

GURUKULAM

VOLUME VIII • 1992

FIRST QUARTER



MAJALAH

SEKOLAH



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FIRST QUARTER

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GURUKULAM

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Rain Meditations

As I sat alone, listening to the rain pelting the roof of my cabin, I felt the gentle thrill which the rain usually brings. Solitude was seeping into my thirsty soul like the rain drops into the welcoming earth. But amidst the sound of the drops, I slowly became aware of a rhythmic sound coming from my porch. I opened the door and discovered that I was not alone. Sitting there in the rocking chair was a sturdy bearded man with an angular face and unruly hair. Though I was startled, his peaceful rocking and gentle eyes prevented me from feeling any fear. As he rocked, he spoke almost to himself: "Some of my pleasantest hours were during the long rain-storms in the spring or fall, which confined me to the house for the afternoon as well as the forenoon, soothed by their ceaseless roar and pelting; when an early twilight ushered in a long evening in which many thoughts had time to take root and unfold themselves."

I sat down, leaning against the doorway, wondering who my thoughtful visitor might be when he continued:

"I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed by a sense of solitude, but once, and that was a few weeks after I came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted if the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed, I was suddenly sensible of such sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighborhood insignificant, and I have never thought of them since."

My heart leapt up in joyous recognition

that this must be Thoreau and that he was describing his feelings on beginning his solitary life at Walden Pond. "Oh," I sighed, "that is true for me, too, but the woods are becoming more and more crowded. This cabin was isolated but now there are neighbors on all sides, with lights and noises that scare away the wild creatures that used to be my dear companions."

He nodded sympathetically and said, "I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. . . [but a] man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows."

"Yes, I have certainly experienced that. When I am absorbed in writing or editing, reading or studying, what is going on around me often recedes into the background and I can feel very solitary even with people nearby. Sometimes their presence distracts me and makes concentration difficult, but at others, I am able to sink deeply into what I am focusing on."

He asked, "What do we want most to dwell near to? Not to many men, surely, but to the perennial source of our life, whence in all our experience we have found that to issue, as the willow stands near the water and sends out its roots in that direction. This will vary with different natures, but this is the place where a wise man will dig his cellar. . . . Any prospect of awakening or coming to life to a dead man makes indifferent all times and places. The place where that may occur is always the same, and indescribably pleasant to all our senses. For the most part we allow only outlying and transient circumstances to make our occasions. They are, in fact, the cause of our distraction. Nearest to all things is that power which fashions their being." He went on to chant some upanisadic verses and I remembered that he had immersed

himself in the study of Indian philosophy and even described his proposed sojourn at Walden as an exploration of the Farthest Indies. He also studied Greek and Buddhist philosophy, studies which he fully tested in application to his way of life. They nurtured in him a perspective which enabled him to risk society's displeasure at his refusal to conform and to face an early death with joy and peace. As though he sensed where my thoughts were going, Thoreau said, "By a conscious effort of the mind we can stand aloof from actions and their consequences; and all things, good and bad, go by us like a torrent. . . . However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it, and that is no more I than it is you. When the play, it may be the tragedy of life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned."

I told him that I was reminded of verse five of Narayana Guru's *Atmopadesa Satakam*:

Worldly people, having slept, wake and think many thoughts; ever wakefully witnessing all this shines an unlit lamp, precious beyond words; that never fades; ever seeing this, one should go forward.

The going forward the Guru points to is both that of pursuing the discipline, the path, which helps one to be always aware of the ever-shining light, as well as that of applying that awareness to make every moment of life one of value. I thought of how Thoreau has been one of America's most eloquent champions of the value of solitude and communion with Nature, yet, even in his days at Walden, did not choose to live as a hermit. He was always close to his family and dear friends and was involved in anti-slavery activity his whole life. I asked about his civil disobedience to protest Massachusetts' support of and participation in slavery and he spoke vehemently: "Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legis-

lator? Why has every man a conscience then? I think we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. . . . It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous, wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support. If I devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations, I must first see, at least, that I do not pursue them sitting upon another man's shoulders. I must get off him first, that he may pursue his contemplations too. . . . Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison." As he continued, I realized that prison for him was not the confinement it is for most because of his ability to identify with the witnessing light: "I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and bones, to be locked up. . . . I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. . . . I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous."

As I mused on how those meditations were so powerful that they not only escaped the walls of the Concord prison, but made their way around the world to encourage the brave efforts of millions of lovers of humanity including Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., I gradually realized that I was once again alone with the sweet sound of the rain.

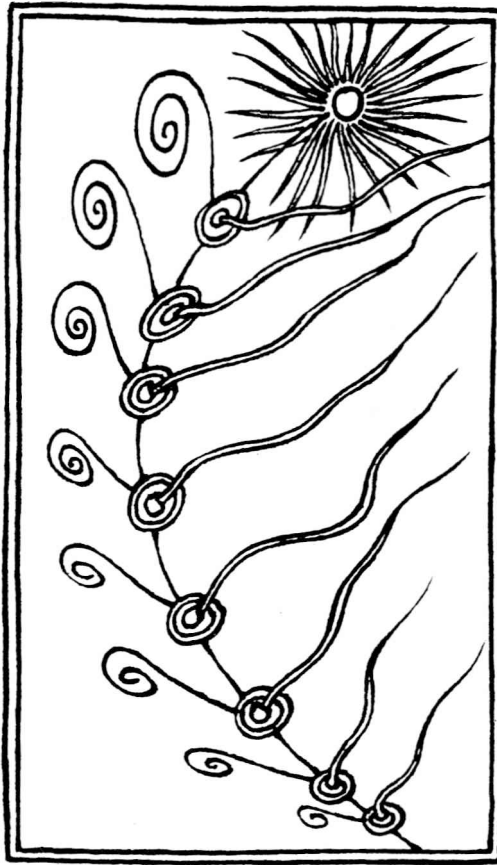
Nancy Yeilding

Svānubhavagīti Śatakam:

Experiential Aesthetics and Imperiential Transcendence

by Narayana Guru

Translation and Commentary by
Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati



Verse 62

If that is You, I am the worthless
existing in the precious plenum.
I have no way to liberate myself, Oh Dissolver of all beings.
Ultimately you will give me emancipation.

When a child is born at home, the proud parents declare it to their friends and relatives. Much before the parents announce to the world the birth of their baby, the child is present in the mother's womb. We cannot say that the child had no existence before the sperm was united with the ovum. The sperm was not sitting somewhere in the father like a seed in a fruit. The mother did not come to his world with an ovum to be fertilized. After puberty, month after month fresh ovums were generated and destroyed. So where were the sperm and ovum in the male and female before the semen was generated in the man and the ovum was generated in the woman?

If an egg-laying hen or duck is cut open one may see eggs of several sizes in the process of maturation. But one cannot make an incision of the genital of the parent to locate any sperm or ovum. What comes through the sperm and the ovum? According to geneticists certain chromosomes bearing the imprint of the father's and mother's characteristics get together and the zygote becomes the nucleus of a developing fetus. Chromosomes are only carriers of genes. It is a big challenge to the leaders of biology to explain how from a single cell a whole complex person is ultimately fabricated. This stream of biologic conveyance of genes has been going on for millenium.

Until very recently the geneticists thought that the entire secret of the psychosomatic formatin of an individual was entirely monitored by physio-chemical and biologic elements carried from parents to their off-spring by genes. Now they have arrived at the conclusion that a mysterious third factor is actually responsible for the internal wiring of a person's software, and that third factor is responsible for providing a person with the uniqueness of his or her personality. This almost resembles the Hindu theory that the essence of a person continues after death and picks up accessories from the parents to provide him or her with a body and mind to be used in a fesh incarnation. God helps this continuing person to discover the right parents having within them tendencies which are similar to the incarnating person's previous personality marks. What is considered as the genetic provision from the parent can be roughly compared to the hardware of a computer. However, there is no tool to find out from where the uniqueness of a person's personality comes. In John C. Lilly's now famous book *The Programming and Meta-Programming of the Human Bio-Computer* he very pertinantly asks the question "Who is the programmer of the human bio-computer?" It seems that if the psycho-somatic hardware is coming from the parents and the unique personality software is coming from the karmic persistence of the person who has departed from a previous body and who is in dire need of another to continue the parth of his Karma in which he was living during the previous life.

According to Indian sources, it is believed that death destroys only the gross physical body compsed of corporeal substance plus the various recordings, registrations, and colorations that have gone into the subtle body of a person. Even when these aspects are destroyed, the causal body outlives physical death, and it lies in waiting to be united with a fertilized ovum in a sort of symbiotic manner.

Traditional scientists may not accept such speculation. But if a radio wave broadcast from some center into the stratosphere can be caught and reproduced by a transistor, what the Indians speak of is not

so far-out for our imagination. If the origin of life in us can be traced back to a remote stream of an organizing dynamics which is of millions of years of history, we can just as well say that such a program was originally initiated by a beginningless intelligence which has conceived the individual function of all beings. The same is spoken of here as the birthless light of Śiva.

It is only a relativistic vision to think we have commenced only after being born of our parents. In fact we co-exist with the Divine without beginning or end. So it goes without saying that ultimately one will come to the realization that every person, by virtue of the right of ones origin, is bound to be inseparable from the adorable Absolute even though such a realization is obliterated by phenomenality for some time in the drama of life.



Verse 63

Not knowing who the master is,
oh my Lord, seeking you, so many here,
having lost their wits,
go astray, confused with their
confounding reason.

In the sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* entitled "The Yoga of Divine and Demonic Inheritance" we read (verses 6-18):

There are two orders of created beings in this world:
The divine and the demonic;
The divine have been described at length;
Hear from Me, O Partha, of the demonic.

The demonic do not know the way of positive action,
Nor the way of negative withdrawal;
In them is found neither cleanliness,
Nor propriety in conduct, nor veracity.

They say that the world is without true existence,
Without a basis, without a presiding principle,
Not resulting from reciprocal factors
(lying beyond immediate vision, as if asking:)
"What else is there other than that caused by lust?"

Willfully holding to this view,
These men of lost souls, of little understanding,
Of harsh deeds, emerge as non-beneficial
Effecting the world's decline.

Holding to insatiable desires,
Accompanied by pretentiousness, arrogance, and madness,
Fondly grasping false values deludedly,
They act with unclean resolve.

Engrossed with infinite cares, lasting till doomsday,
For whom desire and enjoyment is the supreme end,
Cocksure such is the way,
Bound by a hundred cords consisting of expectations,
Given to lust and anger,
They strive unfairly to hoard wealth for sensual enjoyment.

"Today this has been gained by me;
This particular end I will get;
This wealth is mine, and that wealth also will be mine;

That enemy has been killed by me; and others I will also kill;
I am the Lord; I am the enjoyer; I have satisfied my ambitions;
I am powerful and happy; I am rich and well-born;
Who else is like me?
I will sacrifice; I will give; I will rejoice" --
Thus deluded by ignorance, maddened by many thoughts,
Caught within the snare of confusing values,
Addicted to lustful gratifications,
They fall into an unclean hell.

Self-righteous, perversely immobile,
Filled with pride and intoxication of wealth,

They perform sacrifices ostentatiously,
Which are only nominal sacrifices,
Not conforming to scriptural rules.

Resorting to egoism,
Force, insolence, lust and anger,
These envious ones hate Me
In their own and other's bodies.

Both fanatic believers and aggressively heterodox non-believers hold on to some half-truth, and they exaggerate the importance of their submission by raising the wall of emotional opacity between themselves and their rivals. Thus even a common sense approach to traditional values is forsaken by such combatants. They drown themselves in a whirlpool of their own fanatical views.

As the Israelis believe that they were the specially chosen people of Jehovah, they have raised a wall of alienation between themselves and all other tribes. Consequently this alienation culminated into an historical boomerang, and the Jewish people were suspected and hated all over Europe and in Arabian countries. The heavy toll they had to pay is evident from the torture to which they were subjected by Hitler in the Nazi camps. Even in socialist countries where all citizens are in principle looked upon as comrades, the Jewish people are unjustly discriminated against even when they hold morally and intellectually high positions, such as in the case of Sakarov.

The Jewish-Arab fraternal conflict which began with the banishment of Ismael and Hajara by the common ancestor of Jews and Arabs, patriarch Abraham, is continuing in the minds of the Arabs as a smoldering issue of injustice. They think Allah (Jehova) sent the Prophet Mohammed and the revelation of the *Qur'an* to make amends for the wrong done to Arabs. Even though out of deference they accept Noah, Moses, Abraham, David, Solomon and Jesus, they think of the *Qur'an* as the last and final word of Allah and hence superior to everything said in the Old and New Testaments.

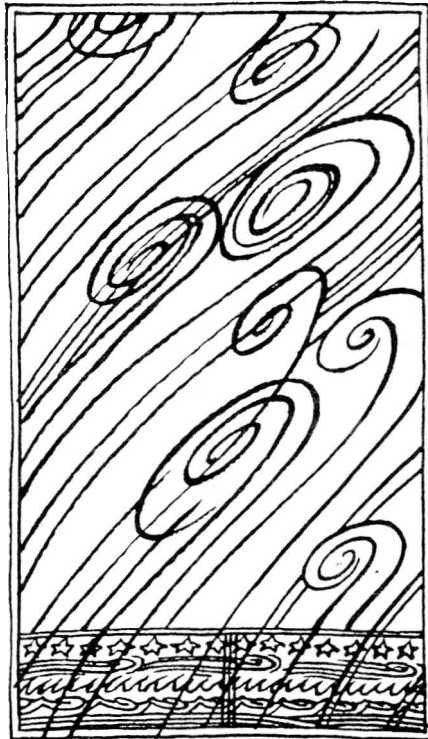
As Jesus claimed himself to be the son of God and that no one would enter the Kingdom of God except through him, the Jewish people considered him a sinful blasphemer. They contrived to get him crucified. Even though Jesus was himself a Jew and he gave the finest and most adorable reevaluation of the Jewish vision of God, world and truth, the fanatical adherence to the prophets of the past is used as a blindfold by even some of the best minds of the Jewish people. Consequently they miss the precious teachings of Jesus.

