



Vesna Anastasia Božović

COLOURED FOOTPRINTS -Live my INDIA

BM Literary community
"Vladimir Mijušković", Nikšić

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COLORED FOOTPRINTS
from Montenegro to India

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The Beginning

I never thought I would write a book. And as Novalis once said a mysterious road leads into our innermost being, within us, or there is no eternity...these steps through my heart that lead to an eternal, destructive, creative emotion, I follow...

This book was conceived on the eve or on the day of our Lord's year while I was traveling my 27th year of life and it is true. It speaks of India's ancient culture, of the sacred Vedas, and also of the culture of our great, great ancestors born and gone into the rocks...under the firmament of Montenegro. It speaks of the present time and people along the path of self-discovering. This is a book about the life and paths of precious people to me from whom I learned about myself.

The similarities between the cultures, customs, beliefs, and ethics of these countries separated by thousands of kilometers, with their different languages and religions, should not perplex you. I believe there is only one culture, the culture of giving and peace. There is only one religion, a religion of the heart and love, and that there is only one nation, of humanity capable of rising above the dualities of this world in order to reach the magnificence of its original divinity. Differences between cultures and customs are beautiful, it is through them we learn about ourselves. It is more beautiful to see how alike we are, but the most beautiful is when we love purely.

Would I have been able to depict the destiny of people from a distant part of this planet, living in their strange and to me completely unknown world, still a close world, providing the heart is open and willing good? It is through them I encounter endless and living faith in truth and the life eternal. It is in them I saw the reality of the spiritual, a divine world of harmony and beauty. I learned by living them, experiencing them in person..following the footprints of the love divine, lasting, love of mother to the child, fatherly love, brotherly and sisterly, humanly love natural and real like the clouds that are sometimes thick and close, sometimes dispersed into the unending transience... selfless divine love that tastes of eternity and happiness. How far had I come? What had I discovered? Had the eternity of furiousness awoken in me? The aim, was it achieved?

MY NOVEL
...a moment, perhaps mine...

I shall write a book in a language of longing for a distant time and culture, resting hidden in a corner of my heart, covered with an oblivion of wants and impulses, yet strangely real. I shall write a book in a language of longing for a time in the future when, hidden in a secret corner of my heart, awaits the call of truth and the joy of living.

REALITY and illusion. Where is the limit?

Katharine Tara M.

**Weeping of loneliness, oblivion
soul searching for the lost self
how many paths have I marched
and the answer was here
closer than close**

**a look back
thousands of millions of years
of oblivion,
what is this all about**

**have I learnt anything
I walk the path of reality
of youth even
a girl with a message of eternity
deserted by the ancient parents teachers friends
will they open
the doors of heart
on which for joy
or loneliness
or ...
I shall knock.**

The almighty truth is within and without every living being. Distant, it is yet so close.

Bhagavad-Gita

Vrindavan

Vrindavan. Who ever has been to Vrindavan has a Vrindavan of his or her own. There are as many Vrindavan's as there are people who have experienced it. Vrindavan is a state of mind, for its visitors and for its inhabitants. Vrindavan is a state of heart of the pilgrims to the threshold of the Divine, who come here to touch, taste, and find pure love. Far from Montenegro, there is a mysterious place with a magnificent history and legends. Fate or divine mercy has brought me here to fulfill the innermost wish of my heart, to know, understand, and look for the hidden truth. The place remembers thousands of years, ancient as the Vedas singing of its glory. The prevailing costumes are just as old. Yet, there is an eternal, untouchable, sacred Vrindavan that, according to native belief, is kept by Shri Radha, the Queen of Infinity, Beauty, and Eternal Love. She is Absolute Love and it is believed that she still rules Vrindavan. "No one can come to Vrindavan unless invited by her," an old woman told me in a temple, emphasizing how blessed and happy I am to be here. Shri Radha is on the altar of all the temples in Vrindavan and she sits there in a demure, coy embrace with her eternal lover Shri Krishna. She is the embodied Absolute Truth. Legend says that when God felt infinite bliss and happiness, the happiness there turned into Shri Radha. The earth I step on now is the kingdom of this Divine Queen. Here even the air shudders with the bliss of living with God.

Radha and Krishna always play together in Vrindavan. Krishna is a local shepherd, and she is the King's daughter. This is their most intimate corner.... is written in the sacred books recently discovered...

Here it is different from Montenegro with its mountains, its sea and rocks, here lies the sand of the Rajasthan desert.

Although another culture lives here, its people are somehow similar to mine. They are simple, of noble character and deeply religious. Their customs and ethics are so alike to those I was taught in my childhood. I wanted to peer into the hearts of the people I meet at this sacred place. Should I have been able to understand the message of their hearts and lives?

This is a place of pilgrimage, like Mecca, Jerusalem, and the mount Ostrog, Medjugorje or Avila. Thousands of people visit Vrindavan every day to receive a blessing from this sacred place. As if here they will find all the answers to the questions of life and death. The atmosphere and the rhythm of life are so dynamic that one is never bored, while attempting to see all five thousand temples in Vrindavan, of centuries old buildings with unusual splendid architecture of the East. Those older than five thousand years are gone now, destroyed during the passes of the Muslim aggressor. The land stayed intact, the little hill Govardhan, the river Yamuna, and a few stones with the imprint of Krishna's feet, hands and his flower garland stayed to witness the times of before, recorded on the pages of the sacred books and into the hearts of blessed people who were with the will of goodness born here to live their lives. I have seen a rock imprinted with the flower garland worn by Krishna when five thousand or so years ago He visited earth and the community and the priests tell of the garland falling from Krishna's neck on that rock the moment Krishna saw Radha. From the warmth and the weight of love Krishna carried within him the rock melted, and so the petals stayed imprinted on the rock. Radha was wearing a most beautiful shawl, which, when she wanted to fly away seeing Krishna (it is how they always played) fell on the rock on the other side of the little hill. I could clearly see the pattern, contours and embroidery of her shawl preserved in the rock.

This was not the first time I walked through Vrindavan and met beautiful, unusual people. My mind kept recording the meaning of ancient wisdoms recognized in this unusual place, by these people, and by my heart. Maybe I will learn something from them and this magic place. The sacred books say that the most intimate of God's festivities, in the remote and magnificent Vrindavan, are hidden behind the anxiety and desire in the hearts of truth seekers. "This Vrindavan," says an old wise man, "is the magical reality of another world, the world eternal and invulnerable, built on love, happiness, and knowledge." I wondered if I would find the world of eternal being.

Or, if perhaps I would remain on the surface of the limited understanding of my own reality and my own illusion? I wanted to let sacred people and sacred books be my guides, and most of all, to let my desire to discover, to understand, and to find the Vrindavan of my own heart lead me on my quest, to the ancient and invulnerable world where my eternal reality rests.

Encounters and Teachings

“When one discards sinful wishes hoarded in the heart one changes mortality for the immortal life of spirituality and achieves the real bliss in the Absolute Truth.”

Brihad aranyaka Upanishad

“Tell me of the past so that I can see future in it.”

Confucius

DADU

Late October 1996. A brief twilight in India. The sky coloured by purity and mysticism. Blue and orange, yellow and pink, created an atmosphere of warm, noble beauty even of a tangible God. This was the sacred place upon which my feet rested. Yearning for knowledge I found myself here. Where was I indeed?

Far from the place of my childhood, far from the people I once knew, and once again, I was not alone. The air was my friend, the earth, the people close by. We belonged to the same nation, to a nation of men and women who seek the meaning of life and death, finding answers in Vrindavan. Legend has it that once upon a time God lived here, that the colour of His skin was blue, and that He still walks this earth. Was this really the most secret and sacred part of the universe?

At the foot of the huge Madhan Mohan which so marvelously arose on my right, there was a narrow path, which was occupied by a single cow. I passed by a house where from I heard the cry of a child. The pathway lead me to a little temple which keeps the holy relics of Sanatan Goswami. I entered the narrow wooden gate. The staircase lead to a yard. I sensed the scent of flowers emanating from the altar and I heard birds singing. From the surrounding trees monkeys fussed notifying their ability to frighten and bite.

At the altar, always at the same time, was my Dadu. That's what I called the old priest. When I was here the first time, there were some children standing upright till the worship ended, waiting excitedly for Dadu to give them sugar cakes. Then he appeared, stoop-shouldered, his aching back having carried over seventy years, bringing the plate with the cakes from the altar holding it aslant. The children were cheerfully screaming: "Me Dadu, me Dadu, I want some more!" The cakes were carefully distributed till the last one which was given to me. The children turned homewards, nibbling their cakes with their tiny brownish shaky teeth, their eyes shining with joy, happy and satisfied for they had fed not only their stomachs but their souls too, as their parents and ancestors believed it to be.

This was the first time Dadu and I had met. He inquired about my name and origin. That is what you are always asked in India.

“My name is Katharine. And they call me Tara.”

I was watching Dadu. I felt some kind of love for that simple old man at the estuary of life, who had such an unusual resemblance to my father. It was not his physical appearance but his mannerisms which reminded me of him. His left arm was positioned in the same way my father's used to be. My father's arm broke when he fell from the tree, and I remember I cried. I asked God why it had to happen to him, when he was so good. I was eight. By an incredible coincidence, Dadu told me his left arm had also been broken several years before. He had similarly fallen from a tree.

Neither my father nor Dadu had any teeth. I could have called him grandpa that instant. It was so easy to recognize him in this land, a land my ancestors could never have dreamt about, a land which has become the home land of my heart.

His life story was simple. The story of a person at the door of eternity. Religious people in India, once they have brought up their children and their obligations as fathers and husbands have been fulfilled, go to temples to spend the twilight of their life patiently awaiting their entrance into the world of Divinity. The time spent there consists of service in the temples and the reading of holy books.. They are seemingly alone, yet not alone.

Who is with them?

Dadu told me that Radha and Krishna take care of him. They are the supreme Divinities in Vrindavan. Really? And where are they, I wondered, who they are?

“In the heart but also in the eternal world where I will go after I die.”

“Are they good, why are you alone now?”

“They are most merciful, they are always with me, and I am with them.”

“What is that world like, Dadu, the one you'll go to after your death?”

“It is the world of spirit, the world of the eternal. The world where Shri Radha and Shri Krishna are. It is the world of music and happiness, incomprehensible in this world. It is the world of the eternal abode, of mine, and also of yours, the eternal home. It is there we belong, and it is there we experience our true existence, where we are what we really are. It is a pity you don't speak Hindi or Bengali, I could tell you lots more about it...”

He stopped for a moment to see what impact his story, rendered in broken English, had on me. It revealed what Dadu had within him and what he could hardly share. I was watching him carefully, trying to discern that world through his eyes, like a child leaning over the window to see the light of a new day and of a new land.

“That world is here now, only you can’t see it. It is the world you carry within yourself. Look for it in your heart. And this place will help you find it. From this place you will get whatever you want. Visit the temples, the Yamuna River, the Govardhan hill. It is by the mercy of God that you are brought to this place, the place visited by God. He loves you very much, very much.”

