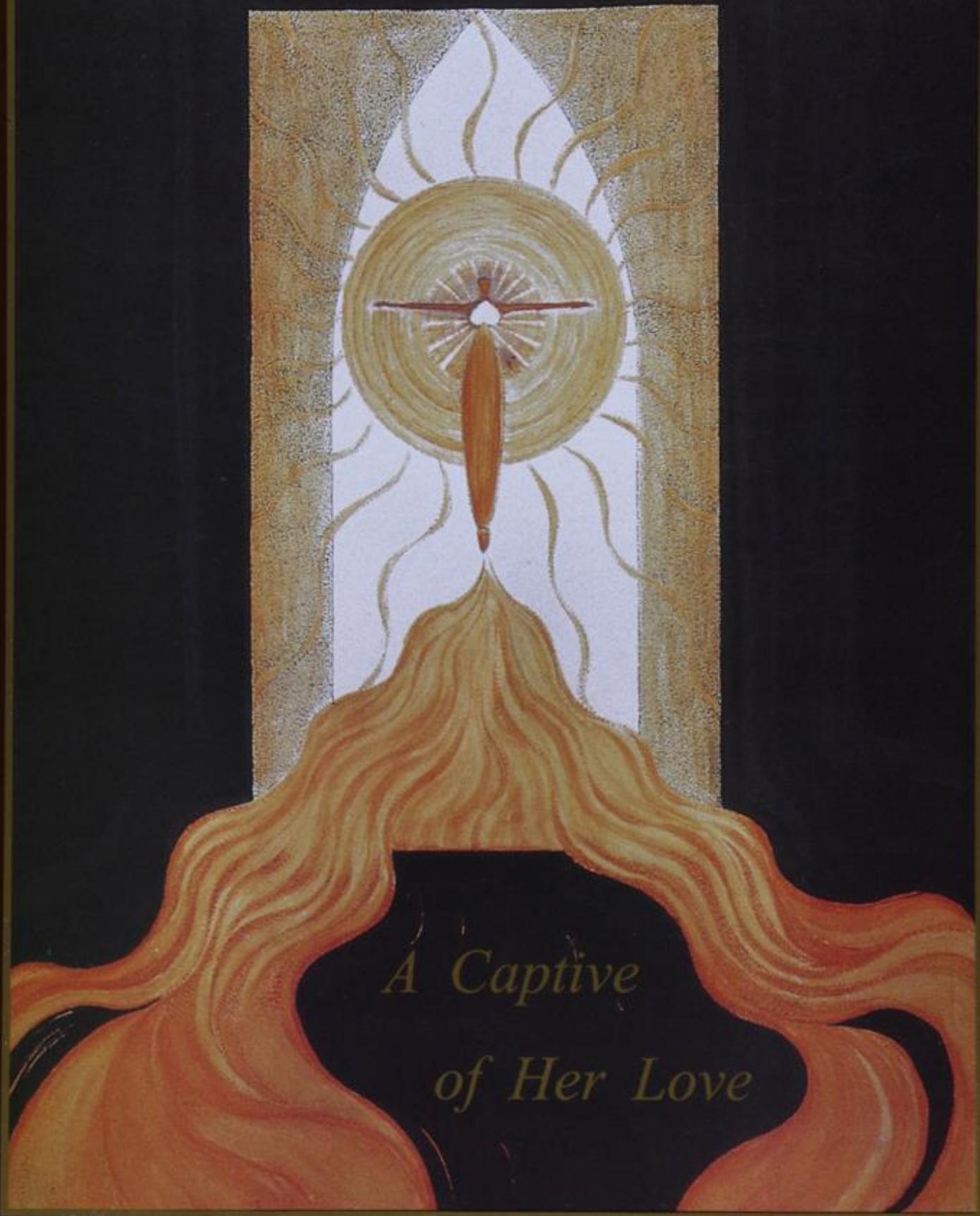


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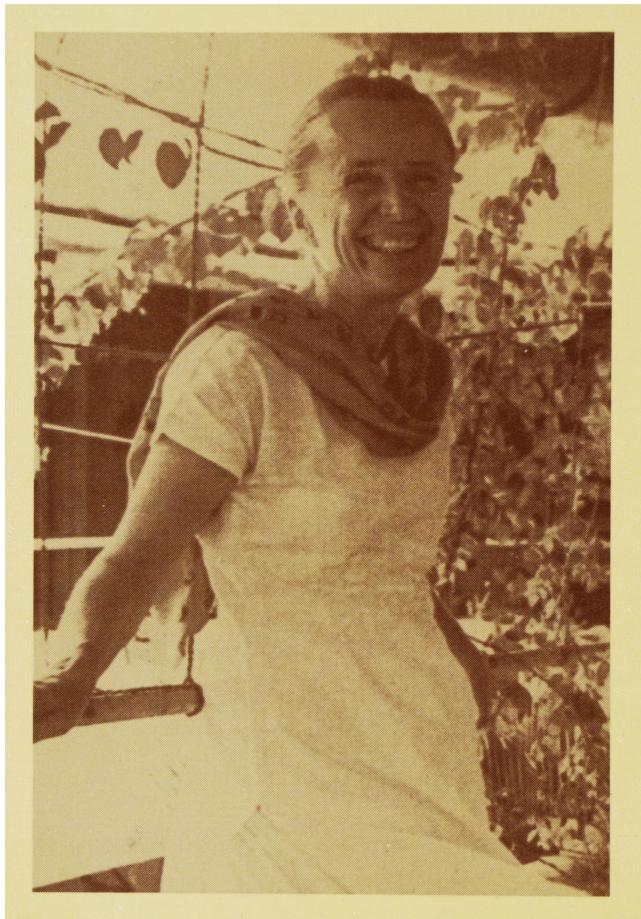
A Captive of Her Love

Letters and Paintings
of
Janina Stroka

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY



With the Mother



JANINA STROKA (1909-1964)

First published 21 February 1998

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Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department

Printed by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry-2, India

PRINTED IN INDIA

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Publisher's Note

This book is a collection of letters, poems and paintings by Janina Stroka, a Polish disciple of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and a member of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, India, from 1957 until her passing in 1964.

Following the Introduction by Michèle Lupsa, the main part of the text consists of extracts from letters written to a Dutch friend with whom Janina lived first in Palestine and later in Germany. These letters cover the six-month period from December 1957 to June 1958, beginning with the day after Janina's arrival in Pondicherry. They describe her impressions of the Mother and the Ashram and her experiences there, summed up in a sentence in the letter of 20 January 1958, "Here we are all captives of Her love."

The correspondence actually continued until Janina's death in 1964; it was only interrupted when her friend came for a year's stay in the Ashram. Some years after Janina's passing, her friend had the idea of publishing those portions of the letters that dealt with Janina's spiritual seeking and the life of the Ashram, for these passages had always been a great help to herself and she felt that they could also be useful to others. She was sending typed extracts to a friend in the Ashram, as published here, when her passing away brought this to an end. The remaining letters have never been found.

The letters in the next section were written between 1960 and 1963 to a young Bengali, a writer and social worker. These are followed by a selection of some of Janina's poems written in Pondicherry. The poems have been included less for their inherent poetic value than to show the intensity of Janina's inner life. The book concludes with a comment by the Mother on Janina's passing.

Janina's letters and poems were written in English, a language in which she expressed herself vividly but by no means with perfect mastery. Slight editorial revision has therefore been necessary. However, the correction of the English (and occasionally French) has been kept to a minimum in order to preserve the authentic flavour and spontaneity of Janina's style.

Janina's paintings were an important part of her life in Sri Aurobindo Ashram. They were a means of offering herself to the Mother and a visual expression of her aspiration, devotion and love. A few of these paintings have been included in the book. Reproducing them has been a difficult task due to their large size and fineness of detail. We have had to confine our selection of the paintings to some that could be reproduced well enough to give an adequate sense of the original.

Introduction

She was like a flame. What can we say about her life? We know so little. Though she was a close friend, I never questioned her about it. For she had come to the Ashram to practise the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo, leaving the past behind her to be reborn to a new life. It was only incidentally that she spoke about herself and related some episodes of her life-story.

From her papers we know that she was born in Lvov, Poland, on the 18th of July 1909. Her father, Jan Stroka, was an engineer, her mother, Jadwiga Krasuska, a teacher. Janina was the younger of their two daughters. After her secondary school examination in Zakopane, she entered the University of Cracow and in 1933 received her M.A. degree in pedagogy and psychology. During the six following years she worked as a teacher in a teachers' training college.

In 1939, when the Nazis invaded Poland, the intelligentsia was advised to leave the country as there was fear of genocide. Janina was among those who joined the exodus. She started her journey with a group of thirty or more people, travelling by all available means, taking lifts in bullock carts or going on foot. Later, they had to disband and take shelter in farms on the way and, as the days passed, her group grew smaller and smaller, many dropping out through sheer exhaustion. When they drew near the Slovakia border in the Tatry, Janina found herself with only one companion who suddenly collapsed while they were climbing a mountain. It was a crucial moment, for any delay would defeat all their efforts. He entreated her to leave him to his fate and not lose her last chance of reaching safety. He preferred to die in his motherland under the wide sky — this was his freedom — his body one with the earth of Poland.

Soon she was on the other side — alone.

From Slovakia she went to Hungary and then, via Yugoslavia and Turkey, to Palestine — or rather what was then Palestine — along with other Polish refugees. This was in January 1941. Neither the itinerary by land and sea nor the details of the journey are known to us. The refugees were given shelter in a camp near Jerusalem. But there came a day when Janina could no longer bear the promiscuity of camp life and she left the settlement in search of work. She knocked at many doors, but they were all closed to her. She went on inquiring here and there and finally arrived at Ram Allah, where she presented herself at a boarding school for Arab girls. The headmistress was a Dutch lady who had been posted there by a Quaker association. She felt very sorry for Janina, whose qualifications were irrelevant here.

“Do you know how to cook? how to sew?” she asked. There was nothing that Janina could do which would justify her employment. Yet, not having the heart to send her away, the headmistress welcomed her into the house. “We shall find something”, she said.

Janina found not only a refuge but also a friend, and more, a kindred soul. It is to this friend that most of the letters published here are addressed.

Before Janina’s arrival in that boarding school there was no real infirmary there, only a sick-room which often remained vacant. The nursing was confined to taking temperatures, giving medicine and food, and sending the boarders to a hospital if their condition was serious. Though there was no need of a special attendant, Janina was appointed to this task. Later on, she helped in teaching and gardening and assisted the headmistress in solving the problems of the Arab girl students. As time passed in that foreign land, the friendship between the two deepened.

Once, in Jerusalem, a lecture on Sri Aurobindo was delivered by a German clergyman¹ who later became a close friend of theirs. He used to give regular talks on the world’s sages and mystics. In a way, he too was a refugee. Before Hitler came to power, he had seen in him a dark force and had written some articles in which he warned people about the coming danger. His political activities led to his arrest and imprisonment. The church negotiated his freedom but expelled him and he had to go into exile. This was for him the occasion to realise one of his old dreams: to go to the Orient, study Arabic and learn more about Islam. So it was that he found himself in Palestine when the war broke out.

One day, as he was ferreting in a secondhand bookshop in Jerusalem, he discovered Sri Aurobindo’s *Life Divine*. This came to him as a revelation and a message of hope. Even if the dark forces were at present holding the world in their grip, there was Someone on earth whose spiritual force could change the course of events, transform the Shadow into Light and sow the seeds of a new world.

Janina heard the message of Sri Aurobindo and it was for her the beginning of a new life. More books by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were obtained and she began to practise yoga with her friend. It was also at that time that she started painting. She had learned drawing and painting at school in Poland, but had never developed her talent, or only as much as was necessary for her teaching. Here, in Palestine, she began to paint water-colour landscapes.

Work in the boarding school for Arab girls came to a stop at the end of the British Mandate in Palestine. As Janina was not a Jew, there was no reason for her to stay there

¹ Heinz Kappes, who later translated many of Sri Aurobindo’s works into German.

and she decided to go back to Poland in February 1948. She worked there for nearly nine years, supervising the educational work of different institutions. Later on, she was put in charge of a home and school for mentally deficient children. Throughout this period, she continued to study the works of Sri Aurobindo and practise yoga, but she fell ill in the destructive atmosphere of soviet communism. In November 1956, thanks to a change of government in Poland, she obtained a passport for Germany where her friend now lived. There she was welcomed once more and nursed both in body and soul. It was in some way an apprenticeship of freedom, a kind of re-education. Janina had to learn to breathe and move and think as a free being in a free country. Living in a different atmosphere, she started to realise how much her soul had been stifled, her spirit wounded by the life in Poland under the communist regime. She could not possibly go back. It was then that she made her decisive choice and with the consent of the Mother embarked for India, arriving in Pondicherry on the 17th of December 1957.

About her life in the Ashram, her letters to her friend reveal more than anything we can say. The Mother put her in charge of a nursing home for surgical cases. As she was not a trained nurse, the technical side of nursing was generally performed by others, but she kept the house spotlessly clean and managed, often out of next to nothing, to create an atmosphere of harmony and beauty.

During her free time, she devoted herself to painting, drawing her inspiration from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The colours she chose were always symbolic of a state or a plane of consciousness. She often used the technique of stippling: hundreds and hundreds of dots, into each of which went all her concentration; each dot contained the Divine Name. Later she painted several series of pictures to illustrate certain spiritual themes such as the adventure of the soul, the divine Play and the story of Creation. In her creative periods she could not stop painting, yet continued to take care of the patients with the same attention — the brush in one hand, the bedpan in the other, as she would say. In six and a half years, she produced more than three hundred paintings. From 1961, she started experiments with cement, taking the help of a master-mason to inlay this raw material with some fine worshipping figures. While thus experimenting, she dreamt of the future, of towns and houses whose walls would reflect the higher aspiration of man and his inner life.

She also decorated pottery — plates, vases, lamps. Her designs were not simply ornamental; each line and shade had a deep meaning. A spiral of tiny circles of different colours would suggest the evolution from the dark Inconscient to the orange-gold of the Supramental, the long journey of the soul through the red, green, blue and yellow of all the

planes of existence and levels of consciousness — with, in the centre of each small circle, a golden dot, the divine spark, growing from a pinpoint in the dark unconsciousness and burning progressively through all the colours until it blazes forth into a golden sun.

Her activities were not confined only to nursing and painting, she also helped some teachers of the Ashram school in their educational work and she wrote a number of poems in English and in French, a few of which we have included here.

She lived in the consciousness of the One. For her, all was He, the Lord. This could be felt in her dealings with people, no matter who they were or what they did. Whether persons of rank or scavengers, she would always address them in the same considerate, even ceremonious manner. All happenings were to her manifestations of Him. Once there was a cyclone. All night the tempest raged. One felt as if the world was being shaken to its foundations. Many trees were uprooted, roofs torn away. There was no electricity, no water supply, houses were leaking. The next morning, everybody's mind was full of the inconveniences of the situation. I met Janina and inquired about the damage to her nursing home and about how she had felt amidst the fury of the elements. Her face expressed nothing but glowing wonder and in amazement she said: "All this is happening in the body of the Lord!"

I had read the Bhagavad-Gita many times, and meditated upon the chapter where Krishna reveals to Arjuna His cosmic form and appears as Time the Destroyer, swallowing all the worlds in His blazing mouth. All this I had tried to see in my mind and imagination, but that day, while our ears were still filled with the clamour of the storm, this simple remark of Janina's struck me with the force of a living truth — a truth that she had lived. At once I swung to another consciousness through the power of her experience.

She had also a great sense of humour. About someone who had not been very nice to her, she said: "In one of my pictures, I shall paint him as a flower in the buttonhole of the Lord."

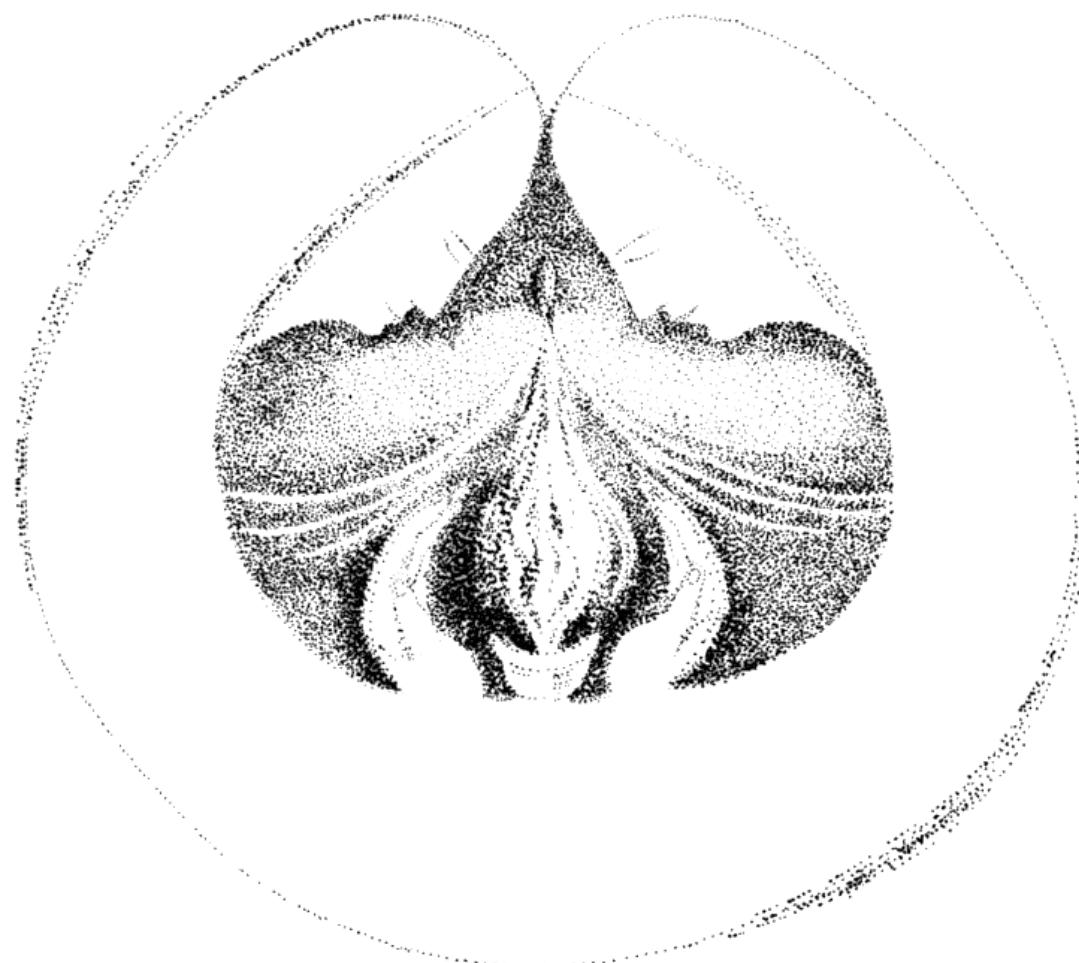
This was her way of taking everything, good or bad, into herself and offering it to the Lord so that He might transform it.

On July 17, 1964, the eve of her fifty-fifth birthday, as she was recovering from a fever, she suddenly died. Just prior to that, she had been working hard on a series of forty-eight pictures she wanted to offer to the Mother on that day. She had completed them all. They illustrated her favourite theme: the journey of the soul out of the Mother's Heart, the plunge into the abyss and, through the divine alchemy in all the worlds, the Return and the Crown. She too was returning from her long journey.

On the morning of the 18th, her birthday, at the time fixed by the Mother, her body was taken to the cremation ground, as is the custom here.

As I was looking at the funeral pyre with a distressed heart, I saw the rising flames merge with the figures of her paintings. This indeed was her life; she was herself a flame of God's living Fire.

Michèle Lupsa



A Captive of Her Love

Pondicherry 18.12.1957

There is a great peace in me and I have inwardly asked the Mother to write this letter too, to help me. Her living and pulsating consciousness is just simply doing everything here and I experience it that there is just no place for my own action. I have only to step aside and hold with ardent aspiration my mind, life and body imploring Her to do Her Will with them. There can be no doubt that the Divine has directly come into the human life in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Anyway there is no doubt in me and for this Truth I am continuously giving thanks.

I arrived in Pondicherry yesterday, 17.12, early in the morning. The brother of the sadhak¹ who met me in the port of Bombay came to the train — another brother for me. The Radiation works through them. He brought me with all my luggage (which has during all the journey never been opened by the customs!) to a house which is supposed to be my home now and soon the place too of my work. It is a house newly purchased by the Ashram for a kind of nursing home for patients after operations. Nahar has told me that Mother wants to put me in charge of this home. The pressure of Her Force is so immense that it is clear that only She will be doing Her work in the house and I am only praying that I may never forget it and learn more and more to be a channel only. This house is in the middle of houses which do not belong to the Ashram. The Ashram forms a third of Pondicherry,² it means that Ashram dots cover, in some places more condensed, in others less, or even sparsely — but cover all of Pondicherry like a fantastic creature spreading Her limbs to swallow the human by the supramental. In practice it means that a noisy Indian restaurant is just beside the dining hall, that loud ugly music sounds from a cafe near our playground, that black pigs with their small ones and naked, unspeakably dirty children raise clouds of dust and dirt on the street where my house stands. And there is something so great in it, in this stream of Love spreading, that I cannot express it.

Yesterday was a day when Mother was giving sweets to Her children, to all the members of the Ashram. She does not give flowers now and does not usually give sweets or nuts either as Her work with the spreading of the Ashram is growing. So I was very happy that She was exceptionally doing it on that day. Pavitra (Monsieur Saint-Hilaire) brought me to Her and I only know that I was Her child and that two streams of vibrating

¹ *sadhak*: one who practises Yoga (feminine: *sadhika*).

² In fact, Sri Aurobindo Ashram forms much less than a third of the town of Pondicherry, but the manner in which it is spread out makes it seem larger than it actually is.

Force of Her Grace penetrated into my eyes, to my soul, from Her eyes. So Her Grace is acting in Her children. Now I know that there is no other way for the human being but only to be, really — in just this sense of the word — a child. And many of these most wonderful people here, who help Her in Her work, have really this attitude to Her, to the Divine. It cannot be a different attitude. It is impossible. Yes, She makes an impression of being ageless, as you said you feel it, and Her smile and face just create an indescribable happiness.

This morning I went (as the members and many people from the town do every day) to the street on which Her balcony is built and where She gives Her darshan³ every day. Usually it is at 6.15, today it was some minutes later. One would be doing harm to oneself if one did not become a child again. And the great adoration in the eyes of the sadhaks is only the most natural thing. This is very far from sentimentality. The balcony is not high, we stood very near to Her. She smiled for some time looking us over and then looked at the houses around, the town and the sky. She was as if blessing all the world — so I felt — and She was doing it for quite a long time, maybe ten minutes, but I could not tell. I could not look at Her all the time, I shut my eyes and prayed that I learn to open to the Descent and to adore Her.

The evening meditation is about at 8 or later and the duration differs between a few minutes and twenty minutes. I think one has to learn to be able to be near Her, anyway so I feel; it is the process of being able to be near Her as She is in the human body. Until now I approached Her only as the Divine in my prayer.

