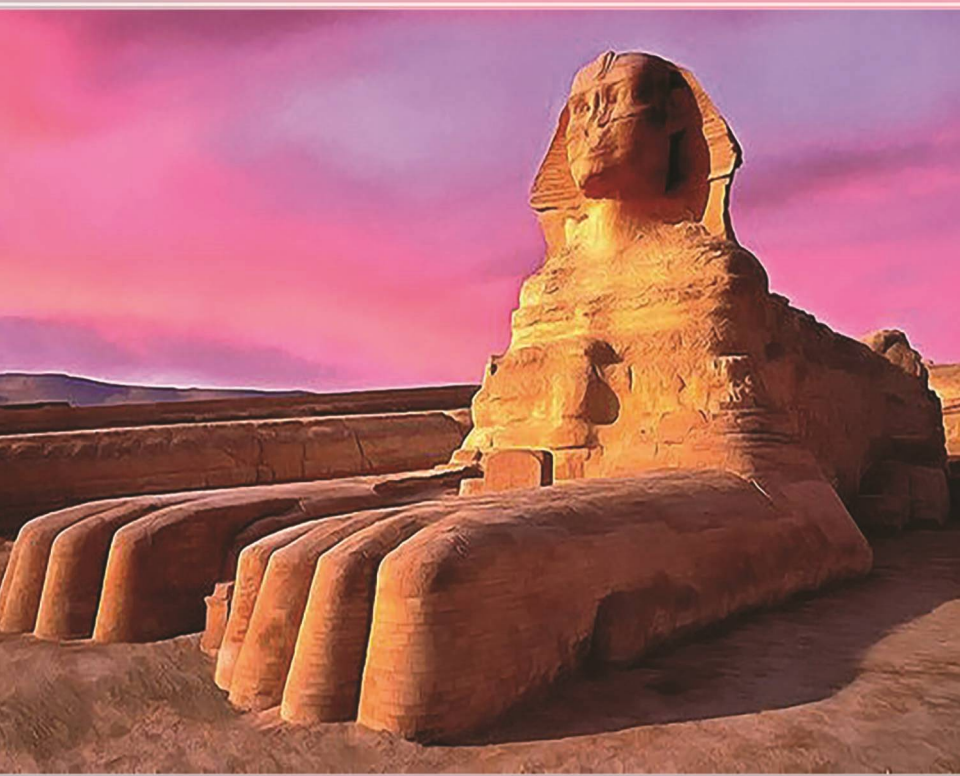


All India Magazine
April 2019



Illumination, Inspiration, Insight
(Tales told by the Mother)

Cover picture: Sphinx

The Sphinx is a mythical creature with the body of a lion and the head of a woman. In Ancient Egypt a lot of times the head was that of a Pharaoh or a god. Symbolically the Sphinx stands for the guardian who keeps a vigil over the gates of eternity. She asks all who would seek to cross over to the Beyond the answer to the enigma of life. It is solved by knowing the Source, the Origin of creation itself, the Divine. Those who discover the secret of the Sphinx of eternity become one with that active and creative power. The Mother was sometimes called as the Sphinx by her friends and co-students since she could often read their minds and come up with novel solutions to their problems.

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Illumination, Inspiration, Insight

(Tales told by the Mother)

Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo

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Editorial: In this issue we present some stories told by the Mother during her conversations. These stories are true events that She has witnessed and hence have a much deeper value and a very special flavour than symbolic tales that mystics often narrate. Even the stories of creation narrated by Her are not things read out or heard from books but experiences and realisations that the Mother has had during Her long spiritual journey. These stories show us what is the Divine way of looking at things that we may have also witnessed but could hardly grasp its full import. They make us conscious so that we can live with a greater awareness. Besides, as they are stories from real-life incidents they also show us that there is nothing really trivial and ordinary. Even the most trivial things can be seen and understood from a profound perspective.



One of my friends had made a trip to India and was requested to give an account of his travels. An old, very credulous lady was there and she asked him, "In India, do they count the souls?" He answered, "Yes." "How many are there?" asked the old lady. He answered, "One only."

CWM 4: 48

The Mother

Illumination

The story of Creation

When the Supreme decided to exteriorise Himself in order to be able to see Himself, the first thing in Himself which He exteriorised was the Knowledge of the world and the Power to create it. This Knowledge-Consciousness and Force began its work; and in the supreme Will there was a plan, and the first principle of this plan was the expression of both the essential Joy and the essential Freedom, which seemed to be the most interesting feature of this creation.

So intermediaries were needed to express this Joy and Freedom in forms. And at first four Beings were emanated to start this universal development which was to be the progressive objectivisation of all that is potentially contained in the Supreme. These Beings were, in the principle of their existence: Consciousness and Light, Life, Bliss and Love, and Truth.

You can easily imagine that they had a sense of great power, great strength, of something tremendous, for they were essentially the very principle of these things. Besides, they had full freedom of choice, for this creation was to be Freedom itself.... As soon as they set to work — they had their own conception of how it had to be done — being totally free, they chose to do it independently. Instead of taking the attitude of servant and instrument of which Sri Aurobindo speaks in what I have just read to you, they naturally took the attitude of the master, and this mistake — as I may call it — was the first cause, the essential cause of all the disorder in the universe. As soon as there was separation — for that is the essential cause, separation — as soon as there was separation between the Supreme and what had been emanated, Consciousness changed into

inconscience, Light into darkness, Love into hatred, Bliss into suffering, Life into death and Truth into falsehood. And they proceeded with their creations independently, in separation and disorder.

The result is the world as we see it. It was made progressively, stage by stage, and it would truly take a little too long to tell you all that, but finally, the consummation is Matter — obscure, inconscient, miserable.... The creative Force which had emanated these four Beings, essentially for the creation of the world, witnessed what was happening, and turning to the Supreme she prayed for the remedy and the cure of the evil that had been done.

Then she was given the command to precipitate her Consciousness into this inconscience, her Love into this suffering, and her Truth into this falsehood. And a greater consciousness, a more total love, a more perfect truth than what had been emanated at first, plunged, so to say, into the horror of Matter in order to awaken in it consciousness, love and truth, and to begin the movement of Redemption which was to bring the material universe back to its supreme origin.

So, there have been what might be called “successive involutions” in Matter, and a history of these involutions. The present result of these involutions is the appearance of the Supermind emerging from the inconscience; but there is nothing to indicate that after this appearance there will be no others... for the Supreme is inexhaustible and will always create new worlds.

That is my story.

CWM 9: 206-07

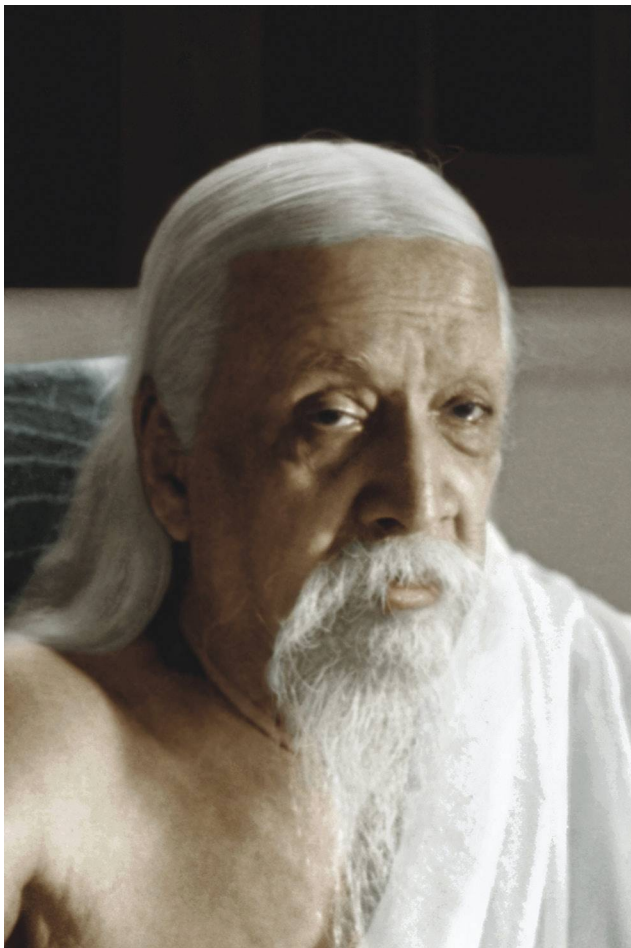
Birth of the gods

What we call “Aditi” here, that is, the Creative Consciousness, well, the Creative Consciousness...

