved ones. She was contented that her work was well given. She felt it was time to let herself go to the river. Each day she visited the river, she felt that this might be her last day. Her breath would stop and her body would relax and release fully. Each day was like this – this full relaxation and release and this went on for many days but the river wouldn't release her permanently. She wondered why and asked, "River, everyday I release this body/mind to you and I am surprised that everyday you return me back to the body/mind. Why is this?"

The river was quiet and didn't speak to her. It just continued its flow. The Earth spoke up instead and six boulders that lay to her left and right vibrated louder to get her attention. She gazed to her left and then her right and the biggest boulder spoke Earth words to her. "Please dear sister, I mean Master, do not give up your mortal frame just yet. There are six of us that believe ourselves to be the 'other'. We believe this under much duress. Our hearts have become hardened inside these boulders of assumption and we beg you to release them. Though we live by the river we are untouched. We long for the touch of the river of your compassion and we don't know how to get to You – how to get to our very Self. We cannot even ask for mercy, we have become so hardened. The Earth is speaking for us as we are too hardened and too stupid to understand our dilemma. We are six big fools living on this Earth; where you have made your home."

Marinee spoke to her dear friend Earth, "You are a great Mother; these rocks – these boulders of other, . . . I will not give the great release to my form yet, I will find them and tell them the truth face to face – Heart to Heart. My passion will drive me and their need will be my attraction. Mother Earth, you are a great, great, Mother to speak for those that cannot speak."

Mother Earth loved Marinee the most of all – of all the living things and creatures that lived on her skin. She always collaborated with Marinee and as Marinee loved to drive; it was upon Mother Earth that she traveled. They were very close and trusted each One (not other!) very much. Marinee's work was not yet finished. She trusted that her body would endure for the task ahead. She still had much to say; to reveal. The wake up call was heard and Marinee got her passport, gassed up her car and hit the open road. Mother Earth was with her every mile of the Way.

## Conversation One

### *I Am The Ocean Wherein Lies The Soul Of The Artist*

Sayed loved opening night. All his work was set up on beautiful pedestals with the best lighting to showcase his multi-faceted colored vases. This was his best collection to date and his work was flourishing and in demand. Many collectors were eager to see his work and purchase it. If all went well, his entire collection could sell for \$350,000. He had some purchases he wanted to make with the money. He needed a vacation, to rest, relax and research for new inspiration. He loved his work and felt he would never tire of it. He felt inspiration was limitless; it flowed down on him like the Niagara Falls. Life is good, he thought.

Sayed loved opening night. He loved to watch the art patrons look at his vases. Their expressions relayed to him that their hunger for beauty was being satisfied. He saw their eyes widen as they took in the colors and shapes of the vases. He saw them exclaim in a whisper, "Wow, this is beautiful." He saw that (like him) they wanted to possess beauty for their private pleasure – to be re-visited as often as they desired. Beauty; to find it, to own it in an object that would endure, consoled them from the disappointment of what was unacceptable, what was aging – how they themselves could not be beauty; that they themselves were deteriorating. To possess beauty, to possess the beauty that he made was to defy what was aging and dying in them. Beauty was a necessary meal to feed off the disappointment of a life that is always passing away. People could not feel their own beauty because the deterioration of their own vessel (their bodies) was inevitable and frightening. They hungered for beauty outside themselves in objects created by talented artists. It was a lucrative business for Sayed; one that gave him a noble purpose. He was that pompous.

He noticed the elderly woman looking intently at his most expensive vase. Ah, he thought to himself, she has good taste, that vase was my most difficult vase. It had involved inventing a new technique to bring about the results he wanted. He loved inventing new techniques to further his vision for his work, the how to was the most fun for him.

The elderly woman will definitely buy that vase, he thought. He knew that she had made her decision. The gallery owner caught his eye and they both nodded in agreement. The gallery owner approached the woman and explained to her all about the subtleties of the vase and why it was a wise purchase for her collection. She didn't need any convincing, she was ripe for the sale. The owner pointed him out to her.