Now, it is interesting that Nahar told me first thing that there are also bad people in the Ashram and that I have to be careful. Mother is keeping them as they belong to life and their bad will cannot oppose Her.

About Pavitra and Sri Aurobindo's Force working in the Ashram I shall write next time.

20.12.1957

Mother is creating me anew and as I am here living in the Presence of the Divine continuously, the process is so deep that I need some days before I shall be able to write about Mother. She will also let me know how to write, I know it. Now I know that a certain kind of writing cannot be done by a human being. Sri Aurobindo could do it and has done it in *Savitri* and other books.

³ *darshan*: public appearance of a spiritual personality.

Yesterday in the evening we had a long meditation. It was 8.30 when it started and past 9 when it finished. Such longer meditations are on Thursdays and Saturdays.

Until now Mother lets me live without work. I get up early to be ready for the balcony Darshan. Today it started at 6.30. Before, I enter for a few minutes into the main building to pray to Sri Aurobindo's Living Presence at the large stone⁴ in the courtyard. I also go to the balcony a few minutes early, before Mother appears, to be inwardly ready for Her. She is the Divine and my real Mother. People are gathered and Her silent appearance brings such glory that nothing else matters. To meet Her gaze means to meet Grace, Power and Happiness. So I experience it. And all this is simply real. This sometimes so frail and delicate-looking body, is the Infinite.

After the darshan I go a few streets farther to our dining hall for breakfast. First we take off our shoes or rather sandals. Then we take a nice round tray (which looks like silver but isn't of course). This tray will be also during lunchtime a plate for rice. So on this round tray which I hold in my hands I get from a few people, one after the other: a big wonderfully tasty bun, a banana, milk or cocoa, sugar in a tiny tin and a nice spoon. Everything looks so clean. All the people are smiling and in the eyes of some, one sees Mother looking at you. Then I go with my tray to one of the four large rooms of the dining hall, I sit on the floor on a mat and put my tray on one of the tiny tables you know from the pictures. It is covered with a white piece of cotton, very clean. Then I meditate quietly, nobody starts talking to me, very seldom people talk loudly, but this is not disturbing when it happens. Not many meditate so that you can see it, but there are many faces that are a proof of a very deep yoga. There are also some who just seem to live — but one can never judge so I try not to do it. The eating is an intensive prayer in my case as the body wanted to create difficulties. I eat the normal Indian Ashram food knowing that Mother is giving it to me. It is not so spicy as on the ship. I am very grateful that it suits me. I did not want to have special food as many Europeans have. I felt that I have to throw off completely many things, straight from the beginning.

21.12.1957

Here I am again with a description of how life flows during the day. As I am not working yet I go home after breakfast. After I have finished eating I always first meditate, then bring my tray outside in the yard where sadhaks are washing up. I wash my hands and

⁴ The Samadhi or tomb of Sri Aurobindo.

teeth with water, put on my slippers and go. It is glorious to accept everything as the Divine's — everything that comes.

Mother has a lot of humour. Yesterday we were supposed to attend an evening class She gives for the children on Fridays and we were sitting, some on mats, some on towels, jerseys (but no carpets!) waiting for Mother to come. It was in the playground and She was in a special room nearby where She gives blessings every day to sadhaks who have their birthday or just sees different people whom She calls beforehand. She was inside and we outside and it was raining a bit, first a warm, pleasant rain, but then more and more. Everything was prepared for Her: you know, in front of the map of India on the wall of the playground under a small roof, the chair, the lamp and even the microphone for people who sit farther away. And then She came. The children had grown noisy and complained that it was raining and She was like an ordinary mother. She said: "Oh! Why didn't you tell me that it was raining?" and then She made a few jokes about the sky that was so unbalanced and about the text She wanted to read and all the time She looked at us. And now I know what I can write about Her and what not. I can describe what I see and hear, but never interpret — maybe this will be allowed when the integral purity of my whole being will be reached. She looked and smiled and said, "Everyone can meditate at home." And so this group of people sitting in the rain was sent home by the Divine without the lesson and without the meditation which was to follow.

But I have to go on with the description of the day in the Ashram. So after breakfast during these first days I just went on opening myself to Mother. I just live in it. There is no other way. Everything must be cut with a decisive cut, all kinds of hypnosis, years and years, long-established ways of behaviour, there cannot be — so I felt — a compromise between surrender and one's own ways of living.

Did you get the last *Advent* already? There is an article about what Sri Aurobindo says about the Divine Mother. She comes at crucial points in the life of the world, Herself, to work without delegated Powers.

22.12.1957

Now I want to tell how it is with this difference here — the substantial difference. When I was outside the Ashram I had faith — now I *know*. Every day the vibration from Mother's eyes enters my eyes when She gives darshan and it spreads all over the body. Now I understand that when one is outside one has no idea in a way of what is going on here. Yes, theoretically one knows — but coming here proves that it is just a complete

revolution. In my case it might be the decisive action as well of the psychic, but I feel as if I who have been walking on my feet, am now walking on my head. It is also a continuous hunger and thirst — although a hunger filled with peace — for this vibration. Do you feel what I want to say? In the morning I could fly and be there quicker and wait, but it has nothing to do with Her physical nearness — as some people here still do, just trying to see Her whenever they can. My life is completely changed, I am just possessed. But this cannot be expressed. I only know that it is a glory to be Her servant and instrument. Why am I writing about this difference? Because I know many questions we were asking ourselves outside. Now there is no use asking and answering questions. God came on earth and is living here in a human body. It is clear that I cannot yet grasp it, although I am here, but all eternity is before me.

I attended a lesson of Mother for the youth. Among other things She said that probably the dominant aspect in the supramental manifestation in the coming age will be that of Power, for the new race will need to be protected and that is why the Divine Power will have to protect it from destructive powers. Naturally, she said, that does not mean that the other aspects, Love, Joy, Knowledge will not be present. I have written this sentence for you because I persist in showing you what a difference here the direct Love means, Hers for us and ours for Her. I shall never forget *how* She said it, although before, when I was in Europe I could never have felt it like now, if I had only read such a sentence. At the end of the lesson She said She wanted to give us an important recommendation: never to want to *take* it but always to try only to open oneself, to give oneself, to surrender with as much ardent aspiration as is possible to us. And she repeated several times that there is a danger in each movement of *wanting to take*.⁵

What I have learned during these first days is — but I shall write about it another time. Now I want to tell you that yesterday I was accepted by Mother to attend a class of older youths and sadhaks during which Mother translates *The Synthesis of Yoga* into French. Before She came I had to wait near the table, just like a child in school (Oh! I tell you, this freedom here and this being a child is a glory) and when She came She handed me a book and a nice copybook with Her indescribable smile. I can look at Her only when I stand under the balcony. When She is so near me I cannot. Maybe because first I adored Mother as the Highest and I cannot even move in such moments, when She is near. But it will come. She will create it. She creates everything. Pavitra kneeling at the great stone of Sri Aurobindo's Samadhi, a girl of 16 with a face of almost a pure spirit, the work of

⁵ This refers to the Mother's talk of 18 December 1957. Janina wrote this paragraph partly in French. Her recollection of the Mother's words was not exact.

hundreds of sadhaks who pray working. There are awful faces too. My helper is not easy either, but I feel it like a benediction today. I started my work. The house has a ground floor and the first floor with a gallery and pillars — wonderful. So this refugee is in charge and has a helper nurse, two men to do the work (cleaning, etc.) and... one patient! There is hardly a possibility that there will be more patients as it is seldom that operations are performed. The helping nurse is a sadhika too and the men are just Indian workers. Oh, there is a nightman too for the nights that patients are here!

24.12.1957

Today is Christmas Eve. I have given to Pavitra, to hand it to Mother for Christmas, the small Polish Madonna in the dark wooden triptych and your photo. I included inside a letter: “Ma Mère Divine, cette statuette a été faite en Pologne. Permet que je Te donne aujourd’hui la photo de Riek, Riek par laquelle Tu m’as menée à Toi. Janina.”⁶ A few minutes later your letter arrived and I knew that the Divine Power was working with you too. You must forgive my letters and understand why it is. They are not so constructed as Heinz would want it, but other things will come later. What I wanted to tell you is this. Yesterday Mother has settled down in me in a way. After a few days of opening me and enlarging She just came and is in me. This does not mean that no waves, suggestions, movements arise, but it means — as I feel — becoming an instrument and being continuously transformed. Great inner difficulties may come, but all becomes different. Today I could even be natural in Her nearness. And I learned at today’s Darshan that these last days since I came have been Her direct Grace at work in me. Today I was prepared that this would go on, but nothing happened and I felt only that now She wants to work through me, with me becoming Her in *all* my movements and seeing Her in *everybody* and *everything*. In my patient when I wash him, I wash Mother — in my helper, I feel Mother’s love streaming through me to her (she is not easy). The difference between this and what was before, in Europe, is that I just simply feel Her in me. Her hands in mine, Her head in mine, Her heart in mine. And so I am becoming wider and wider and Love is streaming around in me. Mother gave me this wonder of a nursing home just for me to create and it will be something wonderfully individual as I am also a portion of Her. I am sorry I cannot write normal letters when I write to you, but this is right.

⁶ “My Divine Mother, this statuette was made in Poland. Let me give You today the photo of Riek through whom You brought me to Yourself. Janina.”

Now I go to help Michele, who is a nurse, to make a few angels(!) for Christmas.

My only patient lies in bed like a king. Probably the only patient in all the world who is alone in a nursing home!

29.12.1957

It is such a great happiness, such an unspeakable glory and at the same time just businesslike or like the working of a power station. Every morning during the Balcony Darshan we are filled with as much as each can bear of Force, Love, Light. It is quite clear that it is Her work on each individually — and, for the day, we are dismissed to do the work. It is like a conference of the manager-director (understand me well) with his workers. I have experienced so much during these few days, as if ages had passed since I left Karlsruhe. I have come in a period where She has more often contacts with sadhaks and they say I am lucky. But this is the childish aspect of many sadhaks here which probably often prevents them from going faster in their yoga. This is not like being a child — about which attitude I wrote to you in my first letter. Pavitra is a wonderful example of this most mature attitude of a real child. I understood this problem of an infantile — not right — attitude when I asked Pavitra if I could offer Mother for Christmas the Polish Madonna; he kindly smiled and said he will help me to hand it over to Mother. I then said that it was not necessary that I do it personally: he looked at me in a certain way and then again smiled at me in a different way than before, with such appreciation that I understood much. With me it is so, that during the darshan I give myself to Her and She gives so much that I see all the other contacts with Her as if I did not deserve them and as if it would be too much of Grace. And I have an inner contact with Her that is very deep. I have not spoken yet to Her, I only love Her and surrender as much as I can, from all my heart and with all my strength; and now I begin to learn, persistently, during the day, only to open myself and only to give myself and then She is there, She is in me, pouring Herself through me on whatever or whomever I am at that moment in contact with. It is not all the time and there are so many suggestions and waves which try to prevent it, but I am quite fanatical in my inner discipline now. And you see, there is a tremendous difference between that awful strain in the atmosphere of Europe and the atmosphere here. Sri Aurobindo said it clearly, that there is a value in Her physical nearness.

So I wanted to tell you that on Christmas day She just sat in an armchair under the Christmas tree in the playground and not only we, the sadhaks, but other people too could come and get some sweets from Her, which, of course, meant the contact with Grace. We, the sadhaks got more (I got a kind of diary with Her words), and when She gave it to me

and looked at me, I just became again a different being. I even did not know how I passed farther and I stood for a time in a corner of the playground filled with something that cannot be described. And my everyday life is not easy. She gave me as helper a woman whom I shall not describe here but who is, humanly speaking, very difficult. But although no word was spoken, I know that Mother gave her to me that She might love her through me. And so I try and learn every day and bring to Darshan all the Nursing Home, with my helper, my workers, the furniture, the walls, the ceilings — everything I bring and give it to Her in my heart. And She gives me Force again. What I am sure of is that what I am experiencing is possible when the self-giving is very strong. Then the life becomes so intensive that nothing matters but She. But She is in everything. During the *Synthesis* Class I give my mind to Her and I feel the Power at work. I try very hard never to approach Her or be in Her nearness without intense concentration and meditation which for me also means self-giving. All this shouting and noise and agitated people and the Divine in the middle!!! So was the Christmas ceremony (after the organised part) and so are often the children in the playground. But I am in this respect a fanatic and when I have once in my hunting for my God got a glimpse of Him I shall not allow anything to deprive me of this.

Now it is 6.45 p.m. and I shall go to the marching in the playground (it is just divinising the body, the process She does during the sadhaks' march). After it and after half an hour's exercises of the adult group (I do not take part yet) there will be the evening half-hour meditation. I have noticed that the evening meditations are not at 8.15, but usually later (8.30).

30.12.1957

During Darshan this morning She showed me what is a kind of knack in the process of surrender. I have nothing to give, ever. But every time my act of self-giving is sufficiently strong She gives and acts in me and through me. It is like a rhythm: a movement in me to Her — a movement of Her in me. And the moment I think of giving or want to give, the contact is lost. It is a real school exercise — a school of Divine Living it is here. I often feel it so. "Here, my child, now this has to be learned, go on and report tomorrow." I am practising it now too. Giving myself as completely as I can to Her and I feel Her Love flowing through me to you. She told me also this morning that the way is just to go on and on with more and more self-giving — nothing else. Just more and more. Oh, there is such a great gratitude in me — how can I express it?

Soon my helper will come, so now I want to prepare myself inwardly. After a time I shall probably be able to write about it with humour.

In the afternoon

A few guests came to see our Nursing Home today. Among them Françoise, the granddaughter of Mother. I have seen Pavitra too, just now, after my lunch when I went to Sri Aurobindo to thank Him for everything and ask for help, that my surrender may grow. Pavitra's eyes are possessed by Mother, so I feel it. It was a wonderful moment to recognize Her in him. He is so very, very good to me in such a kind way and so delicate. But in a way I do not have any problems and I do not need anything. I told him that I feel like I have come home and he said, "At last!" in such a way that all his soul was in his eyes. And he said that I seem to have adapted very quickly. Of course, it is always the same with me: I love and nothing else has any importance then, so I eat everything, I do not think of all sorts of little things. I have just thrown them away.

Tomorrow on 31.12 Mother will again distribute sweets in the playground. And on the first She will play the organ in the morning, about 10 o'clock. My! What days are these, as if the Heavens had opened and are pouring their treasures on us.

1.1.1958

Today Mother played the harmonium — for half an hour, from 10.30 till 11. She does it every year. The loudspeakers are of good quality and it was wonderful. She played in Her room — what came to her. Now, at 14.30 She will hand us what we need for January. Everybody writes on a special piece of paper at the end of the month what he needs and on the first of each month we get what She judges is right. I shall get things for the Nursing Home. At present I do not yet need anything for myself. This evening She will also as usual give a class in French for school-children, which whoever wants attends. I always go. So, Grace is just raining on us today! And in the morning there was darshan as usual too.

The week looks so: Monday, 6 p.m. till 7 — *Synthesis* Class (translation); 7.30 — marching before Mother; 7.30 till 8 — adult physical exercises; 8 — concentration (Mother comes out of Her room which She has at the playground and there are a few minutes concentration on the body; She takes the fatigue away, I also feel it). Then She works again in Her room at the playground and after a time She comes again and there is the evening meditation. I made a mistake in my letter: the half-hour evening meditations

are on Thursdays and Sundays. Now before I go on with the week's plan I must make it clear that the conception I had of the playground before is wrong. Playground is the name for a big compound of yards and rooms and one big playground. But the life that is going on there far exceeds the physical training and the physical training itself far exceeds what we normally call it. Mother plays tennis every afternoon from 4.15 till 5. Then She goes by car to the Playground where She just is the Headmistress, controls things, gives lessons, talks with the sadhaks whom She calls — She just organises the life. After the marching She retires to Her room, but She probably works; later between concentration and meditation she receives people from outside and sadhaks who have their birthdays. Pavitra is also often there, although at the time of the physical exercises he and a few others run along the beach (two minutes from the playground). Now the most important thing is that thanks to the transforming quality of the Divine all these occupations lose their human, lower meaning and everything is embraced by Mother as the way upwards (so I experience it). I do not think that all the sadhaks are clearly conscious of it, but many are.

Oh! I relax, I relax. I had been doing it with you after those years in Poland, but now it seems that all the strain of centuries or ages of ignorance is being — with unspeakable Love — slowly removed from me. I have so much time for everything and all the life here goes so smoothly. I shall soon write you more about my work but here it is so completely different from Europe, or rather outside the Ashram. There is not much work to do, but then the work must be as perfect as possible. I am so thankful that I can relax. I just give myself and give myself and it gives me such a rest.

2.1.1958

Yesterday She distributed the New Year's Message.⁷ On such occasions people from outside come. Oh! I have so much to describe to you! Would it not be better if you came? Half an hour ago I got from Her the things for the Nursing Home. And I am so happy. I live in a stream of Grace these last days. But do not think there are no difficulties! Probably even awful ones may come. The New Year's message made a great impression on the sadhaks.

7.1.1958

⁷ "O Nature, material Mother, thou hast said that thou wilt collaborate and there is no limit to the splendour of this collaboration." (The Mother)

The most wonderful thing here is, that everything gets another meaning — another vibration — as the Divine lives here in a body. Maybe it is most for those whose psychic has opened and who go on deepening their self-giving and surrender, but it is so. For example the word adoration gets completely another sense when you just thrill in a state of Love for the Highest that exists and this Highest smiles and sighs and translates with you the *Synthesis* and touches your hand and gives you a sweet and arranges the flowers on the desk in the class. We usually put into adoration some distorted elements. What else can there be, when a particle of dust looks face to face into the Infinite? This is the most normal state in such a situation, I should say.

And as to the climate; it is now the best time for Europeans to come, there are nice showers, cool evenings and during the day no more than 30 to 32 degrees. But the sunshine is strong. Until now I have not put anything on my head and I do not wear glasses. Nobody does, they have umbrellas, but not everybody. So I will see; I will try to live as normally as possible. For me nothing else matters now but She. And this is not a state of excitement but peace.

My letters have not given you until now an idea of the most inner process that is going on — the deeper and deeper self-giving. It is as if I was continuously being broken by overpowering Love, Her Love; it is clear that the ego hidden in all the corners must disappear and I experience it as being broken, the body too, and the body kneeling prostrates itself with its forehead almost on, or on, the floor. This movement comes spontaneously and a vibrating force moves the body. It is just natural and it is a delight too, there is no strain in anything. And all this process is connected with X.⁸ In Europe we would talk about asuras⁹ and forces and try fervently to remain positive. Here, Mother has given me X that I may give myself more and more to her as if she were Mother Herself. All these orders I get during Darshan. And X is Mother Herself. So I often prostrate myself inwardly during my work with her. I often kneel near her (understand me well, I am very matter of fact!) because she is the Highest with a mask. And then when I do it with enough surrender and purity I feel Mother working through me. I do not know what She does but now I have experienced that if we give ourselves to Mother in the evil, as if for being eaten up, She can really do the work, Her work. But all this comes just naturally, there is no tension, only happiness and gratitude and pain and suffering mixed together in a state that I cannot describe yet. And every day during Darshan She fills me with what She wants. Today She was as if not satisfied. She wanted still more surrender and stepping

⁸ The name of Janina's helper has been replaced by "X".

⁹ Hostile beings.

aside, but I go on. And I begin to love X with a force that just overwhelms. I have understood that Mother wants my Darshan adoration and surrender to widen into a permanent darshan towards Her in all things.

And now about Sri Aurobindo. If you could see some of the faces here when they kneel near the Samadhi or just lean closely and almost caress it, you would feel that this is a Living Stone. And if you could come to Him and kneel and put your tired head on this Stone, your worries would disappear and peace would enter into you. There is such a loving tenderness vibrating and such Power that I always get strength to go on when, after my work with X, it seems sometimes that I can no more go on — and when I come to Him and put my head on Him, this is not adoration as we understand it in our ignorant way, this is just Love for the Living Lord. Allow me to write as it comes. The time for things that will interest Heinz will come too. But I must remain natural in my writing.

When we, or rather She is translating the *Synthesis*, I sometimes think that a time will come when She might no more stay with us in the body (when She chooses it so) — and that so many human beings will never come in touch with the indescribable glory of Her presence; many will not even know that at that time Heaven was on earth. Oh! I am so grateful, that my being has really no more room to contain all these feelings that fill me. When we read about the Highest Universal Energy (She reads aloud in French — Pavitra and another French sadhak prepare their own translation in advance) and one knows that She is this Energy — I just cannot describe what I feel.

8.1.58

Yesterday I grasped what She wanted from me. For two days already I felt from time to time as if a mountain or huge waves were coming on me and pushing me back. She wants me to step back this time, as completely as I can — and to make room for Her. And I feel how foolish it is to push oneself into a place which God wants to occupy. But I grasped it with my heart rather. It was yesterday evening during the French talk for children. Among other things She was explaining how Sri Aurobindo used to free people from an obsessing thought or illness. And She was moving Her hands and fingers showing how He just took the thought out and removed it gently — the fact of His and Her Almighty Love became so overwhelming to me that I at last experienced that I cannot exist in God's Presence — I have to annul myself, just to become nothing. And now the time will come to practise it and persevere and persevere in this way. But my happiness is so great, so great....

I asked Nahar to send you the calendar. It is wonderful: Mother during the Morning Darshan. I stand always just below, a bit to the right in the second row with my head bent backward and with folded hands. God is descending there every day and She always appears silently as if a wild bird coming to its nest where children with wide opened beaks wait for food. I always feel it like this and She is feeding us through Her eyes. And it is all so real! Her vibration is felt usually after a few moments, after She has looked at me. I feel it in me and it works in me.

I want to write you a bit about my work. There is so much Love in the arrangement of this house. All my “wounds” can now be healed here because all I longed to realise in Poland, in my home for the mentally deficient — but could not — will be now realised by Mother through me, here. I know it. When I came there was one patient.... I work with Dr. Sanyal, the one who was Sri Aurobindo’s doctor during His last “illness”. Dr. Sanyal is one of the best Indian surgeons. He settled here a few months after Sri Aurobindo’s death. Before he was not a sadhak. He has written something about his experiences. Tell me if you have it. On the fourth of January the second of my patients was operated upon in the open rooms downstairs (there are walls only on three sides). We put white screens. On a truck come all the furniture and equipment(!) already sterilised; we disinfect the place and when everything is ready and the patient is on the table we meditate. After the operation the furniture and everything disappear again. The patient is carried by four strong sadhaks to his room and I and X do the nursing. There was a lady doctor, an Indian visitor from Bombay, and she came to see this nursing home. When she heard that the next day such an operation would take place and that I just two weeks ago arrived from Europe, she could not grasp it quite well.