I am going to tell you about this in an absolutely childish way:

She formed at first four beings; when she received the mission to create she put out four emanations from her being; and these four emanations were made and given the charge to develop the universe. And then — I think I have already spoken to you about this once — it turned out badly, we could put it like that; and so when things went wrong, she made another creation of all the beings who became the gods; and parallel to the disorder created by the first four emanations, there was the development in order, that is, under the guidance of the Supreme, the creation in order of all the worlds descending further and further towards Matter. And it is to this line that the gods belong who were manifested later, a formation, a greater and greater materialisation in the domain which Sri Aurobindo has termed the Overmind. And from there they presided over the creation of the material universe and the earth. And one of the proceedings was the formation of the earth as a symbolic creation representative of the whole universe, in order to condense and concentrate the problem so that it might be solved more easily. And this earth, though it may be from the astronomical point of view something infinitesimal and as unimportant as can be, from the occult point of view of the universal creation it is a symbol which represents the universe so perfectly that by transforming the earth one can through contagion or analogy transform the universe, because the earth is the symbol of the universe. This was the procedure adopted by the gods. And the place that’s the seat of existence of these gods Sri Aurobindo has called the Overmind.

CWM 7: 157-58



As might a soul fly like a hunted bird,
Escaping with tired wings from a world of storms,
And a quiet reach like a remembered breast,
In a haven of safety and splendid soft repose
One could drink life back in streams of honey-fire,
Recover the lost habit of happiness,
Feel her bright nature's glorious ambience,
And preen joy in her warmth and colour's rule.

Savitri, p.15

Sri Aurobindo

The lost Paradise

Theon always told me that the true interpretation of the Biblical story of the serpent in the Garden of Eden is that humanity wanted to pass from a state of animal-like divinity to the state of conscious divinity by means of mental development, symbolised by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. And this serpent, which Theon always said was iridescent, reflecting all the colors of the prism, was not at all the spirit of evil, but the power of evolution — the force, the power of evolution. And it was natural that this power of evolution would make them taste the fruit of knowledge.

Now, according to Theon, Jehovah was the chief of the *Asuras*, the supreme Asura, the egoistic God who wanted to dominate everything and keep everything under his control. And of course this act made him furious, for it enabled mankind to become gods through the power of an evolution of consciousness. And that's why he banished them from Paradise.

Although told in a childish manner, there's a great deal of truth in this story, a great deal.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, February 4, 1961

The story of Savitri and Satyavan

The earth is a representative and symbolic world, a kind of crystallisation and concentration of the evolutionary labor giving it a ... more concrete reality. It has to be taken like this: the history of the earth is a symbolic history. And it is on earth that this Descent takes place (it's not the history of the universal but of the terrestrial creation); the Descent occurs in the individual terrestrial being, in the individual terrestrial atmosphere.

Let's take *Savitri*, which is very explicit on this: the universal Mother is universally present and at work in the uni-

verse, but the earth is where concrete form is given to all the work to be done to bring evolution to its perfection, its goal. Well, at first there's a sort of emanation representative of the universal Mother, which is always on earth to help it prepare itself; then, when the preparation is complete, the universal Mother herself will descend upon earth to finish her work. And this She does with Satyavan — Satyavan is the soul of the earth. She lives in close union with the soul of the earth and together they do the work; She has chosen the soul of the earth for her work, saying, 'Here is where I will do my work.' Elsewhere (*Mother indicates regions of higher Consciousness*), it's enough just to be and things simply are. Here on earth you have to work.

There are clearly universal repercussions and effects, of course, but the thing is worked out here, the place of work is here. So instead of living beatifically in Her universal state and beyond, in the extra-universal eternity outside of time, She says, 'No, I am going to do my work here, I choose to work here.' The Supreme then tells her, 'What you have expressed is My Will.' 'I want to work here, and when all is ready, when the earth is ready, when humanity is ready (even if no one is aware of it), when the Great Moment comes, well ... I will descend to finish my work.'

That's the story.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, July 28, 1961

Challenge of the first Asura to the Supreme Lord

I have a sort of memory — the memory of a very ancient story no one ever told me ... in which the first *Asura* challenged the supreme Lord and told him, "I am as great as You!" And the answer was, "I wish you would become greater than I, because then there will be no more Asura."

This memory is very living, somewhere.... If you become

the Whole, it's finished — you see, the Asura's ambition is to be greater than the supreme Lord: "Become greater than I, then there will be no more Asura."

On a very small scale, it's the same thing on the earth.

In a certain state of consciousness, it becomes absolutely impossible to worry about what may happen; everything becomes visibly, *obviously*, the work of one and the same Force, one and the same Consciousness, one and the same Power. So that sense and will and ambition to be "more" — more powerful, greater — is again the same Force which pushes you to expand to the Limitless. As soon as you cross the limit, it's finished.

Those are old ideas — the old ideas of two powers opposing each other: the power of Good and the power of Evil, the battle between the two, which of the two will have the last word.... There was a time when children were entertained with such stories. They're just children's stories.

Some people (or if you like, some beings, or forces, or consciousnesses) in order to progress need to give themselves, to merge, and in total self-annihilation, they attain realisation; for others the path is diametrically opposite: it's a growth, a domination, an expansion which assumes fantastic proportions ... until the separation disappears — it can no longer exist.

Some prefer this path, others prefer that one — but when we reach the end, it will all meet.

Ultimately, the one thing necessary is to abolish limits....

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, July 3, 1963

The Divine touch

I had a case like this in France, a long time ago, of a young, very young girl who had never had any education so to say, any instruction; she was an Opera dancer, a very

good one, and had been put to study there at the age of eight, as they are always put, that is, as a child; and she had learnt to dance instead of learning history, geography, mathematics and the rest. She almost did not know how to express herself, and her intelligence, though evident, was untrained. Well, she was attracted like that and felt an imperious need to seek the Divine, to consecrate herself to Him. And she began to dance in His honour at first, like the juggler of Notre Dame; and she truly danced most remarkably. And then, suddenly, she wanted to express what she was feeling: she began writing letters which were wonderfully poetic; she said surprising things and in a still more surprising way; page followed page, and she wrote all with an extraordinary facility.

It happened that, due to certain circumstances, she had some difficulties, there was something in her nature which pulled her back towards the old nature she had given up — which made her practical and materialistic, made her see things externally. And immediately she became incapable of putting two words together, she could not write a line without making numberless spelling mistakes.

When she was in the state of inspiration she wrote without a mistake, like a great writer; and as soon as she came out of that state and fell back into her down-to-earth consciousness — the needs of life, the necessities of each minute, etc. — everything disappeared, she could not even write a single line without making mistakes and it was totally unrefined stuff.

So you see, this proves that if one attains the true consciousness, there is no longer any problem to solve. What you have to be, you become. What you have to know, you know. And what you have to do, you have the power to do. And it naturally follows that all those so-called difficulties

immediately vanish.

In the case I am speaking about, what pulled her down was not something in herself, it was in another person. And unfortunately that's what happens most often: one takes on in life the burden of certain responsibilities and they prevent him from advancing.

CWM 7:394-95

The power of faith and detachment: Mr Tiger

It is a Buddhist story which perhaps you know, it is modern but has the merit of being authentic. I heard it from Madame Z who, as you probably know, is a well-known Buddhist, especially as she was the first European woman to enter Lhasa. Her journey to Tibet was very perilous and thrilling and she narrated one of the incidents of this journey to me, which I am going to tell you this evening.

She was with a certain number of fellow travellers forming a sort of caravan, and as the approach to Tibet was relatively easier through Indo-China, they were going from that side. Indo-China is covered with large forests, and these forests are infested with tigers, some of which become man-eaters... and when that happens they are called: "Mr. Tiger."

Late one evening, when they were in the thick of the forest — a forest they had to cross in order to be able to camp safely — Madame Z realised that it was her meditation hour. Now, she used to meditate at fixed times, very regularly, without ever missing one and as it was time for her meditation she told her companions, "Continue the journey, I shall sit here and do my meditation, and when I have finished I shall join you; meanwhile, go on to the next stage and prepare the camp." One of the coolies told her, "Oh! no, Madam, this is impossible, quite impossible" — he spoke in his own language, naturally, but I must tell you

Madame Z knew Tibetan like a Tibetan — “it is quite impossible, Mr. Tiger is in the forest and now is just the time for him to come and look for his dinner. We can’t leave you and you can’t stop here!” She answered that it did not bother her at all, that the meditation was much more important than safety, that they could all withdraw and that she would stay there alone.