The Christians, who are equally fanatical in holding themselves against the Jews and the Arabs, forget that the spiritual roots of Christianity and Islam are in the noble vision of Jewish seers. The Christian fundamentalism which made them believe literally in everything spoken of by early Christian fathers led to bloody crusades. In the place of the teaching of love and charity for which Jesus gave his own life, the church instituted inquisition, and many brilliant people who used the power of reason given to them by God were burned alive at the stake or were persecuted with thumbscrews, prisons, prickly-nail boxes and conversion by strangulation.

The fanatical Muslim belief that only the *Qur'an* interprets the mind of Allah correctly, led inexorably to the Kalif order to burn down the great library of Alexandria and also to the insistence on adhering to a faulty interpretation of a koranic verse that it is the solemn duty of all Muslims to kill infidels, and act they call *jihad*. When the Muslims entered India, the fanatic conquerors threw to the wind all their sense of shame and razed to the ground Hindu temples of exquisite beauty as they had declared themselves enemies of idol-worship.

In no country or civilization was demonic division of people perpetuated to a greater extent than in India where the institution of caste has been operating now for thousands of years as the most rigid system of prejudicial discrimination. Millions of working class people on whose labor the country's welfare has been established were subjected to the worst kind of slavery, and those people are even now kept away from public offices and all the fine values of life.

No race of man is free from such demonic excesses. It is equally true that every race of mankind has contributed to the precious heritage of man in the fields of science, religion, art and literature. Great lovers of man who call themselves socialists believe that democracy can only be preserved by merging individuality and collective goal-oriented action. The champions of individual freedom think of socialism as a dark force which will ultimately turn man into a machine. To resolve this paradox more than 50,000 young men of the United States were sacrificed in the swamps of Vietnam. And now the threat of such fanaticism held out by political ideologists has mushroomed to the extent of blasting away the globe itself with a star war. Seeing this tragic situation the poet laments that both the so-called spiritualists and the materialists have lost their vision of truth because of their fanatical one-sidedness.



Verse 64

In proportionate composition of earth, water, fire,
and the enveloping sky with ancient winds,
along with heaven and hell,
all are gone. You have swallowed me wholly.

Underneath my feet is the earth. It is my footstool and the support of all who have made this earth their habitat. I can feel the moisture of life in and around me. The blood that circulates in me and the river that circulates between the ocean and the mountain peak are in principle the same, both substantially and purposefully.

The warmth which the sun brings day after day does not leave my body at night. I have kept a little of that fire in the pit of my stomach to digest my food. The same thermal energy goes to every cell of my body with my warm blood. The warmth of love and the white-heat of anger reside in my speech. The fire that fills the atmosphere can be seen sometimes in the sudden provocation of a cloud emitting lightning and a thunderclap.

Typhoons and tornadoes are angry winds. That wind is polarized in me as the upgoing *prāna* and downgoing *apāna*. The intertwining of the two in every synapse is the great distributor, *vyāna*. The equalizer of the heat inside and outside is *samāna*. The controller of all is *udāna*. These are the benign roles the winds play within me.

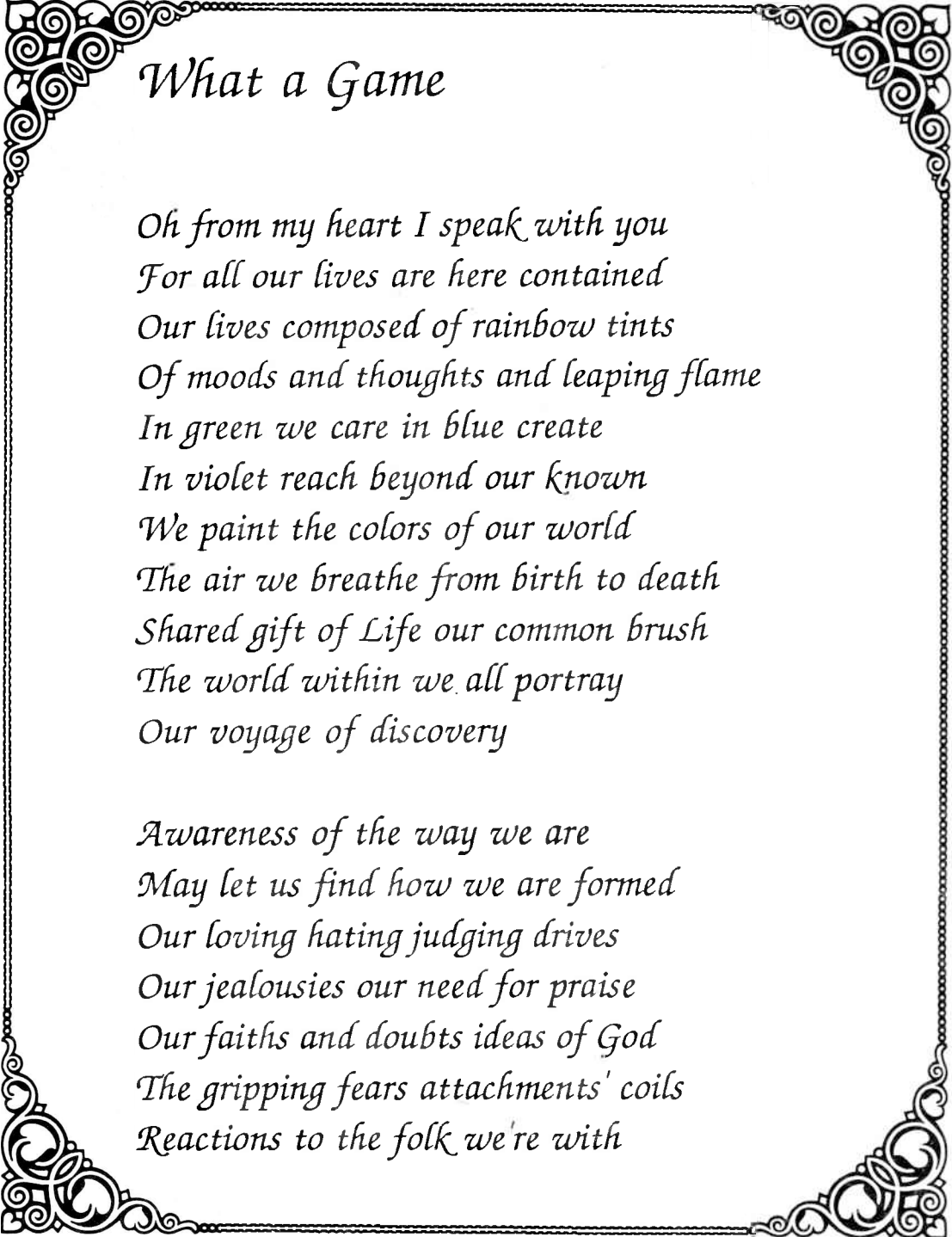
You have not forgotten to give an encasement to everything You created. To wrap this world You have given the sky.

It is in such a scheme of things that I sit here pondering, meditating and admiring the magical impressiveness of our creation. As I sit fascinated and go on admiring the depth and serenity of the peace that you are, the earth under my feet is dissolved into your depth and so is everything gross that I was seeing with my eyes open and painting with my imagination for a brush. Not only have the elements that were impressive of their existence merged into the void of your transcendence, but the very hell I feared and the paradise I longingly dreamt of have also disappeared forever.

Like the cosmic hunger of Vaiśvānara who swallows everything, You have swallowed me and the "mine" in me. What is there for me to own anymore when the me and the my are no more? All that reigns supreme now and forever is the solo flight of the alone to the Alone.

(Continued in next issue.)





What a Game

*Oh from my heart I speak with you
For all our lives are here contained
Our lives composed of rainbow tints
Of moods and thoughts and leaping flame
In green we care in blue create
In violet reach beyond our known
We paint the colors of our world
The air we breathe from birth to death
Shared gift of Life our common brush
The world within we all portray
Our voyage of discovery*

*Awareness of the way we are
May let us find how we are formed
Our loving hating judging drives
Our jealousies our need for praise
Our faiths and doubts ideas of God
The gripping fears attachments' coils
Reactions to the folk we're with*

(Or Happiness is Being Ourselves)

*Ongoing mental commentaries
Our dreams at night daydreams awake
All watched unjudged our self reveal*

*Our conscious flow forgiven loved
Compassion blooms within the heart
For out and in as one we see
Enmeshed in tight conditioning
This knowledge makes us wonderous kind
Accepting one another's plight
Each struggling from our natural sheath
As butterfly from chrysalis
Thus wordless bliss dissolving frees
Beyond the rainbow light Alone
Unminded unspaced Infinite
Without beginning so I AM*

Sheilah Johns

Kātha Upaniṣad

Translation and Commentary by

Muni Narayana Prasad

IV 7

She who arises as the vital principle (prāṇa), the all-consuming origin of divinities (āditi) and constituted of brightness (devatamayī), who is seated in the secret abode in and through all beings, one who sees her, he verily is that.

Here the Truth that we seek, which is beyond birth and death, is thought of as āditi. According to Indian mythology, āditi is the mother of gods (devas). Devas are the shining ones, in other words, the specific forms of functional consciousness. That is why the senses are also sometimes called devas. The word āditi means the all-consuming one. Knowledge is the all-consuming one, and so it is befitting in this context to consider the pure awareness which is casual to all the specific forms knowledge as āditi. This āditi is also stated here to be of the stuff of brightness (devatamayī). Awareness is a bright experience. It can never be thought of as an experience of darkness, which in itself is a contradiction. Narayana Guru's words may be remembered here:

The "I" is not dark; if it were dark we would be in a state of blindness, unable to know even "I".
As we do know,
the "I" is not darkness;

thus, for making this known,
this should be told to anyone.

(Ātmopadeśa Satakam, 18)

This pure consciousness is never experienced as pure consciousness. Even when we are convinced after due cogitation that pure consciousness is the only Truth, it is experienced only as the truth of the I-consciousness. What is that we call "I"? Is it the vital principle which rules all our functions, or is it the physical form constituted of the elements? In fact, this vital principle and the physical form are inseparable. If separated, they cease to exist as the "I". It shows that what we call the vital principle (prāṇa) and the physical body are really nondual. To put the same truth in the present allegorical context, it is the same āditi of the content of brightness that is cognized as the vital principle (prāṇa) and also as the physical elements, both being its manifested aspects. Those who see the Truth with this experiential identity do not see the Truth as truth and the "I" as I, but only see the Truth as the "I".

IV 8

The fire inlaid in the two fire-sticks, like embryos well preserved by pregnant women, worthy of propitiation day by day by wakeful men, This verily is That.

The fire to be used for fire sacrifices, as enjoined in the Vedas, is to be made from two fire sticks called *aranis*, made out of *sami* tree. When the two sticks are rubbed very hard, sparks come out of them and this spark is carefully preserved and made use of in the fire ritual, which goes on for days together and sometimes for months. This fire is taken to be the Fire God, who is considered as the carrier of offerings (*havyāvāhana*) in the Vedas. So the oblations meant for all the gods are offered to the fire. But those who do not care for the way of rituals and who follow the way of wisdom see the Truth as the fire that is hidden in the firesticks and which emerges out of them as subject and object. Narayana Guru also compares wisdom to the all-consuming fire that sparks out of the two fire sticks (*Ātmopadeśa Śataka*, verse 82). In this sense we can say that both the followers of rituals and the seekers of wisdom consider the fire that comes out of the fire sticks very valuable. Here the fire is called *jātavedās*, which means one who knows everything that has been born. This definition is more befitting the fire of wisdom than the fire of ritual.

Just like the pregnant women who well preserve the embryo, both the followers of rituals and of wisdom preserve this fire as very valuable. The embryo also comes into being in the womb of a woman only when the sperm and ovum are united. A pregnant woman considers the embryo that is growing in her as making her life meaningful and leading to perfection. Just so, the man of ritual considers the ritualistic fire. And the wisdom seeker considers the fire of wisdom as bestowing meaningfulness and perfection to life. The growing embryo makes the life of the pregnant woman full of joy.

The ritualist finds his happiness in tending the ritualistic fire and the wisdom seeker finds happiness in the keeping up of the fire of wisdom. Thus it is the fire principle that makes life perfect and happy in all its domains. This fire principle never dies and is never born, though the beings who enjoy happiness die and

new enjoyers emerge into being. This is the ever-living life principle that pushes the actual life on. When we see that every pulsation of life is a new sparking of this immortal fire principle, we will realize that what is filled in our being and what rules its functions is the same fire which might be written with a capital letter. Not being able to understand its wonderfulness, one is able only to praise and worship it. A thing loses its wonder when it is understood.

IV 9

*Whence arises the Sun
and wherein it goes
setting, whereupon all
the gods are set, which
no one goes beyond,
This verily is That.*

The theme of this Upanishad is the state of the self after death. The state of the self with a physical body is called the life here. When the body is left behind we say the self has gone to the hereafter.'