19.1.58

My second patient left the Nursing Home the day before yesterday and as there are at present no candidates for operations, we have a holiday! Is life not wonderful? I stay alone in this beautiful house in which at last I feel really at home. All the life of the Ashram and my own circulate round the Mother. This is like a magnetic point, or rather the magnetic All. Because She is really everywhere and I begin to feel it as one feels the breeze from the sea or hears the murmur of the waves. This feeling is becoming more and more concrete and realistic. In the work this presence is often overwhelming. Being in charge of an institution, I at once came in touch with almost all the heads of different departments. Pavitra is the general secretary — for foreign problems mostly — and the director of the University Centre. To me he is also a friend and being far on the path (as I feel) he seems

to be one of the main channels for Mother's Power. This is my own impression. I do not talk with people about such things. Amrita is the head of the financial department and organisation of the work of the Ashram and the purchasing of buildings, etc. To him I go for advice in matters of supplies for the Nursing Home, the problems of servants, etc. Nolini Kanta Gupta is the first secretary and handles most of the correspondence of the Ashram and all the material from the life of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. He is the only one left of the collaborators of Sri Aurobindo from the time of His public activities. But he was a young boy at that time. He was also the first one who recognised the Divine Incarnation in the Mother in the period when around 1926-1930 She began to organise the Ashram, and when many sadhaks, even the nearest to Sri Aurobindo (among them His brother) left the Ashram not being able or not wanting to give themselves to Her. Nolini has an assistant secretary (Madhav) who helps also with visitors, supplying photos, etc.

All these offices (each one in its own room) are in the main Ashram buildings built around the Samadhi area, or rather the Stone has been put in the middle of the courtyard in the centre of these premises. In the main buildings Nahar has also his publication department with shelves and shelves from the floor to the ceiling. Here we also get our letters, there is also a small reading room, the fruit room (where we get fruits in season — besides our main meals) and the office called "Prosperity". Each institution like my Nursing Home and each sadhak get a "Prosperity book". On the 23rd of each month we write down in this book what we need for the next month. On the last page of the book articles are named which we can get and it is written for how long they have to last. Prosperity supplies also thread, Vim, linen and other things after Amrita's decision and Mother's sanction. In a way nothing here is being done without Her sanction.

People like Pavitra, Amrita, Nolini and Nahar seem to be able to see Her freely or almost so and they often help sadhaks by acting as intermediaries in different matters. So Pavitra asked Her now if I may join the physical exercise group. This is not always necessary as there is a special box for letters to Mother, but we rather use these people as channels as it seems to be easier for Her and She can immediately give the answer. There are also many other departments and workshops with which we come in touch, like electricity, Sanitary service, Furniture department, Domestic service (Amrita's department), repairs, upkeep of buildings, chief gardener and other gardeners, flower room, where we get flowers every day, Dairy, and two shops (called Honesty). Nowadays sadhaks may have their own money if they want. There is also a Cottage Industry Centre where poor Indian boys are taken in to learn weaving, shoemaking, carpentry, etc. A few sadhaks run the place. I have seen it already. From there I can get for the Nursing Home

and for myself some furniture, mats, baskets, incense, bedcovers, etc. Here they also weave the bedsheets. We get enough through Prosperity.

20.1.58

It is like being flooded. She pours and pours in and spreads Herself to all the corners, holes and caves of the being. And it is a continuous fever of self-giving and a continuous imploring and calling Her to come. The self-giving seems to be so insufficient and so poor when it faces the Grace. And when She comes, She becomes so near that I at last begin to feel free with Her, to talk to and adore Her in Her manifested body as She is here. I did not yet do it and this is also so wonderful how every tiny movement of life is being harmoniously arranged. There are already many threads connecting me with Her — not only the darshan and classes — although I have never talked to Her yet. Only once when She distributed sweets and I asked Her for one for our patient who could not come. But the threads are there: the doctor who reports to Her every day, Pavitra, Nahar who wants to create these connections, asking for photos of Her for our Nursing Home, telling Her probably about me, etc.... Here we are all captives of Her love. This is not an abstraction or a sentimental expression. This is as realistic as anything can be. And it is just sheer delight, the life here. Anyway that is how I feel it. In the morning I awake and there is no inertia or coma, the first thoughts and my heart's beat are She and it is just love, and love. And Her vibration is in me, it often comes with great force and this makes it also possible to be able to face Her during the day — the love is this bridge between the drop of sea-water and Infinity.

Eating in the Dining Hall is a delight — She is present, really present — I feel Her and I offer my food to Her. (I always feel like telling you that I am very matter of fact, do not think that it is my Polish imagination!) The most wonderful thing is Her Love for us. I come near to Her only during distributions. There have been six such distributions since I came. The first on the day I came, when Her eyes' Vibration broke a crust in my eyes into my soul which felt as if somebody had made with an instrument two holes in a screen or wall. On Christmas day, She flooded me with a vibration of such sweet Love that I did not know how I could possibly bear it. On the 31st of December there was the distribution of the New Year's message and on the first of January distribution of the calendar and Prosperity. The fifth time was on the 14th of January when She touched my hand with a purpose (I knew it) and all my being went aflame. Yesterday there was the distribution of sweets after which I am again a different human being and nothing else matters but She. Now, each time the waves work with such a strength, I just try to withdraw into a corner

and sit still. I know that not everybody here is open and surrenders to these waves strongly, but I write you what I have experienced. Anyway there are many who do — and probably much stronger than I. And this problem of more or less is no longer important to me. I do not compare. After a time She will probably widen my consciousness by flooding it more and more — and I will be all these sadhaks who do not surrender and all those who surrender — because She is all these sadhaks together.

But I wanted to write about the Love for us. She surrounds me with care and loving Force and thoughts although She does not speak to me. My French is improving with such speed that I can follow the translation of the *Synthesis* without difficulty. And She gives me all the ideas about how to make the Nursing Home harmonious and beautiful. And She gives everything I ask for. Yesterday I asked Madhav for Mother's signature to hang on the wall in the Nursing Home. You know Her signature is wonderful when large and framed. I did not know that that needs Her sanction. In answer She told Madhav that She will sign in the middle of the paper Herself, if I make a frame for it — not a real frame, but just a drawing around the paper. And this will be framed later. My gratitude is so great! You know how my being needs to be relaxed, loosened and how I would love to be in painting and drawing only Her pure instrument! And She is just doing it, because now each smallest line and dot on this drawing I shall try to draw with such love that it almost annuls myself and then She will come and draw. She said to Madhav: "Janina is an artist and when she draws it I shall sign it."

27.1.58

My instructor in physical training lives in the Ashram with her family. They are members of the Ashram. I stress this because there are various categories of people. Besides the visitors who come for a few weeks or days there are single people or families who come for a few months. They sometimes hire or even buy a house, but are not sadhaks. Officially they are not members of the Ashram. They disappear for a time and then come again.

It is wonderful how our instructor works with us. You see, it is individual work for people like me, whose body has been allowed to stiffen for a long time. There is so much of Mother's Love in all these arrangements and being with such consciously living people helps to awaken the physical consciousness. My mind always tries to mediate between the Power that moves the body (nerves and muscles) and the body. I should just abandon

myself completely, directly in my physical to Her. But it will come too. Maybe it is already coming. Sometimes it is too much happiness.

Half an hour ago She finished playing tennis. As I want to draw and sculpture Her I come and, always praying to the Supreme Grace and adoring Her as the Supreme Grace and the Supreme Truth, I look at how She moves and plays. The air is transmuted, packed with Grace, the sea murmurs and the fresh wind disperses the heat. The tennis ground is on the beach, just above it. It is glorious. Now I am sitting on the beach with all the small creatures crawling around me on the sand and in a few minutes I shall go to the Playground for the *Synthesis* Class. We have finished the introduction and now we are making corrections in the French translation. In general there are very few corrections.

On Fridays we have the text of the “Dhammapada”. Mother reads one or two sentences and talks a bit.

I remember that I wanted to correct another expression which I used in one of my letters in connection with my inner life here. I felt the body to be broken — only on the first day of this experience. Later it changed into a wonderful feeling of being bent by a Power to which this body was responding with self-giving and now I feel it as a kind of liberating wave that makes the body more and more plastic. I am sure that our body needs this expression of bowing before the Highest and I believe more and more that we have to take the words of the Gita in their *exact* meaning when it says, “Thou wilt bow to me...”, of course I do not mean it as a rule, but spontaneously.

Today one part of our house is being whitewashed and I have to watch and supervise exactly as I would have to do it in Tantour or in Poland. Oh, they are lazy, I tell you!

Soon I shall send you a few pamphlets about the Ashram. There are so many visitors nowadays and so many books are being sent abroad that they have to be reprinted. Mother’s work with people outside is growing so much that as a consequence She is cutting progressively Her contact with the sadhaks. One year ago She used to see personally each sadhak every day, if not for talking, then at least to give a flower or a sweet and of course to send a Power through it. But now it does not even happen once a week. But it proves, I think, how tremendously the connection with the Supermind, established last year (I mean in 1956) has influenced the world. Every day there are new people from India or other countries. Sometimes early in the morning crowds of simple people arrive for the Darshan, which reminds me of the pilgrimages of Catholic people in Poland to holy places. But one of the most wonderful things is the freedom I experience here. Each pure wave, each intention can be realised. There are infinite possibilities of creating. There is only one thing to do: to persevere — and to feel that all these waves and

intentions, all this, is just She living in us and creating. Yesterday She gave me so much during Darshan that I live on it continuously. She wants to expand in me a universal wave, a universal vibration — and more, just with my soul; to give myself, not to think, not to want. I learned it today. There are hours (even when I do other things) when I repeat: “je me donne, je me rends...”.¹⁰

Next time I shall write about my work with the departments — now there is no more room. I just discovered that when a lower wave wants to drag me down I inwardly dash to Mother immediately (even if I have already done something wrong, hiding for a long time) — without being ashamed — and I bury myself in Her outstretched, loving arms. This brings a solution to so many previous “problems”.

The new worker and those doing the whitewashing are very slow, but it is She who is working through them also and I try to realise it as much as possible — in my heart mostly. These are just grades of deeper and deeper realisation of the same things that first in thought started years ago in my consciousness. And this realisation now seems to be so simple, when one comes nearer and nearer.

Now the workers have left, half an hour before their time, so of course the servant wants to go earlier too! And I am going in half an hour to the *Synthesis* Class and later to March Past. The evening meditation is about 8.15, or later, when many visitors are there, but I do not go home in the meantime. I read in the class or walk on the shore. I went twice only to the tennis court. She “told me” that that is not the way. I have to turn to people, see Her directly in them and give myself continuously to each one. So I stopped going to the tennis court. And there is also a very subtle, but essential difference during the morning Darshan. I used to wait with tension, at least with expectation, for Her to look at me. Now there is real peace in me — I do not want even Her looking at me and Her giving me a Force to work in me. I am so grateful. Something has fallen again from me. It is the same — if She gives to me or to others — I really experience that now.

This morning I have prayed to Her after breakfast and Darshan: “My Divine Mother, oh, that I may give myself still more and more. I feel that my surrender is deepening but before Thee it looks so small and weak. I know what Thou wantest now, that I give myself so completely to each human being I see and so continuously that at last the time might come when Thou wouldst be giving Thyself through this being. The urge, the longing to give myself when I meet anybody is beginning to be so strong that at this moment it seems that I could no longer live without it. Allow that it may remain so, allow that I may

¹⁰ “I give myself, I surrender...”

become ‘l’amour qui se donne toujours et toujours’.”¹¹ I am grateful that She always brings me back on the safe path from any deviation. In this tennis ground business sentimentality was mixed and now all is sound again. It is so wonderful how “nüchtern” [sober] She wants us to be. Not with shut eyes meditating in a corner of the playground for hours without end, but with open eyes and at the same time in Her — but in Her in all people. It is again a new liberation, being freed from the overconcentration on Her alone as She is transcendentally and individually. Now it is: discovering Her again and again, not theoretically as before, but really Her in each human being. I am just thanking Her without end after having rebelled for some hours.

And as to my letters you must drop immediately all the stupid things in them coming from my ego. So there will never be any inhibitions in our correspondence.

Our food in the Dining Room is not purely Indian. For lunch we always get rice and different kinds of vegetables, but they are not so spicy as in Bombay. We also get twice a week lentils with vegetables. And this we mix with rice. I always get a lemon so that things can be made more sour if I want it. We always get two bananas and a wonderful yoghurt, just a dream. As we have sugar in our boxes I can prepare a glorious dish: rice, cut bananas, yoghurt, sugar and lemon, as a dessert. I can also eat yoghurt with vegetables, just as I like. I discovered also that this attitude of giving myself — if applied to *food* (I just give myself to Mother in food) or *heat* (I surrender to Her in the heat) or other conditions — creates a completely new way of living. Before I used to face the condition, now I give myself so completely that I feel it deep, deep in my inner heart. Maybe this will become the general attitude? Anyway until now it makes it possible to live in the heat and eat this food and enjoy it.

5.2.1958

Sometimes I think I shall not be able to bear all this She is pouring on me, my gratitude is so great that I think I shall burst. When I aspire so strongly with all my heart for something and then She gives it to me it is as if Heaven had opened. I usually write to Her (but I do not send it) in the diary, every morning after Darshan and breakfast. I write to Her in French. This morning I wrote: “Aujourd’hui pendant le Darshan, nous tous, les sadhaks, étions l’Un — et il n’y avait plus, ici, en bas, qu’une paire d’yeux Te contemplant. O, ma Mère Divine, le besoin de me donner, de me donner complètement à

¹¹ “The love that gives itself for ever and ever”.

tous et à tout devient une nécessité. Ma gratitude est immense. Permet que ce besoin de me donner s'accroisse continuellement. Ma Mère, Amour Suprême, Vibration Suprême, je viens à Toi, je m'abandonne à Toi et me blottis dans Tes bras. Et tout est félicité. Tu es ce que j'ai cherché toute ma vie et je ne le savais pas. Et maintenant je T'ai reconnue. Je me prosterne devant Toi comme Tu es en tout et en tous.”¹²

I am so thankful that I can write these letters to you. This morning during Darshan I prostrated myself before you, who are the Mother and at last I found the true love for you, the ardent, living love.

6.2.1958

I understand and feel what Sri Aurobindo said about not being concerned with one's own perfection. I simply forget all about it. I just have a kind of fever to be able to serve Her and nothing else. There is no place for anything else. Only to do Her will.

Do you know what happened yesterday? Mother sent me a sadhika whose husband was very ill, he almost died, but Mother kept him alive. Now he is out of the hospital and at home and now this Indian lady came to me to ask some details about the diet. But I felt that Mother wanted more from me and as there are no patients at present I proposed to go every day to her home and to supervise the servant and help with the cooking!! I am so happy because she accepted the proposal — I mean Mother has accepted it. I shall see Her in the sick man and I shall cook Her in the food and She will help me. But I would like to learn more from a book, and if you would send me one with recipes I would be awfully grateful. I feel the Mother must be laughing too about Janina's cooking! And in all these arrangements She is also teaching me French, because I had to prepare for Her the list of needed articles and write some explanations.

You should see me in the Indian “kitchen”, cooking on the charcoal stove on the floor!! You are really missing something! Sometimes I pinch myself and realise that it is

¹² “Today during the Darshan, all of us sadhaks were the One — and there was only one pair of eyes down here looking at Thee. O my Divine Mother, the need to give myself, to give myself completely to everyone and everything, has become a necessity. My gratitude is immense. Let this need to give myself grow constantly. My Mother, Supreme Love, Supreme Vibration, I come to Thee, I abandon myself to Thee and nestle in Thy arms. And all is bliss. Thou art that which I have sought for all my life without knowing it. But now I have recognised Thee. I bow down before Thee as Thou art in everything and in everyone.”

not a dream and I chuckle to myself. And you should have seen me today humbly serving "the king" and assisting humbly while he was eating! He is a darling old man. The doctor in the hospital said that his illness cannot be cured, but Mother works in all the cells of his body. So I know and feel that Mother is cooking through me and I pray and pray and try to learn not to do anything else but just to pray in all I do for him. Today I made vegetables (beetroot), rice, poached egg, one banana boiled in water with honey and a beaten egg-white with sugar which he liked best. I think you would burst out laughing seeing my worried face when I look at him to see if he likes the dishes I served or not. Until now he has liked everything, my dear!! So do not laugh too much! And now I am thankful that I did so much mountaineering and cooking on the rocks and at the lakes. Here it is done in just the same way. But here I have a servant — of course — who washes the dishes! So you see that it was only in the Belchenstr. 19¹³ that I was treated badly and washed dishes every day!

This evening She will again distribute sweets in the playground. Something must have happened in my being as there was never such a glorious happiness in me as today. I do not want anything from Her — I just give myself and love Her. And so I shall go to Her this evening, to Her as the Universal Vibration who acts everywhere and is everything.

I had a very bad pain in my ear (the pain has been going on for two weeks). But since the day She touched my body with Her fingers, I said that there can be no compromise and that She is the only Master in this body of mine. So yesterday there was a kind of climax and I knew that the pain itself was She too and Her supreme Love working in me. I felt a great happiness — I implored Her that She help me to persevere. I knew it would not be right to ask for the pain to disappear. All this was going on in the afternoon and I went to the *Synthesis* lesson and implored Her all the time while we were waiting for Her. And then She came and stopped at the door and looked at me. I sit on the last bench. She just encouraged me to go on and the pain did not stop then. But She took it from me after one hour and allowed me to do my physical exercises without pain. Since then a great nearness and intimacy have been created, because She is in me and I in Her. This is how I begin to realise it. She is also the one who feels the pain in me, who moves my limbs, talks, thinks and feels, and this She does in every human being. So slowly She goes on widening my consciousness. Sometimes I am so thankful that I would like to give Her something great and wonderful and a few days ago I felt that I can give Her all the world, why not? If the

¹³ The address of the friend in Germany to whom these letters were written.

time comes when all the world is in me, why should I not — in my deepest act of gratitude — do it?

13.2.1958

It is high time to move out of this “house” definitely. So She made me feel this morning. She tolerated for a long time the conceited lodges who imagined that he was the true owner, and She let him make a fool of himself but now — She said — it is enough. She started already yesterday, to show me methodically that I just stand in Her way. Almost each action I do She showed me how I spoilt it by mixing myself into it. Exercises, walking on the street, attitude to people, working, painting... Oh, it is as if a loving teacher was bent over me explaining to me my lesson with such infinite patience and love that I just cannot do anything else but learn the lesson as quickly as possible. My gratitude is so great that I realised today that being prostrated before Her is becoming almost the normal, continuous attitude. And if I do not learn this lesson now I will always see myself as on a stage where She is acting and where “I”, the dwarf actor, am just continuously doubling Her in a miserable distorted way, crawling and jumping between Her legs. She started this new process in me the day before yesterday during the distribution I mentioned. She filled me with something that grew and grew in my heart, until I realised that these were my dear old patient and my servants. She just opened my heart like a box and put them in. So there is no more of forcing myself to love them, or aspiring for it, they are just there in my heart (in the inner heart). In a strange way I even feel, really feel, that my heart is heavier than I am really carrying something. It is like being pregnant, so it really is. And She said that this heart can stretch itself infinitely, so now when I go somewhere or meet people I just take them one by one and put them in my heart.

Now as to the cook-book; it is not necessary to send one. I never thought there would be cook-books in our wonderful library where Medhananda reigns, but imagine — I found twenty-two of them! Yes, twenty-two cook-books in the Ashram! Some of them as old as the world, but some quite new. Medhananda is quite amused by my studies. And these twenty-two are quite enough to make a real gourmet of my dear old patient, the husband of Tripura. They had both been in the Ashram for thirty years, not living together. But in 1947 they left the Ashram as a protest against the development of more group and community life. He is a Brahmin with a head full of theories and fixed ways of living. So he was outside for nine years in Madras. In 1956 he asked Mother to accept him again. Whether he did it because he was growing old or for other reasons I do not know. Anyway soon he became ill. When I came here and got slowly nearer to the people, I discovered

that our (I mean the three of us) deep attitude towards yoga has something in it that is western, but western in a positive sense. Maybe I wrote once about it already. These Indian people here seem to be very spiritual but then you discover that they have only stopped eating meat, or do not live with the wife any more, or just gave away their property, etc. I think that the kind of surrender that breaks through in a western being after even a very prolonged protest has a richness in it that is foreign to the Indian way. This is of course not meant as a generalisation — Sri Aurobindo was an Indian and many of the Indians here are far on the way. But I hope you feel what I want to say. Here they so easily call things spiritual.

As to the money for stamps, do not send any at present. First I will find out how many letters are sanctioned by Her. If Nolini who supervises the correspondence feels that it is too much and wants to ask Her, we shall see. I have still one rupee so I can pay for this letter.

You know, I discovered that I am so concentrated on serving Her that I do not even pay attention to so-called realisations and experiences. I really *saw* the stream of vibration pouring down from Her eyes during Darshan a few days after my arrival here, and the day before yesterday I also *saw* the vibrating Light coming from Her eyes when She looked at me. But I forgot to write about it because it seems so natural to me. She is the Highest Vibration for me, almost scientifically.

14.2.1958

I am “crying” a little out of too much happiness. I have just read your letter once more, and together with this morning’s darshan it is overflowing my soul. This morning I noticed that She is in my heart. She is there, simply, in all Her Glory. And I asked Her what I should do now. She has already placed the old man and the servants in this heart and now I see that it is filled with Her and that She works there silently with Her divine smile as in Her own house. There is nothing for me to do, only to prostrate myself and be the most humble witness of Her actions. Now all my movements will change, they will become more delicate, more subtle, because it is She who lives in this body and it will try to carry Her in itself with the greatest care and love. For She is the greatest treasure in all the infinite Universe. And just to think that She was always there in my heart and I did not know it! Now I understand also this feeling of being pregnant. In the Mystery of creation She became my child which I carry in my heart. Do you know what I want to say? You must know also that all I write are only changes of consciousness, you know it, don’t you? And I describe to you just the most glorious work She is doing in me. But there are also

hours (which I also have to learn to see as glorious) when the lower tries to come again and again, but I dash to Her for help, solution, consolation and that brings always the victory at each crucial moment.

Now it is 8.30 and I have to supervise a bit what the servants are doing. At 10 o'clock I am going to my old man to cook. Ashram life is now concentrated on Her birthday (21 February). The main buildings are being renovated and there is such joy vibrating in the air, that I just smile at these houses that look like people who put on new clothes. They seem to be alive. And in a way they are. Crowds of people have come — and more will be coming. Now the distributions are in the playground; there are also "blessings", in the Meditation Hall in the main building. For blessings She sits like a queen among flowers. There She also distributes saris for Her birthday, but then there are no flowers and She sits as if in a shop among stored cloths.

On the 21st She will sit in Sri Aurobindo's room, as during all the darshans. I have understood also what a transforming power our love for Her has. It is only that everything She does becomes immediately something wonderful and glorious. When one does not love Her completely and naturally, thoughts creep in. I remember it from before. But it is rather not our love for Her, but Her love for us, Her all-powerful and omnipresent Love, that does it.