He watched her as she made her way to him. Time seemed to stand still and though her arrival would be imminent, it felt like it was taking all of eternity for her to get to him. Or maybe, he thought, it will take all of my time to get to her. She attracted him, but he didn't know why. She appeared very aged, at the conclusion of her life. The force of her attractiveness contradicted everything he knew and felt about beauty. He wanted to possess the quality of her attractiveness but he didn't know how to invent a

technique to employ it or own it for himself. Her unknowable beauty frightened him and he wanted to turn away and avoid the meeting altogether.

“Hello, are you the artist?” she asked.

“Sayed put on his usual confident air and said, “Yes, I am.”

“Good,” she said. “I am the ocean wherein lies the soul of the artist.”

Sayed could sense that she was speaking from a place of great authority unlike his put on confidence. But how could this old lady gain or have such an authority? Why did she both attract and frighten him?

“If you really have the ability to see beauty, then really look. Really look at me.”

He wanted to dismiss her and turn away but the force of her challenge attracted him. He was surprised at how much he wanted to meet her challenge. It was also terrifying him. He wanted to avoid this confrontation with her beauty but he knew that as an artist; a maker of beautiful objects, he needed to see deeper – beyond form; into the essence of beauty, he needed to see her. This was the point of all his work. To see her; he could be seen. This vulnerability scared him and he wanted to turn away. He had no power of his own to do that. He was faced with a bigger power than his own power to control and create. He was faced with an attraction that denied his authority. It humbled him. He looked and he saw she spoke to him directly, not to his mind but to the longing in his heart. This longing had nothing to do with his drive for success. It was a longing for recognition; to be able to see and embrace What-It-Is-He-Is, beyond the persona of creative artist. He felt vulnerable, naked and he saw himself begin to dissolve. His hands unclenched and broke apart his whole form. Why, it was nothing, just meat and bone held together by fear. He felt a gripping clench around his heart and it hurt greatly. The clench was where all his fear lived and contained him.

“Do you want me to undo that clench? Will you trust me? Will you let me hold your heart in the open palm of my hand?” When she said this, both her palms were held up facing him.

He didn’t know if he could speak. Could he give himself up completely to be destroyed or really created? His eyes rolled up. He lost his center and sense of himself. Her hands were on his heart. He felt a big jolt go through his body; it was shaking off something that he had always lived with, something that he thought he needed – he thought was necessary. The clench, it was gone. He was himself without it.

He looked at the woman with the eyes of a beautiful innocent. “You have freed me. How can I ever thank you? You have freed me of the encasing of fear that I have lived my entire life through.

She smiled and said, “Live life as this beauty. This is the only True, Real Art.”

He knew who she was. She was the Master; his Master, the artist of all souls. In his love of beauty he was only being attracted to Her.

## Conversation 2

### *So What Do You Study?*

Marinee was in the tropics. She ordered a mango-pineapple-coconut smoothie and looked for an empty chair by an empty table to sit on. She had had a wonderful day of wandering above the clouds on the plant-bare volcano top. She loved altitude. She loved being in the mountains, feeling the intense rays burning on her skin. She had a thought-free dialogue of happy earth exchange there. Good day's work, she thought as she put her change into her purse and slid onto a plastic patio chair. A young man with long curly brown hair, thin, tanned and full of the chemistry of his opinions sat down across from her at the table. He was a bit disconcerted to see that she had landed at 'his' table. He thought of saying, 'I was here first' but felt that would be socially unacceptable since the woman was quite elderly; at least 90 or something like that.

"I don't mind sharing," she said.

He felt awkward, should I go or should I stay? he thought. He thought it would be better manners to make a go of it. "Thanks," he said. Seth put down his plate of mahi-mahi and started to eat. Marinee took small sips of her smoothie enjoying especially the fresh pineapple flavor. Seth ate quickly; evidently starved.

"So, first time to Maui?" he asked.

"Oh no, I have been coming here for many years," she said. "How about you?" she asked.

"I come on the winter school break."

"Oh, a student, what year are you in?"

"My last year, I am a senior."

"What are you studying?" asked Marinee.

"Marine biology."

"Sounds interesting but not really," she laughed.

Seth frowned. What's up with her? He wondered. "What do you mean?" he asked.

Oh, I meant nothing by it, no harm. It's just that you're a young man, you must have a lot on your mind besides what fishes are up to."

Seth gave her a puzzled expression and Marinee asked, "Have you made any dent into what life is all about?" "You know, the bigger picture?"