Very reluctantly they started off, for it was impossible to reason with her — when she had decided to do something nothing could prevent her from doing it. They went away and she sat down comfortably at the foot of a tree and entered into meditation. After a while she felt a rather unpleasant presence. She opened her eyes to see what it was... and three or four steps away, right in front of her was Mr. Tiger!—with eyes full of greed. So, like a good Buddhist, she said, “Well, if this is the way by which I shall attain Nirvana, very good. I have only to prepare to leave my body in a suitable way, in the proper spirit.” And without moving, without even the least quiver, she closed her eyes again and entered once more into meditation; a somewhat deeper, more intense meditation, detaching herself completely from the illusion of the world, ready to pass into Nirvana.... Five minutes went by, ten minutes, half an hour — nothing happened. Then as it was time for the meditation to be over, she opened her eyes... and there was no tiger! Undoubtedly, seeing such a motionless body it must have thought it was not fit for eating! For tigers, like all wild animals, except the hyena, do not attack and eat a dead body. Impressed probably by this immobility—I dare not say by the intensity of the meditation! — it had withdrawn and she found herself quite alone and out of danger. She calmly went her way and on reaching camp said, “Here I am.”

CWM 9: 53-54

The joy of overcoming a desire

The Buddha has said that there is a greater joy in overcoming a desire than in satisfying it. It is an experience everybody can have and one that is truly very interesting, very interesting.

There was someone who was invited — it happened in Paris — invited to a first-night (a first-night means a first performance) of an opera of Massenet's. I think... I don't remember now whose it was. The subject was fine, the play was fine, and the music not displeasing; it was the first time and this person was invited to the box of the Minister of Fine Arts who always has a box for all the first nights at the government theatres. This Minister of Fine Arts was a simple person, an old countryside man, who had not lived much in Paris, who was quite new in his ministry and took a truly childlike joy in seeing new things. Yet he was a polite man and as he had invited a lady he gave her the front seat and himself sat at the back. But he felt very unhappy because he could not see everything. He leaned forward like this, trying to see something without showing it too much. Now, the lady who was in front noticed this. She too was very interested and was finding it very fine, and it was not that she did not like it, she liked it very much and was enjoying the show; but she saw how very unhappy that poor minister looked, not being able to see. So quite casually, you see, she pushed back her chair, went back a little, as though she was thinking of something else, and drew back so well that he came forward and could now see the whole scene. Well, this person, when she drew back and gave up all desire to see the show, was filled with a sense of inner joy, a liberation from all attachment to things and a kind of peace, content to have done something for somebody instead of having satisfied herself, to the extent that the evening brought her

infinitely greater pleasure than if she had listened to the opera. This is a true experience, it is not a little story read in a book, and it was precisely at the time this person was studying Buddhist discipline, and it was in conformity with the saying of the Buddha that she tried this experiment.

And truly this was so concrete an experience, you know, so real that... ah, two seconds later, you see, the play, the music, the actors, the scene, the pictures and all that were gone like absolutely secondary things, completely unimportant, while this joy of having mastered something in oneself and done something not simply selfish, this joy filled all the being with an incomparable serenity — a delightful experience... Well, it is not just an individual, personal experience. All those who want to try can have it.

CWM 7: 38-39

Indifference to compliments

When Mme. David-Neel — I have spoken to you about her, haven't I? Mme. David-Neel who is a militant Buddhist and a great Buddhistic luminary — when she came to India she went to meet some of those great sages or gurus — I shan't give you the names, but she went to one who looked at her and asked her... for they were speaking of yoga and personal effort and all that... he looked at her and asked her, "Are you indifferent to criticism?" Then she answered him with the classical expression, "Does one care about a dog's barking?" But she added to me when telling me the story, very wittily: "Fortunately he did not ask me whether I was indifferent to compliments, because *that* is much more difficult!"

CWM 7: 388

The grain of pure gold within everyone

There is, without doubt, an almost ineradicable difference between individuals, the one arising from their special role, their place, their status in the infinite hierarchy of beings; but whatever this role or status may be, within it each one can develop his own qualities to perfection, each one can and must aspire to gain the perfect purity, the perfect sincerity, the deep harmony which bring us into accord with the laws of order in the universe.

I knew an old sage who used to compare men to minerals that were more or less crude, more or less rich, but all containing gold. Let this ore undergo the purifying flames of spiritualisation and at the bottom of the crucible will be found an ingot which is more or less heavy, but always of pure gold.

We must therefore seek to release from its matrix the pure gold that is within us.

CWM 2: 110

Rejoicing in suffering

I knew Abdul Baha very well, the successor of Baha Ullah, founder of the Bahai religion; Abdul Baha was his son. He was born in prison and lived in prison till he was forty, I believe. When he came out of prison his father was dead and he began to preach his father's religion. He told me his story and what had happened in Persia at the beginning of the religion. And I remember him telling me with what intense joy, what a sense of the divine Presence, of the divine Force, these people went to the sacrifice — it can't be called "sacrifice", it was a very joyful gift of their life.... He always spoke to me of someone who was, it appears, a very great poet and who had been arrested as a heretic because he followed the Bahai religion. They wanted

to take him away to kill him — or burn him, hang him, crucify him, I don't know what, the manner of death in vogue at the time — and, because he expressed his faith and said he would be happy to suffer anything for his faith and his God, people devised the plan of fixing small lighted candle-ends on his body, his arms, his shoulders. Naturally the candles melted with the hot wax all over, till the wick of the candle burnt the skin. It seems Abdul Baha was there when this man was tortured and as they came to the spot where he was to be killed, Abdul Baha went up to speak to him affectionately — and he was in an ecstasy of joy. Abdul Baha spoke to him of his sufferings; he replied, "Suffer! It is one of the most beautiful hours of my life...." This cannot be called a sacrifice, can it?

CWM 4: 315-16

Outer circumstances and the inner impulsion

Outwardly, it was a funny thing that had made her (a lady who came to the Ashram) Come here. She was a young woman like others, she had been betrothed but not married; the man had broken off. She was very unhappy, had wept much and that had spoiled her pretty face, dug wrinkles there. And when the heavy grief had gone, she was no longer so pretty. So she was extremely vexed; she consulted people whose profession it is to make you look pretty. They advised her paraffin injections in the face: "After that, you don't have wrinkles any longer!" She was injected with grease; and instead of the desired effect, she had greasy lumps here and there. She was in despair, for she was uglier than ever. Then she met a charlatan who told her that in England there was no means of restoring her pretty face: "Go to India, there are great Yogis there who will do it for you!" That is why she had

come here. The very first thing she told me was: "You see how my face is ruined, can you restore my pretty looks?" I said no! Then she started putting me questions on Yoga and she was moved. That day she told me: "I came to India to get rid of my wrinkles; now what you tell me interests me. But then why did I come? This is not the true motive that made me come here." I explained to her that there was something other than her external being and that it was her psychic being which had led her here. External motives are simply pretexts used by the psychic to realise itself.

But she was quite a wonderful person! In the beginning she had taken an attitude of benevolence and goodwill towards everything and everybody, even the worst scamp; she saw only the good side. Then as she stayed on, her consciousness developed; after a time, she began to see people as they were. So, one day she told me: "Formerly, when I was unconscious, I thought that everybody was good, people seemed to be so nice! Why did you make me conscious?" I answered her: "Do not stop on the way. Go a little further."

Once one has begun Yoga, it is better to go to the end.

CWM 5: 3-4

It is faith that works miracles

Long ago some people used to believe that a perforated coin... It was in the days when coins were not perforated... now we have perforated coins, don't we, some countries have perforated coins, but in those days they were not perforated, and yet sometimes there were holes in a coin. And there was indeed a superstition like this, that when one found a perforated coin, it brought good luck. It brought you good luck and success in what you wanted to do.

There was a man working in an office whose life was rather poor and who was not very successful, and one day

he found a perforated coin. He put it in his pocket and said to himself, "Now I am going to prosper!" And he was full of hope, courage, energy, because he knew: "Now that I have the coin, I am sure to succeed!" And, in fact, he went on prospering, prospering more and more. He earned more and more money, he had a better and better position, and people said, "What a wonderful man! How well he works! How he finds all the solutions to all problems!" Indeed, he became a remarkable man, and every morning when he put on his coat, he felt it — like this — to be sure that his coin was in his pocket.... He touched it, he felt that the coin was there, and he had confidence. And then, one day, he was a little curious, and said, "I am going to see my coin!" — years later. He was having his breakfast with his wife and said, "I am going to see my coin!" His wife told him, "Why do you want to see it? It's not necessary." "Yes, yes, let me see my coin." He took out the little bag in which he kept the coin, and found inside a coin which was not perforated!