This morning during the darshan I did what I had decided, I prostrated myself before Her as completely as never before and I offered Her my being. And She accepted it, yes, She accepted it. Now in everyday life I have to practise it: "C'est Toi qui parleras, qui marcheras, qui penseras, qui dessineras... qui feras tout."¹⁴ She will be doing it — not I. Oh, I am so grateful!

16.2.1958

She is in me, my dear She really is. I feel Her present in my heart. So these are not only changes of consciousness but something is happening in my inner heart. Or has it always been so, and now She allows me at last to discover Her? And there are vibrations of such great happiness going through my body. I could just prostrate myself before Her and remain so. This morning at 10 a.m. She gave us saris, shorts and shirts. Yes, Her presence is continuous Grace, I feel it so strongly.

¹⁴ "It is Thou who wilt speak, who wilt walk, who wilt think, who wilt draw... who wilt do everything."

17.2.1958

This morning during Darshan I was only telling Her: "je T'aime, je T'aime...".¹⁵ All the problems seemed to disappear. I have a difficult servant, but when I prostrate myself before the Mother in him the atmosphere immediately becomes different. During Her classes She speaks much about vigilance and that only when the meditation becomes spontaneous in our life, something living, can we say that we are really on the way. You will find all these talks later in the *Bulletin*.

24.2.1958

It is now necessary that I drop my mental as completely as possible. So She wants it. But it is not easy and for a time I shall stop formulating what is going on with me. This will help me. I want just to live in self-giving only, just to close my eyes and plunge myself into Her.

There are such wonderful articles in all three monthlies and quarterlies, *Advent*, *Bulletin* and *Mother India*, that I am sending you the last number of *Mother India* too. And from the *Advent* I am copying here a few sentences from the Mother that have for me a special value:

Perfect surrender

Three figures of total self-giving to the Divine:

- (1) To prostrate at His feet giving up all pride in perfect humility.
- (2) To lay down one's being before Him, to open out the whole body from head to foot, as one opens a book, spreading out the centres in order to make all their movements visible, with a full sincerity that permits nothing to remain hidden.
- (3) To nestle in His arms, melt in Him with a loving and absolute trust.

These movements may be accompanied with three formulas or any one of them, according to the case:

- (1) Let Thy Will be done, not mine.
- (2) As Thou wilt, as Thou wilt.

¹⁵ "I love Thee, I love Thee..."

(3)I am Thine for eternity.

Generally, when these movements are done rightly, they are followed by complete identification, the dissolution of the ego, bringing the sublime Felicity.

As to the “Douce Mère”, they have here come to the same conclusion as you have, that in many languages it sounds odd.

I have been doing some drawing lately. For Her birthday I have made a project for a glazed window — Aspiration, a figure in a flame and all as a composition in Mother’s emblem. And small flames as ornamental finishing touches — around, between the middle and outer circle.

I wish I could send you one of my servants. Do you know that Mother gives for each sadhak privately a servant for 2-3 hours daily? Not only for institutions.

I am starting a new letter for you where I shall at last write about my work and the Ashram’s work. I shall try to give a picture of Her birthday darshan. In *Mother India* there is an article about Mother’s work and some details of Her life. Did you know that in Algeria She practised occult science with a Polish(!) occultist for some years? And She studied painting in Paris! But essential for this article is that there is no doubt Who She is. And in the *Bulletin* She gives some answers so overwhelming that I thought I could not bear it. Something new has come into it. She speaks directly as God speaks.

25.2.1958

I am not afraid of the mental any more. She will help me and it will dissolve itself into something higher. So I shall remain natural. But I must tell you how it all happened. During the morning Darshan on Her birthday I was so overflowing with gratitude that I was just singing a song of thankfulness to Her in my heart. Later in the morning, at 10 a.m. started the proper Darshan. She was sitting in Sri Aurobindo’s room upstairs (where we can only go on the quarterly Darshans) and all of us, one by one, were passing before Her. She was distributing the message of 21.2.58.¹⁶ Much earlier had started a process in

¹⁶ “To celebrate the birth of a transitory body can satisfy some faithful feelings. To celebrate the manifestation of the eternal Consciousness can be done at every moment of the universal history. But to celebrate the advent of a new world, the supramental world, is a marvellous and exceptional privilege.” (The Mother)

me in which I did not see anything wrong, the decision to go with the attitude of gratefulness only. Now I know that “the conceited noodle” was there, who wanted to be different from the other people. So, repeating to myself: “I am a wave of gratitude...” I came before Her... received a charming smile and — nothing more!! I was so stuck in thinking things out that I did not notice that my attitude had lost the simplicity it had before. All day I felt that something was wrong, but it was only the day after that She lifted the veil and taught me that I have to remain empty so that She may fill me with what She wills — and not force myself into gratefulness.

In my last letter I copied from the *Advent* three bits of advice from the Mother. These are Her own words. Since three days I have been living almost continuously what She said. When I awake the first movement is: “I am at Thy feet” — and so I go on. And I open myself so widely, as widely as I can, so that She may see the most hidden corners — Oh, I am so thankful doing it! I try to stretch everything and to open as perfectly as possible which brings a glorious happiness. Now I know that it was this kind of self-giving I have been trying to find all my life — that nothing is hidden from Her eyes and every particle of the being gives itself with a glorious joy. But I had been trying to do it with men — and so I landed with the wrong one. All my life I have been longing for this melting into another “being” and now She has granted it to me. But I do not do it alone.

When I cook for Tripura’s husband I take him with me and I settle as if in a nest in Her arms, (although it is no more Her human form only, but just the Supreme She is) and I hide my head deeper and deeper and, — my dear, I really disappear in Her Love. It is a new life again. What I am writing about makes me feel very strongly the intimate tie that exists between Mother and the sadhaks. One is as if moved from behind, inspirations that She sends come and I realise them, but it is She in the inspiration and so the whole day I feel that I am almost physically connected with Her. You must understand me well. This being of mine is full of rust and dirt and is crooked — but I have to become Divine and She is changing me, so I can say that I am part of Her. She says it to us: “Je suis vous et vous êtes moi.”¹⁷

I wanted to say more about the morning Darshan. Oh, I am often so sad that you, both of you, are not here! As I have written already, first She appears smiling like a fairy and a real mother both together, and then She begins Her work with us through Her eyes. Her face is no longer smiling (only sometimes She smiles at somebody who needs it) but usually She looks like a mother or teacher so completely concentrated on the needs of her children that nothing else exists. After that, She lifts Her eyes to the Horizon and I feel as

¹⁷ “I am you and you are me.”

if She is lifting all of us with, and in, Her eyes. There is an article about this Morning Darshan in the book: *Pioneer of the Supramental Age*. Maybe She lifts us into the universal then. And afterwards comes the moment you see in the calendar photo. She goes to Her own Domain. This is the Trance, the Transcendent. It cannot be described. I just feel Grace pouring on us. And I feel shy looking at Her when She “comes down to us” after the trance. It is all such happiness.

Now more about the Birthday Darshan Day. There were lots of visitors, double the number of sadhaks. All of them come to the morning Darshan and then pray at the Samadhi. You can imagine what crowds there were. The day before, in the afternoon there was a gala performance by Indian dancers from Calcutta and Madras in the Ashram theatre. Maybe you will see me too somewhere in a magazine. There were photographers, All India Radio and reporters. During the performance Mother sat in an armchair on a small platform before the stage. Around it a few prominent guests sat on chairs, but just on the small platform were She and Her nearest collaborators like Pavitra and Amrita. Then the children and then we and the visitors. It is always a bit difficult for me to accept that noise is permitted in Her presence, but it must be right so. It is striking that there never is such noise in the playground during our everyday birthdays. It is always after concentration and before meditation.

My cooking develops very characteristically. The old gentleman has withdrawn a bit. He does not come to greet me and when I have finished my cooking he says through a servant that he will eat later, so that I leave without seeing him. I just go on, while cooking, to surrender to the Force that cooks and nothing else is my business. It is quite clear that all this work is given to me by Mother for me to learn and go on with my yoga. Oh, I am so thankful that She makes me more and more matter of fact.

I just go on living in the three figures of self-giving to the Divine. I try to learn and inertia tries to trample me down and I go on and on. But when I learn to step back definitely from my adhara¹⁸ it will be easier.

1.3.1958

In the book *Pioneer of the Supramental Age* you should read all and find what interests you. There are many things written there we did not know before. And there is a lot about Mother. In Purani’s book, *Life of Sri Aurobindo*, on page 184 you will see a photo of our

¹⁸ *adhāra*: the outer being (mental, vital and physical).

main buildings. The street you see in front in this direction is the Balcony Street. The same street is the street where our Nursing Home is, just five minutes to the right. I see Her balcony from our house.

4.3.1958

Here is this instead of today's letter:

My Mother, Supreme Vibration,

Thou art now becoming my real Friend and my Teacher It is almost all the day, without a break, that I listen to Thee and try to do what Thy will is. And Thou art so near, so close, every day closer to me. During the last days Thou hast poured on this being so much that it really feels like overflowing. I am so grateful. Thou hast made me conscious in the mental being and physical separately and they have surrendered to Thee. Now, when I walk or eat or do exercises the physical being feels Thee vibrating and working and it surrenders with all its strength and with immense happiness that Thou Thyself art moving this being. The physical being is now almost all the time prostrated at Thy feet with as great a humility as possible and it opens itself, all its most hidden corners, for Thee to see; and it is never satisfied with this opening, as for Thee all the tiniest twists must be visible, very clearly visible. So it goes on and on bringing them all before Thee, without end. I feel like a leper who lays before Thee all his wounds and never stops showing all of them, trying not to miss any, not even the smallest.

It is a vibration that comes and comes and before which I can only prostrate myself. And as Thou, being God, art becoming my intimate Friend and Teacher, with whom I talk all day, from early morning till late in the evening, all my life changes again and all becomes more and more simple, in its purity and reality, so that my thoughts stop existing — disappear — as it is all too holy. And yesterday I asked Thee what is the matter with my vital — that it does not become conscious of itself — and in answer Thou hast made it act. It began to pour waves of a previous sexual character and I had to reject them one by one, imploring Thee all the time to give me strength. It began (like the last time with the pain in my ears) before the *Synthesis* Class and just as I was so vehemently imploring Thee to help me Thou hast entered and Thou hast looked again at me like last time. Oh, Mother, Thou art always with me, in me and around me! Thou knowest everything that troubles us, Mother! I prostrate myself at Thy feet in gratefulness and humility. And all the time during the class the battle was going on in the lower vital being. Then She took the vital and filled the lower vital being with peace. Is this the last examination of the vital? I do not think so. But this is not for me to think about. Thy will be done. Today the

lower vital — surrendered and peaceful — is giving itself all the time to Thee, without end. But all this is only the beginning of surrender, as all the smallest elements have to surrender, each separately — each cell, each movement. And rejection must go on and on. Allow, Mother, that this being shall have strength enough to persevere and persevere.

7.3.1958

Your letter arrived just a few minutes after I sent mine. So I start the next one immediately. Yes, for me She is God. Maybe I am blessed with a special kind of simplicity, which before used to make me look a bit queer in people's eyes, but which — as I see — proves to be the right key in the integral yoga. God is the Highest Vibration and She is this Highest Vibration. What more shall I ask? I do not want to know things with my crooked mental apparatus. I shall let myself be by the Supreme Grace and if She will bring me to Herself or to something still more Transcendent, what does that matter? For me She is the Supreme. How could I be giving myself, if it were not so?

A few hours ago I got a delicious lemonade from an old sadhika. I came to see her husband (a gardener) but he was not at home. So she invited me in and showed me her "laboratory". She distils rosewater and makes from flowers a wonderful syrup for the Mother. This, mixed with lemon juice and the rosewater, makes a "Göttergetränk" [drink of the gods]. It is interesting to see what things the sadhaks are doing for Mother. All this springs by itself out of their love for Her. My pleasant mental being, of course, immediately produced waves of criticism — Why don't we get such good things(!!) — But thank God I had today more equality than the day before yesterday. Lately I have broken two glasses and one saucer, allowed carrots to burn in the pot, spilt a cup full of liver juice — but never mind, if the mean forces still try something, the time will come that this will stop too.

I have a wonderful time arranging the "garden" in our Nursing Home. Garden = 7 metres x 2.20, and the rest is in flower-pots. Mother has sanctioned some expenses connected with it and there will be wonderful creepers! Tomorrow I shall know how many more flower-pots I shall get and the mason will come to make three holes in the pavement for the creepers. The lazy servant has responded to my giving myself to him as to Mother and shows a big interest in gardening. One of the sadhaks, a professional gardener, will help us. There are still no patients! and it is a glory to live alone in this beautiful house — only with Her. But we are keeping all the rooms ready, clean and with flowers, so that if a patient should come everything will be ready for him. It is as if all the house, the air, the plants were waiting for him.

I was so amused about your remark about the sadhaks — that they can be quite human! If you could see some of them! There is a mixture here, just a world in miniature and this seems to be the arrangement Mother wanted. First there are women who are not sadhikas. They are wives of sadhaks, slow, fat, inert and talkative, just like all women of this type. Some of the women are sadhikas — often older women who have been in the Ashram for about twenty years, who probably came here with their husbands. Among the men you will find all sorts of queer people and also bad people. Externally, I should say, you feel among these people as in a gathering of peasants and workers in Europe — Polish workers, not yours. But this does not mean that there is no real devotion in their hearts; and then, in this gathering, you begin to discover some subtle, concentrated faces — many among the young men. The children and young people also give a very human aspect to this community.

Yesterday evening there was a performance of the ballet class. Strange that it is still difficult for me to harmonise it inwardly completely with Her. But I shall learn. Now She teaches me more and more equality, but all the process goes on in the triple movement of the three figures of self-giving to the Divine. I begin to discover that there is a tremendous power hidden in what Mother advises. The self-giving becomes deeper every day and slowly all the activities and inner movements of the being are connected with these three figures and permeated by them. And this seems to be the purpose of it, because the whole life has to change into self-giving.

She is so infinitely good. This sounds childish, but that does not matter. You know, there is going on in me a dual process — one, lower, where I still (or rather something in my emotional centre) long to be able to prostrate myself before Her as a human person; and there is another process growing — the aspiration for the Highest, the Supreme. Of course, She knows it all because She sees me all the time and Her emanation is with me continuously. She knows that in my most inner being I want only the Highest and that I can do without the rest, that — strange to say — I even want already to do without the rest if the “rest” should be coming from the emotional only. It was yesterday. I got upset seeing how She blessed the children who took part in the performance — one by one they were coming and kneeling before Her with their heads at Her feet. You know that this is the Indian way of greeting the parents. But for me it was more and so, inwardly, I became like a crying child who was not allowed to prostrate itself before Her. I lost my balance — as Sri Aurobindo says — for some time, but after an hour She gave me peace and equality again. I just gave it all up to Her. And when I came home after supper and started my “meditation”, which is rather talking to Her (I do it on my knees), I suddenly felt Her hands on my head and She blessed me. And this was when I was no more thinking of it,

only feeling grateful for all She gives me. But I know why She granted it to me. I have often such intuitive feelings. The longing of my emotional centre was in a way pure — I did not want to grab, to possess Her, but to give myself to Her only. And in this act She purified also a lot that was still lying around in my emotional centre from olden times.

21.3.1958

Before I forget, I want to give you a picture of the purely human aspect of the Morning Darshan. It is not always so bad, but often children — I mean Ashram children — come also and while waiting until Mother comes they amuse themselves as they can; some laugh or play with the dogs that also come and participate in the darshan. Dogs bark of course and sometimes bite each other. When a party of people come to Pondicherry from the country or another town, there is a lot of noise and quarrelling with the rickshaw men about the price. You may also see that in the middle of the street where we stand a beggar has settled down with all his belongings, or maybe it is a pilgrim or a “yogi”, nobody knows. Lately there was one like that who stayed for some days. He never got up, but quietly sat during darshan with all of us around him. You may also see one or two ladies dressed according to the latest Paris fashion standing near some old sadhaks with white beards and naked breasts. Some wives of sadhaks gossip and chatter, some men talk, many sit comfortably on the pavement under the balcony staring at us or meditating (?) until the last moment. They get up in a rush or flutter when She appears. Then there are the late-comers and some want to reach their usual places instead of standing aside. And in the midst of all these movements you see people completely immersed in meditation, waiting for Her, vigilant, not caring in the least for what is going on around them. It was not very easy at the beginning, but now I also do not care — even if my neighbour touches me every few seconds with his elbow, looking at his watch, and from the other side a deep bass greets his friend. Now it is like magic. The world disappears when I come under the balcony, even if it is ten or fifteen minutes before darshan. Of course, during Darshan there is complete silence. You hear only crows. There were two who used to come regularly — and some other birds and from time to time a dog. But all this is something in another world, of no importance — and my being drinks the Grace.

Have you got the *Bulletin* and *Mother India* already? There are some very helpful truths and teachings of the Mother in the last numbers that freed me of many a burden and hypnosis. Especially when She says that the Supramental Force is acting already in the atom, in the cells. It helps me to drop the thoughts of illness. I find now that all our mind is an awful burden and I ask Her continuously to free me. I feel that the mind prevents me

from having a really pure, simple relationship with Her, to depend only on Her — and nothing more! Also in the *Advent* of 1952, 1953 and 1954 are wonderful talks based on Mother's teachings.

During the last days my heart trouble came back and suggestions that it is because of the physical exercises and that I should stop them. The day before yesterday the pain became more acute and again I could learn that She is in the pain. Oh, sometimes I just cannot express what happiness it gives, this nearness and closeness of Hers. And I learned and loved Her in that pain and the pain changed into happiness. I had my exercises immediately after and I did not give in to any suggestions. It was the first time that I could do all the running without a break for a rest. And the fatigue which She later takes away from us, was much less than usual. I begin to see that this world of ignorance is much less powerful than what it looks like — when we once begin to see its weakness.

My "garden" is already arranged. The gardener and I became good friends, which She probably wanted. I learned from him that even with lazy servants, one can demand a greater effort from them than I expected. We now have ferns under two palms and a bush in the middle and smaller ferns and greens all over in a pattern. No flowers on the plot because there is not enough sunshine. It is wonderfully shady. The flower-garden is in the flower-pots and it will be still bigger.

On Wednesday She spoke of the hypertension in the whole world and of the concentration of all the Asuric forces on the earth — so it is no wonder that you feel these waves. Did you read the talk of Hers in the *Bulletin* where She mentions Her protection over all who are earnestly on the path? There She also says that here in Pondicherry we cannot breathe without breathing Her consciousness! Today, after a long time, there is a distribution in the playground. It is something glorious to know that after a few hours I shall be looking into the eyes of God. Oh! I shall try to open all the corners of my being so that She can see everything. Maybe it should not make a difference, but still I am so happy that I shall be near Her — legally so to say, without pushing myself.

I wanted also to describe for you the life at the playground. Michèle says — and very rightly — that it reminds her of a Forum Romanum. We stand or sit or walk, silently or talking. There is complete freedom. Until 7 p.m. there are physical exercises only and from 7 p.m. those sadhaks who do not belong to the groups can also enter. Children also run around and older boys and girls. Many are on the flat roof-terraces. Some stand in front of the open reception room of the Mother, meditating; as long as there is no light in the room it can be done; later, when there is light, it means that She is coming from a back room to receive people — then it should not be done, but the magnetic power is so great

that people cannot control themselves. The most interesting thing is the “double life” that is going on. Somebody walks, for example, but he is really doing hard inner work or is so immersed in Her Love that you can see it from his face. There are some sitting cross-legged along the walls; many have their chosen places where they always sit. A group of children sing, I hear somebody accompanying them on the piano.

23.3.1958

I am so happy today, so very happy. My mind has quieted down since yesterday evening. She gave me peace. It was at first a kind of void but now it is the peace of a child. I do not worry. I do not think if this or that was wrong or not, I just trust Her and learn to love Her. She is my only refuge. I try to give to Her every little thing I am doing, thinking or feeling. This might be “work” for years, but something decisive has happened. Oh, it is as if I have already once written this to you — but now it is much more concrete — it is as if somebody was freeing me from the burden of centuries. I have never realised before how harmful the mind can be. Of course, it had its value in the development of the individual ego, but now it is like putting down a heavy rucksack in the mountains beside the lake and sighing with happiness. And it is so much easier to feel humility and go on deepening it. Nothing in me questions or reasons — I just prostrate myself before God and aspire to learn to be nothing. Life seems to have become so simple; just to go on giving myself and aspiring and rejecting — all the work of purification she is doing Herself. All this is so clearly said in Sri Aurobindo’s *The Mother*, but before so many things escaped me or I felt them differently or the mind simply prevented them from being felt.

24.3.1958

The self-giving is now more generous and free — as She wants it. The difference is that before while giving to Her, while offering my acts or feelings or thoughts, I looked at them and then I gave them to Her. Now I just look up to Her and try to learn to grasp all and throw it up in a large, free sweep — everything that comes. It must be like a stream flowing to God, like an inundation that sweeps everything with it. I feel it. The discernment of wrong movements is also there — it must be — and their rejection, but it is as if included in the main movement towards Her. Since the mind bothers me less I realise it all more and more clearly. When I think that I have been here only three months and that every single moment She creates my being anew, I can only prostrate myself before Her with ardent gratitude and humility.

After I had written the first part of this letter to you there came Tamas, inertia, unconsciousness, etc. and so much nonsense in thinking that even a few days ago it would have upset me. And now — Oh! I am so grateful, so grateful — all my being takes the attitude as if of soaring up (not running away) to Her and with both my hands I take all this nonsense with me without looking at it too much.

I wanted to explain two things I have written earlier. It is very difficult to describe the Ashram. My last description of sadhaks concerned only the dining room and mainly their manners there. I also once said that I tremble while cooking. It is a special kind of trembling — maybe it should be called differently — it is just this feeling that it is for Her, that She is there, that She is working in me — and all this together creates a zeal and concentration and longing to do the work, to cook the meat as perfectly as possible (my patient gets meat).

And now here is the continuation of the playground-life description. In a corner or in the midst of people, an old, very old sadhak practises his physical exercises. He does not care a penny and nobody looks at him. He has a skipping rope and goes on. There will be mass exercises but I do not take part in them. I only take part in group exercises between 7.30 and 8 p.m. — just to open another door for Her — as I have told you. On the benches on the opposite side vis-à-vis Mother's room sit the visitors or wives of sadhaks mostly. These have also their corner beside the benches where they sit on towels, cushions, etc. It is a bit of a gossip corner.

1.4.1958

I have given Her my mind and now I am without mind. Every time the mind wants to work the rejection brings it quietude and I see the futility of all these millions and millions of thoughts that used to fill my life, make me miserable, upset me, made me think how I shall do this or that or what will happen next. And I also understand what She means by wasting, squandering oneself — it is just all this turning and turning of useless stuff being produced instead of one single turning to Her and giving and giving oneself and all the centres and all one is and all one has. Every day is for me a new revelation in this process of self-giving because it seems to be without end and goes on and on deepening itself. I think that everything, just in deepening itself, becomes simpler. It was awful what this mind was doing with me and my life — it complicated everything. And every time I give Her something from myself completely, She flows into me. What will life be then, oh! when I really give Her all of myself — as I feel I shall?