Wow, Seth thought, this lady goes deep right away. Must be some rum in her smoothie. "I have some suspicions," Seth answered.

"Care to share?" she asked. "Nothing can shock me, as you can see I am quite your elder – been around the block quite a few times."

"Well, I have one theory that I have been testing. I have been studying this for a while. There seems to be two things going on. One game is that people are busy trying to get somewhere, somewhere better than where they are – somewhere where there is no pain; only more and more satisfying pleasure. You know, the perfect woman, the cool job etc . . . Seth paused and wiped his mouth with his napkin.

“And the other game, the other thing?” asked Marinee.

“Well living is learning and experience is showing us something else, you know, like . . . like . . . (this is where Seth stalled unable to articulate what he suspected was true.)

“Like experience contains both pleasure and pain, that there is no way to achieve some kind of state of permanent heightened pleasure - that life will always be painful too.”

“Wow, definitely, something like what you just said.”

“So, studying this makes you a student of life, huh?” asked Marinee.

“Yeah, I guess we are all here to study what life is.”

“So what is life?” asked Marinee. “What is it for you?”

“I guess satisfying my urges and desires, like eating when your hungry, basic stuff like that.”

“Are there any urges beyond the basic stuff like that?” asked Marinee.

“Well, meeting someone; falling in love – having kids maybe.” replied Seth.

“Aren’t those the basic urges?” asked Marinee. “Is there any urges beyond those? What do you think?”

“Let me think about it.”

Marinee could see Seth churning ideas in his mind and rejecting them.

“Don’t know, you mean . . . like . . . there is a bigger picture than living a life and trying to fulfill your pleasures and urges? I’m not sure there is a bigger picture than that. I know I’m gonna die and I don’t know what happens if anything after that. No one has come back to tell us anything.”

“Oh!” laughed Marinee. “I have and I have something to tell you about it.”

Wow, thought Seth, this old lady is blowing my mind. “Did you have some kind of death experience, see the light and come back?”

“Yes, but not in the way you are talking about. I did die but it wasn’t my body that died. It was my mind.”

Seth thought, she seems pretty normal. How can her mind be dead? “What do you mean by that?” he asked.

“I mean, my sense of personal identity died.”

“Like you’re not a you? What are you then? How can anybody be except for what they are?”

“Exactly,” answered Marinee. “I realized exactly what I am.”

“And you’re not an old lady?” asked Seth.

“Oh, yes, I am that, too, but that’s only a shadow; a performance concocted by what I really am.”

Seth was grinning now. “Man, I don’t know what you are talking about.”

“It doesn’t scare you?” asked Marinee.

Seth thought for a moment and burst out laughing. “It’s the strangest thing I ever heard but I feel like, yeah I feel, you know . . . somehow . . . and I don’t know how I know this – except that I know that what you are saying is the truest thing that I have ever heard.”

“Ain’t lying,” laughed Marinee.

Seth found himself staring into the old woman's eyes. He didn't want to turn away. He felt a buzz; a transmission of some kind, like a high from hashish but without any side effects. His thoughts were slowing down and in between the few thoughts he was having, he had a sense that he wasn't just his body; his body existed and lived in the bigger thing that he is. He had no words for that bigger thing, he could barely think. He couldn't study himself from his usual small perspective, it was too limited. He could only know himself from the bigger, truer perspective which didn't feel like a perspective at all. He felt limitless and this felt blissful to his body.

Marinee turned away and the sensation of feeling limitless left him. She got up to leave.

Seth tried to get into his thoughts again. He barely managed to get out, "Hey, lady, can I see you again?"

Marinee had already made it to the sidewalk. She turned and waved goodbye. She answered, "Oh, sure, why not, but, you must keep up your studies."

Seth sat still and enjoyed the afternoon sun. He felt that he had just experienced a mind shattering experience. He would never see the world or himself in the same old way. Now, he knew what he really wanted to major in.

### Conversation 3

#### *Who Is The Ruler (Revealer) Of My Heart?*

Carlton King swam out into the sea. It was high tide and the air was crisp and cool on an early morning California day. He was determined that it would be his last gesture. He was going to extinguish his life. He wasn't going to live in a world where he wasn't the master of his own fate. No one would break his heart again like she did or like he did. No one. Each stroke was deliberate; an act of rage. His arms and legs pounded the salty water and he swam and swam until he exhausted himself of all his life.