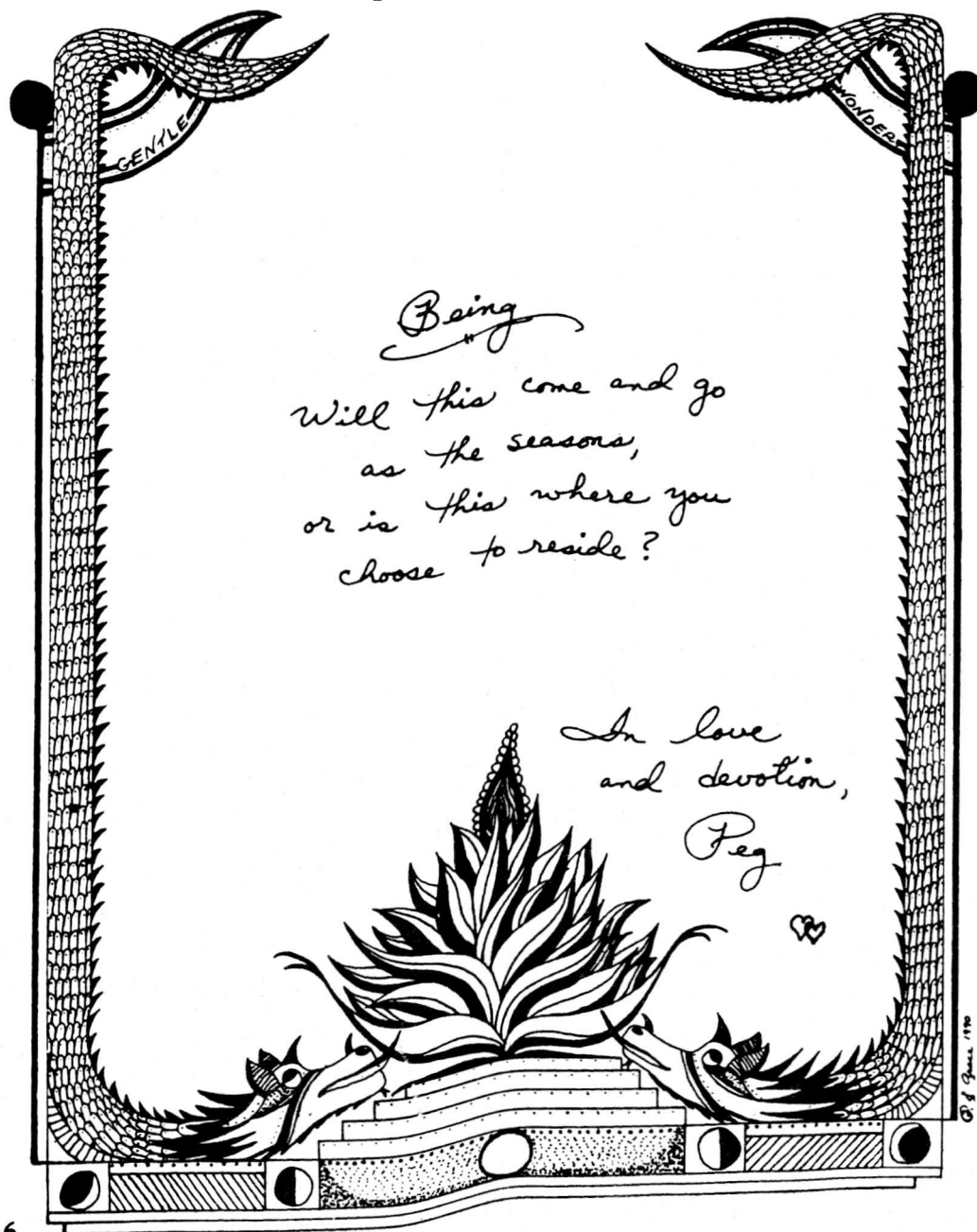
Let us look at the state of life here. The being, endowed with the vitality of life, has only to face death. By sunrise all living beings gain vitality and by sunset they lose their energy and go to sleep. That means all living beings depend on the sun for their physical vitality. Daily we see the sun rising in the east and setting in the west. But from where did the sun originally rise? The only answer will be that it was the self-conscious source, or the thinking substance, as Spinoza calls it, which has structured this universe in such a way that life could be eternalized through the birth, life and death of individual beings. All these living beings and the sun who provides them with vitality in a rhythmic, cyclic manner have the very same source where they can also re-emerge.

Now let us see what is in the hereafter. The hereafter could either be con-

sidered as the habitat of the gods (*devas*) or of the ancestors (*pitrs*), according to one's pattern of belief. Who made the gods or the ancestors, the denizens of the hereafter? Who caused even the differentiation between the here and the hereafter? The very same substance with the stuff of consciousness is the only answer. In short, it is the same Truth that is in what we call the here and the hereafter. It is only in a relative and transactional sense that we say one goes from the here to the hereafter. No one goes any-

where from the ultimate Truth. This Truth has no outside where something in it can go. Where there is no outside there is no inside also. So whatever we feel as existing inside or outside, here or hereafter is only a phase of the self-manifesting part of the eternal Truth or Self. It is that Truth we are seeking. When I realize that I the seeker am also nothing but the same Truth, the question of what happens to the I after death fades out by itself.

(Continued in next issue.)



The Science of Harmonious Union

Commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga Śāstra*

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Sūtra II:24

tasya hetur avidyā

tasya: its (union of *puruṣa*
and *prakṛti*)

hetuḥ: cause

avidyā: lack of knowledge
of its real nature

Its cause is the lack of knowledge of its real nature.

The world stands divided into three groups. From the humblest forms of life like bacteria to those animals not endowed with the faculty of reasoning, all live in the present, caring only for the here and now. Among human beings also we find people of that category whose maxim is "Unknown tomorrows and dead yesterdays, why fret about them if today be sweet?" There are others, especially those influenced by religion, who do not see any meaning in the present. They say, "Vanity of vanities, everything is vanity." They forgo the present for the promised land of tomorrow.

There is a third group of people who see the relativistic imperfections of the given world but at the same time see how beneficial it is to use all the faculties of this body/mind complex and enjoy the vast changes of this world. They want to live in the transcendent and the immanent at once.

A question may arise - Why bother at all about a transient world and its relativistic values? Why doesn't the seer remain unperturbed in his own nature? The present sutra is an answer to that question. *Puruṣa* is susceptible to *avidyā* or nescience. That is the price one has to pay for being individuated. The *puruṣa* is of such nature that when it is attracted to the mirrored image of its identity, nescience comes and blindfolds it. Thus, until it recaptures its freedom, it will remain as an imprisoned splendor in the mesh of nature.

Sūtra II:25

*tad abhāvāt samyogābāvo
hānam tad dr̥ṣeḥ kaivalyam*

tad: that (nescience)

abhāvāt: dispersion, absence

samyoga: union (of *prakṛti* and
puruṣa)

abhāvaḥ: by the disappearance,
absence

hānam: is remedied

tad: that

dr̥ṣeḥ: of the seer

kaivalyam: liberation, aloneness

The dissociation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* brought about by the dispersion of nescience is the real remedy and that is the liberation of the seer.

To understand this sutra we should compare and contrast the two possible states - that of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* being in conjunction and that of their not being in conjunction. Most people living in their individuated embodied state know only the state of the conjunction of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. Although deep sleep gives a semblance of a separation of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*, it does not bring a real aloneness of *puruṣa* even though the agency of the knower, the doer and the enjoyer is lowered to the minimum.

No state of consciousness is absolutely free from other states of consciousness. Even when the gross is experienced there can be subtle elements in it. Similarly, there can be gross elements in the subtle. When the causal is experienced, it can accommodate the subtle. Even so, the causal can incorporate the gross. In the wakeful state there can be intervening spells of dream and some elements of the wakeful can percolate in the dream. In deep sleep also there can be intermissions of dreams and the gross physical can act without disturbing the rationale. All these make the field of the knower very complicated.

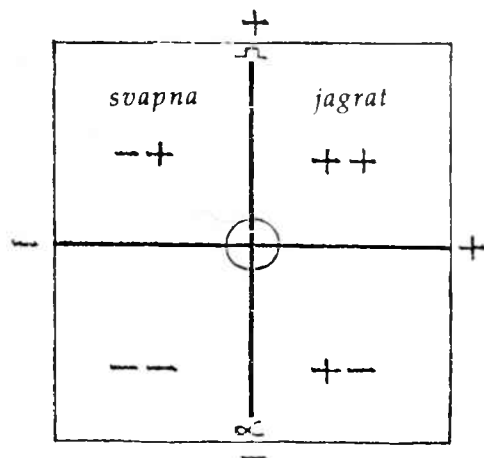
In the transactional world, the five organs of perception are receiving stimuli from objects outside. The stimuli pass through a matrix of memory and, consequently, the intellect is poised to respond to the quality of the stimulus. In conjunction with the ego factor, the motor system is pushed into service to react adversely or in favor of the oncoming stimulus. Here the intellect is empirically acting, taking into account full cognizance of physical and chemical laws. In addition, the socio-biologic factor and ethics are also considered by the intellect. Thus the responses are made to conform as closely as possible to morally recognized social norms. In Freudian language we may say the Ego and the Super-ego are holding the intellect in check.

If the spirit is not interested in the transactional world, it can refuse to illuminate the intellect. When such a negative withdrawal is made by the *puruṣa* from the instrumentality of the mind and

senses, it is called *pratyahara* by Yogis and *uparati* by Vedantins. For instance, a person may live quite close to a tavern or liquor shop without having the least awareness of what goes on there simply because he is not at all interested in what happens in such a place. Thus, every person, to some extent, unconsciously exercises withdrawals of the light of the spirit.

When we are in subjective consciousness, the intellect is freed of all rigid laws, not only of biochemical factors but also those relating to social approbation. The intellect is free to choose its areas of operation on the basis of the pleasure principle. When the causal factor is shaken out of its structured orientation, only the uncertainty of nescience prevails and it is as if the individual is in limbo. There is a fourth state in which the individual is acted upon by the collective consciousness. There, the function of the intellect is pushed away from conscious deliberation to reflex conditioning.

When one is fully disciplined and completely cut off from various exposures, one can remain bereft of all past impressions. In that case, the individual escapes from the structured function of organisms. Then we may say the spirit is separated from nature and it is free.



Sūtra II:26

vivekakhyātiraviplavāhānopāyah

viveka khyātiḥ: awareness of
the Real, discriminative cognition,
distinction between the Self
and the non-Self

aviplavā: uninterrupted, unbroken

hāna upāyah: means of dispersal,
remedy

The uninterrupted practice of awareness of the Real is the means of dispersal (of nescience).

The life of a yogi can be compared to a person driving a vehicle on the highway. The yogi thinks of one-pointed attention or total devotion as the path in which he is driving the vehicle of his life. When full attention is given to any theme of life or to any situation, it is only natural that the yogi would exercise caution and mindful discrimination in relating to the other with perfect knowledge.

The experiences of human beings happen in four frames of reference. The first frame of reference is the transactional world. This is when a person is physically awake and mentally alert and facing one encounter after another. There the discrimination is that of a subjective identity and an objective consideration of polarity. In the wakeful world where the yogi relates with other things, he or she exercises two complementary aspects of discrimination. On the one hand he recognizes the unity of all things in the Absolute and that he is not different from others. That means that what the yogi would see as beneficial to him he would see as beneficial to others also. Consequently, he will not deny another's access to what he aspires to for himself. Secondly, he will also recognize that, as physical entities, all bodies are distinct and each person is a sovereign principle enshrined in a particular body with likes, dislikes and preferences which he should not override.

Even people who do not know any-

thing about the value vision of a yogi are exercising several discriminative cautions in their daily life. We like to hear the pleasing and melodious voices of the people whom we love and those who are specially trained in their voice culture. But we request another person to speak or sing only when we know our demand is not an imposition on them.

It is very pleasant to be fondled by a lover, to embrace a dear person and to be excited by a loving kiss. But in our transactional life we have made certain ethical restrictions and such indulgences are allowed only rarely at convenient places when circumstances are congenial. Certain forms are very attractive to look at, especially a handsome or beautiful face. But there is a person behind that face or form whom we do not want to offend by staring.

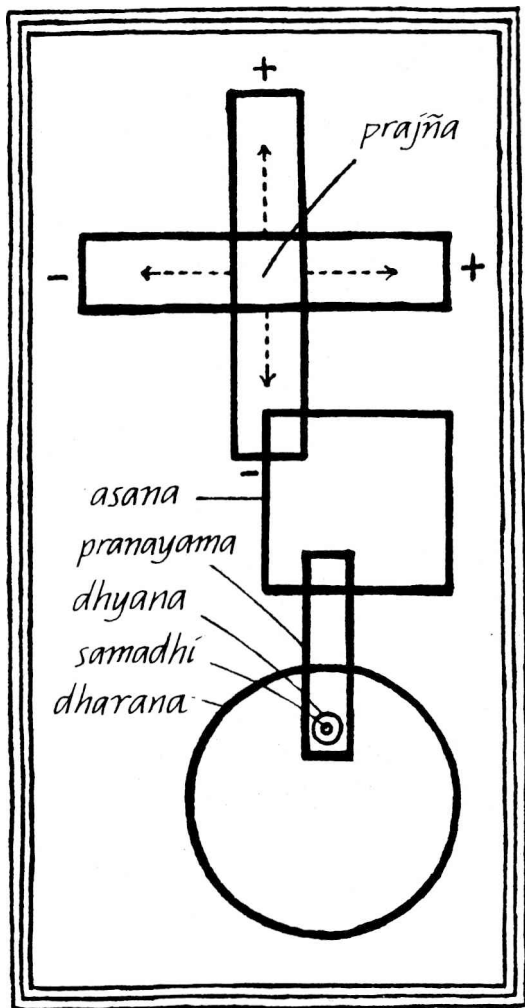
Our tongues are not satiated by enjoying delicious food. To restrict our greed and avarice we program our eating times, observe many table manners and give due consideration to the needs of others. Fragrance has its attraction. All the same we know fragrance comes from bombarding molecules of matter and we do not like our air to be polluted by again and again contaminating it with chemical substances. Sexual cravings are sometimes very strong and may provoke us to cut across social restrictions. To avoid such longings every society has its definition of incest and physical relationships between most people are considered immoral.

Thus, the transactional world is full of restrictions and every member of the community is expected to exercise discrimination. Otherwise many professions would become impossible such as the relationship between the teacher and the taught, the therapist and the patient, the coach and the trainee. There are several magic circles around a person which are not to be transgressed by another. Only with a high degree of sensibility can one decide how far one can go and where distance should be maintained to be honorable.

In the dream state or when a person is

in the subjective realm of engaging in a creative work, one is mainly concerned with ideas and imaginations. They do not have any empirical validity so one has to exercise caution not to mix up facts with fictions. There are many unconscious and autonomous functions in us that are meticulously carried out for our biological and social welfare. In such cases both attention and discrimination are instituted by nature.

Ultimately, there is an all embracing reality to which we belong which is most peaceful and unbroken. Sustaining it all through life is the prime requirement for a peaceful life. So the yogi attunes himself to that reality and maintains his equilibrium with it. This is the highest form of keeping ones discrimination alive at all times.