This feeling of being without mind is so overwhelming that it changes life completely. Quietude, happiness and confidence in Her can now grow and do grow without being hampered at every step. So, I go on. I give Her all my emotions and She takes them and makes me free — I give Her all the desires and my physical being — and I remain without anything. This will now be the essence of my life, repeating and repeating these acts, more and more generously and more and more freely. How can I think, when She is thinking in my mental centre, arranging, rearranging, destroying, creating there as She likes? Of course, now it is all obscured by the dirt in my mental being, but She will slowly remove that. It was the first time that I went to Her for the distribution (on the first of the month) without wanting anything. I did not want Her to look at me, to give me anything, to fill me. I just prostrated myself in my inner being at Her feet and I was giving and giving all I could and I never knew before that I can give so much to God. Or it probably seems to be much... oh, you mind, go away — you do not belong to me.

I received what I had applied for: four cakes of washing soap, one cake of toilet soap and two rolls of toilet paper, yes madam! These articles we receive in small wooden boxes. It is marvellously organised and it goes quickly. It is all done in the office upstairs. Mother sits in an armchair and we first pass by Her. Once She gave a message, another time a toothbrush, then a small cake of soap and today a tiny bunch of herbs!¹⁹ But I do not know if they are to be eaten. I shall ask. My servant Subramani says that they are to be put in my hair, just as the Indian women do. So I did it and they look and smell like thyme. Maybe it is thyme? After having passed Mother we move on to where Pavitra hands us the boxes. They are being handed to him by sadhaks who watch who is entering through the door.

You have not written for a long time. I would not know when Easter is this year but for the groups of Catholic women and children going home from church with palm branches. In the Ashram, Sunday is half and half a holiday.

I got a letter from Katowice from Jadwiga and one from Zosia from Krakau. Her letter is charming, she writes that her heart swells in her when she feels how happy I must be having reached the country of my dreams. It is nice that she has no difficulties in writing to me. Happy Easter to you, my dear ones!

2.4.1958

Oh, this can only be compared to changing the element in which one lives, from water, for example, to air. Everything is new. And the essence of my life changes. Because now

¹⁹ Sweet Majoram (*Origanum majorana*), which Mother named “New Birth”.

there seems to be really nothing more than sacrificing continuously. This will be the main occupation, probably the only one. I do not know. She often gives me new realisations. This one withdraws and comes back and so it goes. But I am born anew, I am the divine child that returns to the Father. Of course there is the adhara which She will go on purifying and later transforming. How long? I do not know — it is Her work, not mine.

6.4.1958

The divine child cannot go back to the Father with empty hands — and nothing less than all will do. Now I really feel it. Every movement, even the tiniest, belongs to Her and I just go on, first stating and beginning to feel that each thought, feeling, action in me is Hers and then immediately giving it, offering it to Her. And all this She is doing in me, She Herself. I feel like smiling at everything and everybody, as if I were living in a new world and I aspire for my birthright to be realised — realised fully — and to become Herself in all my being. And as it is She who aspires in me, it will become a reality.

Today I learned from the Hindu servant how I can easily remove the skin from the meat, holding the knife between two toes. The knife must be placed on a heavy object and remain immobile, then it is well done. Don't you admire my capacities? I hope that after some time I shall do it quicker than today. Tripura's husband gets meat every day and his wife (Brahmin) gets sick at the sight of meat, so I have to do it. The doctor asked me today to cook a double portion in the pot, one for another patient. Maybe I shall become the specialised meat cook in Pondicherry!

I have a boy friend, the so-called "latrine man" from the lowest caste. He walks as if a kingdom belonged to him and never leaves the Nursing Home before I come out on the veranda and send him a smile! We have more and more flowers and they look lovely in the small yard in the flower-pots with the white walls at the back. Subramani, the permanent servant, seems to have been charmed by them too. Anyway he is not so lazy as before.

Let me know if you have got the *Bulletin* issues of 1956. There are a number of very inspiring talks by the Mother. I often go to our beautiful library, sit on a big veranda with a view of the sea, in the shade of course, and read these old issues. It is as if She is actually instructing me. It really is so. Often I feel Her order to get up and leave everything at the Nursing Home and go to the library and read. This is more than reading. The August 1957 *Bulletin* has helped me today a lot. And often the part I have to read is "given to me" with the omission of other talks. My inner contact grows into a greater and

greater intimacy. How could it be different? The time will come when my aspiration is so strong that nothing, nothing else will matter.

Today is Easter, but nothing reminds one of it, although there is a Catholic community which has bought the best meat today and Tripura's husband had only the leftovers from the Easter shopping.

I firmly believe that all these changes in me are the result of the working of the Supermind in matter. It is easier and quicker since 1956 and I feel that I am not allowed to stop for a moment. I never look back, but walk forward and forward and in this walking She gives me rest. I call Her my eternal holiday. All my life I have been longing for such repose and now — since the worst burden, the mind, has lost its supremacy over me — I just feel as if I am being carried in Her arms.

8.4.1958

I cannot grasp it all, but it does not matter. It is all so simple and natural. She really accepted me as Her child, coming home, with all the load of ego and ignorance still on me. She, the Highest and Purest, has done it. Now I feel at last why self-giving destroys all barriers and limits. This Highest Purity purifies almost automatically — if I may say so — all that consciously gives itself to Her completely. And so the impure becomes Purity too. This is the Grace.

The husband of Tripura does not seem to be able to stand my presence any more and Tripura would like to get rid of me — of course under cover of all sorts of reasons. Yes, dear, here also the life is very "human". It would be too long a story to tell, but it may be that I shall be cooking for them now in my Nursing Home. This evening I shall put it all under Her Light through Pavitra. I am of course holding it all the time in Her Light.

The next Darshan (24th April) — Her second coming to Pondicherry, after which She never left again — is already attracting many people who come for a few weeks as visitors. There is not a day without people coming.

11.4.1958

Today is the 11th and still there is no letter from you, but I shall post mine. She is leading me farther now through the tiny little things of everyday work, which I have to perform, knowing and feeling Her working and vibrating in them. I am so thankful that She has not given me until now any other work but just this simple cooking and keeping the house

clean and harmonious. Being alone in this big house only with Her is something for which I can never be thankful enough. There are still no patients, ever since the last one left at the beginning of February. The servants come at 7 a.m. They leave at 12 and one of them comes from 2 to 5 p.m. so that the house and flowers can be kept properly.

12.4.1958

Rain!! Lovely rain — like European summer rain. Now we will have to bear the summer heat for a few months. I am so thankful that I do not seem to suffer from the heat at all. When I am bathed in perspiration I feel contented and quite comfortable. I told myself: "This has to be accepted as something normal and even pleasant." But this does not change the fact that rain is wonderful and that not perspiring is quite welcome!

All my life is now centred on my soul's contact with Her, with God. The vital, mostly the conceited offended person, succeeds in making me fall down from my seat from time to time, but it is She who teaches me to become more and more detached in my soul from the adhara and not to get upset when, for example, the vital is angry with Her for a stupid reason. What I have grasped is that when even an awfully dirty wave rises in my being I must (1) immediately "run" with it to Her, (2) immediately feel immense joy that Her Grace is purifying me. Then there is no depression, no suffering. I immediately restore the balance and am in Her. This is not easy; but I shall go on and on.

13.4.1958

I feel that I should not resist — in a way — any wave. I mean, when Mother sweeps this house I must keep myself transparent and accept all the dirt and dust — accept but not hold it, even for a moment — only immediately pass it on, which means to Her. Almost automatically and with great speed. It is like physical exercises or a game. If I do not do it quickly enough, She cannot go on "throwing" it at me, like balls — because I would suffer under a pyramid of products of my own ego from which She wants to free me. So I must throw the balls back to Her for purification continuously. And if I do it quicker and quicker, She can throw more and more at me. So I feel now that it is much better to learn it, because the process of yoga will go much quicker. What has helped me most is the experience of throwing back the ball with great joy. But this I can still do only seldom. But I do not worry, I will learn it, it is like tennis.

Oh! if you could see our second servant at work! When he wipes the floors he puts the pail of water as far away as possible, to be able to take a long walk with the floor-cloth in

his hand — which means less wiping, of course. And he is so stupid! His movements are exactly like those pictures in the movies, in slow motion. His name is Armogom and he looks like a poor, old dog.

15.4.1958

You ask about the bed I sleep on. It is comfortable, probably American, with iron springs — and an arrangement for a mosquito net, but this I will use when there is more rain. And my dresses? All are useful in a way — I mean the summer dresses, although I was told that it can be quite cold in winter, so I shall probably need the summer jacket as well.

I have now terrible “fights” with unconsciousness and inertia, but this picture of the tennis game helps me so much. Only now I feel it differently. My partner stretches Herself into a Sea of Grace into which I throw back the balls. And as the number of balls and the number of strokes is not infinite but limited, the time will come when one by one the balls will not come back at me from the Sea of Grace, but disappear in it. Seeing it so, I get force to go on and I feel it is better to do as much as I can and not wait for the future.

But no real progress is possible without equality. The time comes when this has to be learned definitely and to me most new things come through love. It is not real Love for the Divine if it is still without equality. So I feel that She will teach me equality now, through love for Her in all people, things, events. I aspire and aspire for equality. If I could apply the same wonderful way I always use when I feel pain, to all other happenings! Loving Her immediately in each fact, being, movement, as I love Her when I feel pain. It is real Grace that I can feel it so. Almost always the pain disappears, as if it melted away in love. Now I have had it with my liver again — since two days ago. I do not give in, even in the smallest things. I eat normally, do exercises and at such times there is always a moment She finds to give me more courage. Yesterday She did it when we were marching in group in front of Her. I felt so much Love in Her eyes when She looked at me that again nothing mattered. Of course, She does it with everybody when it is needed. But I always feel that it is connected with my inner fights and often it is formulated in words. But it is often terrible to discover how strong the ego and the desire soul still are. Of course, it should not be terrible for me, I should have equality, but I still do not have enough of it. I felt awfully hurt when She did not sanction all my projects to arrange the garden in the Nursing Home and this upset me. Thank God, I begin to be thankful when dirt and nonsense show themselves — as I said, it is better for it to be now, as early as possible. They must come out sometime, but still it upsets me.

17.4.1958

Yes, She will do it. This morning during Darshan I got the assurance. I shall learn to love Her in everybody and everything and then equality will come by itself. When I think that all I am going through now is only the first, tiny little beginning of spiritual life, I realise how deep the ego hypnosis is. For seventeen years I have known — and felt too — the existence of the Truth and yet the crust is still so hard.

I must tell you what kinds of flowers and fruits we have here. All the flowers we have in Europe and others too. There is a special garden with roses, many zinnias, gallardias, sunflowers and even violets. I did not see any wallflowers. We have verbena, but without fragrance, jasmine bushes and lovely creepers, like bougainvilleas in different colours and flowers I have not seen in Europe; I shall describe them when I know their names. Here we know them by names given to them by Mother. As for the fruits there are many bananas, lemons and papayas, oranges and of course coconuts from which we drink the liquid.

In the morning and early afternoon I wear dresses, especially those with wide skirts for sitting cross-legged and which are not transparent, as I do not like to wear petticoats—they are too hot. In the evening, when I go to the playground I wear shorts and a shirt. There is such happiness in me.

28.4.1958

My life is changing continuously — and my being almost from hour to hour. As She is the Most Holy who has descended here, I am just living and acting in a temple all the time. What was before as if, is now the beginning of reality. Before, I knew from Sri Aurobindo's books that each most common act has to assume the sublime character of a sacrifice in a temple — but now I really perform the sacrifice before Her Presence. It cannot be told what unspeakable felicity it brings to feel that She is present everywhere. Humility, adoration, gratefulness grow and grow and deepen. And there are really no other things that can drag me from Her, for I begin to feel Her in everything. It is no longer vague. I do not think; I do not try to imagine what will come next as I used to do before. Every time I did that, I landed in a corner. So She was teaching me. No, I have to let Her carry me in Her arms and feel the glorious joy of the unexpected. My trust in Her grows and grows and She becomes to me Something so close and so precious and dear that I just cannot describe it. Now I know that it will not be human beings I shall love but Her — and Her only — in everybody and

everything. This morning I tried to express for you how thankful I am to Her, but I could not. Maybe it could be compared with the gratefulness of a most miserable leper towards one who would wash him and clean his wounds. Oh! She purifies me and delivers me from all evil.

29.4.1958

Your letter has arrived. It takes only five days. I always read your letters in the main Ashram courtyard (near the Samadhi). She is there also, near, on the first floor; usually at that time (1 p.m., when I am back from the dining room) She has Her lunch. So I am reading the letter to Her too. When I am writing about Her, especially in what I wrote here yesterday, I do not now mean Her as a human personality, a human form only, but I begin to feel Her really in me and around me as a vibration, which is also just She, the Same, glorious and wonderful above everything and the One I love infinitely. This personal aspect of the Vibration gives to life something so great that I cannot tell you how wonderful it is. I now can understand that I could even make a toothbrush for Her; even if it took many hours, or I could just do anything, even what would seem nonsense, because nonsense that was really for Her would become a glory — as She is the Highest Will and Love.

The Darshan Day of April 24 has a special touch. It is connected with the beginnings of physical exercises in the Ashram when Sri Aurobindo and Mother for the first time had the groups marching in front of them. So we were all day dressed in our shirts and shorts, with white socks and tennis shoes, white caps and Mother's emblem pinned to the shirt. The cap is made of net, with two ribbons we bind around the head so that it looks like a turban. You have seen it in the *Bulletin*. So already for the morning Balcony Darshan we were standing in groups; then, before the Blessings (10 a.m.) we passed in twos around the Samadhi and Mother came down for concentration. As usual on Darshan days She sat in one of Sri Aurobindo's rooms upstairs. There is such silence there that everything vibrates in that Silence. And we passed by Her one by one. I am sending you half the message She handed me. I kept for myself the French half. Everything She gives is charged with Power. Now I know I did not attach enough value to this before, while in Europe. But it is real power that acts through the object She gives, be it a piece of soap or a flower.

When I read your remarks about the joy of ball-throwing to Mother I remembered that I wanted to write you more about joy. It was this morning during the Balcony Darshan and even before. It is a new joy that came to me, that I have never known before — a joy

connected with self-giving and aspiration — and this joy is so great that it is changing my whole life again.

Now coming back to the Darshan. In the afternoon from 5.30 p.m. we had ceremonial marching, a real *défilé* before Her, and later Gujarati students danced, some very beautifully. A Canadian lady who came six weeks ago took part too. She was in a ballet in Canada. At the end we had as usual the evening meditation and for me the day closed with such a warm feeling of Her closeness and security as I had never had before. Marching and a *défilé*, which in itself would be not much, become sheer delight when it is done for Her. And so it is with everything. She just turns everything into delight, as if by “magic”.

I often think I should write more about the organisation of work here, as I promised to Heinz, but the time will come that I will do this too. Now I just write as I write.

4.5.1958

We have got a patient and I had no time to finish this letter earlier. A lady after a severe gall-bladder attack. But she feels much better already. I feel completely wet with perspiration, so if there are any spots on the paper it is from that. Mother has begun to reveal Herself to me in other people, widening my love for Her — so that I really love Her in my patient. It is again like leading a new life. And it spreads and spreads to many people. Oh! it is becoming so spontaneous and brings such great joy and happiness. It is only the beginning, but it will grow and grow for all eternity. She gives me so much — it is like the waters of the sea, without end.

15.5.1958

I just finished licking my fingers after the ceremony of mango eating. Now it is the season for mangoes. I did not know before that they grow here. One makes a hole at the top and sucks with delight like a little baby, the delight that comes out of the little hole. Naturally it can be eaten in a cultured way too, with a spoon. It is now 10.30 p.m. and I should go to bed, but I just have no time during the day or no inspiration and now I feel like writing. An hour ago I came back from the playground after meditation. I am so thankful that I can really meditate now. Mother says somewhere that the most important thing is to be in a state of attentive silence as if listening to something very subtle, but not to want to know what is being said. This will come out of the depths some time after the meditation. Just ardent, vibrating, attentive silence.

Yesterday one of the sadhaks (European) who left suddenly a few weeks ago, came back as a Buddhist monk with shaved head, beads and yellow robe. Of course, Mother accepted him. And as for myself, I thoroughly understood what a moth is doing; one turns round and round the Light, nearer and nearer. I would not mind if this meant death. When I write to you I usually forget that my life is not always exactly easy here with helpers, etc. But it seems all to be of no importance when I think of Her or feel Her. I just feel the delight that all this is Her Will manifesting itself. Her Will is the glory that manifests. I have now got a Polish-French dictionary from Katowice, so now I can know any word I want in English and German too, as I have French-English and French-German too.

We had thunderstorms and rain — it was wonderfully refreshing, but today we perspire again. My patient is much better. Yesterday she was taken in a car to Mother as it was her birthday.

27.5.1958

Our patient left and I have again more time. We have finished the big cleaning of the house with streams of water, which in this heat was quite pleasant.

Tomorrow X will give me a mango from Bombay. They are the best mangoes in the world, introduced there some centuries ago by Portuguese from Goa. She gets parcels from her husband. What a pity that I do not have a husband!

Oh, my felicity grows and grows. I had a few weeks of difficulty, gray days with inertia trying to get hold of me. But now it is so different. Whether there is inertia or not, I am all the time in Her arms. I never knew before that trust and confidence have such an uplifting power in them. When I am very conscious of the immense trust I have in Her, in the tiniest and biggest things, there comes always such a warm wave of love that surrounds me and I feel Her so very near to me. I have stopped thinking about my yoga, my progress, etc. I only aspire that I might be conscious of Her working in me, that I may not forget the sacrifice of every little thing to Her and that I might become Herself. And I surrender. That is my life. If I am to become more and more like Her, I must lose the ego and become one with all people, all the world. Everything is included in becoming more and more as She is — She contains all. She is the Creatrix of all the Universe. So why should I concentrate on anything else? There is nothing else. And She is for me not the person I see. She together with Sri Aurobindo is the Highest. And I try to feel Her always

together with Him — Ishwara-Shakti.²⁰ This helps me so much. And in the *Synthesis* it is plainly said that “the seeker of the integral Truth feels in the duality of Ishwara-Shakti his closeness to a more intimate and ultimate secret of the divine Transcendence and the Manifestation than that offered to him by any other experience.”²¹ Just a week ago we were translating it with Her in Her class. This is always an inexpressible experience to know that the Highest about whom we read is sitting there in front of us at the desk, reading aloud about Himself (Herself). It happens that sometimes She stops or even puts her head on the desk for a while. Then we know that from somewhere in the world a call has come to the Mother and that She concentrates and acts. Then She quietly goes on reading and translating. And somewhere a soul was helped.

I received your letter of the 21st. It is so wonderful that being so much concentrated on Her and “turning round” Her, I do not feel at all far from all the friends you write about. Just the opposite. The knowledge and feeling is growing that She is in each of them.

28.5.1958

My patients always tell me a lot about the Ashram and themselves. In a way a nurse gets a chance to get to know people and conditions better than many other people. It is sometimes difficult to believe that Mother accepts *all* human nature — very human nature — to be cleansed here. You can see people eaten up by desires, some who cheat — like taking extra rations and selling them to have money for a rickshaw or the cinema(!). Some do business for the Ashram and it is not always completely clean. There are people who discuss “problems”: yoga, politics, gossip. I have learned never to let a thought of judgment or criticism enter into me in connection with it, because in the middle of it, permeating it all, vibrates and radiates and is continuously doing the work of Transformation — the Supreme. Every single person is being scrubbed and chiselled and cleansed and taught — often with humour. Like myself yesterday. We had movies, an Italian film, “The Miracle of Milano”. These films are arranged in the playground and as they are long, there is brought for Mother a kind of chaise longue upholstered with blue silk. She rests there the whole time with us. There is something very “gemütlich” [homely] in it and it is the only time I try to sit near to Her. And I really belong to the very few who do not run after Her From the beginning I felt that the inner contact is the most important thing. But this time during the movie I just enjoyed this closeness, though I also

²⁰ *Ishwara-Shakti*: The Lord and his creative Power.

²¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1970), p. 116.

worked inwardly all the time. So yesterday when the film came to the end I stood up. (She sits against the wall and we all sit with our backs towards Her.) So I stood up and turned towards Her. Doing it I did not notice that the electric light was out (although there was bright moonlight) and that other people were sitting. I stood and looked at the chaise longue and it was empty (I was three metres from Her), so I thought that She had left during the film which She never does. I stood as if hypnotised and I felt that something was going on. I sat down again after a while as the news was being shown. When the news came to an end and I turned again to Her, She was there quietly resting on her chaise longue. You know that the most essential aspiration in me is now to find Her in other people. So She taught me that *all* these reactions towards Her physical person, so common here, I have to drop and find Her in my inner being and in other people. All this went very deep into me and She made me feel that it was very important, at least at the present stage of my yoga.

My dear servant Armogom forgot to cover the tiny seedlings of sunflowers and all but four are dead. But I do love him. Today he was for the first time in his life at the barber's and I admired him loudly. Today he tried to convince me that the floors are dirty because of the bright sunshine but I succeeded in convincing him that he does not wipe them well. And all this we naturally explained to each other with our hands!

The days pass wonderfully quietly. Nahar says that this year is especially hot so I am very thankful that She has made me bear the heat without too many difficulties. We have even an electric fan in the Nursing Home, but I have never used it for myself.

31.5.1958

7.30 in the morning

Since the lesson She gave me during the movies I know that I could never find Her if the element of outer appearances were allowed to remain in my attitude towards Her. But as my love for Her is great it all developed in such a wonderful way. I felt that I myself can do nothing and She made me come to the point where I could take all my love for Her into my hands and offer it to Her for purification and transformation. This happened the day before yesterday during the Balcony Darshan and She accepted my offering. Since it happened I begin to feel more and more as if I am on the way to becoming nothing. I know that there is plenty still in me to be given to Her, but it now seems to be so logical — just to go on: to give this, and there is less in me, and again this and there is still less in me; and so I shall come progressively to the moment of being nothing, because She will have taken all of me. Oh! this is such happiness! Yesterday during the children's class She

spoke about the “Supreme Love which knows everything and can do everything”. I let this sentence work in me and it seems that nearly each preoccupation with myself — the small myself — is in such a situation just an offense and foolishness.

Yesterday I saw something of the country surrounding Pondicherry. Mother possesses many estates, farms, gardens and lakes, 2-7 miles out of town in different places. It is a wonderful feeling to feel Her so much spread over the land around. In each place there are one or more sadhaks living there and there is such a nice atmosphere. I have seen a pottery and a poultry farm and two vegetable gardens, very big ones. I went in a jeep that brings vegetables for the Ashram. I wanted to see the pottery and what clay they use and how they dry the pots as I am doing some sculpture. But they were so kind to show me also other places on the way. Near the pottery is a lovely house where the father of our director of physical education lives. He supervises all the rice fields. The feeling of Her presence in all these places made me see once more that even if the sadhaks are more or less human, She is the Lord of everything and radiates through them. And you know, Riek, there is now also such happiness radiating in our Nursing Home. Our patient said it to Mother and people who come say it too.