Sam stood by Marinee's side watching the man recede further and further into the horizon of the sea. "What do you think he is doing, Master?" he asked.

"He is going back. He wants to kill himself." Marinee spoke in a whisper.

Sam's instinct was to jump in and go after the man, save his life, surely no amount of suffering is worth suicide, he thought. He looked at his Master's face. It was serene with a slight smile on her lips. "Now," she said.

Sam knew his teacher's ways, well, at least some of them. He knew that she was telling him to go after the man. He threw off his shoes and flung himself into the ocean. He, too, was a strong swimmer. He, too, had a strong conviction and was able to reach the man as he was on his last breath. Sam grabbed the man and he fought against Sam's help. Sam punched him out for his own good. It was difficult dragging him back to the shore but he managed it.

"Here, cover him with our blanket." Marinee instructed Sam. The man stirred and began to cough. He opened his eyes and at first he thought he saw an angel standing over him but as his eyes adjusted to the sunlight he saw it was an elderly woman. She did a surprising thing and kicked him hard right into his side and said, "Don't do that again."

This made him furious and he sat up and said, "Lady, what the fuck are you doing?"

"Saving your miserable, stupid life, you fool." She answered.

"I didn't ask to be saved," he protested.

"I don't save anyone that doesn't ask for it," she replied. Sam smiled and knew that was true from his own experience.

"And now that I have saved you, you owe me big time, sir."

"Lady, you are crazy. I didn't ask to be saved and I don't owe you anything."

"Well, we better start negotiating. If you didn't want to be saved I wouldn't have noticed you and your dirty intent, and my friend Sam – a very strong swimmer wouldn't have been here with me to save your sorry ass. Somehow, buddy, that all adds up to you wanting to be saved and now, you owe me for the big bother of the favor. Have some class for God's sake."

Carlton didn't know what to make of the woman's crazy logic. He decided to go along with the woman because (and he didn't really want her to know this), he was



actually grateful to be alive. He knew that what he just tried to do was just about the dumbest thing he had ever done. “Well, let’s say, that if I was glad that you saved my life, why would I owe you anything?”

“Man, you really have no class, that’s got to be the most selfish thing I’ve ever heard.” Sam nodded in agreement.

Carlton was growing more irritated. “Why don’t you just mind your own business?”

“Moron, you mean your own business (pointing at him). What do you know about my business?”

Gee, what is this lady talking about? She keeps going on with some kind of her own brand of crazy logic. “What is your business, then lady?”

“It’s to save your crazy ass and your crazy soul, dumb-ass.”

“Don’t worry lady – I don’t have a soul so it don’t need saving.”

“You don’t have a soul, the soul has you. You got your ass on backwards, and, your soul wants more than saving. It wants a hell – a – lot more.”

“Yeah, like what?”

“It wants love, real true, authentic, all the way righteous, Real Love, baby. Your girlfriend broke your heart along with your best friend, too. I know all about broken hearts. That’s my job. I am not just the healer of broken hearts, I am the Revealer of the Heart.”

What the hell is she talking about? She was dumbfounding all his usual thought processes with a logic and force that surely was all her own. He looked at her companion. He was a man about his own age – early forties. He seemed normal, maybe more than normal, maybe, kind of nice – a man you could like and trust. What is the relationship between the two of them? He looked at her and wanted to tell her to buzz off. But, he didn’t really want to tell her that. He knew that was just a surface reaction; a way of protecting himself from something he didn’t understand. He wanted to know why she was saying these things to him. He wanted to know how she could speak with such authority and how she knew of his crazy intention and his broken heart. Could she, somehow, heal me, help me? What else did she say, that she is the Revealer of the Heart? Why would she say such a thing? He knew without knowing how and he decided without thinking to decide that he could trust her. He held out his hand to her and said, “My name is Carlton King. My life did need saving and I thank you.”