Sūtra II:27

*taṣya saptadhā prānta
bhūmiḥ prajñā
taṣya: its (the puruṣa's)
saptadhā: sevenfold
prānta bhūmiḥ: adjacent stages
prajñā: enlightenment,
cognitive consciousness*

In the *puruṣa's* case the highest stage of enlightenment is reached by seven adjacent stages.

This sūtra is such that it is not to be explained because it is only anticipatory of the following sūtras.

Sūtra II:28

*yogāṅgānuṣṭhānād aśuddhi kṣaye
jñāna dīptir ā viveka khyāteḥ*

*yogāṅga: component parts
(exercises) of Yoga
anuṣṭhānād: by practice
aśuddhi: impurity
kṣaye: on the destruction
jñāna: spiritual knowledge
dīptiḥ: shining forth
ā vivekakhyāteḥ: develops
into awareness of Reality*

From the practice of the component exercises of Yoga, on the destruction of impurity, arises spiritual illumination which develops into awareness of Reality.

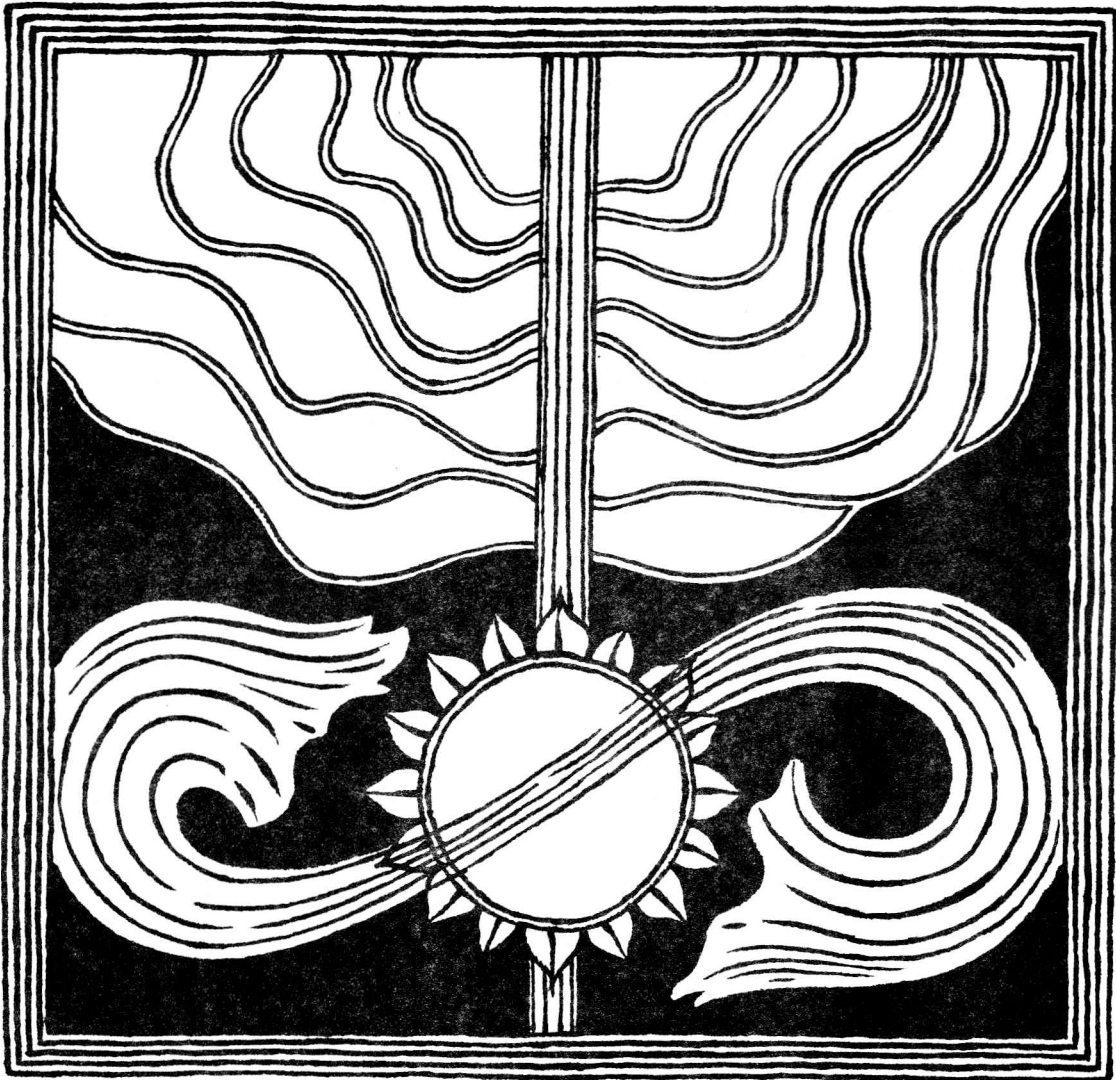
The Self has its pure form and its phenomenal aspect. What is considered as the pure state of the Self in Vedānta is equivalent to what the yogis term as *puruṣa* in a state of aloneness. When individuation happens and *puruṣa* is in conjunction with *prakṛti*, the body/mind complex becomes contaminated with the projected qualities of nature. This happens to such an extent that the *puruṣa* forgets its pure nature.

When an aspirant, wanting to return to the purity of aloneness, undergoes a rigorous discipline of the eight instructions given, he or she sheds all impurities until clarity comes. When all the impurities are washed away with the discipline, consciousness becomes clear. Consequently the *puruṣa* becomes capable of clearly seeing the pure as distinct from the impure and what pertains to the Self as distinct from the non-Self. This inner awakening is the beginning of realization. Thereafter, there prevails in the aspirant yogi clear knowledge that can keep discrimination alive. When such a clarity is established, the yogi is considered to be stabilized on the irrefutable foundation of yoga.

Exercise:

The first indication of impurity is I-consciousness. To remove that dirt, consciousness is to be neutralized so that it does not oscillate between the subject and the object. Then both object consciousness and subject consciousness leave. To bring about that neutralization, the distance between the knower and the known is reduced by focusing on the neutral zero between the incoming and outgoing breath. Physically the mind is kept at the throat plex (*viśuddhi*), the purificatory center.

(Continued in next issue.)



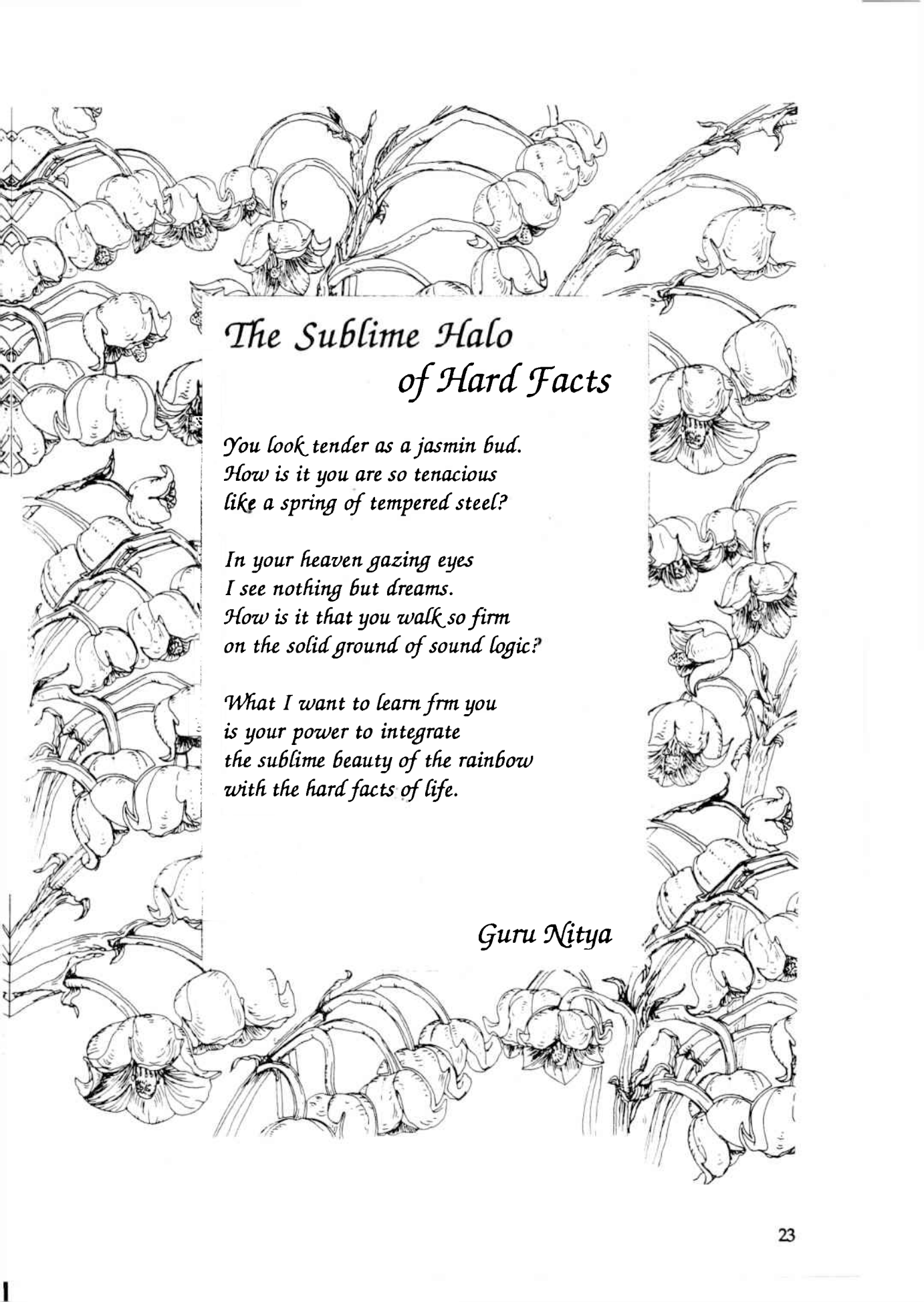


*I Do Not Kiss
the Morning Dew*

*You are a flower
never kissed by any bee.
You are a song
never sung by any mortal lips.
You are God's whisper
that purifies my soul.
You are a symphony that gives me
the ecstasy of beatitude.*

*I do not clasp the moon in my arms,
nor do I kiss the morning dew.
It is enough I see you in my dreams
and love you as eternity's
sweetest melody.*

*I want to learn from you the secret
of walking on earth
without muddying my feet.*



The Sublime Halo of Hard Facts

*You look tender as a jasmin bud.
How is it you are so tenacious
like a spring of tempered steel?*

*In your heaven gazing eyes
I see nothing but dreams.
How is it that you walk so firm
on the solid ground of sound logic?*

*What I want to learn frm you
is your power to integrate
the sublime beauty of the rainbow
with the hard facts of life.*

Guru Nitya

Fear

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Fear is the vacuum of unknowing which is filled both with positive equipment of life and negative assumptions. The sperm of being germinates in the vacuum of non-being. The insubstantial being needs substance that is propped up with an endurable anatomy aided by a scheme of growth and a number of variegated functions. For this the being has to evolve several devices, such as the equipment and instruments of properly designed organisms. In the unconscious no fear is felt, but where the unconscious is in liaison with the conscious there is a threshold of high sensitivity which can generate fearful awareness of the known in the form of recalled memory of pain and bitterness as well as the apprehension of a threatening imagination.

The possible factors that go into the constitution of a persona are:

1. the curiosity to know
2. the vigilance to devise an all out defense
3. the eagerness to transform the unfamiliar into the familiar
4. the ability to reconcile the opposites with reciprocity or complementarity
5. the high suggestability that has the power to conceive umpteen possibilities out of many nebular chances, and finally,
6. the resolve to apply all managerial abilities, both by inventing a production science based on a feasible value hierarchy and also to build around one's self an impregnable mode of defense.

These are the minimum requirements for the being of a person to become an individuated psycho-physical organism that has a vertical parameter to climb from the alpha to the omega, and to relate the most sublime value of the omega

with the substantiality of the alpha.

Fear is the very foundation of life. It has only one counterpart – the imperishable constant which characterizes the Absolute. Fear is the urge to live and it is constantly in search of the fulfilment of life. Like the running water of a stream or a river in its onward thrust is transformed many times as it conforms to the contours of the fields through which it is fated to flow, the irrational fear from which life stems also assumes many varieties in its onward path such as: the fear of heat and cold, the fear of hunger and thirst, the fear of stumbling and falling, the fear of being blinded by ignorance, the fear of losing one's stamina to climb the ascending path of life, the fear of being accused, the fear of being exposed to injustice and discrimination, the fear of not being loved, the fear of being thrown into the company of ununderstanding wretches, the fear of losing a precious companion or friend, the fear of becoming crippled with old age and disease, the fear of no one recognizing one's talents, the fear of becoming like a shadow - unrecognized and unwanted, the fear of being haunted by nightmares in deep sleep and frightening day-dreams when awake, the fear of being stagnated, and ultimately the fear of death at the physical plane, the moral plane and in the spiritual realm. This catalogue of fear is almost inexhaustible.

It is against such odds an individual has to conduct himself or herself from the day of inception to the day of final extinction. Humanity is engaged in the search for avenues of security against the ever growing, ever threatening whimsical forces of fear. In all the endeavours of life to which human beings give their

hearts and souls -- all the contracts of life, schemes of education, formations of political institutions, health programs, housing facilities, facilities for communication, industries of all sorts, farming of every kind, and a never-ending legislation of laws are all to meet the insecurity of life. Although seemingly there is a crowd around every person, one is acutely left alone when one is decreed to walk in the dungeon-like labyrinths of what is described by poets and the myth-making bards of epics as fate.

Is there any way to live in the open, in the clear light of reason, where everything can be clearly perceived, discretely analysed, and one can make a choice of walking in the safest path that will not betray the lone passenger into the dead end of a side line? In the Upaniṣads we read *abayam y brahma*, (fearlessness is the Absolute), and *tarati sokam atmavit*, (the knower of the Self crosses over all miseries). This means that the rishis have seen a way to escape from the quagmire of fear. As these solutions come from the Upaniṣads let us have a short recourse to the passages of the Upaniṣads in which such a gospel is proclaimed.