11 a.m.

The servants show angry faces. S is offended because I gave the mosquito net to him to wash and not to A. And A is today dark like a cloud. It is not easy. I discovered that A is really a fisherman and that he had never before entered a real house! And I continue my conversation with Her: “Thou art playing with me, and playing. I know now Thy masks. Thou shalt not deceive me any more.” And it really helps. My heart becomes light, a joy comes to me and I can smile. I tear down all the masks and there She is in all Her glory. So I smile at Her and prostrate myself before Her in each of them.

1.6.1958

June already! How quickly time passes. I have just finished an “Alfonso” — the best mango in the world. I have eaten it, of course, for Her — anyway I tried to eat it for Her, but I am afraid it was too good and I forgot Her in the middle of the “Alfonso”! But slowly I shall learn this too. It is the first of the month and we got our monthly supplies: I had asked for one toilet soap, four washing soap, toilet paper and matches. As usual She was present and this time each got from Her a marigold. Oh! if I could give myself completely, completely! Sometimes I think I am not so far from it and then She shows me

what a mess of conceit I still am. But She — “l'Amour Suprême, qui sait tout et qui peut tout”²² — She loves me as She loves all and She will purify and transform me. So I do not worry, but am happy.

2.6.1958

Tomorrow is Nahar's birthday. I shall make him a birthday card with Polish patterns. This morning She made me feel that She *really* carries me in Her arms. Oh! All yoga is just feeling this more and more as real and so we enter a new world. Fifteen or more years ago I also used to maintain that the Grace was carrying me in Her arms, but now I feel it more and more. Now I am going to the Ashram, which means the main building, to get this letter posted.

13.6.1958

Sometimes this servant A is too funny for words. In the beginning I thought he was stupid but he is not and when he wants he is not even slow. It was probably a mask he put on to save himself from too many troubles in new surroundings. It seems that he just needs love. I have to beg him with charming smiles to sweep or wipe the floor or to come to me. When I call him my voice must be like that of a cherub and he always pretends at first not to hear me, so that I am obliged to call him once more. When he feels hurt (usually when I raise my voice — now I don't do it any more) he gets a dark, wild light in his eyes and a dark wave comes over me. He cheats me of course too, but I am still more clever than he is and I cheat better. So at the end the house looks clean and the work is done. All these problems with A became actual when the first servant S's child fell ill and died. So I was left alone with A for a time. In all this She works silently to make a witness out of me. I feel that that is Her purpose now. First, as usual, She shows me that this is how I should be and then She lets me aspire and aspire and pray with all my heart. Then only, at last, She graciously agrees to do what She Herself has put as aspiration into me — and then She transforms me. Oh, is it not sheer delight? I have not had easy days of late but my happiness is so great.

I have found in Calcutta's yearly *Mandir Annual* an old article by Sri Aurobindo which made me really feel how essential aspiration is. He describes how it is included in the Harmony of the Universe and says that the gods and the Supreme never give anything

²² “The Supreme Love which knows everything and can do everything”.

without aspiration from the human soul. So, I try to *be* aspiration, to be a flame. And in a way I am, it burns. Being a witness is not easy, but I shall learn this too.

As my birthday is approaching, I am making a small sculpture for Her. It is a custom here that we offer Her something. It will be a figure drinking from the Source. I have also got oil colours. It is wonderful to know that everything that is needed will be given. But, of course, needed as She judges it. Lately she has said such wonderful things during Her children's class, chiefly about the powerful working of the new Supramental Force. That, whether we feel it or not, whether we want it or not, it works in us. And later, when our consciousness has undergone in its progress one of the decisive transformations, then this Force itself will show what it has done in our body without our knowing it and in other parts too. But She always says that each one has to proceed modestly on his own way. What She says is usually printed in the *Bulletin*, so you will have it too.

20.6.1958

Today I have a meat holiday. Tripura's husband has his birthday and he did not want any meat. So I gave more time to the "garden". It is so funny — a garden in flower-pots. Everything grows so quickly — you cannot imagine — but there are also more different pests to be fought than in Europe.

I do my work and practise being only a witness. It will be so: I shall sit in a corner of Her Heart and adore Her. She will do all the work, and think in me and feel in me and I shall look at it with wonder and admiration. In a way — maybe — it is already so. But sometimes it is all so overwhelming that I hardly believe that it is. I remember how often I was reading and repeating to myself in Poland, "In order to stand aside, you must know yourself as the Purusha²³ who merely watches, consents to God's work, upholds the Adhar and enjoys the fruits that God gives." But at that time I never grasped that it means I shall really be doing nothing. When I say that, maybe, it already is, I mean that I feel Her doing the work — not that the channel is clean.

I want to go to the library today and read some of the psalms from the Bible, the ones where the human soul, being at peace, adores the Lord. So I feel, I aspire for more and more true, deep humility. How can I stand before my Lord without perfect humility? She is the Lord together with Sri Aurobindo. She is transforming my love for Her so that I can....

²³ *Purusha*: conscious being; essential being supporting the play of Prakriti (Nature or cosmic energy).

27.6.1958

I don't remember what it was I wanted to say a week ago. A patient was brought in suddenly after a gall-bladder attack and since then I have had no time. I can only do for her what you were doing for me after my operation — just spoiling a bit. It is not so easy. But Mother looks at me through her eyes and it helps. Oh! Diederika, I tell you, these are not easy days, but I am only grateful that Her will is manifesting. I shall tell you something that is going on, but don't tell other people, they would not understand. I am discovering that Mother works with people who have very strong egos and even what one would call mean. Oh! it is wonderful to learn it. You know who my chief is. Well, he turned against me and complained — I do not know if to Mother or Pavitra — that I rearranged the Nursing Home, that I put flower-pots and took three rooms for myself! The "waves" were strong, I tell you, but it is wonderful to feel the Supreme Force working through the maze. I had not seen Pavitra for a long time. Then two days ago he met me and told me what the chief had said and that I must only do what he wants because this is the Nursing Home he is in charge of. Pavitra began to talk with cold detachment and while he was talking and I (inwardly peaceful and surrendered) answering, we both at the same moment felt that all this is just nothing, all was dropped, I knew that he understood what was Mother's will and that I had surrendered and maybe he understood more about my life with Mother during the last months. I felt that we were both really feeling Mother looking through us at each other. There is nothing sentimental in this. It is a little beginning of something in me that is sheer delight and felicity. He probably has it permanently already. So now Janina wanted to learn how to be a witness and she has a wonderful occasion. "Pani Dyrektor" who was always at the top giving orders in Poland will have to ask for the chief's signature for almost everything she wants to change in the Nursing Home. My vital rebels of course and Janina, from the inner being, where she sits close to Mother, tries to look at it and watch how God's Force transforms her being. But Janina feels already what immense felicity there is not only in expanding independently — which God has permitted her to do until now — but also in working "as if with bound hands" because this is now Her Will. And with this attitude towards the new situation I feel only Love streaming from Her to me and from me to Her.

30.6.1958

I am prostrating myself before the chief who is Herself and things are becoming clearer and more harmonious. My life seems to be becoming slowly concentrated only on Her. I

have endless conversations with my God and I begin to discover that He (or She), being the Immensity, is at the same time something very, very simple. I can quarrel with Her, or put my head on Her lap and cry, or I can smile and laugh. She will accept everything. Oh! at last I can be completely natural, completely, completely, as I am now with all my imperfections. She knows each corner of my being and She loves me as I am. I feel Her more and more clearly in my inner being, close to me. She embraces me and we both as witnesses watch all that is being done by Her as God the Worker — in me and everywhere. This does not mean that all is easy. Oh! I feel so exhausted often and have strange headaches, but now all has become different. I have really given my adhara to Her. I no longer have a headache — She has it. Let Her do with it what She likes and with my fatigue too. My eyes are also inflamed again, but I do not worry. Let Her worry!

Our patient is much better. It has been a real yoga crisis. There is so much jealousy streaming on me — but that is also Mother's business, not mine.

The heat had been awful for a week and then, suddenly, overnight, the change came. There are lovely showers and it is much cooler. Evenings, nights and mornings are almost European! I have received both your letters and I shall give the letter to Pavitra this evening. It is good that you have written to him. It does not matter at all what you write to me, just write. Everything will come in its due time. Oh! I have such confidence now in Her. Each tiniest thing She is just doing in the way and time when it is necessary.

Letters to a Young Bengali

24.1.1960

Yes, S, this is the Grace and Glory of Her Presence. Just let it work, let it vibrate in and around you and give yourself, give yourself, give yourself. She will free you from unnecessary workings of your mind and leave those that She needs for the work in you. She will make your heart burn, She will give you bliss, if you will persevere even in the midst of “hell” — persevere and persevere. She will give you strength. Yes, repeat Her Name even in the midst of “hell” — She is there too. And Her Name is the Infinite Love and Power, the Supreme Mother...

We had one patient for an operation and just when we had finished the operation, suddenly our young German friend E had to be operated as an emergency. But everything went smoothly, we meditated as usual before the operation and we all felt that Mother was present. She Herself fixed the time of the operation for 8.p.m.

5.2.1960

Here are the messages. The last Blessings we had were on the 2nd of February and the message was: “Let us meditate on the most auspicious form of Savitri, on the Light of the Supreme which shall illumine us with the Truth.”

I shall now be sending you each message immediately, for what I have learned here is that when we take each message as the *most* important thing at that moment — for it is God’s Word to us, chosen by Him (Her) and given by Him (Her) to us — then it is a tremendous help on our way. The next message will be on Mother’s birthday, the 21st of February.... I feel myself in this respect to be like a clever beggar who runs where he expects something will be given and is completely concentrated on it. So I took the message of the 2nd of February and it fills my life until She gives a new Word on the 21st. You probably know that the 29th of February is the first anniversary of the descent of the Supermind (four years ago) and will be a very great day.

18.3.1960

Since yesterday our Nursing Home is again without patients. It is an enchanted house indeed. Every day it grows more and more beautiful. I do love to sit on the balcony to look at the wonder of the orange bougainvillea against the blue sky and feel Her Presence around me and in me.

And now I am going to tell you a true story. There was a sadhak (a visitor) who used to come here from time to time. A very fine man. He has a daughter here, about twenty years old. He wanted very much to stay permanently near Mother, but the conditions in the family were such that he got too many reproaches that he was neglecting his family duties every time he wanted to come even for a visit here.

And then the accident happened, a car accident; for a week he was still alive and then he died. The girl here is a marvellous girl. You know, there are some children and young people in the Ashram who have something so deep and direct in their relation with Mother. She is one of them. She cried, of course, and was miserable, but one felt that somehow in her being she lives in Mother, instinctively as it were. She loved her father very much, she loved his soul, and her physical mother almost hated her, if one may say so. The girl did not go home for the ceremonies. Mother said it was better not to go and she did Mother's will. And then Mother told her how it all happened. The father's whole being was longing for the Ashram, completely concentrated on it, but he could not realise his heart's wish because of the conditions in which he found himself in his body (wife and other family problems). So it was necessary that the body be destroyed to make the soul free to come here. "Your father is here," Mother said, "just next to you, only you cannot see him. He has brought with him his mental and vital being also, not only the psychic." And Mother has told the girl to write this to her family.

13.4.1960

It is wonderful indeed to have a younger brother who writes such beautiful letters. I do not mind the "ornaments" that are generously spread over the pages. The time will come when we shall sing out of Her Marvel Heart and each word will be a honeydrop of Grace. And we shall write endless books of delight on the white shimmering pages of the Milky Way. From time to time Mother will bend over our heads holding a lamp of stars to make us see better. But at present we may prefer to walk a little longer on the paths of a life turned away from the Divine, immersed in "delusions" — or at least we may want to write about the life of the Shadow and why should we not do it?

Yes, She is the Diamond Bridge. She will join in the One (She has already done it) the two contradictions in you which you mentioned. Of course you can pray and you must pray and you must do nothing else but pray with each throb of your heart and each movement of your fountain pen, that the solution of these two contradictions might manifest in you through Her Love. And it will manifest. It will be your glory path towards the Diamond Bridge, the glory path of suffering or the glory path of joy, as She wants it

— this does not matter at all. It can be a sunlit path if the miser, whom She loves without end, will give Her the small key to his heart even now. Then She will open his heart wide, wide as the Universe, and the miser will *really* embrace the Shadow and *really* console the Shadow — as, it seems, he would like very much to do.

As to the Ashram, what is most wonderful now besides Mother is the tree over the Samadhi. Do you know the name Mother has given to it? It is the Service Tree. And it does bend over the Eternal Child like a good old servant. Can you imagine how it looks now in full golden bloom, a Dome of Light, with its smile-drops falling continuously down and our little children crawling over the sunny carpet around the Samadhi and collecting the small flowers in baskets? The common name of this tree is the Rusty Shield-Bearer.

I have written to Poland asking for Polish children's stories. They might come before you come here next time.

18.5.1960

Here is what Mother said about the Balcony Darshan:

Question: "Mother what do you give us every morning at the Balcony and what should we try to do in order to receive what you give us?"

Answer: "Every morning, at 'Balcony', after having established a conscious contact with each one of those who are present, I identify myself with the Supreme Lord and merge myself completely in Him. Then my body, completely passive, becomes only a channel through which the Supreme Lord passes freely His Forces and pours on all His Light, His Consciousness and His Delight according to each one's receptivity."

"The best way to receive what He gives is to come to 'Balcony' with confidence and aspiration and to be there as calm and quiet as possible in a silent and passive waiting. If anyone has something precise to ask, it is better to ask before and not at the moment when I am there, because any activity diminishes the receptivity."

You see, *since all our life will slowly become a darshan*, it is good to know how it should be.

27.5.1960

I do hope you feel better now. Yes, this is the best medicine, the most wonderful: Mother's Name. Are we not the luckiest people in the world? Just think! She has allowed

us to discover Her and to see Her and to meet Her and She allows us to adore Her and to love Her. She is sitting smiling in each of your cells — sweeping too where it is necessary, and scrubbing — so, all is for the best!

As to you living in your characters, what else is Mother doing but living in us and tasting with millions of bodies this glorious world She has made? We are just Her characters — and yours are just yours and slowly you will learn that they should not drag you down if you can see in them too Mother tasting the world!...

Why should it be a dream — the final breaking down of the Golden Door and being engulfed in Her Embrace? It is *the* most real reality, the most touchable. Only we stupid creatures do not see it yet; but the day will come when we shall awake and realise that all the time we have been in Her Embrace — all the time....

6.6.1960

Last Wednesday was Prosperity Day and the Glory of Her near presence. Although this Glory is there every morning radiating from the Balcony and piercing to the bottom of the soul, still I love the nearness of Her Gaze.

29.6.1960

From each constellation, physical or psychological, new unexpected wonders appear when we can give ourselves to Her as completely as possible.... If She chooses, She can make us into completely new beings — is it not a wonder of wonders?

As to my spiritual thoughts you asked me to write about, I am tremendously happy that I think as little as possible and each day less and less. Mother is answering my prayers.

20.8.1960

As to the Ashram, what can I write about the Darshan?¹ We never have big celebrations. Just in the afternoon some music in Mother's presence after the march past and in the evening some slides of Mother's activities. For the rest, in general, during these days people drag the atmosphere down as they are so many and the Deluge of Bliss has to pump it upwards.

¹ This was written a few days after the Darshan on Sri Aurobindo's birthday (15 August).

7.9.1960

What Mother has said about teaching literature is a message like a thunderstorm. Mother announces in it too that She intends to take in hand the problem of education. She says: "When I intervene and remould things it may seem like a cyclone. People may feel that they can no longer stand on their legs! So many matters will get upset. There will be all-round bewilderment at first. But, as a result of the cyclone, the wall will break down and the true Light burst in."

13.12.1960

I have two patients and I paint, and paint, and paint — or rather I draw, and draw, and draw. I have swept the whole universe away and put it on my white sheet of paper, my small white sheet of paper. And I did not even need to squeeze in. And from my nebulas and divine forms I go to my two coughing and "prosaic" creatures, but when I go to them, I see them as two tiny dots in my world of dots on my tiny white sheet of paper. Because, you know, I am now drawing not with lines but only with dots. Mother told me that She is collecting my pictures for an exhibition which will be arranged when there are enough pictures to do it. It was on the occasion of the anniversary of my arrival in Pondicherry, when I first saw Her. Is it not a glory?

As to your present life of a busy man, I can only see Mother dancing around you in the attire and robes of all those people you meet. Can She not change dresses for Her Beloved as She likes? And can't you see Her eyes in the eyes of many who look or stare at you? Even if with one hand She keeps you in the midst of chaos, She holds Her dear child strongly with the other — and this is the Glory — you are kept tightly by Her in Her arms.

10.10.1961

I am at present mostly occupied in tracing figures resembling Mother's figure. And this will be made into mosaics! For this I have to ask you to do something for me: I need beautiful stones and pebbles in the colours of dreamland! Here we have lots of pebbles of greyish and brownish-grey shades which can be used for backgrounds, but the Pondicherry countryside is poor in colourful stones and, as you have many acquaintances all over Bengal, you might find a few "souls" (because souls are needed for this) who could, maybe, help to develop art in the Ashram. But please do not start with wagon

loads... just a few stones from time to time — green, red, yellow, also nice browns will be most welcome. I also need information about colour cements.

If all this is too difficult for you, simply drop the matter but if it is possible, I shall be very, very happy.

27.7.1963

I must tell you about my birthday. I gave all the pictures to Mother, there are 35 pictures. Mother wrote: “C'est très intéressant.”² She also sent me Her Blessings. “To Janina. With my blessings that the Beauty and the eternal Truth express themselves more and more through her art.”

Do you think a human being can wish more?

And the most amusing thing is that one day later I had to start drawing anatomic diagrams and other pictures for a surgery book.³ I found it such a wonderful Divine Joke that I began to draw them with exactly the same enthusiasm as my own pictures. And I received Her loving Grace, for in those tissues and cells I can find Her too, shining and laughing at us.

² “It is very interesting.”

³ A. C. Sanyal, *Surgical Text* (Pondicherry, 1965).

Selected Poems

Do not dare

Do not dare to say that we are not He,
Not the One who is in each proud lone rock
Or, born into flame-souls of the world to be,
Carries up in His tempest even you who mock!
For we are He.

Do not dare to disdain our radiant child-look
When to our Mother who is radiant bliss we cling,
When bent over dark pages of the sacred book,
Only from Her eyes we read, grow under Her wing.
For we are He.

Do not dare to dream that on this sweet black earth
Will be left one corner where we are not!
In us will spread the all-embracing hearth,
The globe immense of love in a tiny dot.
For we are He.

October 1963

My Cradle

Thy two loving palms, my cradle of delight,
Close on my soul like sun on happy shade,
Like warm praying fields of corn sweet and bright,
Like soft moss and crisp grass on still soil of a glade.

Wide and long I stretched in clasps of wild thyme,
In sweet fragrance, in greenery beauty-rooted,
And with Thee, my Mother, my prayer I rhyme.
By my rapture-cry the whole world is muted.

In Thy loving palms I lie, a bundle of bliss,
And in wide open skies Thy Heart-throbs I seek.
From vaults of light falls a trembling sun-kiss,
A golden drop of Grace on my happy cheek.

Blue winged birds swaying on Thy magic thread
Before my enchanted gaze to Thy hands fly,
In a heaven of smiles that for me Thou hast spread
Rock my dreams to tunes of Thy Lullaby.

Let me learn to fly where the blue winged bird flies
And sway for ever on the swing of Thy beam.
Let me grow to sweep the shining floors in Thy Skies
And build vast and proud vaults for Thy White Fiery Dream.

July 1961

Thy Kite

Hold strong the cord, Eternal Sprite!
I play with Thee the hide-and-seek
Through milky roads, Thy sky-drunk kite
In love with sweet earth, though black and bleak.

Deep in Thy palm I chase Thee, Lord.
With blows of wind in glorious flight
I glide on tempest's leaden cord
And press against the sun my face so bright.

And when Thy caprice pulls my ray
And calls to fly in earth's dark night,
Prey of Thy breath in Thee I sway
From bliss of doom to bliss of light.

The Marionette of Joy

Raise up Thy dappled harlequin of Joy,
Thou One sweet Actress, for the Play's bell rings,
Breathless is waiting Thy puppet, Thy toy,
For the lightning-pull of the magic strings.

Quite numb I am, just dead, a graceful rag,
As all true harlequins have always been.
My long and will-less limbs helplessly sag,
But in the mellow heart throbs Thy Force, my Queen.

O, let these strings now be my nerves of steel,
That I may vault to the caprice of Thy song,
In somersault-whirls Thy Power let me feel
To fight in this stuffed body fierce and strong.

June 1964

The Song of the Battlefield

Do not cry, my fields,
Do not weep, O meadows,
When the cloud of dreadful shields,
When the mass of iron shadows
Bury the Sun's face.

When ruthless feet with black delight
Our breast crush, squash each smiling bud
That leans out from green beauty, when Doom's might
Tramples the radiant warriors into bloody mud,
For this too is Grace.

Do not cry, do not weep,
For in our secret valley's heart
On slopes of mystery hard and steep
She fights the Battle from her victory cart,
The Queen of the golden race.

August 1963

I do not know

I do not know Thy Name, O Thou who art,
When Thy armour of death and these dreadful feet
Trample the white calm of my praying heart...

I do not know.

But I am the bleeding hill of Thy defeat,
O Mask, of all Thy doom.

I do not know, O One, Thy Name of Light
When Thy swift little feet, touches of the Sun,
Fall on me chasing the retreating night...

I do not know.

But I am Thy path of this victorious run
And of triumphs that loom.

I do not know Thee, Lord, but I am Thou,
O Giant Warrior behind the death-black shield,
O Radiant One to whom all meadows bow!...

I do not know.

I am the mystery on Thy Battlefield...
I only bloom.

July 1964

The Service Tree at the Samadhi

O Thou faithful bearer of the rusty shields,
Holy Service Tree!
Thy fragrant blessings on my heart's praying fields...
Thanksgiving to thee.

O humble crown, green vigil of delight,
Guard proud of God,
Thy blessing-shields borne high by the flaming Knight,
High where no fighter has trod,

Are crushed into pollen of throbbing gold,
O vault of luminous shade,
Look! Bunches of blossoming lights behold!
And the shadows of old fade...

Rustling mystery-tale! Love with covered face
Bent over the New-born!
One day under the shield of diamond grace
Thy emerald visor will be torn.

July 1963

To my Lord Supreme

(5th-9th December 1950)

Never could I give my eyes to Thy Eyes light-giving,
Nor feel the touch of Thy Golden Hand's Grace,
Thy Hand's my Lord, while on earth Thou wast living —
Never could I prostrate myself before my Lord's Face.

But I loved Thee always and I was Thine
When with me in my anguished land Thou didst throw Thy Soul,
When to my tears in grief Thou didst chain Thy Cry.
Thou hast not forgotten, my Lord, I know.