I wasn’t sure if I should believe in what he was telling me, but one thing was certain, whether I believed or not, that world was real for him. More real than the reality of my happiness and my pain. It was the reality of love.

That’s how our friendship began. I often called in at the temple bringing fruits and sweets he would offer at the altar and I used to sit in the shade, in front of the small stone altar, attending to peace. Pictures of saints and divinities watched me attentively from the altar, which was a tiny marble chapel which for five hundred years had kept the holy relics of Saint Sanatan Goswami. Dadu would calmly climb the few stairs which led to it each time he performed the ritual of offering food or of worship, softly bemoaning the pain in his back. He would open a small wooden green door, and disappear behind it. The little shrine was quiet and not visited as frequently as was the case with the other shrines in Vrindavan. One could only hear the bell calling to those Dadu worshiped, inviting them to come and accept the gift of food offered in small dishes which contained boiled vegetables, rice, and chapati (Indian bread). Only after such a prayer would he take some food for himself, while the rest he used to share with visitors or return to the central temple. Every day Dadu received food-offers from the central temple, while some of the offers he would cook himself. His daily service in the temple also consisted of cleaning, taking care of the altar, and cooking. He would fetch drinking water from a nearby well, which was an arduous job for his old body to perform. Several times a day, in summer and winter alike, he would bathe in the Yamuna River which runs for hundreds of meters down the mountain. Sometimes it would be swollen and dangerous, sometimes shallow and calm. That’s how his priestly life had unfolded. He moved slowly,

but with an unusual vigour and strength which did not come from the body. His desire to serve God probably gave him that unusual strength. Each day Dadu worked hard in order to serve Him.

I would sit and indulge in thinking how wonderful it must have been here few hundred years ago, of saints living here, whose wisdom my Dadu now lived and breathed. This place and this part of Vrindavan was reaching deeper and deeper into my heart.

The following time I visited India from Germany I had brought a wrist watch for Dadu. It was a fancy sports watch, covered in platinum and quite unlike the place he lived in. It was also an alarm watch, which was the primary reason I bought it. I wanted Dadu to have an alarm to wake him and that it may remind him of me. I felt I had to give him a gift, although he used to say: "Don't give me things, I'm a monk, I need nothing but that which God gives me, I don't need to be hoarding things. You are so kind, but I need nothing but the holy name of God and this service, while He who has my soul and all that belongs to me also takes care of my body." Still, a ray of satisfaction, because someone had thought of him skimmed across Dadu's toothless smile. While trying to figure out how the alarm functions I attempted to persuade Dadu to take the useful watch. He took it, at first non willing to deal with such a strange thing and then nodding with his head the way only Indians do, said "tikhe" "good" and took it to his room. At dusk, in the atmosphere of the quiet shrine, my Dadu courageously accepted in his opinion an over-valued and over-expensive gift, enquiring how much it cost and why I had spent the money at all. The next day I was waiting for Dadu to come, while sitting in the quiet afternoon yard in front of the temple chapel and I heard a strange screechy alarm from one of the rooms in corner of the poor temple complex. I laughed within joy. The sound came from Dadu's room, because I could hear Dadu was getting up whilst sobbing quietly. He came out of the room with a painful expression on his face resting his hands on his spine which ached ceaselessly and uttered: "You came...here is your watch... functioning.... why you don't wake up me?... you came when?...wait...at first I am going to take bath, then we will both make Krishna puja (worship)!" That was the first time I obtained the permission to enter the kitchen. I didn't even know where Dadu's room was, or what to say about waking him up. I wouldn't dare disturbing the quietness of the little shrine, but I was so happy about his growing trust and closeness to me. When we entered the kitchen,

the demure, clean, room with big metal pots hanging on the walls was almost empty. I wondered how would be able to prepare the offering. With what? Dadu insisted that I should take some food first. He always implored me to eat more, noticing how skinny I was and telling me that if I did do not eat I was going to get really ill....although it wasn't the food I was used..although it was new and strange with unusual tastes, a gratitude I felt opened my uncertain appetite. A gratitude for letting me walk in the space forbidden to others, space which was meant for Dadu alone. Thus sitting at the floor we ate milk rice and laddhus (round flour sweets) which Dadu had saved for me from the previous offering. When we finished the meal and washed the floor, Dadu cooked milk. A small gas bottle bought at the nearby market was the only cooking facility he had in that kitchen. My task was to collect and wash a few tulasi leafs and to put them on the offering plate. It was a funny team in front of the altar that evening, Dadu and me.

For the love of those he loved the most he would wake up before dawn could be discerned on the eastern sky. He would then take bath in the Yamuna and start his daily service. He made sure that everything in the temple and at the altar was clean and that the rituals of worship followed the rules according to the Vedas. All knowledge on various human occupations is written in there. Dadu respected them, lived them, and passed them partly onto me. Although they are old books, it is not their age that makes them famous, like mummies which silently witnessed a rich and now inaccessible civilization of Egypt. "The Vedas are truths living beyond time. They speak of the existence of only one God who has a lot of names. His most intimate name being Krishna, which means the most beautiful and all-attractive," I regretted my incompetence in Hindi or Bengali as Dadu continued to elaborate. He was bengali and Krishna was the God he served and loved and for who his simple and pure heart longed in this land of Krishna's queen. Every morning Dadu offered incense, flowers, and a little cotton lamp dipped in ghee (pure melted butter) to the altar. Then he would offer food. During the day he would clean the yard in front of the temple and the small garden. Sometimes I would see him stooped, carrying water from the well. There was no one to help him. In the afternoon he would make yet another offer to the altar. He would rest only for a while, and then he would cook milk and make chapatis (Indian bread). After the third offer and evening worship he would end his day. And that is how it has been for over fourteen years.

The temple was often visited by locals and their children, as well as by other priests. They would sing prayers and songs of worship while Dadu performed his service at the altar. When his ritual was completed, he would present water and sweets to the guests. That was his day. That's how he has lived for many years and that's how he would end his life. Sometimes he was visited by members of his family and his disciples who lived in another country far from Vrindavan.

Since Dadu and I were already friends at that time, I was there almost every day. Sometimes I would clean the temple and its yard, although female devotees were forbidden to do so. He felt as if I was his own granddaughter so he was willing to allow me to help him. Once I had a bad cold. It is tiresome to have a cold in India, it can be difficult to get rid of. Since mine lasted for days and had no intention to leave me in peace, Dadu prepared a remedy for me. From the local marketplace he brought lemon, cumin, and black salt. The cumin had to be ground because a mill could not be found in Vrindavan. Therefore, Dadu prepared it the old fashioned way, by placing the cumin under a larger stone and grinding it into a fine powder with another. I watched him, old and frail use up all his strength to grind the cumin, to make the remedy, to help me recover. I wanted to do the job instead of him but I was too weak. He would take short breaks, and then resume the process. His old lined face contorted with effort, he would stiff his toothless jaw, with purity of a guiltless child he prepared the medicine for me, sweating profusely. The whole process lasted for half an hour. Exhausted with the medicinal venture he reposed. He lay upon a mat on the terrace in front of the temple, reclining only for a short while because the work had yet to be finished. How sorry I was for him! In the end he mixed the lemon juice with the ground cumin and added the black salt. He had created these tiny rolls which I was to take three times per day before meals with water. I was so happy Dadu showed he loved me by investing the last atoms of his fragile strength on preparing my medicine, but I was also sad because it was so exhausting for him.

My illness was not perilous, a simple flu, but Dadu considered this medicine very important for my well being. Of course, who wouldn't recover after taking such a remedy, interwoven with love of my only grandfather? It's true I never liked the prevailing taste of the black salt, but all that did not matter then. I had to get better so that Dadu would stop worrying. He was happy next day seeing my illness off.

There are almost none of my friends who didn't hear my story of Dadu, so that he soon became Dadu for all of us. We called him Dadu, although we, children from the west, according to some Vedic cast rule do not have the right to do so, we loved him and he loved us. The law of love ruled over us.

Once I didn't come for several days as I went to Delhi with friends, to do some shopping. Dadu was worried. He said: "Why didn't you tell me you would not come for several days, I feared you got sick again, and that you had to be taken to the hospital. So I went to see if you are at the hospital, but you weren't there, then I went to see if you were in your mandir (temple) but you weren't there either, and no one could tell me where you might be. Then I thought you left for Yugoslavia or Germany, without saying goodbye, ah Tara, Tara ... next time you must tell me before you go."

This was hard to hear. I had forgotten to tell Dadu I will be away for a couple of days. My hard western heart hurt me. If you could only see his face, a childish face, yet the face of a man who loves his child. Since that time, whenever I was to leave Vrindavan I would first let Dadu know in order for him not to worry. When I would say goodbye to him, whether it was just for a day or a longer absence, I would ask him for his blessing and he would put his weathered hand on my head and say: "You are so witty, you know you need blessing to understand yourself and this world, so here you are," his hand resting on my head, his lisping English emanating from his toothless mouth. "I will pray to Shri Radha and Krishna and Mahaprabhu that you will be happy." That was his blessing. He really prayed and his blessing helped, because I was happy. Only when I thought of heading back west would I be overwhelmed by sadness. It meant being away from Dadu and that there was now no one helping him around the temple, bringing sweets and fruits, or attending him in illness. It would mean leaving the grandpa priest who may any minute depart this temporary reality. And perhaps it meant that I would never see him again. Only when one day I depart this world and enter the world he was about to enter, would I see my Dadu again. Will I be able to recognize him then?

Dadu use to tell me numerous stories about life, stories naÔve and rich with love and a sense of responsibility to those he shared his life with.

I was deeply touched by the pureness and simplicity of heart and mind which came from his words and which intensely radiated from his eyes. He had answers to all my inquiries about life. His conscience was untainted, a conscience of the poor but honourable. He had lived his life with the simplicity of a saint and a child, and he had found peace, a peace of mind and soul one rarely finds. A peace that cannot be bought even with sacks full of diamonds.

Once I saw Dadu cry. I had not seen a man cry for a long time, maybe never. My father never cried, only once. That time Dadu and I were singing songs to the saints in front of the altar, and saying some prayers in Hindi. One of the songs was about God who is so far away from us now. It praised the Golden God who was on the earth five hundred years ago, at the exact place which we inhabited that moment was the abode of one of the personal, nearest followers of the distant Golden God who Dadu called Gauranga Mahaprabhu.