"Ah," he said, "this is not my coin! What is this? Who has changed my coin?" Then his wife told him, "Look, one day there was some dust on your coat.... I shook it off through the window and the coin fell out. I had forgotten that the coin was there. I ran to look for it but didn't find it. Someone had picked it up. So I thought you would be very unhappy and I put another coin there." (*Laughter*) Only, he, of course, was confident that his coin was there and that was enough.

It is the faith, the trust that does it, you see.... The perforated coin gives you nothing at all. You can always try. When one has confidence...

There! now... and that's enough.

CWM 6: 234-35

Thought formations that boomerang

I don't know if you have ever heard of Madame David-Neel who went to Tibet and has written books on Tibet, and who was a Buddhist; and Buddhists — Buddhists of the strictest tradition — do not believe in the Divine, do not believe in his Eternity and do not believe in gods who are truly divine, but they know admirably how to use the mental domain; and Buddhist discipline makes you a good master of the mental instrument and mental domain.

We used to discuss many things and once she told me: "Listen, I made an experiment." (She had studied a bit of theosophy also.) She said: "I formed a *mahatma*; with my thought I formed a *mahatma*." And she knew (this has been proved) that at a given moment mental formations acquire a personal life independent of the fashioner — though they are linked with him — but independent, in the sense that they can have their own will. And so she told me: "Just imagine, I had made my *mahatma* so well that he became a personality independent of me and constantly came to trouble me! He used to come, scold me for one thing, give me advice for another, and he wanted to direct my life; and I could not succeed in getting rid of him. It was extremely difficult, and I didn't know what to do!"

So I asked her how she had tried. She told me how. She said, "He troubles me a lot, my *mahatma* is very troublesome. He does not leave me in peace. He disturbs my meditations, he hinders me from working; and yet I know quite well that it is I who created him, and I can't get rid of him!" Then I said, "That's because you don't have the 'trick'...." (*Mother laughs*) And I explained to her what she should do. And the next day — I used to see her almost every day in those days, you see — the next day she came and told me, "Ah, I am freed from my *mahatma*!" (*Laughter*) She had not *cut* the

connection because that's of no use. One must know how to *reabsorb* one's creation, that is the only way. To swallow up again one's formations.

But, you see, in a smaller measure and less perfectly one is making formations all the time. When, for instance, one thinks of somebody quite powerfully, there is a small emanation of mental substance which, instantaneously, goes to this person, you understand, a vibration of your thought which goes and touches his; and if he is receptive, he sees you. He sees you and tells you, "You came last night to see me!" That's because you made a small formation and this formation went and did its work, which was to put you into contact with this person or else to carry a message if you had something special to tell him; and that was done. This happens constantly, but as it is quite a constant and spontaneous phenomenon and done in ignorance, one is not even aware that one does this, one does it automatically.

CWM 6: 277-78

Thought's inadequacy

Did you ever hear the story of the philosopher who lived in the South of France? I don't recall his name, a very well-known man.

He was a professor at Montpellier University and lived nearby. And there were several roads leading to his house. This man would leave the university and come to the crossing where all those roads branched out, all eventually leading to his house, one this way, one that way, one from this side.... So he himself used to explain how every day he would stop there at the crossroads and deliberate, "Which one shall I take?" Each had its advantages and disadvantages. So all this would go through his head, the advantages and disadvantages and this and that, and he would waste

half an hour choosing which road to take home!

He gave this as an example of thought's inadequacy for action: if you begin to think, you can't act.

This analogy is very apt down here on this plane, but for the higher realms it doesn't apply — up there it's just the opposite! As long as you remain the archer, touching one point, that's how it is; all intelligence below is like that, seeing all sorts of possibilities, so it can't make a choice and act. To see the whole target, the all-inclusive Truth, you must cross to the other side. And when you do, what you see is not the sum of countless truths, an innumerable quantity of truths added together and viewed one after another, making it impossible to grasp the whole at a glance; when you go above, it's the whole you see first, at a glance, in its entirety, without division. So there is no longer any choice to be made; it's a vision: that is to be done. The choice is no longer between this and that, it doesn't work that way any more. Things are no longer seen in succession, one after another; there is rather a simultaneous vision of a whole that exists as a unit. The choice is simply a vision.

As long as you're not in that state, you can't see the whole. The whole can't be seen successively, by adding one truth to another; this is precisely what the mind does, and why it is incapable of seeing the whole. It can't do it. The mind will always see things in succession, by addition, but that's not it, something will always elude you — the very sense of truth will elude you.

Only when you have a simultaneous, global perception of the whole as a unit can you see truth in its entirety.

Then, action is no longer a choice subject to error, correction, discussion, but the clear vision of what must be done. And this vision is infallible.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, February 3, 1962

The power of imagination and faith

Coué was a doctor. He used to treat by psychological treatment, auto-suggestion, and he called this the true working of the imagination; and what he defined as imagination was faith. And so he treated all his patients in this way: they had to make a kind of imaginative formation which consisted in thinking themselves cured or in any case on the way to being cured, and in repeating this formation to themselves with sufficient persistence for it to have its effect. He had very remarkable results. He cured lots of people; only, he failed also, and perhaps these were not very lasting cures, I don't know this. But in any case, this made many people reflect on something that's quite true and of capital importance: that the mind is a formative instrument and that if one knows how to use it in the right way, one gets a good result. He observed — and I think it is true, my observation agrees with his — that people spend their time thinking wrongly. Their mental activity is almost always half pessimistic, and even half destructive. They are all the time thinking of and foreseeing bad things which may happen, troublesome consequences of what they have done, and they construct all kinds of catastrophes with an exuberant imagination which, if it were utilised in the other way, would naturally have opposite and more satisfying results....

Whereas Coué recommended... It was in this way that he cured his patients; he was a doctor, he told them, "You are going to repeat to yourself: 'I am being cured, gradually I am getting cured' and again, you see, 'I am strong, I am quite healthy and I can do this, I can do that'."

I knew someone who was losing her hair disastrously, by handfuls. She was made to try this method. When combing her hair she made herself think, "My hair will not fall out." The first and second time it did not work, but she continued

and each time before combing the hair she used to repeat with insistence, "I am going to comb my hair but it won't fall out." And within a month her hair stopped falling. Later she again continued thinking, "Now my hair will grow." And she succeeded so well that I saw her with a magnificent head of hair, and it was she herself who told me this, that this was what she had done after being on the point of becoming bald. It is very, very effective. Only, while one is making the formation, another part of the mind must not say, "Oh, I am making a formation and it is not going to be successful", because in this way you undo your own work.

CWM 7: 3-5

Power of a mantra

A mantra given by a guru is only the power to realise the experience of the discoverer of the mantra. The power is automatically there, because the sound contains the experience. I saw that once in Paris, at a time when I knew nothing of India, absolutely nothing, only the usual nonsense. I didn't even know what a mantra was. I had gone to a lecture given by some fellow who was supposed to have practiced "yoga" for a year in the Himalayas and recounted his experience (none too interesting, either). All at once, in the course of his lecture, he uttered the sound OM. And I saw the entire room suddenly fill with light, a golden, vibrating light.... I was probably the only one to notice it. I said to myself, "Well!" Then I didn't give it any more thought, I forgot about the story. But as it happened, the experience recurred in two or three different countries, with different people, and every time there was the sound OM, I would suddenly see the place fill with that same light. So I understood. That sound contains the vibration of thousands and thousands of years of spiritual aspiration — there is in it the entire aspiration of men towards the Supreme.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, May 11, 1963

The atmosphere created by desires

People who have desires add to the mental formation a kind of small envelope, a vital shell which gives it a still greater reality. These people are usually surrounded by a number of tiny entities which are their own formations, their own mental formations clothed with vital force, which come all the time to strike them to try to make them realise materially the formations they have made.