Marinee held his big hands between her small hands. His body relaxed and he felt a love soak him through and through and he allowed it. He allowed it because he so wanted it and needed it. He stood there for a long while with his hands held between the old woman’s palms. When he thought that she would let go, she brought him closer to her and held his hand over her heart and placed her hand over his heart. He didn’t know how to describe what happened next. His heart flooded with a balm of truth acceptance. He felt himself, not as a man wronged or as a man that was right, he felt himself not separate from love.

Marinee let her hands drop. Carlton turned to Sam and asked, “Man, who is this lady?”

Sam smiled knowingly. “Why, she is our Master, idiot.”

Marinee started walking to the car. “Home, awaits, let’s go.” She said.

Carlton had no where to go. No where he wanted to go. He could walk away in any direction, be his own man, start over. He had his life back. He know he could and would get over his girlfriends’ and best friend’s betrayal. He never thought that was possible before he met the old woman. So, I do owe her, he thought. He called out before she could get away; out of his sight forever, “Master, you forgot your blanket.”

Marinee waved him to come on and Carlton handed the blanket to Sam and Sam whispered to him, “Man, I don’t know if you know this, but this is the luckiest day of your life.”

Carlton laughed and said, “I’ll trust you man on that one.”

Sam smiled. What a novice, he thought. The sun was shining brightly and their hearts were already warm. Sam knew a lot about luck – his life was lived in service to the Ruler of his Heart.

## Conversation 4

### Who Is The Difference?

Karel was an angel of the highest caliber. She loved her work of serving the will of the Great One. She knew that the people she helped found it difficult to accept the ways of the Great One – especially in the face of suffering. They always questioned the will of the Great One and at times of personal difficulty, they even questioned the reality or existence of the Great One. She was often shocked at that. It was a stab at her own heart as she loved the Great One and she loved to serve Her Will. She had never seen the face of the great Beloved. She had never even seen her own face. She knew of the Beloved through the force of her attraction to Her. She had always felt that attraction. It motivated all her impulses and actions. It was actually her food. She did not eat plant life or animals. Her body was ephemeral – appearing as wisps of light fluctuations. She couldn't imagine the Great Beloved as a form; that would be too gross. She knew that at times the Great Beloved descended into form to awaken people to the One Great Attraction. She felt that the gesture of the descent was a remarkable sacrifice. From time to time, she hovered around such a God-person but was unable to sustain herself in the lower realms. She would always have to return to knowing the Beloved in the rarified realms of light.

She loved loving the Beloved. She did not understand how the beings in the lower realms could busy themselves with anything but the worship of the Beloved. She reasoned that embodiment must somehow be a great obstruction to the play of love. She was grateful that she was an angel.

One day, she felt a question arise in her heart and it began to disturb her worship. "What is the difference?" "What is the difference?" it repeated over and over. She was able to push it away but recently it appeared more urgent in its inquiry and it was burning a hole into her satisfying status quo of blissful absorption. She began to have strange lapses. She felt a rebellious attitude growing in her. What is the difference? What is the difference? It demanded an answer. She had to answer her own inquiry. For the first time in her life, she doubted the will of the Beloved. Why had the Beloved planted this question in my heart, perhaps this is the torment and dilemma that people feel and she felt a deeper compassion for them. She visited them more often and for longer periods, always unseen as their eyes were too gross to see her. Until, one day an elderly woman said, "Excuse me, you are standing in my way. Are you alright? Do you need some kind of help?"

"What, you can see me?" Karel asked.

"Oh, yeah, you are quite visible, my dear. Quite visible."

Karel didn't know what to do or where to turn so she turned to the elderly woman. "I must admit I am out of my realm."

The woman laughed and said, “You ain’t kidding. Come on, you can hang out with me if you want.”

Karel nodded and followed the woman. They sat by the river and Karel watched as the woman took off her shoes and dipped her feet into the water. “It’s quite lovely and warm.”

Karel put her feet into the water and enjoyed the sensation of the liquid flowing over her feet.

“Don’t you have some kind of question you want answered?” the old woman asked her.

Question, she wondered, what question? “I don’t know,” she stumbled.

“Okay, I can see that you are a bit dazed by the descent, happens to everyone when they find themselves embodied like this. It’s a tough transition. Most of what you are and what you know becomes veiled to you and you will have a struggle on your hands trying to lift the veil. Do you know who I am?”