Dadu often talked about Mahaprabhu. He used to say: "Radha and Krishna together, that's Mahaprabhu, two bodies and one soul, one life!" He recited verses in Bengali trying to translate them to me so that I would be able to understand that beautiful story about the Golden God. This story had been written in the holy books called Shrimad Bhagavatham long before the God visited earth. When the golden God came, it was late fifteenth century. "That incarnation of God was carrying the message of love and mercy. He predicted that the divine names would be heard and sung in the future in each town and village all over the world, that the whole world would once sing praises of Lord. Mahaprabhu entered the priesthood when he was twenty four, and when he was forty eight he left this world, for a world we all will one day discover," Dadu was telling me, his eyes shining with tears whenever he spoke of the Golden God. We were singing prayers and in the middle of the prayer he started crying. I knew he was crying because of the pain of separation from those he loved most, from his Radha and Krishna, he was crying for the world where his Golden God resided, like a child crying for his home. His heart, soft like butter, was melting. I was sorry for Dadu, I cried too.

When his eyes opened, the light of divine love and deep human love, which is for many of us unrecognized and unknown area of our hearts, was shining with warmth of innocent purity from this living saint. Serving his masters who are hidden somewhere in his heart, he was transmitting a magical reality and beauty of a world he longed for. As if he himself was a part of the mystical, splendid world, his reality

embodied in front of my bleary eyes, my comprehension, and my awareness. My vision of that world was clearer now. Dadu's life resembled ever more the play he used to play out with his masters. As if he had always been with them, in a dynamic relation of perfect love.

When I think of it now, as strange as his crying was, Dadu was happy at the same time. As if his sadness did not belong in this world. He held his eyes closed, his face relaxed, with tears falling. Then he started sniffing and wiping his face and as if nothing had happened, resuming his duty of service in the temple. As if the pain had been forgotten already in another moment, sinking into the world of eternal peace and bliss, Dadu carried within. Something had changed in me after that, my heart changed. I loved Dadu even more. I also started loving his masters, Radha and Krishna and Gauranga Mahaprabhu.

When recently I visited India again, the door of Dadu's room in the temple was festooned with cobwebs.

THEATRE

“Live with people so as if God were always watching you, and speak to God so as if people were listening to you, because how long I should live is the matter of another’s will but it depends primarily on me that I live as a man as long as I am living.”

Seneca

Imagine that you are at a spiritual place in India and that you're going to the theatre. Strange combination, isn't it? There is a theatre but largely different from the one we may be used to anywhere out of Vrindavan. Encounter with it, a family whose generations have performed at the Krishna theatre, which is called Rasa lila was as wonderful as anything else that may happen to anyone touching Vrindavan. I shall return to this later. The people from Vrindavan believe that God has always walked our wonderful Mother Earth and that in a human aspect he has always communicated with people. The theatre called Rasa lila was always a big mystery for me. Was it the truth or an illusion?

It is believed that, when the true believers and people of art perform at Lila, God himself comes and embodies on the stage. The scene is no longer a place of artful illusion, but a medium and transmitter of reality from the world above. The world of divine beauty and mystery then opens and unravels into the hearts of the devoted spectators. It seemed that emotions felt throughout Lila could change one's heart and one's mind forever. Spectators became participants. Often happened that people visiting Lila and having such an intense experience of God, would choose a monastic life afterwards, forever leaving their previous lives. It is the reason why Lila has always been thought of as a sacred and noble event, providing a direct communication with God. I have seen people rushing to the altars after a performance at Lila to pay respect to the actors portraying Radha and Krishna and, with tears in their eyes, I have seen them touch the feet of the actors. The actors were boys and men of the Brahman class, dressed in lively, richly decorated, and glowing but not kitsch costumes. All the roles in a play are played either by men or women, because the mixing of sexes is disallowed in Lila. The actors characters must be unblemished and they must be of the habits befitting spiritual aristocracy, otherwise Krishna and Lila wouldn't manifest on stage. Lila is an indispensable part of the lives of Vrindavan inhabitants, while the topics and the main characters are almost always Krishna and Radha, and their plays described in the ancient books. Lila sometimes talks of Mira Bhai, the saint, or about another Indian famous poets, or poetess, to whom God Krishna revealed Himself. Hardly a month passes without Lila in Vrindavan.

People always have reasons to celebrate. h always praise God and their love for God. Sometimes, especially during the great festivals, Vrindavan streets also become a stage for Lila. The actors then, from a big wooden cart, accompanied by thundering music blaring from dusty Indian loudspeakers, and by a mass of people dancing and singing in front of them, present themselves to the entire small town. They are mostly children in the carts dressed as Krishna, Radha, Ramachandra, Hanuman and other traditional Hindi Gods. For the community of Vrindavan it is an expected event they have always lived with and will grow old with. They only need to hear that the "Divine Lila will be at a certain place at a certain time" and at the appointed place, hundreds and thousands of people would suddenly appear. Auditoriums will be crowded with old and young who with a shared longing of heart impatiently wait to see what They have prepared for them. The audience is mostly made up of devoted and religious family people, children and adults. None of them find Krishna strange, or unapproachable. He is their life, their love, and worshiped God. He is an active participant of their earthly life.

When for the first Tara saw Lila she knew nothing about it. It seemed like she was introduced to an utterly new world of art, of an art noble and spiritual. An art form she had never dreamt of. Whilst watching Lila, her heart experienced yet another unfamiliar emotion. It felt like some kind of metamorphosis, she had previously only heard about from Arto. The experience of stage, for her, was an entrance of Divine reality... of facing God, looking Him in His eyes. As if the stage had embodied all the capability of feeling, all the existent volcanic emotion within her. What was there that moved her thus? It was this thought she cherished when afterwards she remembered that first encounter with Lila and Krishna. When at those moments of attendance to His voice and His perfectly gentle and aristocratic movements and dances, she experienced the eternal feeling of the beauty of living. Never before had she been so much alive and happy. She knew the actor on stage was cast as Krishna for he was exactly as the One described by the holy books, and by Dadu. The One the whole Vrindavan celebrated and about whom the devotees in their temples sang. She had been in India and Vrindavan for several months now and she learnt a lot about its strange culture, its beliefs and the way of life. However, this encounter with Lila was very powerful, it changed her in a beautiful, substantial, and utterly new way. It took her by surprise, developing spontaneously, and she ran with it.

She ran quickly as if lead by the arm of Providence. The surprising flood of emotions moved her, or rather, paralyzed her as she watched the play. The main actor was dressed in a dark green suit. He wore a large crown decorated with peacock's feathers. He carried a flute and spoke in a language she couldn't understand, although she most certainly understood the meaning of the performance, being unaware of how it all was possible. His face was beautiful, his eye brows dark and arched, painted and decorated with black kajal and golden spots. His eyes were wonderfully painted. His facial features were of a delicate male beauty, but most impressive was his expression. It embodied, a certain ethereal quality which his face radiated with.

"It was by far an unseen purity of soul, for me, the charm of Amour and the strength of pure, innocent character. The inner beauty of one who understood human relations, who feels for others, and is able to hear their hearts and the heart of his neighbour."

She almost feared the automatic connection with Krishna or with that person she was seeing for the first time, who seemed to be able to read from her soul already. She was so blissful that she didn't notice He was also aware of her. Thinking that he was oblivious to her existence she continued calmly watching Lila. She could understand the events upon which the plot was developing. All that happened on the stage seemed completely human, still strangely divine. The whole stage, the beauty of emotion she perceived with her eyes, her ears, and her heart felt familiar and simultaneously new to her. It didn't feel strange and incomprehensible to her heart. It didn't feel particularly close or distant. She was immeasurably happy. Her life was gathering a meaning she had never dreamt about, as she tasted the beauty of the unworldly here on this stage at this unusual theatre. She had been initiated into a world of art and comprehension which vastly differed from the one she had known, with Krishna in Vrindavan. It was as if the door of the world within her throbbing heart, during what seemed like an eternal quest for one's self and one's dearest was suddenly, unpredictably opened in front of her. She recognized the world of eternity and joy. As if it had always lain within her, and she had been looking for it elsewhere for such a long, long time. Now, it seemed she had come face to face with it. The door to self and infinity was finally opening, the door she found at this beautiful play which lay between her heart and the stage. Lila helped her to approach, at least for a while, or even enter that real world of her relation with the mystic Krishna, helped her to enter the world of her love.

All that was happening between her and her God within who was now starting to live for her, truly and more humanely. He was no longer a distant figure of an unreachable and unapproachable God. Suddenly He was there, in front of her and within her heart. As if He from the innermost spheres of her subconscious being went out and as if the spheres of the so far unknown self of hers started to live without. It was another, but more intensive, gift of the eternal feeling of being in love with God. Her delight went on.

The first encounter with many thing...

“By his spirit does the gentle man become him who can always transcend his lot.”

Seneca

It was December '96. A temple in Vrindavan organized the Ratha yatra festival (the ratha yatra is the festival of the wooden cart) in Kanpur, a town in the central part of India. There were around two hundred of us, mostly young westerners, hungry for adventure and travel, and taking part in various festivals. Traveling to Kanpur took us twenty hours by train. But it wasn't my first long journey through India. It's just that I remember it clearly. A feeling, a presentiment that I was flying on magical wings through a warm, humid Indian night in an atmosphere smelling of greatness and depth. It is impossible to know it in advance, for it comes from the Almighty will of Gods. It has left an immense imprint in my mind. As if there, on that train, I breathed in my fate, unaware of it, unaware of myself while reading a biography of Teresa of Avila, feeling it to be infinitely mine, so close to me. In those moments, separated from the rest of the travelers, lying on the upper bed in the car, with walkman music on my ears, I was passing through an experience of complete identification with her... or I may have been her for a moment... It was rock, pop, gothic, metal, grunge, and also some Indian music I listen to, while my mind roamed the monasteries where she had her visions and her conversations with God. I was so inspired, so fulfilled, so infinite. Only occasionally did the crazy musical mix transport me to Europe, to my strange present self.

Thousands of people were waiting for us at the station and I'm not exaggerating. Masses holding flowery garlands to be put around the necks of the arriving happy company. TV cameras and reflectors surrounded us while the Mayor of the town was holding his welcome speech. Amazing mix of inspired conventionality and unconventionality has always had an overlapping form in India. There was the mayor and serious and dignified priesthood on one side, and, on the other side, the arrived westerners, exhausted and half alive from train and long late night travel. We were crazed from the heat which had reached over thirty degrees at late midnight, and by the masses of people who found themselves at the station, either by chance or on purpose. The first real display of the Indian way of life, always a show. It seems that they always put out of great and seemingly important things inadvertently produce a real, complete, coincidental show, regardless of the nature of the motive – it may be a celebration and a tragedy simultaneously. I felt as if everything was a play in India, intentional or not, the play of humanity and of the chances in life. In those people I saw delight and the desire to enjoy life mixed with a

transparent and clear focus of mind – on death, on departures from one another, and perhaps on a more beautiful world. For this reason, whatever happens, an Indian will never respond absolutely seriously and finally. A life is like a film which doesn't know tragedy. Indian literature doesn't have tragedy. It only knows emotion. That particular evening, we arrived in Kanpur, the station was brimming with emotion of delight, euphoria, curiosity, and respect.