You have perhaps read the books of Maurice Magre; there are some in the library. He describes this; he had come here, Maurice Magre, and we spoke and he told me that he had always noticed — he was highly sensitive — he had always noticed that people who have sexual desires are surrounded by a kind of small swarm of entities who are somewhat viscous and rather ugly and which torment them constantly, awakening desire in them. He said he had seen this around certain people. It was like being surrounded by a swarm of mosquitoes, yes! But it is more gross, and much uglier still, and it is viscous, it is horrible, and it turns round and round the person and gives him no peace, and it awakens in him the desire that has formed these entities and they batten on it. It is their food. This is absolutely true. His observation was quite correct. His vision was very true. It *is* like that.

But everyone carries around himself the atmosphere of his own desires. So you don't at all require that people should tell you anything; you have only to look and you see around them exactly the state they are in. They may want to give themselves the airs of angels or saints but they can't deceive you, because that thing is there, turning around them.

Inspiration

The power of unalloyed human love

But what does Anusuya¹ represent?

She is a portrait of the ideal woman according to the Hindu conception, the woman who worships her husband as a god, which means that she sees the Supreme in her husband. And so this woman was much more powerful than all the gods of the Puranas precisely because she had this psychic capacity for total self-giving; and her faith in the Supreme's presence in her husband gave her a much greater power than that of all the gods.

The story narrated in the film went like this: Narada, as usual, was having fun. (Narada is a demigod with a divine position — that is, he can communicate with man and with the gods as he pleases, and he serves as an intermediary, but then he likes to have fun!) So he was quarrelling with one of the goddesses, I no longer recall which one, and he told her ... (Ah, yes! The quarrel was with Saraswati.) Saraswati was telling him that knowledge is much greater than love (much greater in that it is much more powerful than love), and he replied to her, 'You don't know what you're talking about! (*Mother laughs*) Love is much more powerful than knowledge.' So she challenged him, saying, 'Well then, prove it to me.' — 'I shall prove it to you,' he replied. And the whole story starts there. He began creating a whole imbroglio on

1. Anusuya: wife of the rishi Atri and endowed with a great inner force. In her husband's absence, three gods came (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) disguised as brahmins and asked her for something to eat. Then they refused to eat unless she served them naked. Since they were brahmins, she could not send them away without feeding them, so by her inner power, she changed them into babies and served them naked. This film was shown at the Ashram Playground on August 5, 1958.

earth just to prove his point.

It was only a film story, but anyway, the goddesses, the three wives of the Trimurti — that is, the consort of Brahma, the consort of Vishnu and the consort of Shiva — joined forces and tried all kinds of things to foil Narada. I no longer recall the details of the story ... Oh yes, the story begins like this: one of the three — I believe it was Shiva's consort, Parvati — was doing her puja. Shiva was in meditation, and she began doing her puja in front of him; she was using an oil lamp for the puja, and the lamp fell down and burned her foot. She cried out because she had burned her foot. So Shiva at once came out of his meditation and said to her, 'What is it, Devi?' (laughter) She answered, 'I burned my foot!' Then Narada said, 'Aren't you ashamed of what you have done? — to make Shiva come out of his meditation simply because you have a little burn on your foot, which cannot even hurt you since you are immortal!' She became furious and snapped at him, 'Show me that it can be otherwise!' Narada replied, 'I am going to show you what it is to really love one's husband — you don't know anything about it!'

Then comes the story of Anusuya and her husband (who is truly a husband ... a very good man, but well, not a god, after all!), who was sleeping with his head resting upon Anusuya's knees. They had finished their puja (both of them were worshippers of Shiva), and after their puja he was resting, sleeping, with his head on Anusuya's knees. Meanwhile, the gods had descended upon earth, particularly this Parvati, and they saw Anusuya like that. Then Parvati exclaimed, 'This is a good occasion!' Not very far away a cooking fire was burning. With her power, she sent the fire rolling down onto Anusuya's feet — which startled her because it hurt. It began to burn; not one cry, not one movement, nothing

... because she didn't want to awaken her husband. But she began invoking Shiva (Shiva was there). And because she invoked Shiva (it is lovely in the story), because she invoked Shiva, Shiva's foot began burning! (Mother laughs) Then Narada showed Shiva to Parvati: 'Look what you are doing; you are burning your husband's foot!' So Parvati made the opposite gesture and the fire was put out.

That's how it went.

Lovely.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, November 4, 1958

(The Mother commented on the story as follows):

If human love came forth unalloyed, it would be all-powerful. Unfortunately, in human love, there is as much self love as love for the beloved; it is not a love that makes you forget yourself.

Evidently the gods of the Puranas are a good deal worse than human beings, as we saw in that film the other day' (and that story was absolutely true). The gods of the Overmind are infinitely more egocentric — the only thing that counts for them is their power, the extent of their power. Man has in addition a psychic being, so consequently he has true love and compassion — wherein lies his superiority over the gods. It was very, very clearly expressed in this film, and it's very true.

The gods are faultless, for they live according to their own nature, spontaneously and without constraint; it is their godly way. But if one looks at it from a higher point of view, if one has a higher vision, a vision of the whole, they have fewer qualities than man. In this film, it was proved that through their capacity for love and self-giving, men can have as much power as the gods, and even more — when they are not egoists, when they can overcome their egoism.

Certainly man is nearer the Supreme than the gods.

Provided he fulfills the necessary conditions, he can be nearer — he isn't so automatically, but he can be, he has the power, the potentiality to be.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, August 9, 1958

But death can wait

There is also a true story about Queen Elizabeth. She had come to the last days of her life and was extremely ill. But there was trouble in the country and, about questions of taxation, a group of people (merchants, I believe) had formed a delegation to present a petition to her in the name of a party of the people. She lay very ill in her room, so ill that she could hardly stand. But she got up and dressed to receive them. The lady who was attending upon her cried out, "But it is impossible, you will die of this!" The queen answered quietly, "We shall die afterwards".... This is an example from a whole series of experiences one can have in the life of a king, and it is this which justifies the choice of the psychic being when it takes up this kind of life.

CWM 4: 150-51

This remark, "We shall die afterwards," is my own experience, it wasn't a "dream" — in fact, it's never dreams: it's a sort of state you enter very consciously, and all at once you relive a thing.

Even now I can see the picture: I see the picture of the people, the populace, myself, the gown, the person who nursed me — I see the whole scene. And I answered ... It was so obvious! I felt so strongly that things are governed by the will that I answered, "We shall die afterwards," quite simply.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, September 12, 1964

Spiritual life and troubles

If you come to the spiritual life with a sincere aspiration, sometimes an avalanche of unpleasant things falls upon you: you quarrel with your best friends, your family kicks you out of the house, you lose what you thought you had gained.... I knew someone who had come to India with a great aspiration and after a very long effort towards knowledge and even towards Yoga. That was long long ago. At that time, people used to put on watch-chains and trinkets. This gentleman had a golden pencil which his grandmother had given him to which he was attached as the most precious thing in the world. It was fixed to his chain. When he landed at one of these ports — at Pondicherry or perhaps elsewhere in India or at Colombo, I believe it was at Colombo — they used to get into small boats and the boats took you ashore. And so this gentleman had to jump from the gangway of the ship into the boat. He missed his step, somehow got back his balance, but he made a sudden movement and the little gold pencil dropped into the sea and went straight down into the depths. He was at first very much aggrieved, but he told himself: “Why, that is the effect of India: I am freed from my attachments...” It is for very sincere people that the thing takes such a form. Fundamentally, the avalanche of troubles is always for sincere people. Those who are not sincere receive things with the most beautiful bright colours just to deceive them, and then in the end to enable them to find out that they are mistaken! But when someone has big troubles, it proves that he has reached a certain degree of sincerity.

CWM 5: 157-58

The perfect gift

What you are, give that; what you have, give that, and your gift will be perfect; from the spiritual point of view it will be perfect. This does not depend upon the amount of wealth you have or the number of capacities in your nature; it depends upon the perfection of your gift, that is to say, on the totality of your gift. I remember having read, in a book of Indian legends, a story like this. There was a very poor, very old woman who had nothing, who was quite destitute, who lived in a miserable little hut, and who had been given a fruit. It was a mango. She had eaten half of it and kept the other half for the next day, because it was something so marvellous that she did not often happen to get it — a mango. And then, when night fell, someone knocked at the rickety door and asked for hospitality. And this someone came in and told her he wanted shelter and was hungry. So she said to him, “Well, I have no fire to warm you, I have no blanket to cover you, and I have half a mango left, that is all I have, if you want it; I have eaten half of it.” And it turned out that this someone was Shiva, and that she was filled with an inner glory, for she had made a perfect gift of herself and all she had.

I read that, I found it magnificent. Well, yes, this describes it vividly. It's exactly that.