Somehow Karel knew the answer. “You’re a Divine descent, aren’t you?”

“Wow! Pretty good! Hit the target on the bulls’ eye.”

Karel was shocked that the great Beloved – the Great One – was wearing a face and enduring embodiment. She felt the shock of her own embodiment and knew she was also wearing a face. She wondered what it looked like.

“That’s how the difference begins.”

Those words rang in her; they mean something, she thought. “What do you mean – about the difference?” she asked.

“The difference is . . . Marinee pointed to her body and then at Karel’s, “It’s the obvious separation that embodiment implies. But it also exists’ at the most subtlest level of existence. It is the sense of two – of the other.”

“But why does the difference, this separation exist?”

“It doesn’t, it is only implied in the appearance of existence – in embodiment – no matter how gross or subtle. The difference is a false assumption based on the seeming appearance of the other.”

“There is no other?” asked Karel. “Is there not a me, a one that lives; that serves; that loves – that lives to love, that loves to love the Great One?”

“Listen, honey, the Great One is the Only One. There is no one else. The Great One plays this game of Divine Ignorance – pretending to play the part of separation – wearing another face, leading this false one; this pretend one down the road of embodiment both sublime and horrendous and then, when the false assumption becomes unbearable – the Great One wants to be relieved of the burden of that difference, of being separate, the sense of relatedness disappears. The sense of difference is gone. The worshiper and the worshipped are One. This is the strange whim of the Great One.”

Karel was shocked. She saw that the veil of lover, the act of worshipping was actually the ritual of separation. “What a silly game I was playing and I didn’t want to stop it.”

“That’s right,” Marinee replied. The Great One is both a rogue and a very compassionate player, that’s why the Great One placed the burning question in you, the

question –what is the difference? It forced you to allow the descent into physical embodiment. It was the only way to shock the true answer out of you. The veil has been lifted. Pretty fun game, the veil has been lifted by being veiled in the heaviest, thickest way possible – physical embodiment.”

“She does her strange ways,” laughed Keral.

“You mean, you have your strange ways,” Marinee corrected.

“Can’t I just pretend a little separation so to enjoy talking to Her, sharing with Her?”

“Oh sure, enjoy your act; your pretense, as She does through all these billions of people and creatures but you know there is no dam difference. The game is seen so enjoy the illusion of relatedness.”

“Then, what will happen, what will I do?” asked Keral.

“You’re looking at it,” laughed Marinee.

## Conversation 5

### *What Are The Possibilities?*

The holding realm was pleasant enough. It was not a place where anyone expected to stay long enough to get really bored with it. The seats were comfortable, a beverage of your choice was always at hand and the billboards changed frequently advertising different possibilities for your consideration. They advertised roles to play and places to see and people's choices sometimes would change as quickly as the billboards did.

When anyone new came into the holding pen they were usually of an advanced age; every bit looking like 70 or 80 or 90, but there were also the younger looking dead that arrived. The older 'lookers' looked after the younger newly arrived 'lookers' giving them advice on all the information that they had read over and over from the billboards. They helped the youngins because the youngins would have less time in the holding pen because each person advanced in age by becoming younger and younger. Your disappearance from the holding pen counted on your disappearance from your body. When one got so young that they were the age of a young child or even a toddler, they left the holding pen and began their new life of possibilities.

Tasha had been in the holding pen for awhile. It was hard to keep track of exactly how long but she knew it was awhile because she had seen the complete circuit of advertisements about 3,000 times. She had entered at a very advanced age of 105 years and now her body was pre-teen. She was looking forward to her next life. She was satisfied with her last life on Earth though she couldn't remember much of it. The memory goes as you get younger and younger, she laughed to herself. Just as well, she thought, because I must concentrate on choosing my next life. I have to carefully consider all the possibilities. She knew she had to electronically turn her vote in soon, vote in her sex, the kind of roles she wanted to play, the places she chose to live before she got too young to access or process information intelligently. I don't want to make the same mistakes that I made in my last life and I don't want to live in Chicago (she still remembered that!) too dam cold in the winter. She wondered how she would know what to pick. She had observed others when they voted. Everyone gossiped about their possible choices. She wondered if they actually knew why they were voting for what they did. Besides studying the billboards there wasn't anything else to do. When the momentous voting moment occurred a 'looker' was usually around seven years old in appearance, sometimes as young as four years old or younger. They voted and pop! . . . they were gone. Someone else arrived and occupied their seats.