Naughty me, laughed with an Italian friend, who, irritated with the masses had started knitting that Italian neurosis around us, complaining to me about the crowds. It wasn't that I could get all the Italian meaning at that time, but I could tell that she was at the edge of screaming. That crowded moment of weariness drove her crazy. I tried to calm her, saying "calma ti," "take it easy," nodding my head, not in the rhythm of music I was listening to, because it really wouldn't be fair. You cannot know what it is, when an Indian crowd, delighted with you because you are white, blonde, or wearing their traditional costume, throng on to you. OOH! Indians do know how to celebrate. Westerners do know how to fuss.

We drove to the house of one of the richest men in India, and perhaps the world. He was from the family of Karunagvenka. It was a palace rarely experienced even by Western standards. Marble all around, huge halls and millions of rooms. Beautiful and clean. The first man I met on the staircase leading to my room wore a typical Indian mustache. Actually, all the traditional Indians, have mustaches and thus look a dozen years older than they really are. This man was of a pleasant appearance. He spoke to me in English telling that he was from Vrindavan and that he had come with the rasa lila theatre. I also learned that he was the manager of the troupe and that his brother had a role in the play. They were accommodated in the same palace but on the upper floor. He greeted us perhaps because he was looking forward to practicing his English, especially with a young white female. Indians have a weakness for the white female skin. But my collocutor was really very agreeable and not in the least conspicuous. He told me to come to lila the following day. Since it was too late, and the members of their company were mostly asleep, he couldn't introduce me to Thakurjee. I could hardly understand what he was speaking about, but I nodded, said goodbye, and pondered off. Where, how, what? No idea.

Ratha yatra was on the following day. There were so many participants that only God could count them. While I was dancing with my friends, leading the procession, we were passing by thousands of people who were celebrating, standing and waving to us. Thousands and thousands took direct part in the procession. Ratha yatra was a big wooden cart with the Deities of Jaganath, Baladev and Subhadra, on top, large and beautifully decorated...Thousands of people were tagging along beside the cart, while we, the participants from the West, were in front. with cords and police cordons, protecting our dance, or our white skins, or whatever police protect at a place of celebration. We were separated and protected from the huge bit terrifying crowd which celebrated with us. All rushing toward us were reporters, children, inquiring about our origins and names. The procession was several kilometers long, joyful, and magnificent. During the procession, we were served juices and food so that we may keep up until the very end. They were renowned people, with important positions in the town, who took care of our strength, and our health, determined that we don't give up due to thirst and exhaustion under the burning Indian sun and dust rising from the vast streets of Kanpur. The incessant dance and song lasted for five or six hours. The little books on philosophy I was carrying with me soon left my hands. The people I passed who took my books were more delighted with the fact that I was from Yugoslavia, visiting their country, and learning about their culture, than with the festival itself. They also asked me about the ex President Tito. As if the "angrezi" present at the celebration of their traditional festival was the most important thing for the citizens of Kandarpur. And "angrezi" meant whites. They all thought us to be English. One of their local papers published an interview with me and introduced me as an English woman from Yugoslavia. Indians are highly amusing sometimes.

I was tired and happy when the procession was over. We arrived at the point where the evening program was to take place. I felt unusually light, when I stepped into the huge podium. Several thousands of people were sitting and attending the theatrical performance. I felt as if I had changed my day wings for a new pair of evening ones. At first I didn't know what it was we were attending. I sat next to an old Indian women, who smiled at me wholeheartedly. She spoke to me but I could only respond with a smile. However, I think we understood each other in the end.

We witnessed a Krishna lila. A middle-aged man started singing in a beautiful but hoarse voice. It was rather cold after a whole day in the sun and procession. He looked magnificent and dignified, with a silk shawl around his neck. The song he was signing was so beautiful I couldn't tell if it was him or notes directly emanating from his heart. He was singing from his heart, and that was magnificently obvious. My heart responded as if it had known the song, although I had never heard it before. Radha and Krishna were sitting on a huge throne on the stage. I couldn't see them clearly. The glorious kathak dance started. Music, dance, and the general atmosphere were not from this world, almost as if I was secretly witnessing the world of their most beautiful God Shri Krishna. It was a magically spiritual experience, sitting in the audience, which consisted of thousands of spectators, in an unknown town, in central India. It was now that for the first time I felt so intensely the wonderful distant world yet hidden within the heart of each human being who truly seeks fulfillment in relation to their God and good people. I was a spectator of a beautiful culture that, to my surprise, felt strangely familiar although my roots were Montenegrin. I felt that there is only one culture, the culture of beauty, of offering, and divine love that is always the same for all of us. I felt alive and perfect sitting in the audience, at lila. I was becoming part of the universal dance, and it was only the beginning.

Suddenly Krishna stood up, and gracefully ran down from the throne. He took a fan made of peacock feathers. It was a huge fan, over one meter wide and long, and gorgeously coloured.. Keeping it behind his back and waving it gently, he fell to his knees and danced to charm his beloved Radha. She (or rather the actor who played the role) was holding a silver saucer full of biscuits. Krishna remained on his knees trying to grab a hold of the biscuit Radha was holding in her right hand, waving his fan, dancing, and moving his head this way and that way, right, left. When Krishna was about to grasp with his lips the biscuit Radha was holding, for that was what their play consisted of, he was supposed to dance and grab the biscuit with his lips, she would run away. Sometimes Krishna would succeed to have a bite of the biscuit. The audience was cheering him on to get as many biscuits as possible. The dance ended with Krishna still on his knees spinning first slowly and then faster and faster always widening the circle. His spinning was so fast in the end that I thought he would fall or stumble, or at least get dizzy with so many rotations and faint. But none of these happened. He then suddenly jumped to his feet and continued the

dance. After the introductory part started the lila I could follow, I couldn't understand the language and I could get the action because it was classically played in the naive style. It told how Krishna stole Radha's ring, showing her the moon to distract her so that she didn't notice when the ring disappeared from her hand. The entire audience saw how the ring disappeared but Radha did not. It was the motive of a great imbroglio until Krishna was forced to return the ring since Radha's friends intervened in the play stealing the flute, the cloak, and a few other things from Krishna while he was asleep. So, prior to returning his things he was forced to give them back the ring. Since Radha is his love and the air he breathes, Krishna sometimes "has to act absurdly, do stupid things, or make a joke" to provoke a conflict between the two of them and thus incite emotions. Dadu once told me that emotions in the spiritual world are lasting and follow the line of perpetual growth. Radha could never be bored with Krishna, I thought, and I laughed when the play ended. It was beautiful, unusual, and...

During the dance, towards the end of the play, I pondered who these men were, these men who lived in such proximity with God. Krishna is their God, and only a moment ago they were with him. I was deeply moved by them, by the fact of their existence. Never before have I seen such an earnest and close relation with Krishna. They lived with their families, in little villages around the district of Vrindavan, and they moved in the world of material things, while they lived Krishna and earned their living doing that. Unbelievable. I wanted to learn more about their life, their culture, about the meaning of their life. Krishna was everything to them. They depended on him entirely. He was somebody they knew, he was an unavoidable part of their every-day life, because he was the shepherd boy from their village. He was their friend and their love. There was no awe and distance, although they revered him and prayed to him singing while the lila was enveloping. They laughed with Him and cried with Radha and Him. They loved them. It was clear to me, watching those people who participated in the lila and those who were singing and playing in the little choir on the stage, that they had and lived a world and a life infinitely different from mine, but also infinitely happier than mine. I wanted to know all about their life.

Another lila was performed the next morning. Again there was Krishna's scheming and a lot of joy during the whole performance.

As if it had been a comedy. At the end the audience would get on the stage and offer donations to Shri Radha and Krishna. They would touch their feet, bowing with their arms folded. They offered money, flowers, and biscuits. I joined the crowd approaching the “living altar”. Before I touched Radha's and Krishna's feet I looked into Krishna's eyes, they were different from any eyes I had ever seen, eternally deep, shining, and black. Don't ask me why but tears started flowing from my eyes, I had no idea why, that took me by such a surprise, thus feeling ashamed and seeing nothing from that liquid decoration, I climbed off the stage and left.

I met the actors at breakfast in “our” palace, soon after. I was introduced to the young man who was playing Krishna. His brother, whom I met on the night I arrived in Kanpur, pointed at him saying he was the actor, the Krishna of their company, and invited him to join us for breakfast. The boy Krishna was reluctant because he didn't speak English, or for some other reason, but he joined us anyway giving into his brother's persuasion. He looked unlike the person on the stage. He was now completely different, much the same as the other boys from the company. However in my mind, the strange beautiful gleam on his face and in his eyes connected his present image with the one from the night before. I asked him about the beautiful song, after I succeeded to remember a word or two. He recognized it and started singing. He didn't speak English, I didn't speak Hindi, but we somehow understood one another. I felt he was communicating straight from the heart. And I was happy, so happy that I was there with them and that I again heard the song which was changing my heart...

That evening we the foreigners performed on the same stage. The Krishna Company was to perform after us. We sang for TV and for the great audience, but I never knew who I was singing to because my thoughts were submerged in a feeling of peace and strength. My identity was peace. Peace before the volcanic eruption of my emotions I can always sense their approach.. I had sensed them on the train, with Teresa of Avila, with my rock, gothic, metal, hard core...and now I could see the omens of storm. Oh, how infinitely beautiful it is, when the entirety of self becomes the conductor of the essential, the true, reality that exists, is happening, somewhere deep inside. Oh, God, how strange is this emotion I feel for the first time so intensely, which I

know is endless but also shaping me right now, changing me, taking me so high, carrying me away in the stone-like firm feeling of pure joy..

When, climbing off the stage I found myself inside the improvised dressing room of the boys from the rasa lila troupe, who were dressing and preparing for the performance, I was surprised and embarrassed. I had thought I was joining the audience down below and was looking for my seat in order to follow the rest of the program, but it turned out I somehow chose the wrong flight of stairs. How I happened to end up there and the rest of my company in the audience, I have no idea. Suddenly someone spoke to me. I was looking into an unknown face and listening to an unknown language, not understanding a word he was saying, ignorant of who he was. Then the manager approached me to say that it is his brother who is playing Krishna and translated his brother's words. "This evening you'll hear the beautiful song again," he said. I smiled, because I couldn't respond otherwise. I remained with them there cos it was too embarrassing to go out now, in the audience. They let me witness the process of their transformation, applying make-up, for the lila, which they seldom let people from the outside witness, as the brother, manager said. And, you see, the exceptions prove the rule...I did attend their preparations, being especially focused on Krishna. The boy, ignoring me, was quickly applying his make-up, his movements so precise, the task bordered on geniality and impossibility. Clearly he was repeating this process for the "millionth" time in his life. While I was talking to his brother manager, he interrupted and asked for my name. I said "Tara" and asked for his in return, his brother was quicker in reply but the actor denied the name, "nooo" he said, it was "Mohan", a name given to him by his guru, while the first one I heard was given to him by his parents, explained the brother manager.

That's how our friendship started. Or was it already something bigger than friendship by that time? I never saw an ordinary human in him. To me, he was always a medium to God, almost the living God embodied in a human body with a great part of Divinity within him. Still, he was a man, but no ordinary man.