The rich man, or even people who are quite well-off and have all sorts of things in life and give to the Divine what they have in surplus—for usually this is the gesture: one has a little more money than one needs, one has a few more things than one needs, and so, generously, one gives that to the Divine. It is better than giving nothing. But even if this “little more” than what they need represents lakhs of rupees, the gift is less perfect than the one of half the mango. For it is not by the quantity or the quality that it is measured: it is by the

sincerity of the giving and the absoluteness of the giving....

And the beauty of the story I told you — moreover, there are many others like it here — is just this, that when the old woman gave, she didn't know that it was Shiva. She gave to the passing beggar, for the joy of doing good, of giving, not because he was a god and she hoped to have salvation or some knowledge in exchange.

CWM 8: 15-18

Independence and love

Independence!... I remember having heard an old occultist and sage give a beautiful reply to someone who said, "I want to be independent! I am an independent being! I exist only when I am independent!" And the other answered him with a smile, "Then that means that nobody will love you, because if someone loves you, you immediately become dependent on this love." It is a beautiful reply, for it is indeed love which leads to Unity and it is Unity which is the true expression of freedom. And so those who in the name of their right to freedom claim independence, turn their backs completely on this true freedom, for they deny love.

The deformation comes from constraint.

One cannot love through compulsion, you cannot be compelled to love, it is no longer love. Therefore, as soon as compulsion intervenes, it becomes a falsehood. All the movements of the inner being must be spontaneous movements, with that spontaneity which comes from an inner harmony, an understanding — from a voluntary self-giving — from a return to the deeper truth, the reality of being, the Origin and the Goal.

CWM 9: 51-52

One must conquer fear

You must not be afraid of anything. This is the first lesson of transformation. So everyone has to conquer fear.

When you fear, at once you must take refuge in the Divine and consider that in everything there is the Divine. All things will seem simply charming and wonderful because, truly, everything is the Divine. There isn't anything to fear.

Once Ramakrishna was meditating beneath a huge tree. A big cobra came there and bit him on his wrist. Ramakrishna woke up and rubbed his wrist and asked the cobra, "O Mother Kali, why did you bite me?" Immediately Ramakrishna was cured.

You must never fear anything.

Mother You Said So, 16.7.56

A mother's patience

I had a puss, the first time it had its kittens it did not want to move from there. It did not eat, did not satisfy any call of nature. It remained there, stuck to her kittens, shielding them, feeding them; it was so afraid that something would happen to them. And that was quite unthought out, spontaneous. It refused to move, so frightened it was that some harm might come to them — just through instinct. And then, when they were bigger, the trouble it took to educate them — it was marvellous. And what patience! And how it taught them to jump from wall to wall, to catch their food; how, with what care, it repeated once, ten times, a hundred times if necessary. It was never tired until the little one had done what it wanted. An extraordinary education. It taught them how to skirt houses following the edge of walls, how to walk so as not to fall, what had to be done when there was much space between one wall and another, in order to

cross over. The little ones were quite afraid when they saw the gap and refused to jump because they were frightened (it was not too far for them, but there was the gap and they did not dare) and then the mother jumped, it went over to the other side, it called them: come, come along. They did not move, they were trembling. It jumped back and then gave them a speech, it gave them little blows with its paw and licked them, and yet they did not move. It jumped. I saw it do this for over half an hour. But after half an hour it found that they had learnt enough, so it went behind the one it evidently considered the most ready, the most capable, and gave it a hard knock with its head. Then the little one, instinctively, jumped. Once it had jumped, it jumped again and again and again....

There are few mothers who have this patience. *Voilà*, my children. That's all? Nothing more?... Good night

CWM 5: 242-43

The Mother

I once had a cat with almost a child's consciousness, and someone poisoned it. And when he came back poisoned, dying, I cursed all people who poison cats. And that's serious, so you mustn't do it. It was a real curse – I was with Sri Aurobindo, so it was serious – so don't do it. ...

You know, I made a pact with cats, with the King of the Cats – it goes back very, very far. And it's extraordinary (it happened in Tlemcen, entirely on the occult plane), extraordinary! For certain reasons, the King of the Cats gave me a power over these creatures – and it's true.

The Mother: Conversation with a disciple, April 12, 1961

Insight

Sign of a strong vital

When you are outwardly weak, that is to say, when your vital is weak, you always like thunder, fight and furious things. On the contrary, if you have a strong vital, you like sweetness and tenderness. Now to keep the balance, these opposite movements are quite necessary. It certainly takes time to be absolutely perfect.

You see, sometimes the same nature has opposite movements. For example, there was a king (A king most probably Louis XI) in France, who was very cruel and unkind to others, while he loved his white kitten very dearly more than himself. He never hesitated to kill people and shed their blood, but if something happened to his kitten, he started shedding tears.

Mother You Said So: 11.10.57

The baby cat and the scorpion

Once there was a baby cat. It was in its mother's mouth. Suddenly it jumped from the mouth and went to play with a scorpion. Its mother was against its playing with the bad creature but it did not listen. Now, by its very nature, the scorpion stung the baby cat. The kitten screamed and wept. At once it ran to its mother and told her all about the scorpion. The mother asked, "Then why did you jump out of my mouth?"

The hostile forces are like the scorpion. They are very bad indeed. If you do not look at them or listen to them, the evil forces can be destroyed. People should constantly refuse when the adverse forces put false suggestions before them. Otherwise these forces would destroy everything....

I know how the hostile forces enter people's brains, it

is from anger, dislike and innumerable desires and useless matters.

First of all, anger catches the legs and gradually it goes up to the navel and then to the heart and finally to the brain.

The people get terribly hurt. Once anger enters the brain, it is difficult to control oneself. So we should prevent it from coming in. Then it is easier to overcome it.

Mother You Said So: 5.6.56

The spirit of imitation and illness: Panurge's sheep

Mother, there are periods when there is a collective illness in the Ashram...

Yes, not only in the Ashram. Unfortunately, first it comes in the town and then someone very kindly... people who spend their time frequenting the town, you see, bring it along here, and then here people are like Panurge's sheep, when there's one who has caught it, it is considered smart, it is an elegance, everybody catches it....

It is one of the famous books of Rabelais... which I haven't read, besides... but he tells the story of a flock of sheep which were transported on a boat and then... I don't know whether it did so deliberately or it happened by chance, I don't remember this now because I have read the story as told by several different persons... I mean, there are even old Hindu traditions like this, I think, there are Persian stories like this, there are Arab stories like this; so I don't exactly know what Rabelais has said; however, the story goes like this:

For some reason or other one of the sheep falls from the boat into the sea, and all the rest follow one after another. Because one has gone over, all rush headlong into the water. So it has become famous. They are called Panurge's sheep.

But there is only one way, it is to do as I said, it is the individual atmosphere, calm, luminous, quiet... Then one no longer becomes the sheep of Panurge.

CWM 7: 149-50

The propagandist spirit

This habit of wanting to compel others to think as you do, has always seemed very strange to me; this is what I call “the propagandist spirit”, and it goes very far. You can go one step further and want people to do what you do, feel as you feel, and then it becomes a frightful uniformity.

In Japan I met Tolstoy’s son who was going round the world for “the good of mankind’s great unity”. And his solution was very simple: everybody ought to speak the same language, lead the same life, dress in the same way, eat the same things.... And I am not joking, those were his very words. I met him in Tokyo; he said: “But everybody would be happy, all would understand one another, nobody would quarrel if everyone did the same thing.” There was no way of making him understand that it was not very reasonable! He had set out to travel all over the world for that, and when people asked him his name he would say “Tolstoy” — now, Tolstoy, you know... People said, “Oh!” — some people didn’t know that Tolstoy was dead — and they thought: “Oh! what luck, we are going to hear something remarkable” — and then he came out with that!

Well, this is only an exaggeration of the same attitude.

Anyway, I can assure you that there comes a time when one no longer feels any necessity at all, at all, of convincing others of the truth of what one thinks.