Abhāyam y Brahma Fearlessness is the Absolute:

In Section II, Chapter IV of the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upaniṣad* we read as follows:

Janaka, Emperor of Videha, rose from his seat and approaching Yājñavalkya said, "Salutations to you Yājñavalkya. Please instruct me."

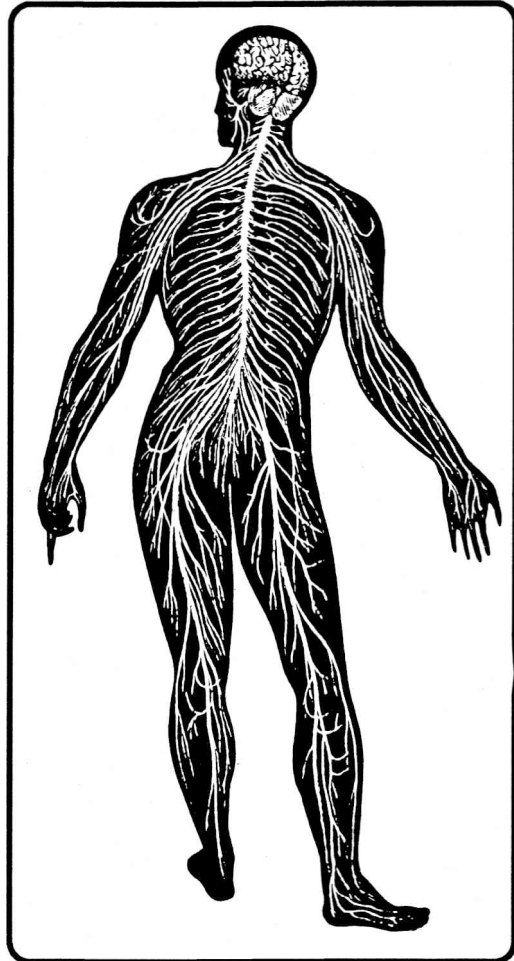
Yājñavalkya replied, "As one wishing to go a long distance, O Emperor, should secure a chariot or a boat, so have you fully equipped your mind with many secret knowledge. You are respected by all and you are wealthy. You have studied the Vedas and heard the Upaniṣads. But where will you go when you are separated from this body?"

"I do not know sir, where I shall go."

"Then I will tell you where you will go."

"Tell me sir," Janaka said.

Yājñavalkya said, "Listen, this being who is in the right eye is named indra for the gods have a fondness, as it were, for indirect names and hate to be called directly. Thus you have attained the self called vaiśvānara." He continued, "The human form that is in the left eye is his wife virāj (matter). The space that is within the heart is their place of union. Their food is the lump-like red blood in the heart. Their wrap is the net-like structure in the heart. Their road for moving is the nerve that goes upward from the heart. It is like a hair split into a thousand parts. In this body there are nerves called hitā, which are placed in the heart. Through these the essence of our food passes as it moves on. Therefore the subtle body has finer food than the gross body. According to Śankara, the lump of blood which penetrates our fine



nerves causes indra (identified with the subtle body and called taijasa) to stay in the body. Of the sage who is identified with the vital force, prāṇa, the east is the eastern vital force, the south the southern vital force, the west the western vital force, the north the northern vital force, the direction above the upper vital force, the direction below the nether vital force, and all the quarters the different vital forces. This self is that which has been described as 'not this', 'not this', (neti neti). It is imperceptible for it is never perceived, undecaying for it never decays, unattached for it is never attached, unfettered it never feels pain and never suffers injury. You have attained that which is free from fear, O Janaka."

On hearing this the Emperor Janaka said, "Revered Yājñavalkya, may that which is free from fear be yours for you have made that which is free from fear known to us. Salutations to you. Here is this empire of Videha as well as myself at your service."

It is significant that Janaka refers to Videha which means the empire that is rid of the physical body. It is also identified with the highest Self. Here the fearless aspect is identified with the Absolute. Only by transcending everything relative with the conviction, "This is not the Absolute, This is not the Absolute," does one ultimately come to the unconditional which is unfettered. Thus the contemplation suggested here is to leave behind everything conditioned with fear.

Tarati śokam Ātmavit The knower of the Self crosses over all miseries:

Nārada, wanting to be instructed by Sanatkumāra approached him and said, "O Lord, please instruct me."

On hearing this Sanatkumāra said, "First of all tell me what you have already known. On hearing that I shall tell you what you have not learnt."

Then Nārada said, "I have learned the R̥, Sāma, Yajur, and fourth, Artharva, Vedas. I know epics and legends. Also I know grammar, astrology, rhetorics,

logic, ethics, semantics, the science of warfare, astronomy, and various kinds of theatricals. I am a knower of the mantras, but I have not realized the Self. I have heard from wise ones like you that a knower of the ātma transcends miseries, but I am still in the ocean of misery. Please show me how to cross over to the other shore."

Then Sanatkumāra said, "R̥, Yajur, Sāma, Atharva Vedas, the epics, legends and everything you said are only names and their connotations. So you meditate on name as the ever-expanding Absolute and it will take you to what extent a name can take you."

Then Nārada asked, "O Lord, is there anything superior to name?"

His teacher said, "Yes."

"Sir, then please instruct me."

Sanatkumāra said, "The word is certainly greater than a name. All the Vedas, the worlds, the sentient beings that inhabit the world, right and wrong, the beautiful and the ugly, and everything which you come to know with the aid of language, is the word. It is the word that introduces you to its meaning. It is by listening to a word its meaning reveals the secret held in sound. Only with word you can ask for instruction and the instruction is given to you by word. Therefore word is great."

Nārada was not satisfied. He asked, "Is there anything superior to word?"

Sanatkumāra said, "Yes of course. Like a berry that can be held firm within one's palm, even so names and words are held within the mind. It is the mind which initiates all endeavour. Without the initiation of the mind there is no desire, no resolve, and no action performed. So you may meditate on the mind as the Absolute."



Narada asked, "Is there anything superior to mind?"

"Yes of course. Imagination is greater than mind. Only when one imagines mind starts functioning. It is with imagination the word is inspired and the names become mantras, and the mantras produce karma. Everything manifests as a result of imagination. Therefore you may meditate on imagination, sankalpa."

Narada further asked, "Is there anything superior to imagination?"

Then Sanatkumāra said, "Yes of course. Memory is the seed bed for all imagination. If a man has no memory, it is as if he is an ignoramus. So one should meditate on cittam, the seat of memory."

Nārada further enquired and Sanatkumāra said, "Dhyāna, contemplation, is greater than cittam, memory. Earth looks as if it is meditating, the atmosphere looks as if it is meditating, the sky looks as if it is meditating, the mountains look as if they are meditating. So if you find any human with the mark of greatness he must have attained that with meditation. Those who do not ponder, contemplate, or meditate, they are of small minds. They have no compunctions in ridiculing others. So if you want to become filled with the mark of the contemplatives, you engage yourself in contemplation."

Nārada wanted to know if there was anything greater than contemplation. His teacher said, "Of course, vijñānam, applied knowledge, is greater than contemplation. The ability to perform and to manifest comes from the application of knowledge. Even in the minutest particles of earth there is an implied knowledge for it to function. This knowledge is shared by all, from the seemingly insignificant worms to a man of superior virtue."

Nārada was still curious so his Preceptor said, "Strength is greater than knowledge. If you have no strength even your mind will not work. In body, mind and spirit your functional ability comes from strength."

Nārada wanted to know the source of

strength. Sanatkumāra said, "Strength comes from food. If a person starves he loses his power to apply his sense organs. he loses his memory, he has no control over his meditation. Therefore you should worship food."

Nārada further wanted to know the source of food to which Sanatkumāra said, "Food comes from water. Life is precipitated in moisture, so one should worship water."

Nārada wanted to know what was superior to water. Sanatkumāra said, "Heat is greater than water. When heat affects air, air becomes hot and the hot air generates currents. It is followed by thunder and lightening and the showering of rain."

Nārada, however, wanted to know if there was anything further to be known. To this his Master said, "All these are to be contained by space, ākāśa. Therefore the Absolute is to be seen as identical with ākāśa, ether. By meditating on ākāśa one becomes expansive, unlimited."

Nārada wanted to know if there be anything greater than ākāśa.

"Yes of course. The power to recall. That alone fills the space with words."

Nārada continued to be inquisitive so his Master said, "Desire is superior. It is with desire that all these are subjected to one's knowledge."

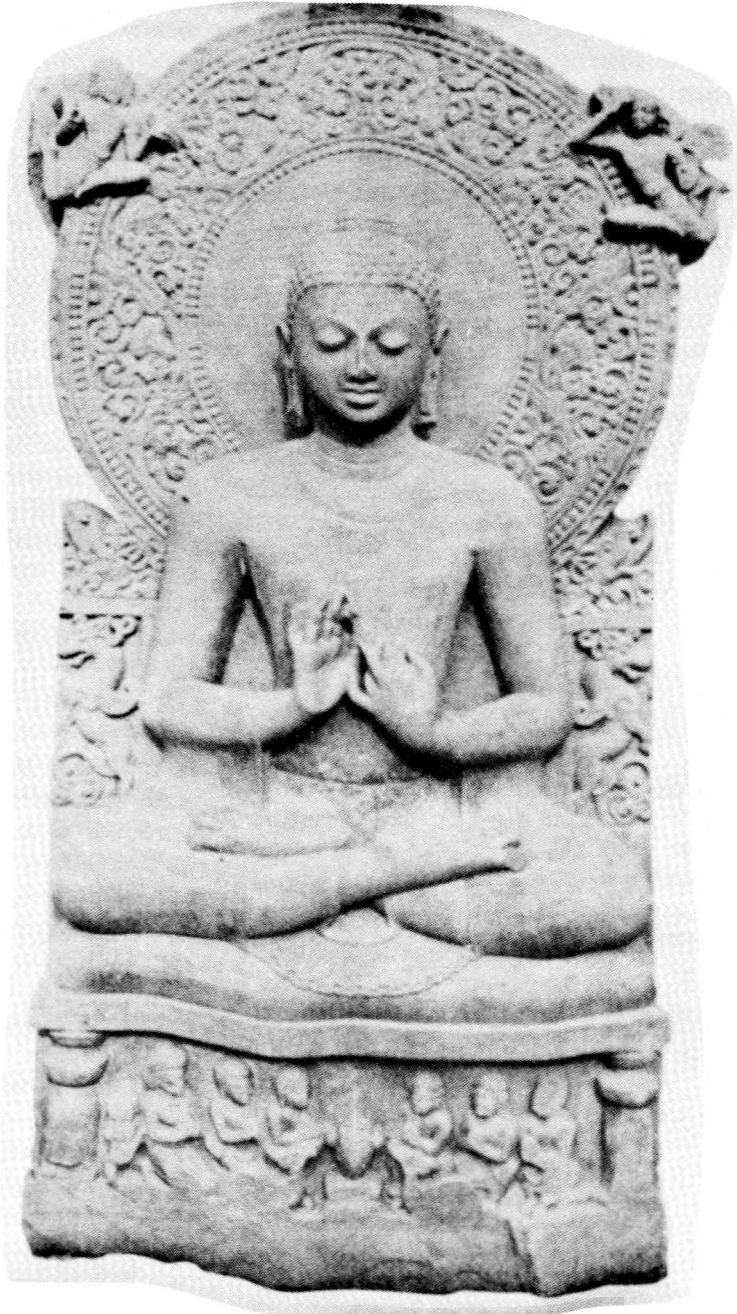
"Is there anything superior to desire?"

Then Nārada was taught that *prāṇa* is the propelling force by which everything is controlled. When Narada heard about *prāṇa* and all its qualities he became silent. He became convinced that there was not anything further to know. Even though Nārada become silent and he did not want to know any further Sanatkumāra wanted to instruct him that there was still something more to know. Ultimately one has to transcend everything that has been said so far. For that one should know truth in its essence.

Only by knowing truth in essence can one speak truth. Mere knowledge is not the ultimate. One should know that

knowledge is the ultimate truth and one should know how in thought, word and deed the truth can be lived. For that, even after hearing truth one should ponder over it and go to the very depth of it. This is called *manana*. *Manana* becomes possible only where there is faith, such faith that can bring absolute attention. Faith and attention are stabilized only when there is dedication. The mark of dedication is consistency. Consistency is possible only when one feels within one-

self an absorbing joy, joy that is free of the slightest touch of pain. This happens only when there is no other to be rejected or abhorred. This happens only when the Self and the Self alone is known. That is the realization of *bhumāvu*, the Absolute. Then one crosses over all forms of miseries. The knower of the Self is free, both of miseries, *śoka*, and *bhaya*, fear. Fear follows as a shadow until we become fully merged in the blissful serene splendence of the Self. ♦



Biography of Narayana Guru

Nancy Yeilding

The Road Back

When Narayana Guru emerged from the cave of Marutvimalai, he did not rush down the mountain and plunge into activity. He was filled to the brim with the love that had initially led him to seek the light which could brighten the lives of those lost in suffering and ignorance. But it did not motivate him to generate a program of action, or to gather followers. He could see only the oneness of the Supreme Self, in which there was no differentiation of his own self and others. His inner sense of oneness manifested as a peaceful, all-embracing love felt by all who came near. Thus his inner contentment became a blessing to others.

With a simplicity that marked all of the actions of his life, he walked down the mountain and through the forest until he came to Aruvipuram. He lived in a cave there on the banks of the Neyyar river. Continuing in his life of solitude, he ate the fruits of the trees and bushes of the forest and passed his days absorbed in bliss. One day, a young cow-herd, looking for a lost cow, chanced to see Guru sitting by the river. In Indian culture, as far back as cultural memory reaches in the oldest teachings and legends passed on orally through many generations up to current practices, it is customary to revere those who have walked away from society's interwoven bonds and efforts towards materialistic acquisition and to offer them food, simple clothing and shelter for a few days. So when the young man found Guru in the forest, he very naturally went home to fetch food (boiled tapioca wrapped in banana leaves), and timidly offered it. The compassion and the gentle calm that flowed from the Guru to

him made Parameswaran Pillai want to be in the Guru's presence as much as possible. He became the Guru's first disciple.⁴⁴ Narayana Guru did not wish his presence there to be well known and crowds to gather. But when word spread that a recluse was living in the forest, he did not run away from those who came seeking his blessings.