Lila in Vrindavan

“When we die, the only thing we can carry with us is what we have given.”

Seneka

Gori is a middle-aged woman whose husband was somebody, a figure of importance in the temples of the States. On our return from Kanpur we became friends. She was from Venezuela originally and lived in Caracas. A fair woman with black hair, her facial counters perfect, and her mystic black eyes deep. She wore glasses. She was a connoisseur, having spent more than twenty years researching the essence of ancient Indian traditions, philosophy and culture, and her Hindi was fluent. She and her husband couldn't have a child, hence she devoted her life to her spiritual world and lived mostly in Vrindavan. She treated me as if I were her child, a child-friend. I was a kind of hanger-on, wherever she went I followed.. It is always important to take care of one's reputation in Vrindavan. It isn't advisable, and it is inappropriate, for a young white female to be alone in public, the programs or the lilas. All excluding shopping.

I wanted to know Vrindavan, its culture, and everything connected with lila. In short, lila became my obsession. Gori appreciated lila and had been a frequenter at lilas for over a decade. She knew everything about lila and about the stories lilas told. She also knew a lot about the family performing the lila, and about Mohan. She had known him since he was a child. In a way, he had grown up with her. She had been a friend of the family. The other natives respected her, primarily as an elder and educated. Since we were both strangers, westerners, and white females, in relation to our acquaintance with the local aristocracy, who had strict rules about the choice of friends from the

West, I felt as if I had fallen under severe scrutiny. Sometimes I even felt that I was being watched. Actually, everything in Vrindavan is as if under a magnifying glass. Gradually I learned about the whims of Vrindavan and its inhabitants and they got to know me as well. People would watch us, observe our behaviour, and our way of clothing. They were slow to open and become friends. We were observed everywhere. I felt as if all the fellow citizens knew one another well and that I, as well as the majority of the westerners staying there for extended periods of time, was like a spy, to be suspicious of, "do you belong here?" That's what we all wondered about from time to time. Occasionally this Indian chauvinism would get on my nerves, and I hated some of their customs I was expected to respect. My nature is one of a rebellious oppositions', and this would sometimes cause me to scream within and counter their outdated, retrograde thoughts, which, I was sure, had nothing to do with their Gods Radha and Krishna. One of their customs is that a Brahman should never marry a white woman, God forbid, or worse, that their girls should marry white men. This was simply IMPOSSIBLE. Such a marriage would immediately be discarded, the young pair would be outcasts from the community, so no one would even dare dream of doing anything like that.

The community accepted me quite easily and quickly, which is why I already had friends in a lot of local Brahman families. Sometimes we talked about those attitudes, and they would reply that desire and love must be controlled, that God and their parents have the best solution for their lives. Marriages are always arranged in Vrindavan. It was simply like that. There was even one temple in Vrindavan near the whites. I often came to that temple always observing it from the outside. It was strange, the feeling of being discriminated against. This was a Ranganath temple, built in the south Indian style of wonderful pyramidal architecture. We were not allowed to enter the two hundred year old building due to the colour of our skin and our not belonging to the Brahman cast. Huh, I was sometimes so sad because of that...

It was at this time that something unforeseen happened. An Indian married a white girl. It was an unprecedented scandal, which later, when their son was born, turned into a beautiful and festive event. The young white woman was finally accepted when she gave birth to a healthy son. She was also devoted to Krishna, and although she was white and from the west, she accepted all the traditional customs and recognized manners. She covered her face, as Indian women do, in front of all the male elders, even in front of her father-in-law.

Oh, how sometimes their strange traditions exhausted me. One can fight them only with purity of one's character and the decency of one's education and upbringing, which we, although westerners, inherited from our parents. So it happened that 'them' and 'us' were coming closer and closer, merging into one another. Slowly, conservative customs were dying. Perhaps, their untouchable enclosure originated from the time the English threatened India. The English lamed India in one way, but helped it in another. Indians were shocked to see half-naked tourists from the west welling up in Indian at the beginning of the seventies. Then the conservative and strict cultural tradition of Vrindavan clashed with its complete opposition, the hippy culture of free love. Apart from the liberated attitude and the desire for peace and love, hippy culture made a very negative impression on the citizens of Vrindavan and on the priesthood all over India. This impression was applied to all whites, especially white women which were a priori-held to be immoral. "Vrindavan is not a tourist place, so that the tourists coming here and smoking marihuana in this SACRED place desecrate our holy objects." These were the words of a temple president when we talked about the differences between east and west. There was a need to show and to prove that if one is white one isn't necessarily a blasphemer and immoral. The community was distanced, but not resentful. They wanted to check out who was coming to Vrindavan and for what purpose. Within the community, it was a public secret that some of its reputable and rich members from Brahman families were also poisoned by the material desires for money, women, and a better position in society. It wasn't easy living in Vrindavan. There was no privacy at all. The penetration of a foreign degrading culture was unavoidably desecrating the purity of the hearts of men and women of this time in Vrindavan. A strange chaos of thoughts and the collapse of norms flooded Vrindavan. Only the really pure and honest citizens were excluded from the ball of materially contaminated thinking. Since they, looking for purity embodied in Radha and Krishna who were always present in Vrindavan, with humble minds and open hearts, without false motives. They lived for love and lived love. How difficult and yet sometimes easy it is to embrace love. You can feel it moment to moment in Vrindavan. It was unbelievably difficult to enter the minds of the citizens of Vrindavan. To understand their minds and feelings. Having spent some considerable time there, they have proven to be no ordinary and typical humans, and that they really live in a more beautiful and wonderful world, a world very different from that which the observer and quester can discern with the physical eye.

There is also a mafia which prevents foreigners buying Indian land and settling in Vrindavan. Most of us were there for reasons of enlarging our awareness, to study ancient cultures, Hindi, music, Sanskrit, and to understand the life in love with God. Everybody talks about love in Vrindavan, but also about the weight, the intricacy, and illusions that await us on our quest. Being partly isolated, they protect themselves from "us" and at the same time, they were quite fascinated with "us". They approached with sympathy and humour the way in which we understood their holy books, the way we loved lila, and respected their sacred places. Gradually we adapted, and in spite of our differences we started to love one another.

Gori spent a lot of time in Vrindavan, she would stay for a whole year and only from time to time would she return to Los Angeles. Soon she accepted me and introduced me to the family of the boy acting Krishna. She was my mother's age. I was now far away from my real mother, having stayed in Vrindavan for months. God wanted my mother were with me, and she was with me, through Gori and through Mummy.

Who is Mummy?

Mummy was the Krishna actor's mother. She was of the same age as my mother, and she was born in the same month in the same year. Maybe even on the same day, I'm not sure. Chubby, just like my mother, the middle-aged Indian woman was of exceptional beauty with large eyes, and high-arched eyebrows, and beautifully contoured lips. She used to laugh at Gori and myself whenever we called in. She couldn't say a lot, since she didn't speak English, but somehow we got along just fine. Our way of communicating was highly humorous as we knew exactly what we were attempting to say. Of course deep philosophic talks were not those. We spoke mostly about lila, jobs around the house, or some other private stuff. Her household was huge, but she ran it peacefully and with dignity, observing each member of it and knowing "all" that was happening around it. Dozens filed through the house, children, guests, house members. She supervised them all. Mummy was a woman, how shall I say, of exceptionally strong character, she had enough love for everybody in her house, and there were many. Enough to drive one mad from time to time, children and adults fidgeting around rooms and halls, or playing Indian games in the backyard. Mummy was in charge of the family's finances, taking care not to spend a rupee on anything that wasn't really necessary. The family of the Krishna boy wasn't poor, nor too well off. Mummy would double check each rupee before spending it. She soon was saving my money

on my behalf too. I spend it too easily, so Mummy was the best bank in the world to save it. She didn't want me to trouble myself carrying it around all the time. My God, one spends money like water in Vrindavan. Millions of devoted beggars, holy persons, false persons, children are always around you, begging. You need lots of coins to be able to pass the beggars and donate to the temples. One feels terrible and miserly, otherwise. But, they are no ordinary beggars, the lame, and the groups of children. They were organized teams who would surround you with no way around until you handed over some chocolate or ice-cream. The way they played the imploring little mortals who could only be saved by an ice-cream or a biscuit! Ah, if you could see those faces? Just until they got what they wanted, then the brilliant metamorphosis would take place on their faces! Everyone's an Actor in Vrindavan!

Everybody loved Mummy, because she was extremely attentive and successful in taking care of her family and of its business. Mohan, the Krishna boy, loved her more than anybody. He would sit in her lap and she would caress and kiss him, as if he was a child and not a grown up man. Their relationship was open-hearted and spontaneous. She held in her arms the fortune of her youngest son. She was in charge of his future. It was she who would choose a wife to spend the rest of his life with. I wondered if it's the trust he cherished or a conviction and belief he was brought up on or a conviction forced upon him by the tradition of his caste. One thing was certain; he would never oppose her will. Still, there was something he was hiding from her. Mummy possessed that deep intelligence of old people and the delicacy of character that reminded me of my mother. Thorough, unobtrusive, like a moving rock, strong and always present. They had so much in common. I suppose all mothers do. Mummy always had one eye a little closed, and I didn't feel that it was a good sign, but I was wrong. Oh, how our senses can mislead us sometimes.

**In the family...
in the strange lila-play of life ...**

“This time is a wilt time but it will past.”

Eliot

Walking through the outer gate and then a short open passage one comes to a blue wooden door that leads into a big hall, with open roof. It is a cemented part that resembles a garden with a tulasi plant and a few little trees. The garden leads into the house, actually into the parlour where the family welcomes visitors. Opposite are the stairs which lead to the temple and the family's altar. The temple has two rooms, the hall preceding the altar made of red cement, and the room containing the altar. Access to the altar is only allowed for the priest or a male member of the family who performs the ritual of worship or the liturgy (aratik). Occasionally the family's female members may approach the altar. Since I soon became part of the family I used to sit with them, in the cemented hall of the house. Becoming a part of the family was not as easy for the other visitors, as I learned from Gori. Mohan's dad, whom we called Babujee, once told us "if God wants you to live with us, you will live with us." Somehow it seemed that they wanted me to visit them. I don't know why. Soon I felt at home with them, due to the paternal love I received from Mumy and Babujee, and

certainly because of the Divine Love the family so tenderly and heartily cherished in their chosen way of living.