CWM 8: 105-06

Vital entities that bring ruin by feeding ambition

I know the story of a man who had a few small powers and indulged in all kinds of so-called “spiritualist” practices, and through repeated exercises he had succeeded in coming into conscious contact with what he called a “spirit”. This man was doing business; he was a financier and was even a speculator. His relations with his “spirit” were of a very practical kind! This spirit used to tell him when the stocks and shares would go up and when they would come down; it told him, “Sell this”, “Buy that” — it gave him very precise financial particulars. For years he had been listening to his “spirit” and had followed it, and was fantastically successful; he became tremendously rich and naturally boasted a lot about the spirit which “guided” him. He used to tell everybody, “You see, it is really worthwhile learning how to put oneself in contact with these spirits.” But one day he met a man who was a little wiser, who told him, “Take care.” He did not listen to him, he was swollen with his power and ambition. And it was then that his “spirit” gave him a last advice, “Now you can become the richest man in the world. Your ambition will be fulfilled. You have only to follow my direction. Do this: put all that you have into this transaction and you will become the richest man in the world.” The stupid fool did not even realise the trap laid for him: for years he had followed his “guide” and succeeded, so he followed the last direction; and he lost everything, to the last penny.

So you see, these are small entities who make fun of you, and to make sure of you they work these little miracles to encourage you, and when they feel that you are well trapped, they play a fine trick upon you and it is all over with you.

CWM 4: 86-87

The Charity Bazaar

There was a “charity bazaar”. This charity bazaar was a place where men from all over the world came to buy and sell all kinds of things, and the proceeds of the sale went to works of charity (it was meant more for amusement than for doing good, but still, charitable works profited by it). All the elegance, all the refinement of high society was gathered there. Now, the bazaar was very beautiful but not solidly built, because it was to last only for three or four days. The roof was of painted tarpaulin which had been suspended. Everything was lighted by electricity; the work was more or less decently done, but naturally with the idea that it was only for a few days. There was a short-circuit, everything began to blaze up; the roof caught fire and suddenly collapsed upon the people. As I said, all the ‘elite of society were there — for them, from the human point of view, it was a frightful catastrophe. There were people near the entrance who tried to escape; others, all ablaze, also tried to reach the door and run away. It was a veritable scuffle! All these elegant, refined people, who usually were so well-mannered, began to fight like street rowdies. There was even a Count of something or other, a very well-known man, a poet, a man of perfect elegance, who carried a silver-knobbed stick, and he was surprised in the act of hitting women on the head with his stick, and trying to push forward! Indeed, it was a fine sight, something most elegant! Afterwards, lamentations in society, big funerals and many stories.... Now, a Dominican, a well-known orator, was asked to give a speech over the tombs of the unfortunate who had perished in the fire. He said something to this effect: “It serves you right. You did not live according to the law of God and He has punished you by burning you.”

And every time there was a disaster this story was

repeated. Naturally many people protested and said, "Here's a God whom we won't have!" But these ideas are quite typical of ordinary humanity.

"Sinning" humanity is altogether a Christian idea, which falsifies our idea of the Divine — a Divine who punishes poor people because it is their misfortune to be born "sinners" would not be very generous!

CWM 4: 175-177

The first expression of love

But it is also said that the first expression of love in living beings is the desire to devour. One wants to absorb, desires to devour. There is one instance which would seem to prove that this is not altogether false—that is when the tiger catches its prey or the snake its victim, it happens that both the tiger's and the snake's victims give themselves up in a kind of delight of being eaten. An experience is narrated of a man who was in the bush with his friends and had lagged behind and was caught by a tiger, a man-eater. The others came back when they saw that he was missing. They saw the tracks. They ran after him, just in time to prevent the tiger's eating him. When he came to himself a little, they told him he must have had a frightful experience. He said: "No, just imagine, I don't know what happened to me, as soon as that tiger caught me and while it was dragging me along, I felt an intense love for it and a great desire to be eaten by it!"

This is quite true, it is not an invention. It is a true story.

Well, I have seen with my own eyes.... I believe I have already narrated this to you—the story of the little rabbit which had been put in a python's cage. It was in the cage in the *Jardin des Plantes* in Paris. It was the breakfast day. I happened to be there. The cage was opened, the little white rabbit put inside. It was a pretty little white rabbit and it

immediately fled to the other end of the cage and trembled like anything. It was horrible to see this, for it knew very well what was happening, it had felt the snake, it knew very well. The serpent was simply coiled up on its mat. It seemed to be asleep, and very quietly it stretched out its neck and head, and then began looking at the rabbit. It looked at it without stirring — just looked at it. I saw the rabbit which at first stopped trembling; it no longer was afraid. It was quite doubled up and it began to recover. And then I saw it lift its head, open its eyes wide, and look at the snake, and slowly, very slowly it went forward towards it till it was just at the right distance. Then the snake with a single leap — without any disturbance, without even uncoiling itself, just remaining where it was, you understand — hop! it took it. And then it began rolling it, preparing it for its dinner. It was not in order to play with it. It prepared the thing. It crushed all its bones nicely, made them crack; then it smeared it with a kind of gluey substance to make it quite slippery. And when it was all quite ready, it began swallowing it slowly, comfortably.... But it didn't have to disturb itself, it didn't have to make the least movement, except the last swift one just to catch it when it was right in front. It was the other creature that had come to it.

CWM 5:149-50

Beauty is universal

I mean one must have a universal *consciousness* in order to see and recognise it. For instance, if your consciousness is limited to one place, that is, it is a national consciousness (the consciousness of any one country), what is beautiful for one country is not beautiful for another. The sense of beauty is different. For example (I could make you laugh with a story), I knew in Paris the son of the king of

Dahomey (he was a negro — the king of Dahomey was a negro) and this boy had come to Paris to study Law. He used to speak French like a Frenchman. But he had remained a negro, you understand. And he was asked (he used to tell us all kinds of stories about his life as a student), someone asked him in front of me: “Well, when you marry, whom will you marry?” — “Ah! a girl from my country, naturally, they alone are beautiful....” (*Laughter*) Now, for those who are not negroes, negro beauty is a little difficult to see! And yet, this was quite spontaneous. He was fully convinced it was impossible for anyone to think otherwise.... “Only the women of my country are beautiful!”

It is the same thing everywhere. Only those who have developed a little artistic taste, have travelled much and seen many things have widened their consciousness and they are no longer so sectarian. But it is very difficult to pull a person out of the specialised tastes of his race — I am not even speaking now of the country, I am speaking of the race. It is very difficult. It is there, you know, hidden right at the bottom, in the subconscious, and it comes back without your even noticing it, quite spontaneously, quite naturally. Even on this very point: the woman of your race is always much more beautiful than the woman of other races — spontaneously, it is the spontaneous taste. That’s what I mean. So, you must rise above that. ... Therefore, if you want to have the sense of beauty in itself — which is quite independent of all these tastes, the taste of the race — you must have a universal consciousness. Otherwise how can you have it? You will always have preferences. Even if these are not active and conscious preferences, they are subconscious preferences, instincts. So, to know true beauty independent of all form, one must rise above all form. And once you have known it beyond every form,

you can recognise it in any form whatsoever, indifferently. And that becomes very interesting.

CWM 5: 330

Destiny and the play of forces

There was an aviator, one of the great “aces” as they are called of the First [World] War, and a marvellous aviator. He had won numerous battles, nothing had ever happened to him. But something occurred in his life and suddenly he felt that something was going to happen to him, an accident, that it was now all over. What they call their “good luck” had gone. This man left the military to enter civil aviation and he piloted one of these lines — no, not civil aviation: the war ended, but he continued flying military airplanes. And then he wanted to make a trip to South Africa: from France to South Africa. Evidently, something must have been upset in his consciousness (I did not know him personally, so I don’t know what happened). He started from a certain city in France to go to Madagascar, I believe (I am not sure, I think it was Madagascar). And from there he wanted to come back to France. My brother was at that time governor of the Congo, and he wanted to get back quickly to his post. He asked to be allowed as a passenger on the plane (it was one of those planes for professional tours, to show what these planes could do). Many people wanted to dissuade my brother from going by it; they told him, “No, these trips are always dangerous, you must not go on them.” But finally he went all the same. They had a breakdown and stopped in the middle of the Sahara, a situation not very pleasant. Yet everything was arranged as by a miracle, the plane started again and put down my brother in the Congo, exactly where he wanted to go, then it went farther south. And soon after, half-way the plane

crashed — and the other man was killed.... It was obvious that this had to happen. But my brother had an absolute faith in his destiny, a certitude that nothing would happen. And it was translated in this way: the mixture of the two atmospheres made the dislocation unavoidable, for there was a breakdown in the Sahara and the plane was obliged to land, but finally everything was in order and there was no real accident. But once he was no longer there, the other man had all the force of his “ill- luck” (if you like), and the accident was complete and he was killed.