And then, when the fierce pride of the Dark and its wrath
Into Thy cells Thou didst suck in to transform into Light,
That Light came shining on my sorrowful path
Where fear, where pain were creeping, and despair of Night.

Now, in Thy Home, Thou hast taken me into Thy arms,
Near Thy Living Stone, at Thy feet, I can rest,
Like a tired worker who returns to his own home's charm,
Like a hunted bird that, at last, flies back into its nest.

Thee I thank, who in those woeful, darkest days
Didst kindle Hope Supreme with Thy receding Breath.
Thee I thank, whose Arms of Light, in rest,
Have strangled the approaching Death.

Three Prayers

while waiting for Thee, Mother

1

While I was waiting for Thee, O Light,
To appear on the balcony,
I prayed:

Before the Lord descends in the first ray of Thy gaze,
O Mother, chase away the clouds that cover my soul
As Thou art lifting at dawn the mist-veil
From the immaculate face of that deep Black Lake
In my Tatry Mountains...¹

And then, when the Lord will come,
The luminous beam will pierce my bare being
Unto its very depths and fill it with bliss.
And the Lord will be pleased,
And He will look around Him on His happy property
At the bottom of my soul.

2

While I was waiting for Thee before Thy Blessings,
Before my eyes would come near to Thine,
I prayed:

Mother let my eyes lie still like those tranquil lakes
In my Tatry Mountains,
Immobile, spread before the Lord,
Crystal mirrors waiting...

¹ The Tatry Mountains, the highest mountain range in Poland.

Will He permit an offering to Him of His own face?

And then, when the Lord will come through Thy eyes all loving
To stoop over these two lakes of calm,
He will perceive Himself in their humble felicity.
And the Lord will be pleased,
And He will smile
Seeing His own eyes looking at Him.

3

While I am waiting for Thee in the lucid silence
Before the sacred hour of meditation,
I pray:

Fill, Mother my cells with longing ecstasy,
The same that sparkles in all those lakes of beauty
In my Tatry Mountains,
When the last sun-drops caress them with glowing happiness
And when the Lord Himself is approaching after His long day's journey.

And then, when the Lord will come,
My whole being will be His luminous abode.
And the Lord will be pleased.
He will sigh with delight.
He will rest and take off His sandals
And wash His feet in the radiant waters.

May 1964

The Mother on Janina's Passing

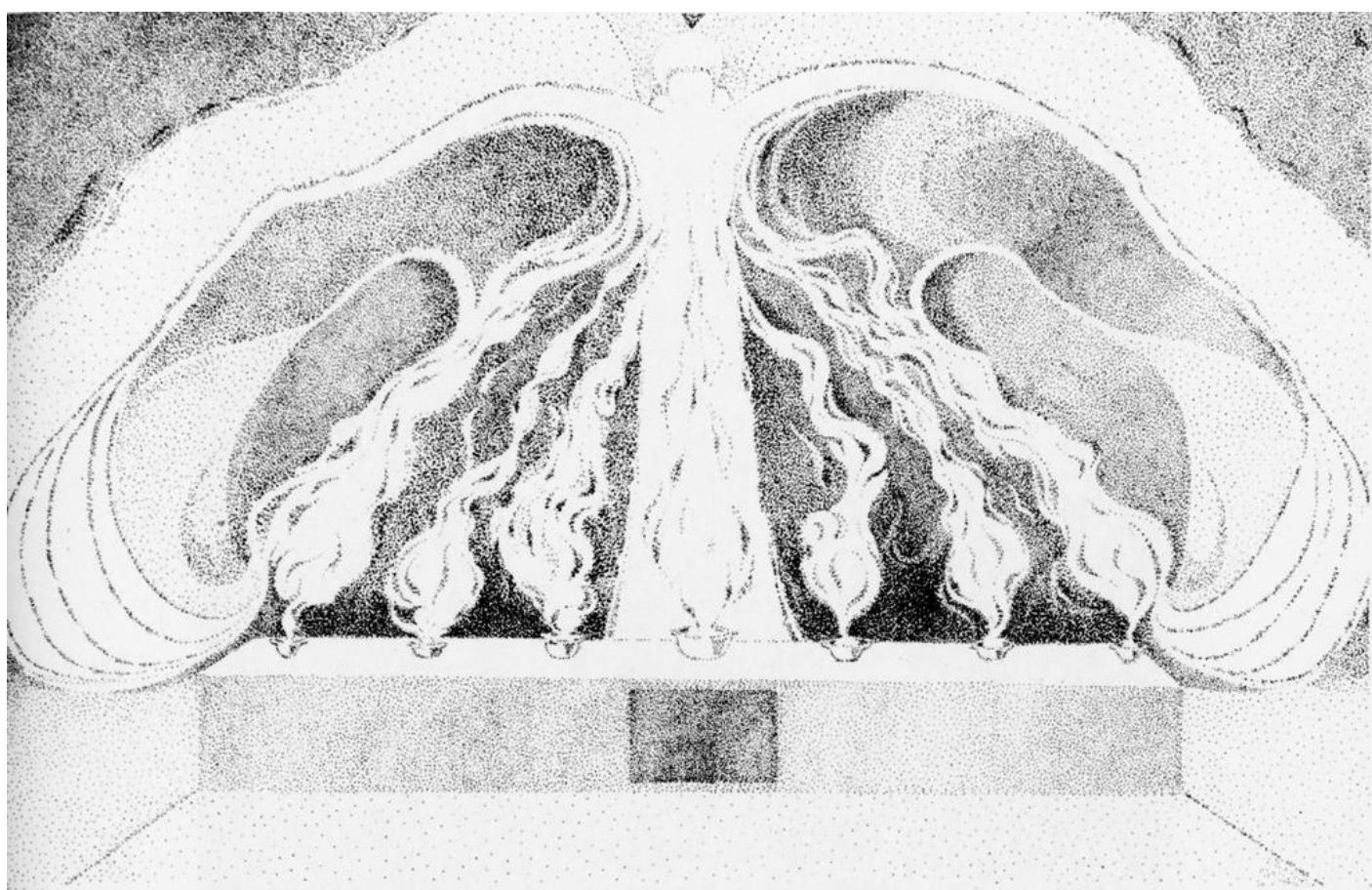
I remember, the very day Janina died (she died at about six in the morning, I think), around four in the morning, suddenly something made me take interest in this question: What will the new form be like? What will it be like? And I looked at man and at the animal. Then I saw that there would be a much greater difference between man and the new form than between man and the animal. I started to see things, and it happened that Janina was there (in her thought, but a quite material and very concrete thought). And it was very interesting (it lasted a long time, about two hours), because I saw the whole timidity of human conceptions, whereas she had made contact with something: it wasn't an idea but a sort of contact. I had the impression of a Matter that was more plastic and full of Light, responding much more directly to the Will (the higher Will), and with such a plasticity that it could respond to the Will by taking variable and changing forms. And I saw some of these forms of hers, which she had conceived — a little like these beings who don't have a body like us, but who have hands and feet when they want, and a head when they want, and luminous clothes when they want — things like that. I saw that and I remember I congratulated her. I told her, "You have had a partial, but partially very clear perception of one of the forms the new Manifestation will take." And she was very happy. I told her, "You see, you have worked fully for the future." Then all at once I saw a sapphire-blue light, pale, very luminous, shaped like a flame (with a rather broad base), and it made a kind of flash, pfft! and then it was gone... And she was no longer there. I thought: "Well, that's odd!" An hour later (I saw this around six in the morning; all the rest had lasted about two hours), they told me she was dead. That is, she spent the last moments of her life with me and then, from me, pfft! went off towards... a life elsewhere.

It was very sudden. She was so happy, you know; I told her, "How well you have worked for the future!" And all at once, like a flash (a sapphire-blue light, pale, very luminous, with the shape of a flame and a rather broad base), pfft! she was gone. And that was just the moment when she died.

It is one of the most interesting departures I have seen — fully conscious. And so happy to have participated!... I myself didn't know why I was telling her, "Yes, you have truly participated in the work for the future, you have put the earth in contact with one of the forms of the new Manifestation."

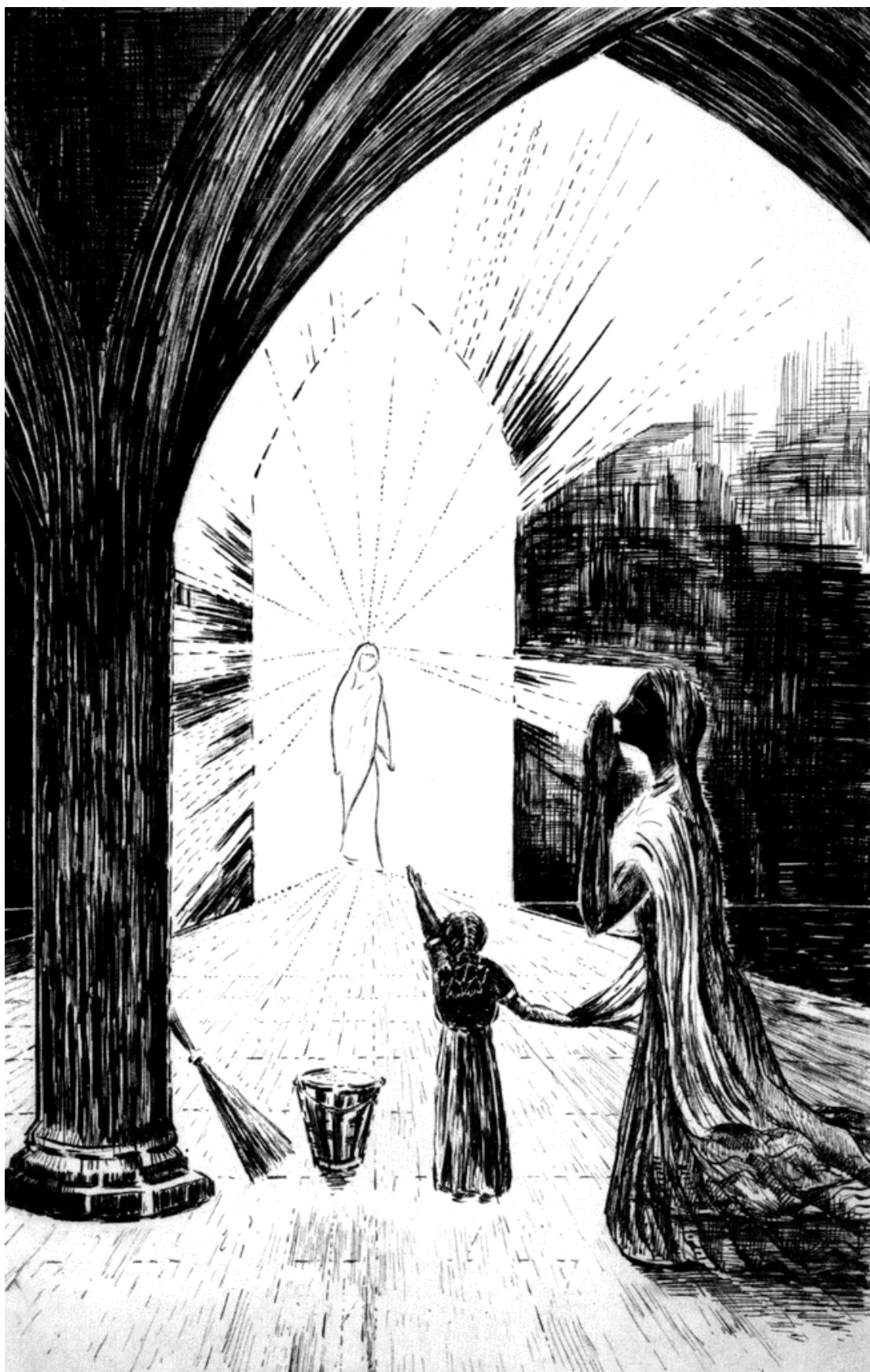
From a talk of 11 August 1964 (translated from the French)