They lived with Krishna. It was Thakurjee Radhakant, as they called the Krishna at their house altar. The divinity was a few hundred years old. Made of shining brass, Radha and Krishna smiled at the visitors of their home. It is the ground floor where the family lived too. There they had a kitchen, a spacious room where the musicians used to practice, as well as a couple of bedrooms. The children's rooms were on the upper floor. The actors also had their rooms upstairs. There, most of the time they held their rehearsals. The children were darlings with exceptional beauty. To be accepted to play in the theatre they had to be beautiful and talented. One can work on one's talent for a lifetime, but a lila actor needs to possess something special and it was their precious desired dream to play lila. These children really wanted it. They very well knew the importance of lila. They knew it wasn't a naïve childish game but a serious and wonderful play of God. They were all beautiful boys, between the ages of six to twelve. The troupe also contained some adults, even older than sixty years in age. However, there was a group of ever present smaller children which lived in the house. They were separated from their families, whom they visited only once in a while. But they loved being there and living their somewhat strange childhood. If a child ever wanted to quit lila, which was indeed rare, he would soon be sent home and replaced.

There was another little boy who played Krishna. He was lovely, exceptionally clever, but withdrawn, shy and hardly approachable. Somehow, I managed to find a way to communicate with him and we became friends. I asked him to sing me a couple of songs from lila so that I could record them with my walkman. He started to sing, his expression serious, like a fifty year old man not a ten year old boy.. Once I gave him a see-through ball one couldn't find in India and he was so happy that he played with it whenever he wasn't at a rehearsal. If he misbehaved, not obeying Mummy, she would take the ball away from him and not give it back until he did as expected. The ball became an object of blackmail as well as a symbol of joy..

Biharij, the little Krishna boy, was like an adult, except that he was small. He knew exactly how to behave in certain situations, what to do when he was with children and how to conduct himself when with adults. Although he was reserved with me at first, he soon grew to love me, without displaying his feelings in front of the others. One day he

asked me to sit beside himself so that he could hear if I'd learned a word from a song he sang. It was a word I had difficulties pronouncing correctly. I couldn't understand the problem because I used to pronounce it the way the other children did, but he was never satisfied. I kept repeating the word until he suddenly said "tikhe", meaning "all right," I'd got it. The problem was in the letter "k" which Indians pronounce in two different ways for which I needed time in order to recognize the sounds of two different "k". Bihari was like my little brother but of course, he couldn't approach me too closely because the children lived in isolation and were prohibited from making loose contact with people other than their closest relatives. And they were never spoiled, for instance never crying over some unimportant things as other children would. They matured and grew up so quickly, within the world of lila, the stage, and around the adults.

The father of the Krishna player, babujee, was the head of the family and the troupe. He was a fifty year old man with an exceptionally beautiful face and character. As a child and as a young man he also played Krishna and was respected and well-loved in Vrindavan and India. Actually he was the most celebrated of all the Krishna's. His group of actors was the most popular of the hundred groups that existed in Vrindavan at that time. His son was also famous. Babujee was an excellent singer and musician, but he was also a good-hearted and honourable man. He and I were becoming closer. At first he could never approach me as his child, because he had never had a daughter, but in time, as he was getting used to me, he would call me his baby several times a day. He probably couldn't envision himself with a white child. But soon he called me "betha" "my child," as he had called his own children and all those he loved.

Apart from the brother manager, the family had another, third, son. This one wasn't as connected with lila because he was fragile and often ill. His name was Ravi. He was the most beautiful of all the brothers but he couldn't play lila. He used to stay home and take care of Mummy, his sister-in-law, the rest of the family, as well as their little shop. All day long he would sit in that shop listening to Indian trash-techno-pop and write the names of the Gods on a notebook cover. Quietly, day after day, he would sit there, but it was almost as if he wasn't really there at all. He also had no interest in getting married. Mummy found this to be a problem of gravest importance, as she often told me in confidence. I would attempt to console her by, telling that something would eventually arise. I never knew what I meant, but she accepted it as a

relief. Later he went to Bombay; became the chief of a department in a firm and married a wonderful girl who gave him many children. The first brother was married and when i came his wife was pregnant. Apart from them, there were always other relatives in the house, coming from neighbouring villages, to help around the house. I made friends with Mita, a beautiful cousin girl with who i had so much fun in the housework. She was fifteen at that time, but such an amazing spirit, of purity and seriousness in life...and she did not want to marry. I supported her against the family tradition to get married at that age. We succeeded. She went to college and became a graduate instead.

The house was always swarming with people so that a notion of privacy was incomprehensible. Perhaps they didn't need privacy, their privacy was in lila. The principles this family, and all the other families in Vrindavan respected were very conservative. They still obeyed the traditions of the ancient times. Not one unmarried girl, who was not a relative, was allowed to enter the family house, except under certain exceptions with her parents.. All the young men, especially Mohan, were isolated from the society of unmarried girls. They were expected to marry a girl of their mothers' choice. Besides, the girl had to be from the same caste and almost always she had to be from Vrindavan. The young men and boys from lila went to a spiritual school, never mixing with ordinary boys and never attending ordinary schools. They were isolated from the world of cinema and discos. They only had one TV in the house which they would gather around from time to time to see a decent Indian movie. Their contact with the outer world was limited to the moments they performed in larger towns, towns which they never found interesting enough. Their life primarily consisted of lila, and the stage. They wanted this particular life, and it was only such a life that made them happy.

The children of lila cherished the great knowledge of the holy Vedas. They knew by heart whole chapters, epics, and verses from the Bhagavad-Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Upanishads, and Puranas. Verses about eternity and the noble love of God. The wise rested in the little vivid bodies of those children. In spite of all the isolation, by a miracle, I was allowed to enter the house. It was all very strange to me. A secret beckoned me there, wanted me to build friendships with the people whose blood ran and whose whole life was lived desiring an eternal Vrindavan and the eternal divinities of their hearts, Radha and Krishna. Breaking the rules of yore, disobeying the

rules of yore, they accepted a new person into their home. It was absolutely out of all norms of their strict caste society. I also felt that the person who sincerely wanted me there was Mohan.

What was my motivation?

How did we become so close? One evening, passing by their shop, which at that time I didn't know was theirs, I heard someone calling my name. I turned around and saw the brother manager. He called me in. We stood and talked for some time. Mohan soon arrived and started imitating me and making me laugh. He became dear to me in a strange way. They invited me to join them for lunch the next day. If I hadn't accepted, they would have thought it disrespectful to them. I had to go with Gori. Soon a pattern evolved and whenever I went to leave they would express their wish of seeing me again. In no time at all, my visits became obligatory. If I missed one day they would ask me millions of questions as to why. They wanted to spend time with me simply because I loved their lila. That's what the elder brother had told me, "At once I knew that you were ours, first thing I saw you," except that he had thought I was forty five years old. I was only twenty six. White females always seemed older to him, much older.

Often on ekadashi, the eleventh day after the full moon, Mummy and I would go on a pilgrimage around Vrindavan. On this day, the moon has a great influence on the oceans provoking tides and ebbs, effecting the movement of human bodily fluids too. Therefore, for logical medicinal reasons, as well as for some mythological reasons, it is advisable to fast on cereals, beans, and grains. On this particular day thousands of people will go on a two to three hour pilgrimage around Vrindavan. Each time, the pilgrimage would help Mummy and I become closer to one another. We would bring rosaries and say prayers. Mummy never had enough time; hence she was never motivated to do this at home. Ekadashi parikrama, as the pilgrimage is called in Hindi, was an opportunity to visit the world of God, meditation, and paying respect. Yet Mummy found it exhausting. We walked bare feet and her feet would get swollen so that she could hardly walk towards the end of it. Once back home I would bring her warm salted water to bathe her feet and she would immediately advise me to do the same. She took such gentle care of me, and I took care of her. We must have been a humorous couple to see, a white girl with a rosary, and Mummy, an old Indian mother, an aristocratic woman, with her

rosary, together on a pilgrimage around Vrindavan, and together at her home.

Mummy would often embrace me; kiss me, as if I were one of her children. She loved me somehow. Actually, she behaved thus only with me and with Mohan. Whenever I was absent from home, and I'm highly irresponsible about phoning, she would criticize me upon my return, because she would worry. She used to say that Vrindavan could be a dangerous place for young white females and that my absence was yet another worry. I thought her panic was exaggerated and I would calm her saying that nothing bad was going to happen to me, and promising that next time I would ring her. Another Mummy, my own Mama in Montenegro would always make me give her a note regarding my movements.

Then there were the lilas again. All the roles were played by small boys. The lilas were led by bab (abbrev. babujee), or sometimes by Mohan. Listening to them every day, I could better understand the plot, but I was still ignorant about the details. In time I grew to know that a deep philosophy of life and feelings was hidden in lila, the poetry they recited and in the songs they sang. In time I became completely overwhelmed by a desire to grasp all knowledge in relation to it all. I wrote down songs and started singing them on harmonium. He sang a few songs for me which his friend had translated so that gradually I was able to enter the world I always desired, a world of Divine love, poetry, and music. I didn't get very far, it's not a cheap world, but it seemed to me that the spiritual poetry and lila helped me recognize, more and more, the open doors of that world, its beautiful fragrance and colours. It was ancient poetry, of saints who surrendered all their possessions to God Krishna, of Surdas, the blind devoted poet who lived a few centuries back in time, of Rasa Khan, the Muslim poet who became Hindi saint, of Mira bhaj, the queen from the fifteenth century, who left her kingdom and came to live and die in Vrindavan marrying Krishna and surrendering her heart to the God Krishna who lived in her poetry.

Mohan and I gradually developed a relationship of close appreciation and shyness of emotions. When Mummy and I once returned from parikrama, he ran towards Mummy and told her something in secret, and then, so that no one could see, he turned towards me making a couple of grimaces, and sort of went to close the door of the hall in front of me, joking with me and flirting. It was the first time he came close to me,

stepping over the border of friendship. I smiled, knowing what it meant, feeling a strange trepidation. We were coming closer to one another, making grimaces and communicating with our eyes. I didn't want to delay the approval, of my expectations. In my mind I understood his behaviour and wanted to know what he felt, really. I didn't want to realize afterwards that it was but another of my barren fixations. Once we had an argument in front of Mummy, and I stayed away the following two days. Everybody asked about me, but Mummy didn't know or understand my reasons. It turned out we quarrelled about the differences in our cultures. "People fight when they love one another," his brother said, because all the house members wanted us to make it up. And I had told Mohan's brother that I loved Mohan, and that I was hurt by Mohan's misunderstanding my culture. His brother called him and when he came he was worried. It pained him that he should hurt me, and he had never really intended to do anything like that. Maybe it was a cosmic arrangement in order for the two of us to confess what we really felt for each other.

When I told his brother I loved Mohan, his brother laughed, he was happy, and he couldn't believe his ears. I wasn't sure at the time what it was that was so unbelievable about it, except that I was but a little bit older than Mohan and white? Apart from this I wasn't sure what, the problem could possibly be. And Mohan had confessed that he loved me. He said that his heart was always with me, but that marriage would be an impossibility because of tradition which was strictly obeyed by his family. I was simultaneously happy, sad, and angry. I thought if he really loved me, he would do something. It was only later I realized one of the main traits of his character was that he was prepared for great sacrifice in order to satisfy his elders. He would accept deep personal sufferance, as long as others would be contented. That was my defeat. It was as if I'd been in a movie whereby the two main characters loved each other but could not be together because of the norms of a caste and customs thousands of years old. And this all was occurring at the turn of the twentieth century. Yet, I never lost hope, hope for something I couldn't articulate at that time. I wondered how deeply did I belong there? To what measure were my emotions shaped to last in a world so different from that of my origin? Hard lessons awaited me, painful lessons, yet beautiful at the same time, an experience almost bordering life's reality.