A similar incident happened to a boat. There were two persons (they were well-known people but I cannot remember their names now), who had gone to Indo-China by plane. There was an accident, they were the only ones to have been saved, all the others were killed, indeed it was quite a dramatic affair. But these two (husband and wife) must have been what may be called bringers of bad-luck — it is a sort of atmosphere they carry. Well, these two wanted to go back to France (for, in fact, the accident occurred on their way back to France), they wanted to return to France, they took a boat. And quite unexpectedly, exceptionally, right in the midst of the Red Sea the boat ran into a reef (a thing that doesn't happen even once in a million journeys) and sank; and the others were drowned, and these two were saved. And I could do nothing, you know, I wanted to say: “Take care, never travel with these people!”... There are people of this sort, wherever they are, they come out of the thing very well, but the catastrophes are for the others.

CWM 5: 406-07

Food habits and higher life

I knew a lady, a young Swedish woman, who was doing sadhana; and she was by habit a vegetarian, from both choice and habit. One day she was invited by some friends who gave her chicken for dinner. She did not want to make a fuss, she ate the chicken. But afterwards, during the night suddenly she found herself in a basket with her head between two pieces of wicker-work, shaken, shaken, shaken, and feeling wretched, miserable; and then, after that she found herself head down, feet in the air, and being shaken, shaken, shaken. (*Laughter*) She felt perfectly miserable; and then all of a sudden, somebody began pulling out things from her body, and that hurt her terribly, and then someone came along with a knife and chopped off her head; and then she woke up. She told me all this; she said she had never had such a frightful nightmare, that she had not thought of anything before going to sleep, that it was just the consciousness of the poor chicken that had entered her, and that she had experienced in her dream all the anguish the poor chicken had suffered when it was carried to the market, sold, its feathers plucked and its neck cut!

That's what happens! That is to say, in a greater or lesser proportion you swallow along with the meat a little of the consciousness of the animal you eat. It is not very serious, but it is not always very pleasant. And obviously it does not help you in being on the side of man rather than of the beast! It is evident that primitive men, those who were still much closer to the beast than to the spirit, apparently used to eat raw meat, and that gives much more strength than cooked meat. They killed the animal, tore it apart and bit into it, and they were very strong. And moreover, this is why there was in their intestines that little piece, the appendix which in those days was much bigger and served to

digest the raw meat. And then man began to cook. He found out that things tasted better that way, and he ate cooked meat and gradually the appendix grew smaller and was no longer of any use at all. So now it is an encumbrance which at times brings on an illness.

This is to tell you that perhaps now it is time to change one's food and go over to something a little less bestial! It depends absolutely on each one's state of consciousness. For an ordinary man, living an ordinary life, having ordinary activities, not thinking at all of anything else except earning his living, of keeping himself fit and perhaps taking care of his family, it is good to eat meat, it is all right for him to eat anything at all, whatever agrees with him, whatever does him good.

But if one wishes to pass from this ordinary life to a higher one, the problem begins to become interesting; and if, after having come to a higher life, one tries to prepare oneself for the transformation, then it becomes very important. For there certainly are foods which help the body to become subtle and others which keep it in a state of animality. But it is only at that particular time that this becomes very important, not before; and before reaching that moment, there are many other things to do.

CWM 6: 178-80

Consciousness of Vegetables and animal life

Sweet Mother, if the agony of a chicken can attack us, so too can that of a beetroot or a carrot, can't it?

For all that, I believe the chicken is more conscious than the beetroot. (*Laughter*) But I ought to tell you my own experience. Only I was thinking this was not something common.

In Tokyo I had a garden and in this garden I was growing vegetables myself. I had a fairly big garden and many

vegetables. And so, every morning I used to go for a walk, after having watered them and all the rest; I used to walk around to choose which vegetables I could take for eating. Well, just imagine! There were some which said to me, "No, no, no, no, no."... And then there were others which called, and I saw them from a distance, and they were saying, "Take me, take me, take me!" So it was very simple, I looked for those which wanted to be taken and never did I touch those which did not. I used to think it was something exceptional. I loved my plants very much, I used to look after them, I had put a lot of consciousness into them while watering them, cleaning them, so I thought they had a special capacity, perhaps.

But in France it was the same thing. I had a garden also in the south of France where I used to grow peas, radishes, carrots. Well, there were some which were happy, which asked to be taken and eaten, and there were those which said, "No, no, no, don't touch me, don't touch me!"

Why did they say that, Sweet Mother?

Well, I experimented precisely to find out; and the result was not always the same. At times it was indeed that the plant was not edible; it was not good, it was hard or bitter, it was not good for eating. At other times it happened that it was not ready, that it was too early; it wasn't ripe. By waiting for a day or two, a day or two later it said to me, "Take me, take me, take me!"

CWM 6: 181-82

Telling stories to oneself

When I was small I used to call this "telling stories to oneself". It is not at all a telling with words, in one's head: it is a going away to this place which is fresh and pure, and... building up a wonderful story there. And if you know how

to tell yourself a story in this way, and if it is truly beautiful, truly harmonious, truly powerful and well co-ordinated, this story will be realised in your life — perhaps not exactly in the form in which you created it, but as a more or less changed physical expression of what you made.

That may take years, perhaps, but your story will tend to organise your life.

But there are very few people who know how to tell a beautiful story; and then they always mix horrors in it, which they regret later.

If one could create a magnificent story without any horror in it, nothing but beauty, it would have a *considerable* influence on everyone's life. And this is what people don't know.

If one knew how to use this power, this creative power in the world of vital forms, if one knew how to use this while yet a child, a very small child... for it is then that one fashions his material destiny. But usually people around you, sometimes even your own little friends, but mostly parents and teachers, dabble in it and spoil everything for you, so well that very seldom does the thing succeed completely.

But otherwise, if it were done like that, with the spontaneous candour of a child, you could organise a wonderful life for yourself — I am speaking of the physical world.

The dreams of childhood are the realities of mature age.

CWM 8: 117-18

The Mother



With best compliments of:

DEORAH SEVA NIDHI

(Founder Trustee: Late Shri S.L. Deorah)

25, Ballygunge Park, Kolkata - 700019



An Announcement

Sri Aurobindo Divine Life Education Centre, Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan)

The basic object of this centre established by Sri Aurobindo society is to work for the realisation of a divine life upon earth as envisioned by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It aspires to create a community of spiritual aspirants who seek this goal.

This education centre has been functioning since 15th August 1994. The new academic session begins every year from 15th August for children aged between 6 to 12 years. It is a residential school with English as the medium of instruction. The education is completely free. There are no tuition fees, nor any charges for lodging and boarding.

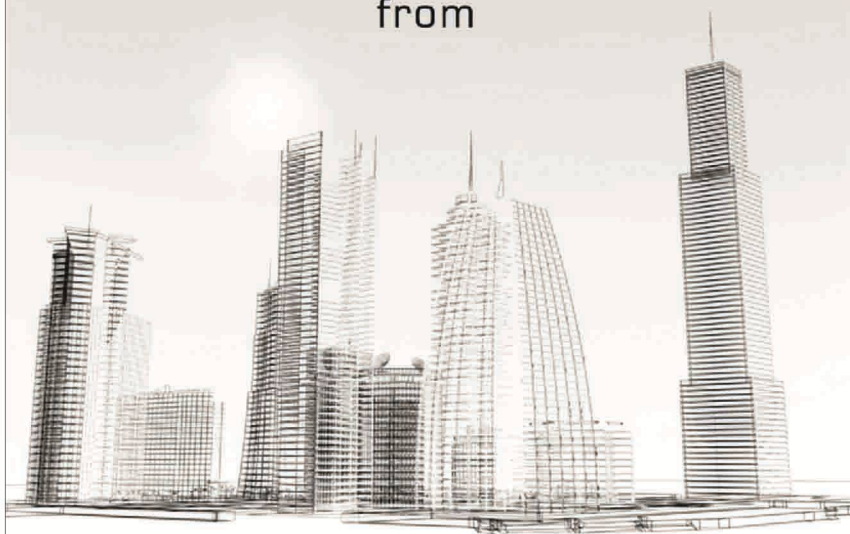
The centre aspires to provide an integral education and to offer scope for the full development of the being. Parents who are not interested in degrees and diplomas or Government recognised certificates for their children, but who simply aspire for the better growth of their children's consciousness and total personality, and wish to admit them in this school, may write to the organisers at the earliest. Admissions are open throughout the year.

Also are invited the seekers of divine life who would like to stay at the centre, pursue a life of sadhana and dedicate their lives for this cause. For details please write to:

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