Besides circuit A of the billboard, there was circuit B and C and D. Circuit A concentrated on sexual preferences, body types. Circuit B concentrated on roles to play, there were a lot of choices besides the gender roles of wife/husband, brother/sister etc . . . there were identity/work roles as well: farmer, musician, professor, artist . . . etc.

Circuit C dealt with special gifts, unusual feats, strange occurrences. This circuit was chosen from less frequently as people were wary of the unusual or abnormal. Circuit D was usually fast-forwarded by the majority of the 'lookers'. It had to do with cracking the code of one's existence and most of the 'lookers' found that to be a dangerous very fearful proposition. It was well rumored to avoid that circuit, that to even view it could be too disturbing. It could cause a 'looker' to become disenchanted with a new life choice and all the wonderful possibilities for it. It might cause a 'looker' to disappear without locking in their choice votes. It was rumored that if you didn't lock in your choices you would return unable to function at all – out of your mind. It was important to have all the essential details of your next life worked out to guarantee a good, productive, fulfilling life.

Tasha wondered if people made good choices. How did they know what would fulfill them? She worried that she might make a bad choice that would leave her unfulfilled in her next life. She could feel a growing concern from the other 'lookers' to make her vote. They assured her that she would just 'know' but she didn't feel that way about any of the possibilities. While the other fast-forwarded through circuit D, she decided that she wanted to see what circuit D was all about. What did it offer? She pressed the button and scrolled forward.

An elderly woman that called herself Marinee appeared on the circuit screen and introduced circuit D as a very select circuit for those with very discriminating tastes. "No, this choice is not for the weak-hearted. This choice is the study of not only the body, the mind, the soul – it is the study of their undoing; their release. It is the study of the Open Heart, the Open Hand. One will be tested and purified in a fire of intelligent submission to What Is Truth. None of your preferences or choices will be indulged or fulfilled, all choices and preferences will be seen for the limitation and limiting definition that they are."

Tasha was shocked, scared shitless. This choice and its prospects were terrifying, yet she was attracted; attracted mightily beyond any reasonable comprehension she had.

The other 'lookers' noticed her and were aghast. "Fast-forward, dear, fast-forward."

She did not pull away. There was something about Marinee and the choice that she offered that made sense to her. Yes, it was terrifying as well but she was attracted beyond her fear. She knew, she felt that somehow or other this choice was right for her, that it was true and with that conviction she pressed in her vote and she disappeared.

A 'looker' saw her go and mumbled, "With all the wonderful choices - with all the world has to offer, why would anyone make that choice – their last choice?"

## Conversation 6

### *When Will I Know Love?*

Vanessa thought she had known love. She was convinced that she had experienced true love and had given true love. So, why was she all alone? She had connections and acquaintances, children that she had raised, grandchildren that visited her. She had friends to gossip with. She always had someone to turn to if she was lonely. There were family and friends always around. She didn't have to be alone, so why was she living alone? She liked living alone most of the time. She could eat when she wished, sleep when she wished. She made all her own decisions about her life and could do whatever she wanted; when she wanted without anyone judging it. Really, everything was fine. It was a good life, a fine life but she wondered if she lived up to her full potential. This made her disconsolate. She began to read self-help books. She wanted to know how to motivate herself. She wasn't sure what it was that she wanted. She felt unfulfilled in love. She knew that her friends and family loved her but not in the way she felt truly seen and felt. What could others feel of her that was bigger than what she was willing to give or let be seen? She didn't know if there was more to her than what she gave. She did feel there was potential for more. More of what? More love to be known, to be revealed? She didn't know how to reach that potential. The self-help books seemed to carry a promise that she could reach that potential. She was faithful in carrying out the exercises they said were fail proof. She saw a therapist once a week and began to see her emotional patterning. She felt she was making progress with becoming a kinder, caring person. She had always felt she was a good person, now she was becoming a better person. No one seemed to notice any difference. Life was just more of the same and the people she cared about were also the same. She tried to feel gratitude for her life. It was a good life, she had what she needed and her health was good. She wondered if the potential she felt inside could actually be realized. Maybe, I am deluding myself that I have any more potential to realize beyond what I am already living. This made her feel even more disconsolate. It was in this state of mind; of being inconsolable that she met Marinee.