I avoided him purposefully for days, and then one morning, we unexpectedly met. He was serious and never made a grimace like before. We felt so close, as if we belonged to one another. We behaved more freely in front of his parents. They didn't know about our love, and we kept it hidden in our hearts. Within the family, all but the eldest brother, no one knew about our love, although the other brother sensed something. But it was our secret and he began to pay me more respect. None of the immaturity young people often show when the person they love finally confesses returned feelings. When, because of either the wrong motivation, ego or selfishness, they start inflicting pain, or they turn to the other extreme of uncontrolled gratification until they become fed up with one another and quit..

He was mature and he was friendly. One of the ways to prove my love for him was to continue showing love and respect to Mummy and the rest of his family. Mummy was the most important, she was the woman of the house and she would surely be the first to understand what was happening between Mohan and me, but, maybe due to a miracle, she didn't. We pretended indifference so cleverly but how we burnt with the desire to be close every minute, and to be distant at the same time. Our love moved us and was spinning us around, but our expressions were icily cold. Our eyes were burning with the fire of rift. The same fire that was burning our hearts and souls. But soon we would quarrel, more accurately I would become angry with him. We could be together only in the company of the elders, and Mummy was our favourite person in whose company we felt we could conduct our coming together, the most loving being who didn't discern our secret, who was unconsciously offering us the space and the time for those beautiful, precious moments of play.

New lilas were being staged. He performed as Krishna. Everything was different this time. He now belonged to me more than to the others, and it was through him Krishna was communicating to me, and felt closer to me. Those were the most beautiful days of my life. I could love them both yet I could tell them apart. I would get angry with him if he was suddenly Mohan instead of Krishna, and I didn't want to communicate with him, and he would try so hard to make me happy. With one trifle thing or another, to show it wasn't his attention to interfere in my relationship with God, with Krishna. Gori knew about our feelings. She could also discern Mohan from Krishna. She knew when he was in deepest contact with Krishna, and also when he'd obviously turned towards the world, forgetting Krishna. Lila would

always bring an atmosphere of unusual, extraordinary, and fresh emotion. It was lively and beautiful when Mohan would get completely absorbed in his thoughts about Krishna. Thousands of people attending lila felt it. As if our hearts were but one barometer or detector of a divine presence and beauty was feeding our souls. I had two other friends who knew all about Mohan and me. Everybody enjoyed lila, but only a few of us knew how much Mohan could give and how much he was really giving. At some of the lilas he was more of an actor, and Krishna wouldn't be so present, but there were others, like Vasant, the spring lila, which were absolutely perfect.

It was vasant panchami or the fifth day of spring in India. Everyone wears yellow and all the altars and temples are decorated with yellow silk, yellow flowers, even yellow rice is offered that day. I had never seen so much yellow around me, so many joyful nuances of yellow. It was February, my birthday, and no one knew but Krishna. He presented me a most precious gift no one but He could give me, the gift of restless love. By a miracle, it is you, the insignificant little attender to lila, you are being given the most beautiful present of emotions which transform, ennoble, destroy, build, and feed. No one, according to the ancient tradition, was more of non belonging to the noble society in Vrindavan, on that day at the lila but me. Sometimes I would feel the sorrow of being labeled, but I was also happy to be a part of everything, because of Mohan. He was my ticket in to the world of Krishna's love. Shyly but intensely our relationship existed. I had come to lila with a few friends of mine. The music started, and the curtain was rising. Each person wore a yellow dress. Radha and Krishna were watching their audience. I was always shy to look into Krishna's eyes, at least I didn't want to be the first person to look him straight in the eyes, so I needed some twenty minutes to get accustomed to his look. Probably because I was angry with Mohan from the previous day and the previous lila, because again he didn't let Krishna come through him. Miraculously, this lila was about Shri Radha being angry with Krishna. Throughout the play, Krishna was trying to cheer up his Radha. They were singing beautiful songs, and one of the songs claimed that it was a vasant panchami and if there was someone angry with somebody they would remain angry for the entire remaining year. From time to time Mohan would look at me imploringly with his eyes begging me to stop being angry. My friend noticed it. "Can't you see Krishna is looking at you all the time!" one of them said. I smiled, passing on my anger and getting rid of it. I could

see he was really deep today, that he deeply felt the lila. I could see the emotion within him was swelling, and that the whole audience, as if it was but one being, was breathing in the emotion by which Mohan was playing Krishna. The same emotion Mohan was passing onto us, the skies, and Vrindavan. He produced, incited, and transmitted the emotion, strong and in-containable, volcanically strong, and volcanically beautiful, with which he moved the world without. The stage was suspended above the river; hence the audience would follow the performance from the river banks and little boats. I was in one of the little boats, near the stage. The moment in mind was free of anger, Krishna stopped looking at me as often. By the end of the performance he had only looked at me a few times, which was a good thing, as I didn't want special attention; I just wanted him to be Krishna for the time being...And he was. The show soon ended with all the sakhis (Radha's friends), the boys dressed and made up as girls throwing tons of flower petals in their direction. It was wonderful to see Shri Radha and Krishna slowly disappearing into a heap of yellow-rose flowers. The people started singing and celebrating, everybody wanted to throw flowers on Radha and Krishna, who were almost buried beneath so many flowers. And then they suddenly got up and started throwing the flowers back at the audience. Krishna jumped over the boats and onto the bank also throwing flowers...Never before had I witnessed so many flowers and so much happiness. Then he started throwing flowers at the sisters from the temple where the asthayam lila was to take place, he threw them at Gori and also at our other friends. He had ignored me and the friend I was sitting beside, as if we didn't exist. But it didn't matter because we were so happy regarding the people around us. We were as happy as children hence we never felt excluded. All the other boys and Shri Radha were throwing flowers at us, but not he. And then suddenly, he appeared with his arms full of flowers. He looked at us, and said: "Now you will also be given flowers, I ignored you until now, because the two of you are especially dear to me," and then he started throwing flowers on us. It lasted perhaps one minute. The attention of the shouting and celebrating audience was solely focused on us. He then climbed the stage and continued throwing flowers in our direction.. Everybody could see Krishna singling us out, and sending us this special message of love. When he threw the flowers from the stage, it was as if he was telling me "see, can this make you sure of my love, this being a

special love...” I got the message and I was happy. I didn’t expect this bravery from Mohan to publicly show his affection to two white females in public. It was the most beautiful lila of all. Afterwards he went to the temple with the old mother and we didn’t meet.

How angry I had been with Mohan the day before! At lila, at which Krishna was throwing food at the audience, I could clearly see he was taking the sisters side from the temple of the old mother. I knew it was him, not Krishna his character. Did he think this was the right way to react? But, the real Krishna does not take sides and gives to everybody equally and in such a manner they deserve. At the end of the performance, while he was throwing biscuits at the audience I didn’t want to look at him hence I didn’t receive one. Once at home, in the kitchen, after the lila, I clearly pointed out my anger. He approached by saying, “I understand how you feel, I tried several times to throw you a biscuit but you never looked at me.” He uttered this in half-English phrases using mimics. I didn’t care for biscuits really, but what hurt me is that he was too subjective and not letting Krishna act through him. I tried to tell him but he left the kitchen immediately and returned with a little biscuit he was saving for me. It was from the lila. He could see the expression on my face at lila, I wasn’t happy because he didn’t let Krishna come through, as much as I was used to seeing. He brought the biscuit to console me. I was consoled and a little happier. Still all of this was so philosophically complicated. It was a conflict and misunderstanding between the philosophies we learned and lived at that time. Actually, our philosophies had same basis, but he was modifying it, which frightened me. The very idea of Mohan’s straying towards a spiritual falsity, as many did in Vrindavan, was agonizing. He had Krishna and the perfect way of transmitting Krishna to the lila audience, but how supported was his philosophical knowledge? What, indeed, did his inner understanding consist of? I had no idea. We couldn’t communicate our awareness, and that was yet another concern. His character was pure, which at times was my sole comfort and I didn’t want his purity ruined. It felt as if my role was to warn him, and he knew it. He could read what people felt about him and lila, but he was still young and people could exploit and spoil him. I wrote to him, imploring him to try and really embody Krishna on the following lila, instead of willfully improvising.

When vasant panchami was over he knew that everything was again all right with us and that I was no longer hurt. Still, on the following day,

a feeling of disappointment reared up in me. I probably wasn't ready to let it go and pretend everything was fine so soon after such a badly performed lila. I couldn't and didn't want to forgive him that easily. I didn't even want to attend lila or to come near him. He didn't seem to like my attempted escape. We met at his house. It was the first time I had seen him preoccupied and sad. I was sitting with Mumy and he hadn't spoken a word to me, he had completely ignored me and just left. When soon I was to go, his brother told me that Mohan was sad, very sad, because of me, because I was still angry with him, and advised me not to let another day pass without having a talk with him. He wanted me to say that I was no longer cross because there was no reason to be. I wrote a letter to Mohan then, explaining the philosophical ground of my resentment...

Although he had not read the letter his next lila was performed exactly as I'd pleaded. I could hardly believe he didn't know about the letter, but it was true, he didn't, he didn't have time to do so, as he had told me afterwards. Perhaps, receiving it just before the lila, he didn't want to be meddled by the emotions of a simple girl in love with him, maybe it would have interfered with his meditations. He had to be calm and lucid before lila, spiritual and pure.

On the next day he performed his last lila perfectly. History repeated. It was not the same lila as the previous evening, but the last scene was also played out on the river and similarly ended with biscuits thrown at the audience. He didn't care about the individual personalities in the audience, but deeply inspired, he was throwing his biscuits to those who really wanted something from Krishna, which meant thousands of outspread arms. In the end, everybody I spoke to, in the audience had been positive that God, Thakurjee was actually present on that day. This time he was serious and unfathomable. I was very happy.

I wondered how it was possible that he could read my heart without knowing it, how it was possible that he played exactly as I had asked him in the letter to do if he had never read. Did it mean we were deeply connected within, because both of us loved Krishna? I didn't know how to explain all that was happening. Where did such an understating of heart, when verbal communication was disabled, come from? He didn't want to speak to me for he couldn't be so precise in English, he did not speak well. He wanted me to come to an understanding on my own, of how he felt. His love shouldn't hurt anyone else but him. His feelings stayed inside. This I had learned only later. He gave me Krishna and I was truly happy at the lilas.