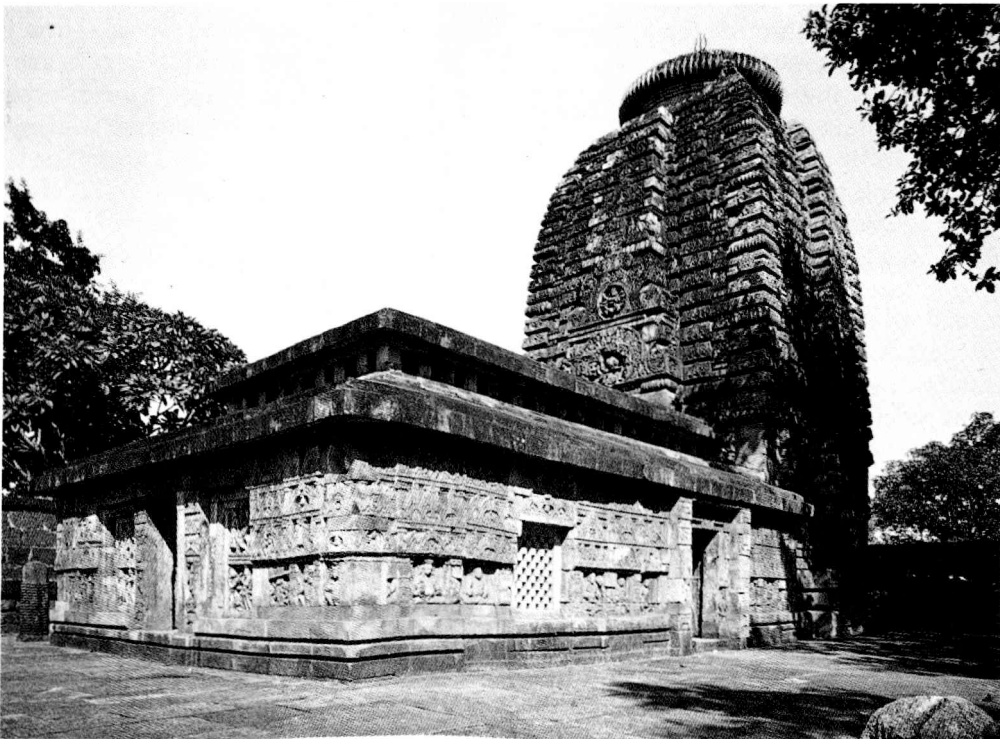
As Indian traditional lore is abundant with stories of yogis whose penance results in the attainment of supernatural powers (*siddhi-s*), it was natural for those who heard about a man living in a forest cave to attribute such powers to him. Narayana Pillai, a forest conservator, wished to ask the Guru's blessing to rectify the childlessness of his marriage. He had a trail made to the cave. When he went there he was startled to see a tiger nearby. But Narayana Guru said quietly, "Don't be afraid. Tigers are not as bad as human beings. You can come." The conservator approached and spoke sadly about having no children. The Guru asked, "How old is your wife?" and when he received the answer, said, "Don't worry. Some women give birth late," and gave him a banana. He took the banana home and shared it with his wife. The trail he had constructed made it easier for the people of all the villages of the area to come. And when a child (Narayani Amma) was indeed born to Narayana Pillai's wife and dedicated to the Guru, the ranks of those seeking blessings swelled. ⁴⁵

All that the Guru saw was One and, to him, all who came were as dear as his own Self. Thus, the light of his inner brilliance easily kindled hope, generosity, love and self-confidence in them. As a human being who had expanded his love

to include all humanity, he re-awakened that possibility in others. Many who came were those who had been pushed down under the feet of the rest of society for centuries. Having been forced to live in dirt and ignorance for generations, they had come to regard it as their inevitable lot and even to incorporate it in their sense of themselves. But in Guru's presence, they became like green shoots poking up through the mud, opening their leaves and petals to the sunlight.

The Guru recognized the need of all human beings to relate themselves to the wholesomeness of Truth and Beauty and to tune themselves to the peace that passeth understanding. Knowing the value of these dynamics, he founded a temple which could foster them. He especially insisted that, contrary to prevailing practices, worship be simple and hygienic and the temple a place of cleanliness and beauty. Over several millennia, the songs that had risen from human beings at the dawn of history to praise and ask blessings of the Divine, seen as the sun, moon, fire and other aspects of nature, had transformed into an intricate so-

cio-religious framework. Preserved orally and then written down, the Vedic songs were subjected to elaborate commentaries which froze both devotion and propitiation into detailed rituals. The growth of a priestly class, often dedicated more to its own advancement than to anything else, added to the encrustation of ritual and prohibitions. They reserved for themselves the central and lucrative functions of religious life, such as temple installations and performance of rituals, and thereby manipulated themselves into a superior position in society. An inevitable by-product of such corruption was the decay of the rituals into shallow performances, devoid of meaning. Temples became unclean places, stinking with the smells of rancid butter and sour milk poured over images as a form of devotion and even with the putrid odors of hapless animals who were sacrificed. Their inner sanctums were cut off from light by the gates and chambers used to preserve secrecy and blackened with the accumulated soot of ritual fires. Some of them became places of perversion when worship of the Divine as Mother was turned into



the forced prostitution of young women for the benefit of the priests.

The temples of Kerala were citadels of caste-ism, with one's position in society reflected by one's privileges of approaching and entering the various gates and courtyards of the temple. The poorest and most downtrodden people were expected to contribute to the welfare of the priests and to the maintenance of the temple from their meager resources but were not even allowed to walk on the road in front of the temples. Such prohibitions were enforced with cruel and extreme punishments. It was in this context that Narayana Guru founded the temple at Aruvipuram in 1887. This step was thus inevitably viewed by many people as an act of social reform and a defiance of theocratic oppression. But one has to see an oppressor to defy him, and Narayana Guru saw only God; one has to see society to try to reform it, and Narayana Guru saw only facets of the one light, obscured by varying degrees of dirt. These distinctions clarify the difference between one who acts with the intent to reform the practices of society or individuals -- which inevitably sets up dichotomies of good and bad, right and wrong-- and one such as Guru whose universal compassion in itself transformed the tradition-bound or ignorant ways of seeing and doing in those around him. Though his founding of the temple was not in the nature of a reform, its effect was revolutionary, abruptly altering the course of Hindu religion and society which had persisted for thousands of years.

Nataraja Guru's account, in *The Word of the Guru*, speaks of the founding of the temple:

The place, however, still lacked one feature of an Ashram, and that was a place of adoration. This became especially necessary as the Yogi was beginning to move about again from this abode. On these occasions the atmosphere was lacking that which his presence gave, and thus the need of a special place of worship was felt by the little community

which had spontaneously established itself in connection with the new Ashram.

This new need raised a whole tangle of problems. What was to be the shape of the place of worship? What form of worship was to be adopted? Was it wise to depart completely from popular tradition, or was it better to respect tradition in its harmless aspects and point the way to reform? Agreement on these various problems seemed almost impossible.

Under the encouraging guidance of the Guru the villagers progressed from one form of compromise to another until they reached a point which represented the farthest progressive step they could take.

Uncouth formalities and customs handed down from time immemorial were mostly cut out, there being only retained some of the simple harmless ones like the waving of camphor lights and the offering of flowers. The difficulties, that at first appeared Himalayan, dwindled down into insignificance. There among the hills was to be established a temple of Śiva, the God of Renunciation. There the women and children could gather together. That would form the centre from which the children would begin to love the clean and the beautiful. The idea satisfied all concerned and the Guru instead of refusing to co-operate with the peasants and the villagers because he himself had risen above the need of formalities in worship, consented to consecrate the temple with his own hands. The necessary land was soon purchased and the date was fixed for the consecration of the temple.

On the appointed morning, long before the 'hunter of the east' began to throw his pink noose of light across the sky, the Guru was up to prepare himself for the duties of the day, bathing himself in the bubbling river. The spot for the installation of the stone altar had been selected and made ready. Thousands of people had gathered overnight to witness the event. The stars shone still when the young ascetic entered the enclosure.

What miracle was going to happen? This was the thought engaging the

minds of the thousands of villagers who had gathered in eager expectation under the starlight. There in the centre of them stood the silent ascetic ready to perform the installation ceremony of the central stone of the altar. The darkness was lighted only by the golden flicker of a five petalled brass lamp set among flowers.

To some present it all seemed strange and suspicious. Was the young ascetic fitted to perform such a serious ceremony? Was he orthodox enough for it? Had they not heard him talk of Śiva as a mere historical figure, some ancient hunter who lived in the Himalayas, who, because of his virtues as a leader of his people, was loved and began to be worshipped with godly attributes. Was he pretending to be a devotee? Would the wrath of God descend on the village for such breaking away from tradition? These were the thoughts that passed through the minds of some of the crowd as, standing nearer to him than the rest, they watched his features to find a reply to their doubt.

No answer to these separate questions seemed available. He stood in the centre, his face eloquent with expression, and with his eyes lifted in silent prayer. "Let increased blessing come! Let the poor and needy be comforted! Let them prosper and let not their daily bread fail them from day to day! May they learn to be truthful and seek the ways of happiness each in co-operation with the other! May they learn to be cleaner day by day! Let all hatred and dissension vanish from among them! Let them learn to respect the feelings of the least little creature of God! Let at least a portion of the Great Truth dawn on them and bring them consolation!" These were the wishes with which he lifted up his eyes.

As he thus prepared himself for the act which was to be the living link, not only between the past and the future, but also between his deepest feelings and those of the ignorant millions for whose sake he was performing the act, in outward evidence as it were of his earnest-

ness, the questioning villagers saw on his resolute features, rolling down in unceasing streams, just simple childish tears.

Silence prevailed while the crowd, moved by the same contagious emotion, looked one at another in the starlight. Soon the installation ceremony was over. The day had dawned. The clarion call of the conch rent the sky, and as the white clad crowd began to disperse beyond the hills, each felt the petals of a new hope unfolding within; and victory seemed to reign. 46

That new hope indeed proved to be true—the impact of a common man opening a temple for everyone, regardless of caste, sex or religion, spread throughout India, bringing with it the sweet breath of spiritual emancipation.

As is inevitable in any gathering of human beings, those with the capacity to organize step in to bring order to the comings and goings and efficiency to the meeting of the needs of all concerned. Narayana Guru still spent much of his time in inner absorption, indifferent to his physical needs. So, a shelter was put up around him, and simple, healthy food regularly brought. Systems of food dispensation were established so that all who came could leave feeling nourished and rested, their gifts and goodwill to the Guru becoming part of the common experience of abundance. Gradually an ashram came into being as more and more people came to dedicate themselves as serious disciples, willing to serve and eager to learn.

(Continued in next issue.)

NOTES

44. Renamed Sivalinga Swami, he spent the rest of his life at Aruvipuram looking after the temple.

45. Narayani Amma became the first woman Parliament member in the state and helped to bring about radical changes in society, especially regarding women's social freedom.

46. Nataraja Guru, *The Life and Teachings of Narayana Guru*, East-West University, (Fernhill, India, 1990, p. 19-21)



Narayana Guru

Book Review

Deborah Buchanan

As a poet and essayist, Robert Bly is a prominent figure in contemporary American literature. He was an early opponent of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, as well as being a stringent critic of domestic policies. Early in his writing, Bly began an exploration of the feminine aspect of the psyche, and is now a major voice in the current mens' redefinition of their identities and roles. Bly, thus, occupies a position in American cultural life that is both social and aesthetic, intermingling his activities as poet, political activist and psychological explorer.

Two of Bly's books of poetry -- *The Light Around the Body* (1967) and *Loving a Woman in Two Worlds* (1985) -- were published just twenty years apart and are related through their titles and their poetic intent. A study of these works together reveals some of the major themes elaborated in Bly's poems: the relationship of the spiritual and political aspects of our lives, the function of grief, and the qualities and uses of love. It also clarifies two unspoken concerns in Bly's work: the nature of poetic inspiration, and how the maturing process is expressed in poetry.

The inscription at the beginning of *The Light Around the Body* is from the Christian mystic Jacob Boehm:

For according to the outward man, we are in this world and according to the inward man, we are in the inward world...Since then we are generated out of both worlds, we speak in two languages and we must be understood also by two languages.

This quote gives the title to the first section, *The Two Worlds*, of the book, and the following four sections are further elaborations of this topic, ending with the final, *A Body Not Yet Born*. Each

poem in the book is whole in itself, yet in overview the poems are interconnected components of the book's underlying theme, which is an exploration of the two bodies of man.