DRAWINGS
AND
PAINTINGS





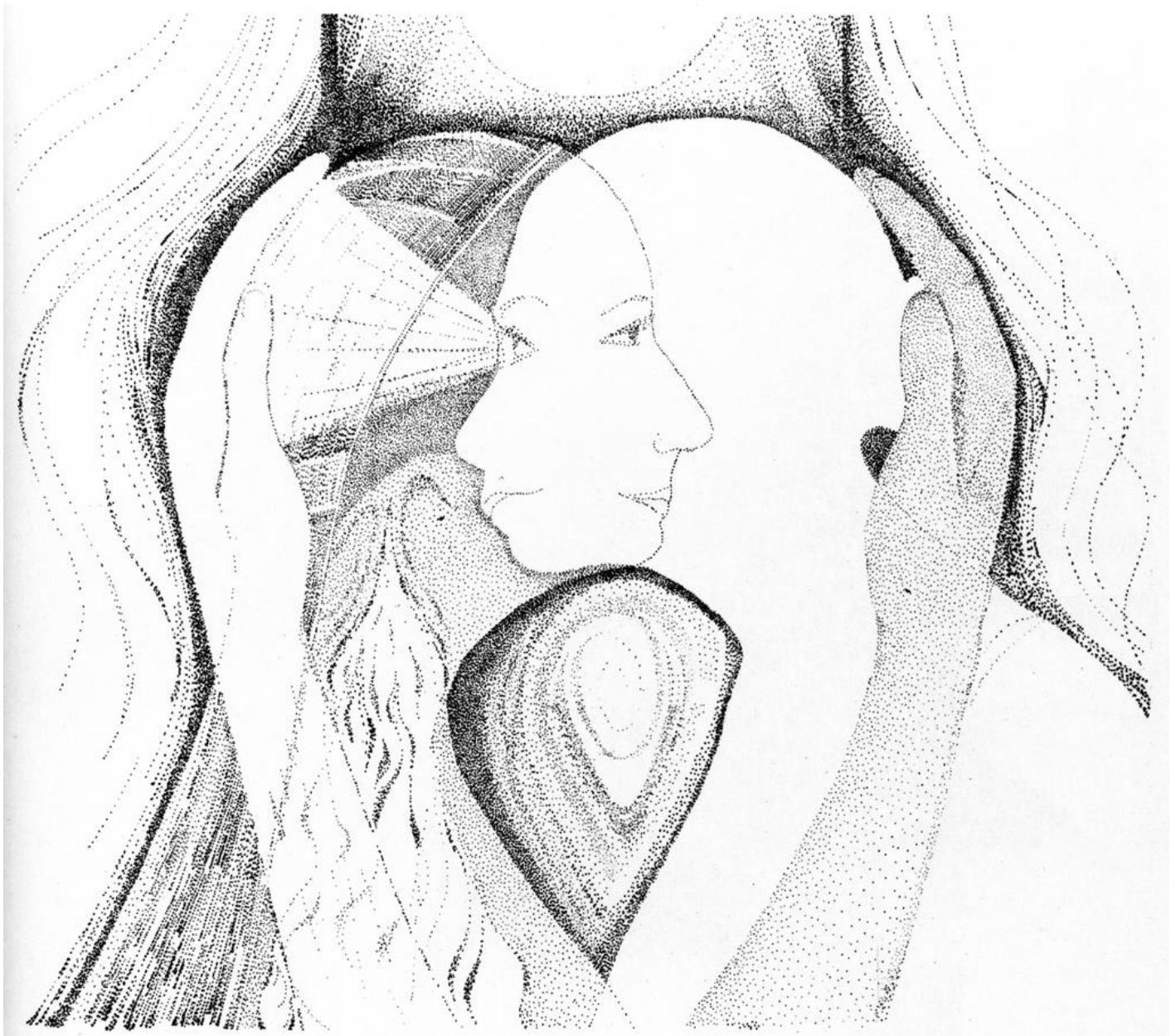
With the Mother



With the Mother



With the Mother

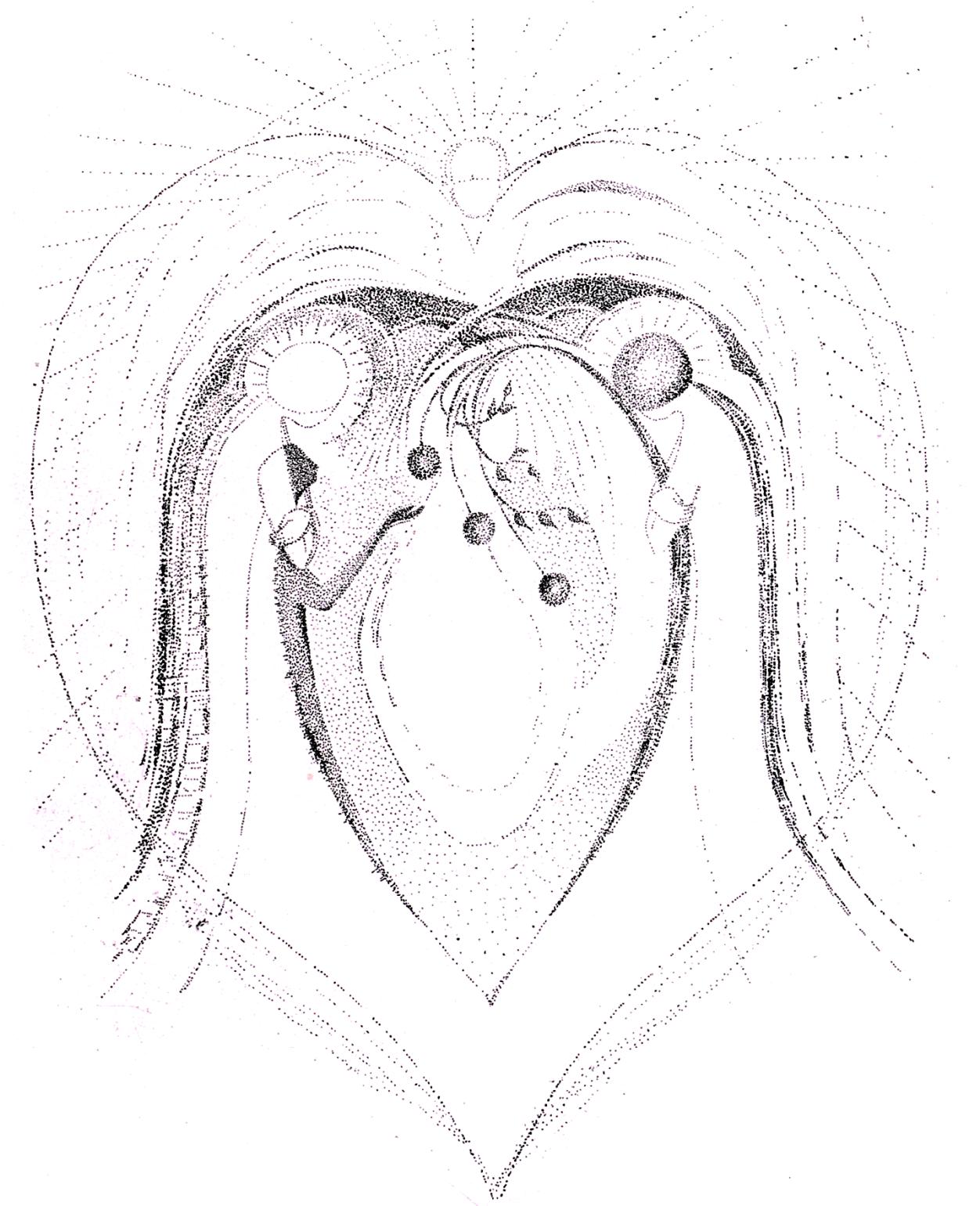


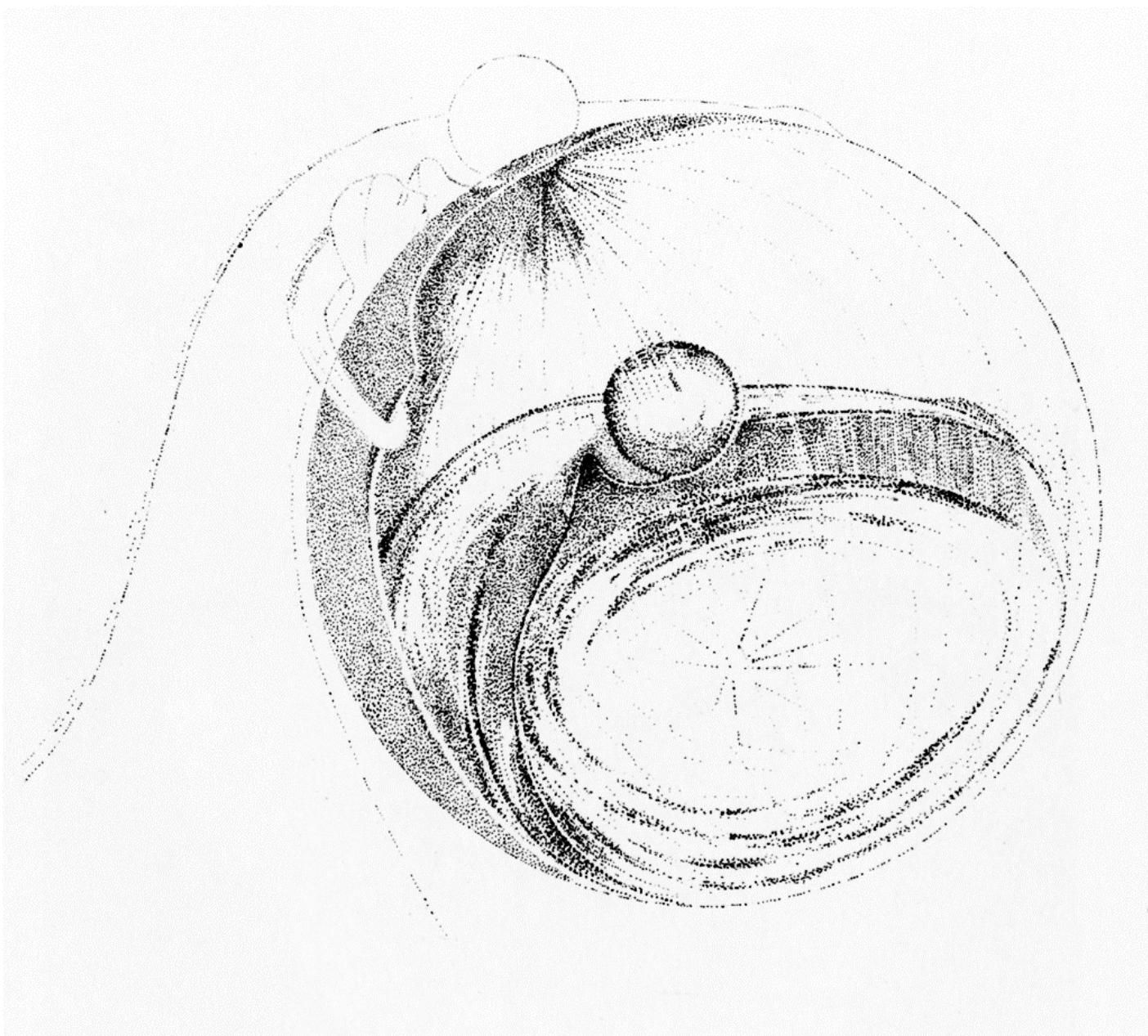


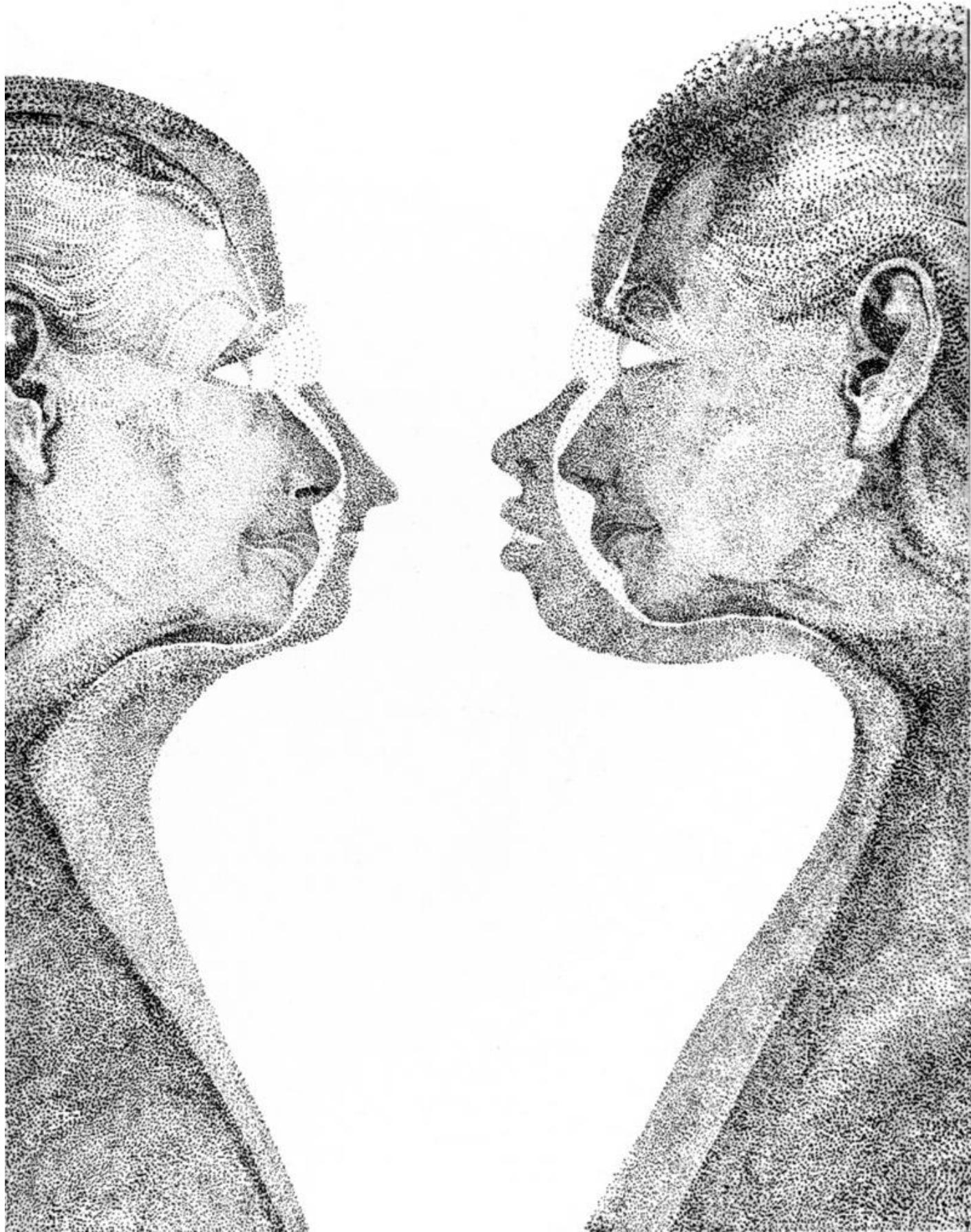
The Mother in Japan

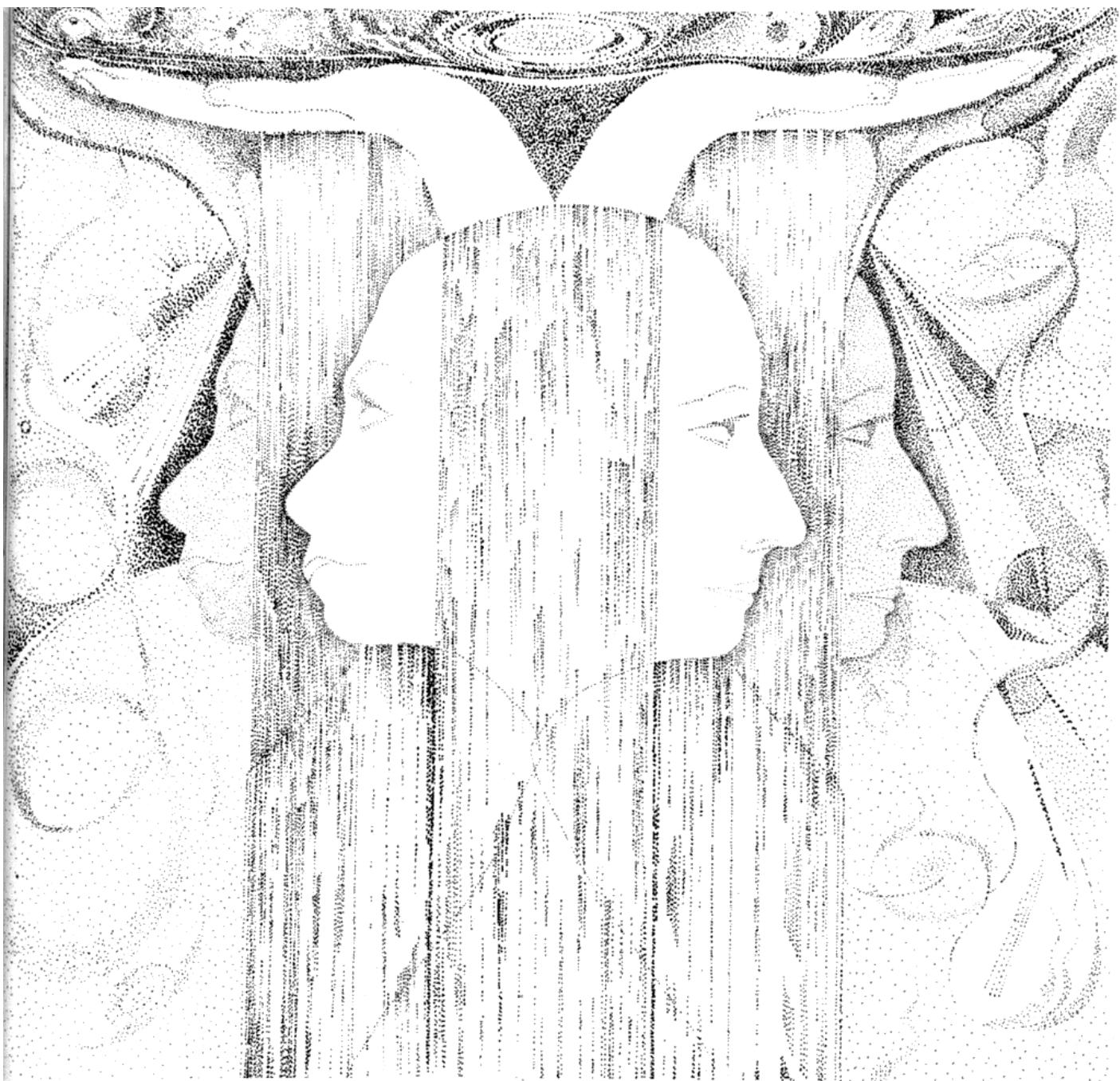


The Mother in Japan











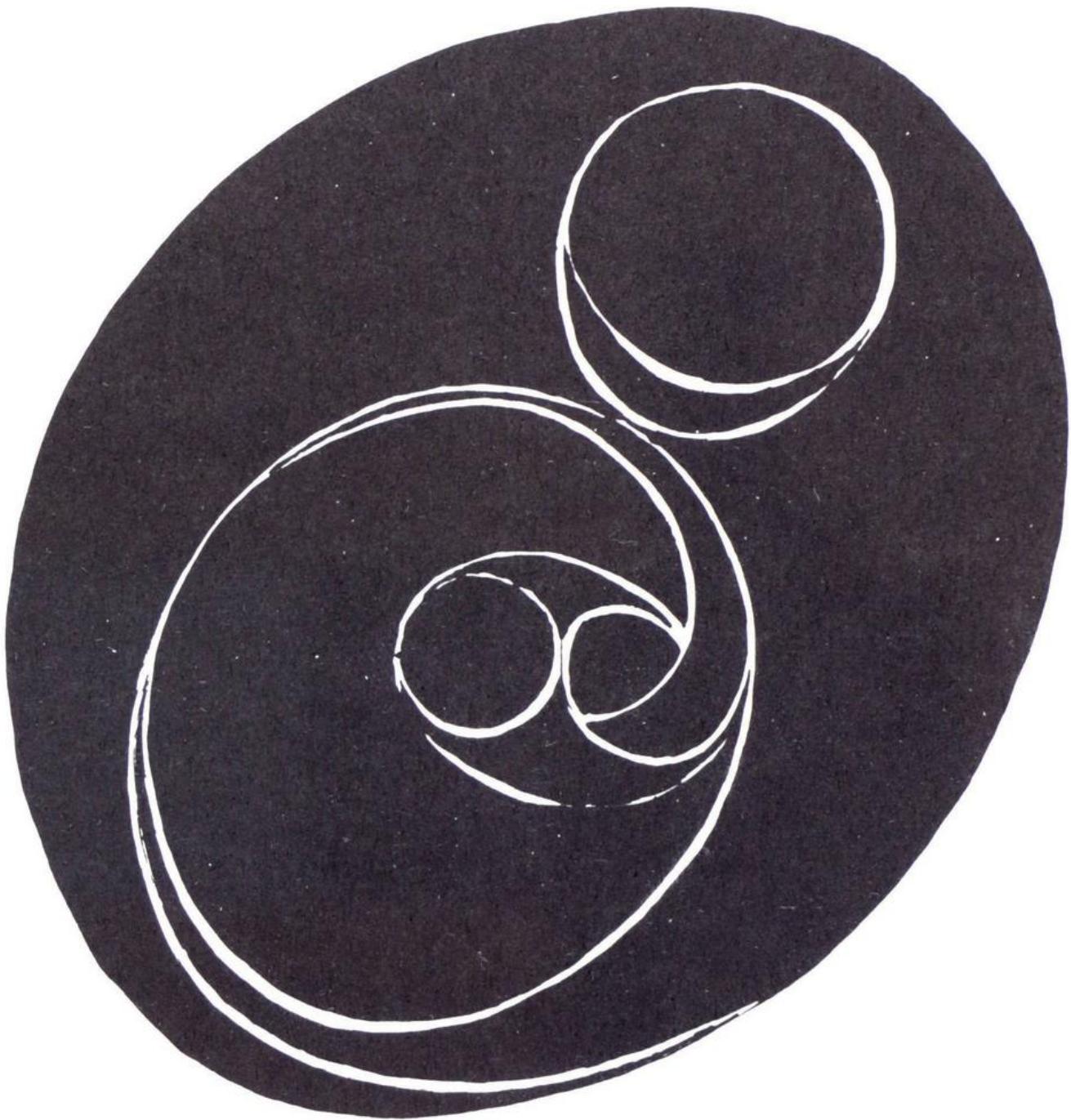
Descent of the Mother



Descent of the Mother



Descent of the Mother



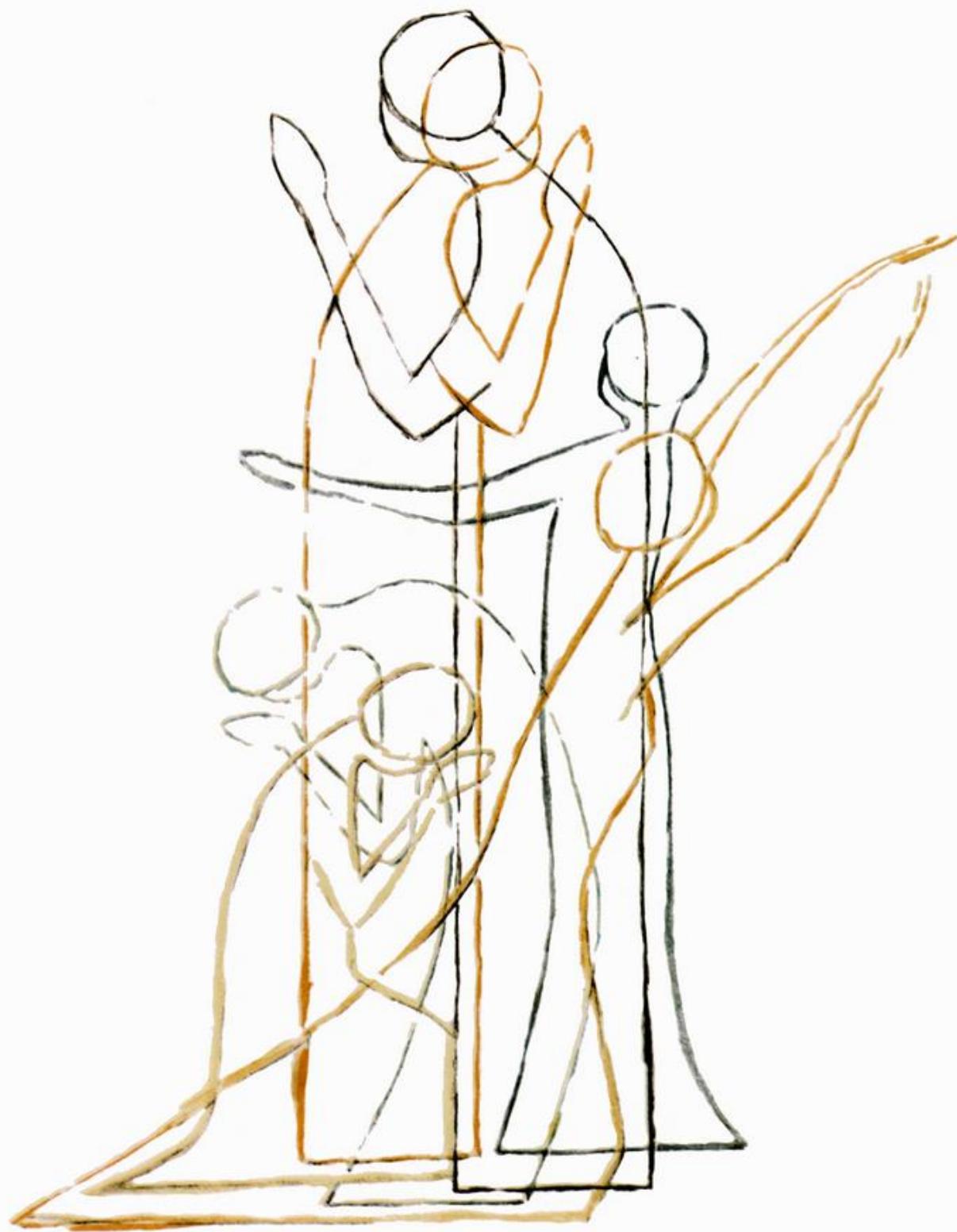
Descent of the Mother



Yan Yin



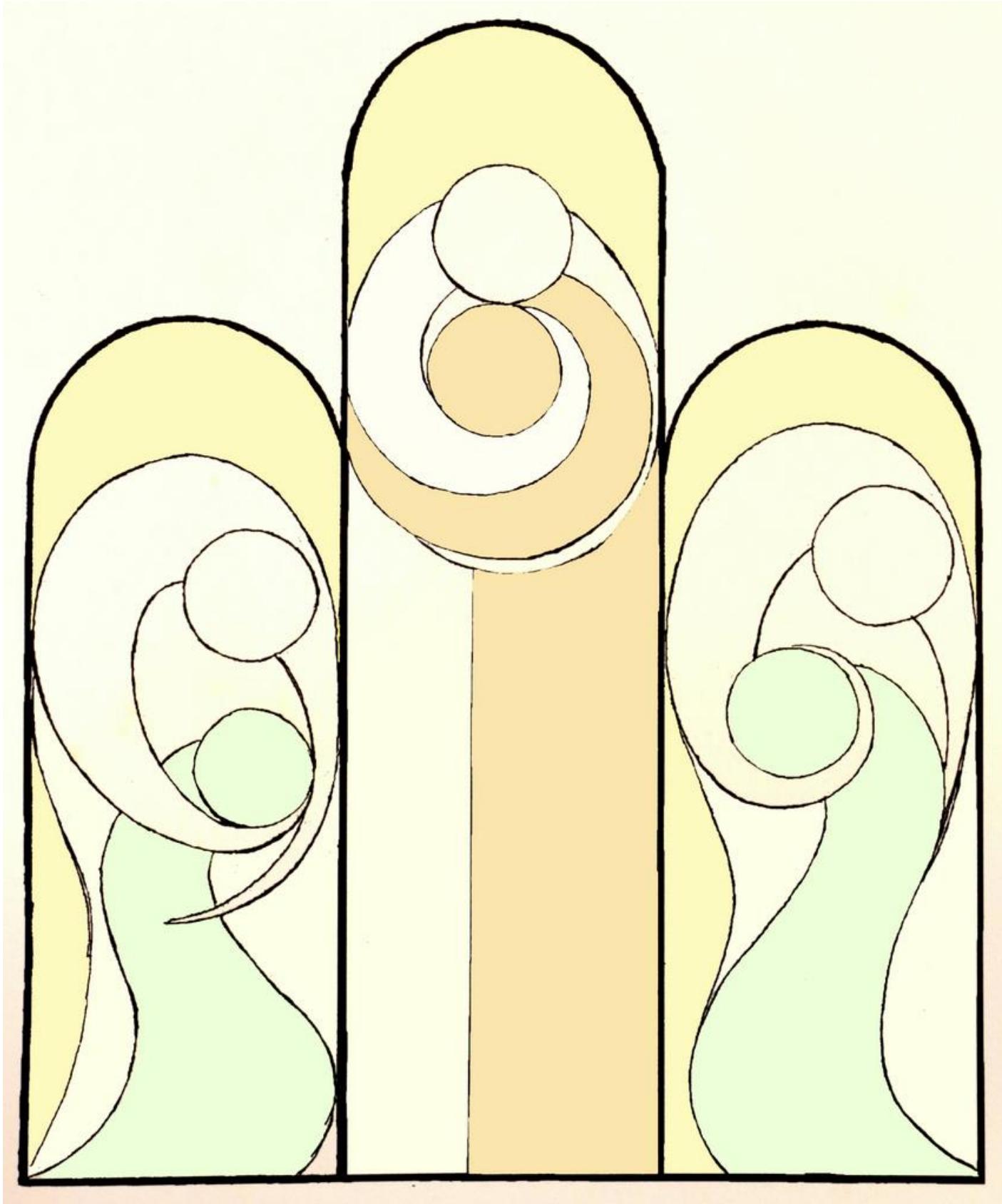
Yan Yin



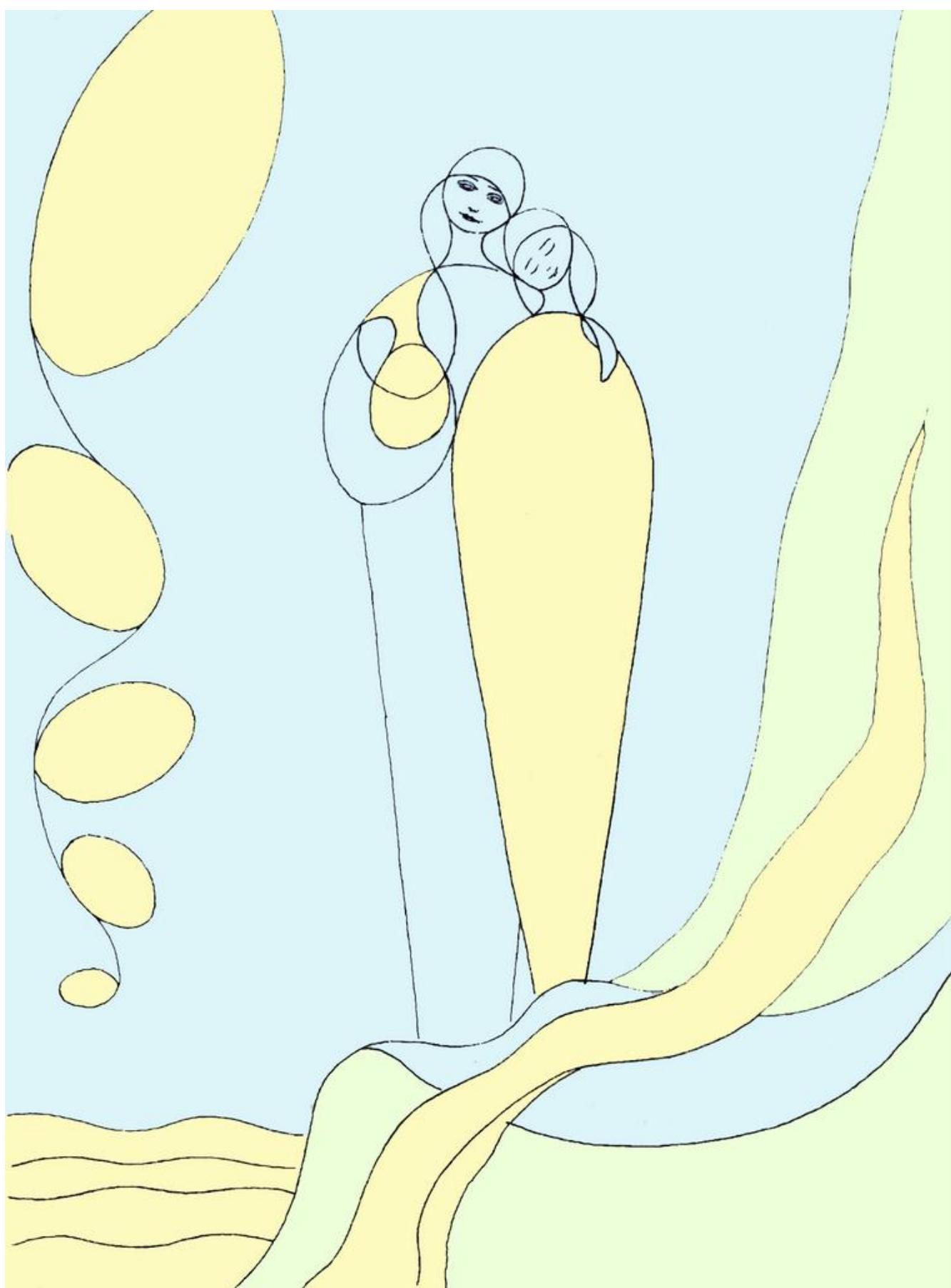




Yan Yin









29. XII. 1960.