Marinee was a very elderly lady that lived two doors up from her. They always waved to each other if either one was driving by. Sometimes they crossed each other's path when they were out walking. It was on a cool fall day when both women were out for a stroll, Marinee met Vanesa and decided it was time to start up a conversation. Marinee stirred past the obvious neighbor chit chat exchange and asked Vanessa, "Have you found the answer? Still working on yourself?"

Vanessa was startled by this approach. "What do you mean?"

"You know, have you known true love?"

"Why of course, I have known true love."

"Then why aren't you consoled? Why are you seeking to know?"



“I don’t know. It is so strange that you are asking me this, what are you doing?”

“Let me show you something. Marinee took out a stone from her pocket. “Look at this stone, what do you think is inside it?”

“Nothing, more stone?”

“Are you sure?”

“I don’t understand, what can be in a stone but just stone, more stone?”

“Yes, what can be in a stone but stone.”

Vanessa frowned, “So?” she asked.

“So” echoed Marinee, “If stone only contains stone, what is its potential?”

“What? “What do you mean?” asked Vanessa.

“How can there be potential in a stone?”

Vanessa struggled, “Are you trying to tell me that there is only more me inside me and that there is no other potential than that? That can’t be true.” Vanessa protested.

“Then why do you feel even more disconsolate then when you first began your investigation?”

“But that can’t be the answer.”

“Do you think if you do more work on yourself; become a nicer you that somehow a greater potential will come alive?” asked Marinee.

“I have hoped that would be true.”

“Is it?” asked Marinee.

“No, but I can’t give up on that potential . . . ”

“I understand, dear, I do, but it is your emotional conviction to your ‘potential’ that is stopping your investigation from becoming real.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, inside the stone is only stone; that was obvious to you, you accepted the answer.”

“You are confusing me. I am not a stone.”

“If this stone disintegrated, what would it be then – more stone inside a stone?”

“It would be nothing or it would become a part of everything else.”

“Yes, it would be nothing and be a part of everything else. That state of knowing is called Being.”

Vanessa eyes brightened. “I think I get it, if I let go of my conviction of ‘being’ myself, I will Be – Be nothing and everything.”

“Yes, it is only by giving up your conviction of yourself can you realize that you are nothing and everything. That, my dear is the state of love.”

“So, you can’t really know love till you can really let go.”

“Yes, what a paradox, the mystery of love is. Love only exists and can be lived when there is no one left to possess it. Here, catch.” Marinee dropped the stone into Vanessa’s hands. “Something to remember our talk and walk by.”

“Maybe, I’ll see you tomorrow?” asked Vanessa.

“Yes, as long as you need. I am always on the walk.”

Marinee relaxed by the river. It was a mild day; the heat of summer was waning. Fall had arrived. She felt very tired and her attention wanted to be drawn out of the body. She took out the six stones of conversation from her pocket and one by one threw them into the river where they would be softened down by the rivers' flow. The work was always like this and would continue long after her body dropped. The transmission of her words; the conversations she had given would always flow the river and like the river could not be stopped by anything a human could say or do. The river always made its way to the ocean eventually and the ocean lived in its undifferentiated state. The ocean consisted all of waters and represented the Reality of Consciousness. She loved the river as it was the means by which the individual/other was carried to its undifferentiated Oneness – the Ocean. She loved the ocean as it contained all. She loved the Mother – The Earth - as everything lived, breathed, moved and flowed on it. She was happy that her body was ready to return to its elements; to become a part of everything here. The Earth received her happily and felt that Marinee's gift was the most perfect gift to receive. Marinee's freedom and her loving Consciousness would stay with the Earth. They were best friends; inseparable. In time or when another cycle appeared, Consciousness and its working ally, Earth, will work together to bring forward another gift to those that need a good talking to. The story will always continue and the gift will always be given. This is the only true conversation; it is how the heart of 'other' can listen to its very own Nature. This is Love – The Perfect Gift.

Santosha Tantra     October 2007