What we call the external world is both the stage and skin of our "outer body," and in the first poems of *The Light Around the Body*, Bly is unflinching in his observations of this outer world. He sees the disease and deceit with which we cripple ourselves. These poems are a conflagration of emotions that burn into the reader. It is with the searing intuition and verbal brilliance of a master poet that Bly describes the separated souls of this outer world. Here he resembles the angry Biblical prophets crying in the wilderness, his desert being that thorny parched landscape of our spiritual isolation. It is with youthful intensity, almost ferocity, that these poems disrobe lies. In *The Great Society* Bly writes:

*Dentists continue to water
their lawns even in the rain;
Hands developed with terrible
labor by apes
Hang from the sleeves of evangelists;
There are murdered kings
in the light-bulbs
outside movie theaters;
The coffins of the poor are hibernating
in piles of new tires.*

The clarity of vision in these poems is never factual or naturalistic. In fact, the poems are precise because of the surrealism in them, which allows a deeper and more encompassing understanding. This is particularly apparent in his poem the *Three Presidents*. In describing Andrew Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt and John Kennedy, Bly illumines his subjects and

their worlds with words that are extravagant, as if written by an American Dali, but which are absolutely precise in a psychic sense. For Roosevelt he says:

*When I was President,
I crushed snails with my bare teeth.
I slept in my underwear
in the White House.
I ate the Cubans with a straw,
and Lenin dreamt of me every night.
I wore down a forest of willow trees.
I ground the snow,
And sold it.*

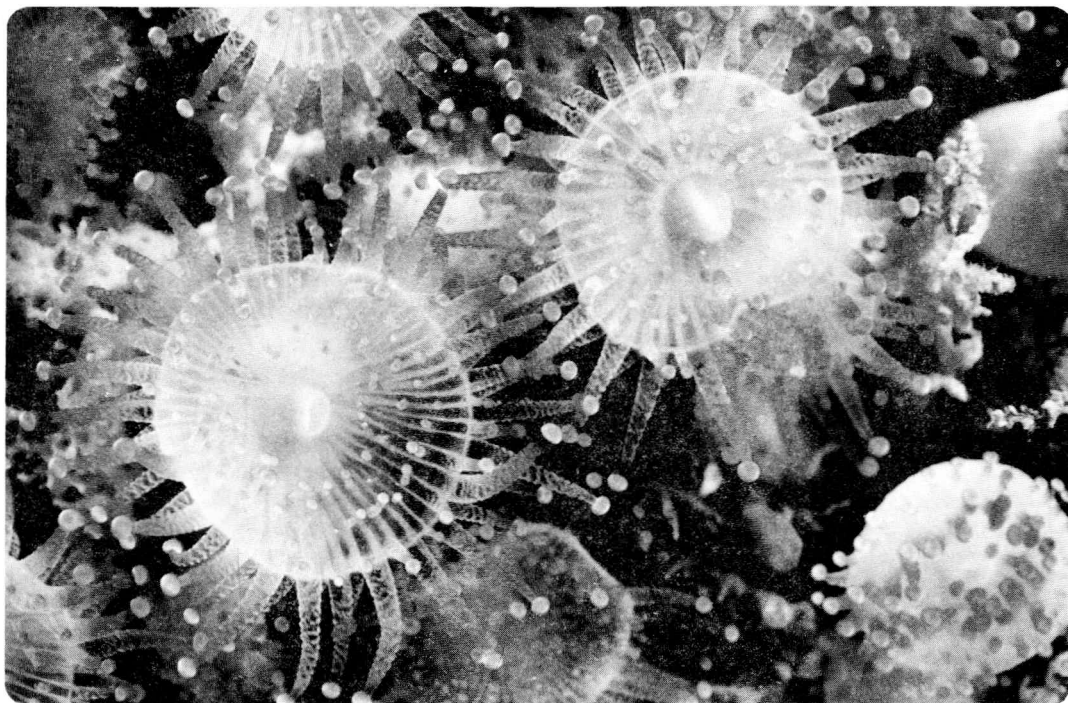
Bly's references to specific political events and actors are ways to illumine more general conditions or situations. In *Hatred of Men with Black Hair*, he writes:

*The State Department floats
in the heavy jellies near the bottom
Like exhausted crustaceans,
like squids who are confused,
Sending out beams of black light
to the open sea,
Fighting their fraternal feeling
for the great landlords.*

With wild, surrealistic allegory, Bly flashes a vision of the State Department as dissociated, confused, harmful; and yet, more importantly, he underscores that disruption found in all injured and isolated peoples.

The anger that is in many of Bly's more overtly political poems is a secondary emotion, which derives from his initial contemplation of truth and wholeness. Beneath all of the fury in these poems lies a silent recognition of inner beauty. The twins, disappointment and anger, arise from the realization of the schism in the human psyche: wholeness exists but is ignored; truth pervades the world but is distorted. We maim ourselves with our own fear. With anger Bly tries to jar our numbness and awaken our blind souls to the deception with which we have structured the outer world. He is the young bard crying to an ossified society: "Look at yourself! Remember who you are!"

Throughout all of the poems -- underlying the vision, the power, the anger, the brilliance -- there is a sustaining rhythm. Bly uses pulse and movement in his poems, carrying them beyond conver-



sation into the realm of song. It is with subtle incantation that Bly adds intensity to his poetry: the chanting in *The Light Around the Body* does not rely on repetition or on rhyming, but an inner fusion of meaning and sound carries the reader on, creating a gestalt that is intellectual, aural and emotional.

Halfway through this first book is a section titled *In Praise of Grief*. In it, Bly begins an exploration of grief that has continued and deepened in his recent poetry. Grief is seen as a companion to anger. First comes the recognition of separation between the inward and outward bodies of man, then comes disappointment and anger. When the separation is felt on a personal level, in man's heart, it is experienced as grief. This grief is both an acknowledgement and a mourning. It is within mourning that the possibility for renewal lies. As Bly writes in *A Home in Dark Grass*:

*That we should learn of
poverty and rags,
That we should taste
the weed of Dillinger,
And swim in the sea,
Not always walking on dry land,
And, dancing, find in the trees a saviour,
A home in dark grass,
And nourishment in death.*

It is in grief that we come to understand our isolation and loss. Here the two worlds of Jacob Boehm stand separate and divided. But grief opens up the possibility of a re-union of our bodies and selves into a new being. This awakening does not happen spontaneously or immediately but is a process of reaching beyond the harsh, artificial boundaries of individuality. In his second book *Loving a Woman in Two Worlds* Bly writes of a man and a woman sitting next to one another.

*Their breaths together feed someone
whom we do not know
The man sees the way his fingers move;
he sees her hands close around a book
she hands to him.*

*They obey a third body
that they share in common.
They have made a promise
to love that body.
Age may come,
parting may come,
death will come.
A man and a woman sit near each other;
as they breathe they feed someone
we do not know,
someone we know of,
whom we have never seen.*

(*A Third Body*)

Through his grief Bly can look towards *A Body Not Yet Born*, the title of the last section of *The Light Around the Body*. In all the poems of this section there is a vision of unity and of awakening, a recognition that we are coming into a world of fiery intelligence. The poet, who in anger has seen the injured world of everyday transactions, now finds himself on the edge of a luminescent reality.

*I have wandered in a face, for hours,
Passing through dark fires.
I have risen to a body
Not yet born,
Existing like a light around the body,
Through which the body moves
like a sliding moon.*

(*Looking into a Face*)

*At dawn we are still transparent, pulling
In the starlight;
We are still falling like a room
Full of moonlight through the air.*

(*A Journey with Women*)

What impels our growth and what teaches us the lessons of union is the act of love. Through physical intensity, through emotional identification, through psychic resonance: through the intermingling of all these, the separate body of our outer life learns to recognize itself in the inner voices of companion beings. Bly sees love as that process of

identification through which our own inner and outer worlds are reunited and related harmoniously to others. With love our reality becomes a seamless experience of reciprocity. Each movement resonates in the two complementary spheres of inner and outer language. Love is a transformative process wherein our earlier, previous definitions falter; it is in love that we move beyond narrow identification and include the other -- humans, trees, birds, snails -- within ourselves.

*I take your hand as we work,
neither of us speaking.
This is the old union of man and woman,
nothing extraordinary;
they both feel a deep calm in the bones.
It is ordinary affection
that our bodies experienced
for ten thousand years.*

*And we did what we did,
made love attentively,
then dove into the river,
and our bodies joined as calmly
as the swimmer's shoulders
glisten at dawn,
as the pine tree stands in the rain
at the edge of the village.
The affection rose on a slope
century after century.*

(The Good Silence)

For Bly, love is a quiet movement through shame, guilt, and the demands for perfection. It rests when we are able to accept ourselves and the other and be in the one world of experience. As lovers we become attentive. We allow the changes of love to move through us.

*In the month of May
when all leaves open,
I see when I walk how well all things
lean on each other, how the bees work,
the fish make their living the first day.
Monarchs fly high; then I understand
I love you with what in me is unfinished.*

*I love you with what in men is still
changing, what has no head or arms
or legs, what has not found its body.
And why shouldn't the miraculous,
caught on this earth, visit
the old man alone in his hut?*

(In the Month of May)

In *Loving a Woman in Two Worlds*, many of Bly's poems take on a haiku-like quality. His descriptions of the world are condensed, purified descriptions of his own inner experience. Crickets and indigo buntings express certain spiritual states, and, as allegory, widen the boundaries of the experience. They add a depth of understanding that the story of a personal ego alone cannot tell. Reflected in the transparent mirror of trees and lakes, Bly's inner journey becomes a passage common and accessible to us all.

The intervening years between *The Light Around the Body* and *Loving a Woman in Two Worlds* have marked many changes in Bly and his poetry. Overt political configurations are no longer at the forefront of his poems. Their significance is, rather, interwoven with the breathing pattern of the night horizon and the intimate pulse of men's thoughts. Bly has not forsaken his fury and scorn, but tempered it, pulled the problem deeper into himself.

He sees that we can not separate our treatment of one another (which is what politics is) from our treatment of, our relationship to, the entire universe of mountains and stars and toads. To heal our political atrocities, we must heal the schism we have created: myself and the other. As he has aged, the poet has let his attention shift from the more obvious, outer conflicts to the inner core of experience. Great passions were the ground for many of Bly's earlier poems. In these later ones, a sense of transcendence and reconciliation underlies the sparse lines: the joy of union sustains the bard's songs. ❖

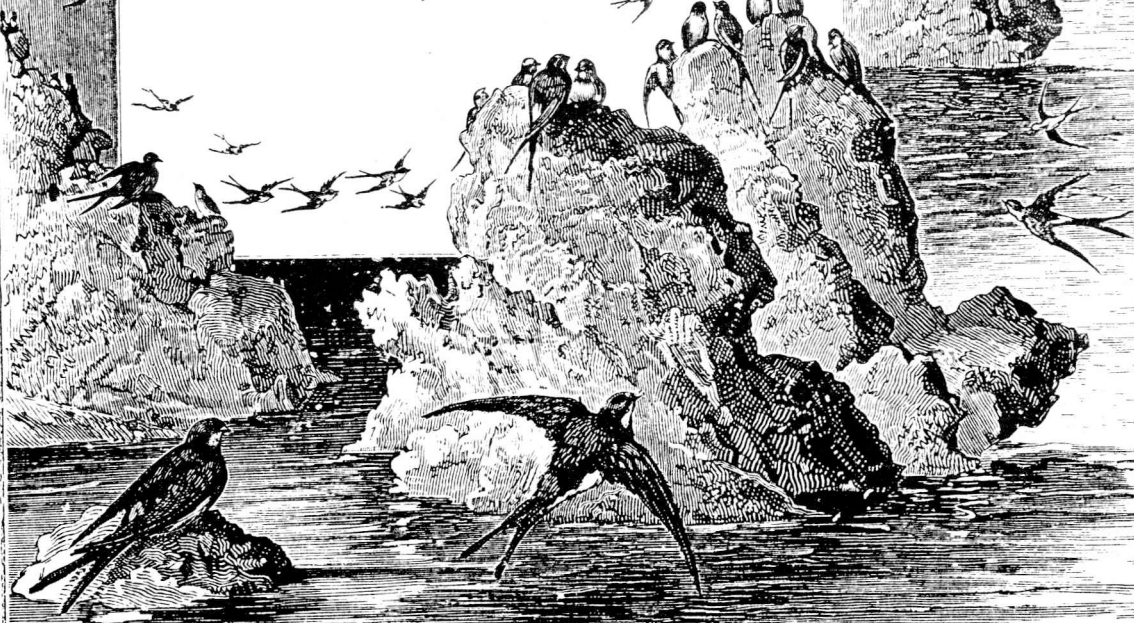
Overleaf from The Hawk--

Land and sea mingle, so we
mingle with sky and wind. A mole
told me that his mother
had gone into the sky,
and his father lay curled
in a horsechestnut shell.
And my brother is part of the ocean.

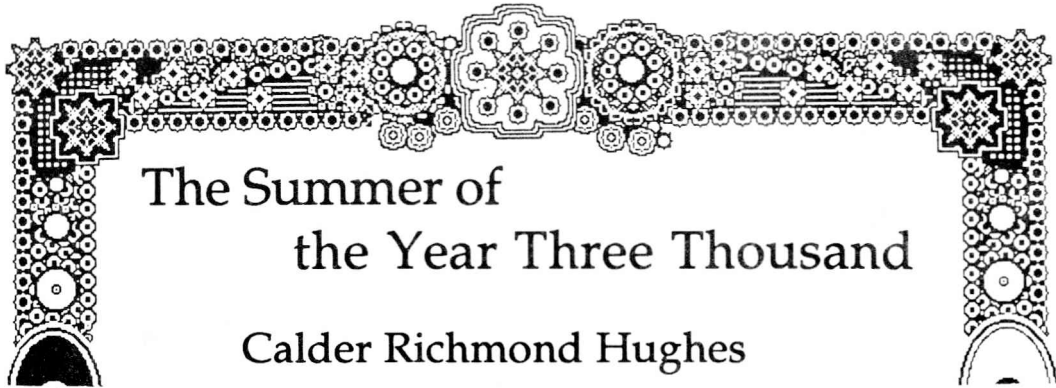
Our great-uncles, grandfather,
great-grandfathers, remain.
While we lie asleep, they see
the grasshopper resting
on the grass blade,
and the wolverine
sweeping with his elegant
teeth through the forest.

And they come near. Whenever
we talk with a small
child, the dead help us
to choose words. Choosing words,
courage comes. When a man
encouraged by the dead goes
where he wishes to go,

then he sees the long tongue
of water on which the whale
rides on his journey.
When he finds the way
long intended for him,
he tastes through glacial water
the Labrador ferns and snows.



Especially For Children



The Summer of the Year Three Thousand

Calder Richmond Hughes

Chapter Ten: The Stowaway

When it started to get dark they all had dinners from the food generator that Professor Alemo had brought. Then they went to sleep. In the morning they all got dressed except for Matt who had left his bag in the trunk of the time machine. Matt opened the trunk, took out his bag and was about to take out his boots when he saw Tom.

"Tom! What are you doing in the trunk?"

"Well, I was sleeping until you came along," he said sarcastically.

By that time Skip and Professor Alemo were on the scene. Then Tom put on his eight pairs of shoes and said, "Can we go exploring? Can we? Can we? Can we?"

"O. K.," said the professor, "but first let me warn you about some things. Number one, not all dinosaurs are dangerous. For instance, you can catch a ride on a Stegosaurus or a Duckbill dinosaur and, if you can find him, Dino the robotic dinosaur. Don't go near any nests because the mother will charge you; and if a dinosaur does charge, you run up hill."

"Well, in that case, let's go exploring."

So the three of them, Skip, Matt and Tom, left.

Chapter Eleven: Dinosaur West

Tom lead, then came Skip, and Matt brought up the rear. As they came through a bush they saw a heap of sticks.

"It's a dinosaur nest! Let's get out of here!" said Matt.

"No, let's check it out," said Tom. "I sure don't see the mother."

"Well, okay, look but let's make it quick. The mother will be back soon."

They were examining the nest when they heard something crashing through the jungle toward them. "Clear the area, the mother is coming back!" They all ran like mad. They ran up the cliff but then a Tyrannosaurus Rex appeared at the top of the cliff. "You have choice: get eaten or squashed."

"Neither. Teleport for your life." So they teleported to the bottom of the cliff.

"If it weren't for your quick thinking, Skip, we all would be dead as prehistoric doorknobs."

"Well, sometimes I think better under pressure."

"Well, it's a good thing." When they got back to camp they told Professor Alemo about their adventure. When Professor Alemo heard what Tom said, he grounded Tom. After that no one even went close to a dinosaur nest. That night Matt couldn't sleep so he went outside and looked at all the sleeping dinosaurs, but then something caught his eye. It was

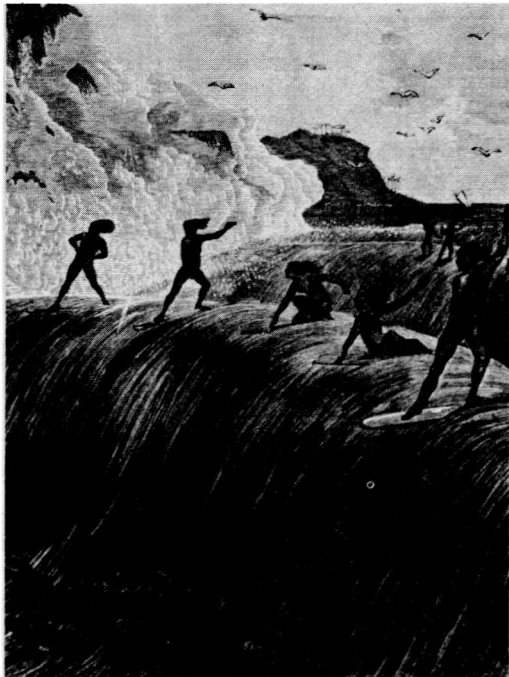
a mother with four baby Triceratops. And they were so cute!

Chapter Twelve: The Baby Dinosaurs

Matt fell asleep with relative ease thinking about the baby Triceratops. In the morning he and Skip collected food for the Triceratops. When they had five bags full, they proceeded to the clearing where the baby dinosaurs were spotted.

They approached quietly with the food held out to the mother. The mother had never seen humans so she did not think they were enemies. She took the food and ate. Then Matt fed the babies and they ate their fill and then started to wrestle. Matt and Skip watched for awhile and then joined them. It was fun wrestling with 80 pound baby dinosaurs. The mother seemed to like it. She looked at them from all different directions and came about as close to a laugh as a dinosaur can. When one of the babies took a dump on Skip, Matt laughed too.

After that Skip went and washed his clothes off in the nearby river, while Matt found a tree that was knocked down and started to build a surf board.



Chapter Thirteen: Hang Ten, Dude!

When Skip got out from his bath in the river, they went and asked if they could go to the beach and catch some pre-historic waves with their dinosaur friends. Professor Alemo said sure.

So they all went to the river -- Skip, Matt, Tom and their dinosaur friends. And they floated down the river on the surfboards they had made. The dinosaurs just floated down on big logs.

When they got to the beach they saw a dinosaur on a surf board. "It's Dino," said Matt.

"It sure is. I wonder where he got that surf board. It looks like it was made in our time. The scientists must have sent one with him," said Skip. So they paddled out to him and caught a wave.

"Where did you get the surfboard, Dino?" said Matt.

"California," said Dino.

Just then, Skip caught a wave, then Dino, then Matt. They did that for the rest of the day. Then they paddled up the river to their camp.

Chapter Fourteen: Return Home

When they got back, they changed into dry clothes. "We're leaving in the morning," said the professor.

"How come?" said Matt.

"Because the Tyrannosaurus is going to be here sometime tomorrow."

"How do you know?" said Skip.

"Because I saw him coming down the other side of the cliff."

"We better get these dinosaurs moving," said Skip.

"Yeah," said Matt. "It's still a little light out. Let's go find Dino. He can translate to the dinosaurs."

So they found Dino who had paddled back up the river with the earthlings. He translated to the mother dinosaur what was going on. Then she told the rest of the herd.

"The dinosaurs say thank you," said Dino. So the dinosaurs started to walk in

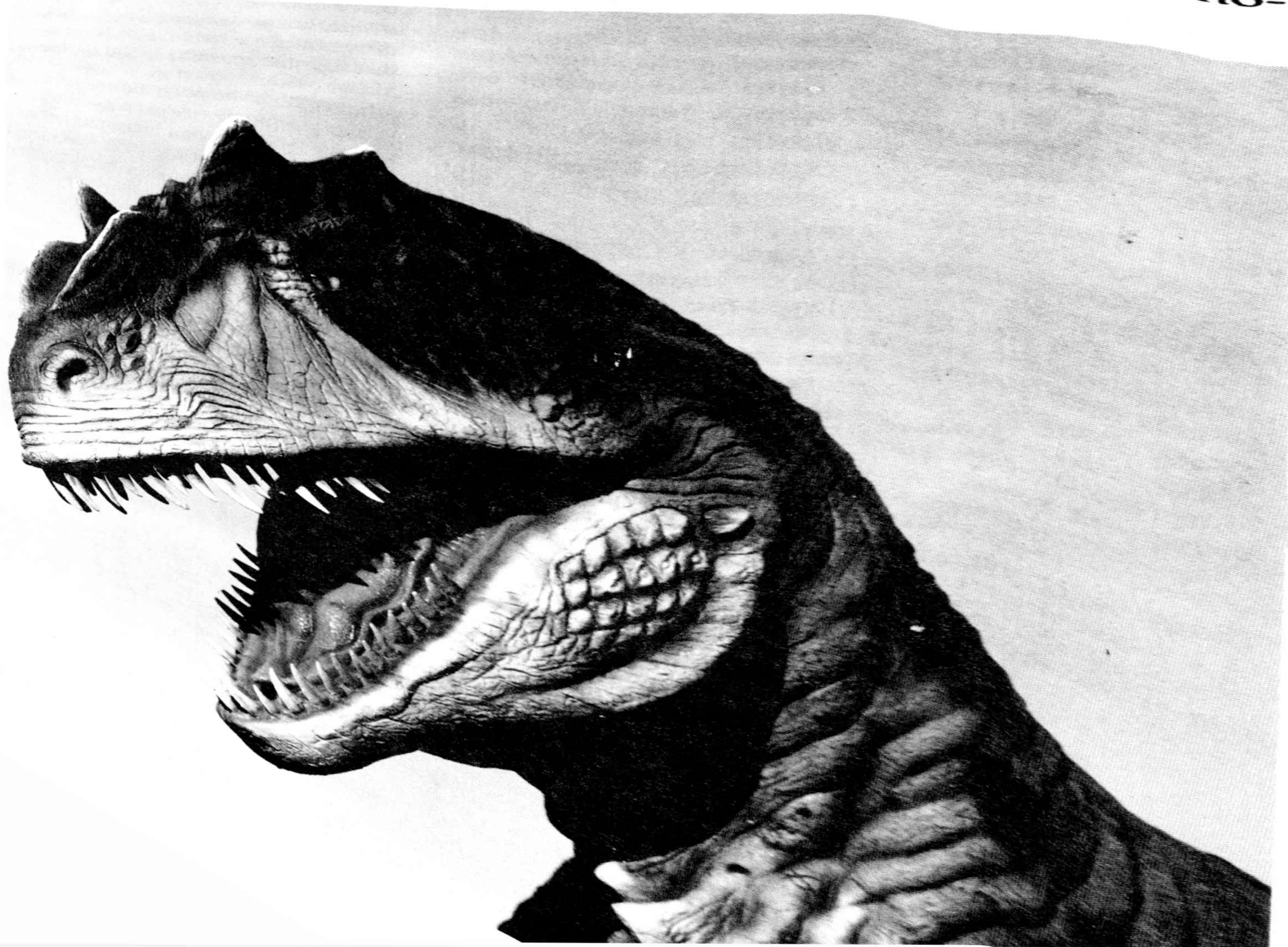
the opposite direction of the Tyrannosaurus Rex.

That night everything was quiet except for the light snoring of Tom. In the morning they loaded the time machine, took one last swim in the river, and were putting on their clothes when Professor Alemo yelled,

"Here he comes!"

Tom, Skip and Matt finished getting dressed and got into the time machine in record time. Professor Alemo hopped in and they were about to leave when there was a clap of thunder. Only there was not a cloud in the sky. Then there was a flash.

"I just wanted a picture of the dinosaur," said Tom.



Then there was another flash and they were in the circuits of time and then in Professor Alemo's lab.

They went back up and told their moms all about Professor Alemo and introduced them to him. They seemed to like him.

Chapter Fifteen: "I'm in Love"

That fall when school began, Matt sat next to his dream girl, Jane. After school that day, Skip and another boy half-teased Matt about Jane: "She was staring at you all day."

"I heard her talking to Katy and she said that you're the cutest boy in the 6th grade."

"Oh, shut up," said Matt, and they split up and went to different houses.

In the morning Matt went to school early so he would be the first person done with his work. That afternoon Matt got a note from a girl in front of him. She said, "It's from Jane."

Matt opened it and read it and here's what it said:

"Dear Matt,

I think you are cute and I was wondering if you were free on Saturday night. I know I am.

P.S. Don't tell or show anyone till after Saturday night, or you die."

Matt wrote a note back to her and here is what it said:

"I'm free and I'd love to go on a date with you."

So that night Matt planned what he was going to say, because he couldn't sleep. Finally he got to sleep.

On Saturday night Matt picked up Jane at seven o'clock and took her to the drive-in down the street. Actually it was inside, but you drove into it. They bought dinner and ate in the car. About halfway through the movie Jane laid her head on his shoulder. Matt didn't quite know what to do so he put his arm around her. When the movie was over Matt drove her home. Then he went home and put himself to bed. He made up his mind that if Jane and he got married, he'd have her change her last name to his.

Chapter Sixteen: The End

As for Professor Alemo, he died at a ripe old age of 136. Matt and Skip attended and both of their mothers cried.

Skip grew up and got married to a chick named Janet and they had two kids. As for Matt, he grew up and married Jane. And they had three kids. Oh, and I almost forgot: Jane changed her last name to Matt's.

The End



East-West University Report and Narayana Gurukula News



1992 New Year Message

Greetings of rejoicement and hope to all from the Guru, the heads of all Gurukula Centers of India, Europe, United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Fiji, and all the disciples and well-wishers of the Narayana Gurukula Foundation.

When we think of a new year, it is only natural that we want to ask ourselves what is new in the new year. On January 1st the sun rises exactly the same way as it rose on December 31st and the cock crows as it did the previous dawn. Newspapers are sure to bring headlines of fresh conflicts and calamities of accidents and gruesome murders. If we turn on the radio or television the panic aroused by the newspaper media will be heightened to its maximum. In ancient days, no news had fast wings to fly more than a radius of ten miles. Now the entire world has become a gossip-club to share any panic or belligerent news in less than a few seconds. Everything spoken and written is dangerously exaggerated with the calculated intention of rousing dismay or anger in the audience. Whatever is to be demonstrated by the propagandist usually

employs all the technology of modern cinema to belie facts and project grotesque fictions. Thus we live in a world of shocking thriller stories. Peace continues to be a favorite concept in our dreams but it lost its meaning several decades ago.

In India, when pious people give invocations, they repeat the word *shanti* three times. Previously it meant peace from physical accidents, mental aberrations and spiritual anomalies. Now the same word in the invocation of peace is aimed at the peace that is easily murdered by political hooliganism, religious fanaticism and the confounded folly of government administrations.

Long ago, Jesus Christ cautioned us: "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Matthew 7:3). The entire world is now busy focusing error-detecting machines on others and everybody is accusing his neighbor. "I am O.K.; you are not O.K.," has become the most prevalent attitude in our society.

All the ancient scriptures in one voice ask us to correct ourselves before we go in search of sinners. The sin of our commis-

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40: Hawaiian "Surf Swimmers", 19th c.

42: Bride & Groom's Ride, Mithila



sion is of much greater magnitude than that of other's commissions. While we enter into the promise of the new year, let us take our resolve like a loyal Buddhist, who proclaims five times a day:

1. I resolve that by thoughts, words and deeds I will not cause any hurt to any sentient being.

2. I take the resolve not to deprive any fellow beings of whatever gift comes their way with the benevolent provision of benign nature. I will, of course, help everyone to have a full share of whatever justice is apportioned to him or her by circumstances.

3. I will give my studied attention to every passing moment, and fill it with good cheer and whatever wealth of blessedness that I can afford, so that all who share life with me will have a full measure of the joy of living in this world.

4. My reverence for every fellow being will be full of acceptance and I will not use anyone to accomplish any of my personal pleasures or gratifications.

5. The power of my reasoning faculty to see, comprehend, cogitate, judge and

appreciate the spectrum of values is a rare gift and I resolve not to contaminate it with any intoxicants or addictive habit formation.

Those who follow the path of the Gita are asked to seek their refuge in Truth alone at all times, and in all ways. Truth has in it an exquisite grace that will enable its votary to be well-established in peace -- a peace that is infectious and can make anyone around magically harmonized.

To those who take such a resolve, every passing moment is a challenge to rectify one's world. The world is none other than the aggregate of the values that we cherish in our hearts, souls and minds. This world is to be governed by each person as a self-governing sovereign. The vision of one's responsibility for self-government is the pearl of priceless worth that we wish you in the new year of 1992.

Be happy and always hopeful!

For the Narayana Gurukula Foundation,

Yours ever,

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

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