The troupe soon went to perform in a town very far from there, and I left for Nepal to obtain another Indian visa. I returned a day after they did, twenty three days after the last lila. I hadn't seen him in such a long time. We had separated with me being angry. Because he had not read my letter and because of his ignorance regarding my personality and my aching heart I decided to stay angry. Oh, the youth, Yesenin would say, "Of the unripe green youth when will thou pass, when will you bring me the peace of maturity." Throughout my journey I realized he wanted to sacrifice his feelings, he didn't want to hurt me. It seemed to me that he clearly wanted to point out that there was no real hope for us, and that we should bury in our hearts our feelings towards one another, without letting them become realized in the world of our reality. Our connection was Krishna Himself, and that's where both of us felt happy and protected. He wanted me to understand this. Without saying much more just to understand it in my heart. I thought it was the end of our relationship and that we should remain friends. I planned at how I would estrange myself from him, and how to tell him that my heart would from then on be forever closed to him. I was afraid of both. I was afraid of a continuation, or a disconnection. I kept telling myself that it would be as God was willing because I didn't know what I wanted. All the paths, back and fro, were closed for me, were impossible, unbelievable, horrible, beautiful, and sad all at once. I was happy to have known him, and that this beautiful person had given and taught me so much. I was now ready to accept the end. It is unbelievable how India and Vrindavan and the people living there are always prepared for the end. I was now learning from them.

Everyday, life would start anew. Everyday afresh I would awaken my love from its sleep, thinking that termination was about. So many people, the swarming crowds, so much human passion made me aware of my little and insignificant existence, which could be separated from love by anything, and brought into love only by God. All I had to do was not to go to Mohan's home. I knew, I could take the first plane, fly west, and see him never more. And all the time, since that evening we opened our hearts in his house, he felt for me. The same intense emotions with awareness that love lasts which is all that really mattered to him. And then he became incomprehensible and I started losing faith in him. It all culminated in anger which determined our separation that day.

When I returned from Nepal Mummy got weaker and repeatedly fell ill.

The first thing I was told by Mohan's brother was "Tara, come, you must speak to Thakurjee , he was sick all throughout the lila, he didn't perform, he didn't eat. He was at the hospital. He hasn't eaten anything for five days now. He's grown thin and largely depends on you. You must go and tell him he should start eating. You must tell him." I was passing by his room, taking something to the kitchen, when he called out to me. When I entered his room his brother was laughing and translating his words to me about how he hadn't eaten for so long. I said: "What's happening, why you don't eat, is it jaundice?" He approached me, stood in front of me, so close; expecting me to look into his eyes and check out the jaundice for myself. I looked at his eyes, but they weren't yellow, which would be one of the symptoms. It was these words and this gesture I suppose, which cured. He was eating the following day. I couldn't believe that he wasn't coping with my anger, and that only a tiny little gesture from me, an acknowledgment that our relationship had not ended, could cure him so effectively. From this moment on, he never doubted my love. It was the first time for both of us to experience anything of the kind. Both of us were for the first time close to the person we loved, and loved so strongly, living the intensity of these unpredictable emotions, when they were to be tamed, and, at the same time, letting them to shape and create us. Our love was a platonic love. Love of the eyes, of heart, and of a few words...but how strong it was...

The next day I had brought him some homeopathic medicines which he was taking regularly and which ultimately helped towards a speedy recovery. When the last, eight asthayam, lila began, he was perfect. On one of those days Mummy had had an operation. Since Rama, her daughter-in-law, was pregnant and couldn't take care of her, and all the rest of the family was at lila, a couple of family cousins and I were to attend Mummy. I wanted to help although I had obligations in the temple shop where I volunteer and had to be present at lila. Once, when Mohan's lila wasn't so brilliant I intentionally escaped the other. He came to the hospital to see Mummy and asked me why I did not come to see the lila. On the day before the last lila, Mummy came out of hospital. We were all present in her home when she told us she would attend the last lila as it was about Radha and Krishna's wedding. A car came to pick up Mohan and take him there. Mummy suddenly said she wanted me to go with him and that she would come later. Incredibly again, the two of us were alone in the car, which was according the

strict rules of the Indian religious society absolutely inappropriate. Never does it happen that Krishna actor stays alone with young lady publicly nor privately, no matter who she is. Those boys are considered as the medium to God. Their reputation must not be questioned. It is if the reputation gets ruined, a great disgrace resulting in the banning of performing on the official and important happenings. Later Mumy didn't come. We were heading towards the car when Mohan suddenly turned towards me. Taking great care that we weren't watched, he made a gesture reminiscent of a prince or a real gentleman bowing to his beloved lady and showing "padaro", "here you are," milady, into the coach. I bowed and thanked him for his kindness. We got into the car and I didn't mince my words saying that each asthayam lila was more of a Mohan lila than a Krishna lila. I smiled and begged him to let it be Krishna lila. He replied that it was the real lila and that the problem was with me, because I couldn't accept the old mother who had organized it all. It was a woman in her late sixties who had a temple and was an outstanding devotee. But somehow I couldn't accept her completely. I thought she was using Mohan to experience the proximity of Krishna. But that's what all of us were doing, wasn't it? We were all looking for Krishna through Mohan. The woman was taking care of him. They were singing songs, and crying for Krishna and the world of eternal love. They went on pilgrimages together, visited various temples, did humanitarian work and Mohan loved the company of the sisters. They were all over fifty-sixty, little grannies, who adored him. I was jealous, and in fear that someone else was taking his heart away from me. When one day we talked about her, his brother was translating for him, he said she was like his mother and she felt for him as if he was her child. It was true, of course. I was afraid of all the rich people that surrounded him, who gave him so much, and probably had beautiful rich daughters. A lot of stuff went through my head! I was also afraid for his purity. Yet, those people were not part of his family or his private life and I was. They knew him in another world, the world of lila and the stage. He was a living Krishna for them, a star. They never visited his house, they didn't dare become close with his family. He had become a kind of living icon for them, an icon who had to be listened to, watched, respected and worshiped only...

The final lila lasted nine hours and it was the pure Krishna lila. How could he endure to act and sing and dance all that time! Astha kaliya

lila means twenty four hours of lila-plays divided into eight lilas each lasting three hours. The old books keep precise records of what Krishna is doing any given minute in the world of his. He dances, sleeps, wakes up, runs through the woods, and meets Radha. The three hours turned into five, six, and then nine hours of stage performance. Various levels depict Krishna's world. One of the levels is occupied by Krishna, his mother Yashoda and his father Nanda, the other inhabits Krishna's friends Sudam, Shridam, Madhumangal, on the next Krishna and Radha are grown up and married. There are also levels where they are children again, playing with their friends Lalita, Rati and Rupa Manjaris. At the time I couldn't quite understand all of this. Most of all I liked observing Krishna and Radha together, it didn't matter where.

Those lilas usually lasted five to seven hours a day and being so intense it was difficult to perform them on a daily basis. The last lila presented us with the wedding of Krishna and Radha. How much delight, how huge crowd, a spectacle with lights, decorations around the temple and the stage, and me so exhausted fearing that I might fall asleep sitting. And I did, in the lap of Mohan's aunt, I had to lean on her and walk the planet of dreams if for a few minutes only. I was terribly exhausted because of the past few hectic days, attending Mummy in the hospital over night, working in the morning in the temple shop, and attending lila in the afternoons. I almost forgot to eat; I didn't feel hunger. My soul was fed by emotions and the intensity of life, and my body followed my soul. I used the long musical introduction to close my eyes and feel the love and peace the music was bringing. I saw him looking at me from the stage. He understood my exhaustion, "Oh, you were so tired, and I could see Tara closing her eyes on my aunt's lap," he told me later, laughing.

After a short sleep I felt much better. Lila started and all the conscious and unconscious particles of my being attended. As if nowhere else existed the world, as if all that existed was in this hall, on the stage, and within me. He was sitting on the throne, beautiful, magnificent. Soon a wooden litter was brought in which he sat upon. It was a beautiful litter, decorated with flowers. He was carried out on the street. The audience from the temple followed. Huge loudspeakers in front of the temple enabled the music to permeate the streets of Vrindavan. This was a special lila. Many attenders came to see this lila from America and Europe, and from distant parts of India too. It was a

spectacle, a sensation, because this was supposed to be the last of Mohan's performances. He would stop playing Krishna after this lila. His fans didn't want to miss it. He was perfectly beautiful and utterly absorbed by this particular portrayal of Krishna. It seemed that the outer world didn't exist and couldn't affect him. He was creating a magnificent new world of divine emotion all around him. This was not simply a lay of my imagination that night, everybody could see it. Gori, and numerous other people confirmed my vision. He truly was the living God. Sitting on the litter, he would cast an eye and a smile on me, time to time. We were throwing flowers, and the girls, the sisters from the temple, as well as the others, even the passers by, would dance around him while he was carried through Vrindavan, like a real king. The atmosphere of such a joy was unimaginable in the western world. Slowly, dancing to the music, we passed through the streets full of onlookers and the participants of the procession. Everybody bowed before him, the Krishna they could sense appearing through Mohan. The young female dancers were all beautiful and rich Indians, and from time to time a jealous thought would enter my mind. He may like one of them. But each time such a thought came to me it was as if he felt the fear in my heart and he would turn to me smiling and talking to me with his eyes "don't worry, my character is stronger than you think." During the procession he would smile at the older people, males, and the sisters from the temple. Actually, everybody could easily see in which direction he was looking, his eyes were covered by a tiny layer of pearls attached to the crown. In order to see he had to move the pearls with his hand, hold them and only then could he communicate with the audience with his eyes and his smile. When after an hour the procession was over, we returned to the temple and lila continued until seven in the morning. Only if one had an invitation could one enter the temple. It was a private performance. Asthayam lila was for the devotees, especially for the sisters and the old mother of the temple, who organized the eight-day performance. It was also a time of prayer for them, a way to enlarge their awareness of God, intimately and privately. For this reason the lila was strictly private, visited only by people they knew. One could see old mother and the whole audience crying at many lilas. An emotion of separation from God and desire for Him were not to be played with nor taken for show. I was tired of philosophizing and I didn't have any particular attitude to this. I respected their intimacy and their emotion. The performance lasted

nine hours. At the end Mohan danced the peacock-feather dance in the same manner he performed it when I saw him for the first time. I couldn't believe the stamina he proved after nine hours of dancing. Some people seem to teach you to forget limits, to forget the possible and the impossible, and to accept what you see as you see it. Unbelievable, impressive, and too beautiful, in an atmosphere which completely transcended the reality of transience and pain in this world. When the lila finished, people climbed the stage offering donations to Radha and Krishna. I was sitting with Mohan's brother, on the stage watching a woman massaging Mohan's neck and back. Her husband and two sons were with her, so there was no reason to worry... However I doubted everything...jealousy is maddening sometimes, especially when mixed with exhaustion it becomes the best cocktail for absurdity. He read my doubts, and threw such a sarcastic look in my direction, which prompted me to see the complete nonsense of being jealous. He loved me and that was real. Yet no one could ever have dreamt up this situation. It all added to the sense of the impossible, and brought a note of strength and charm to everything happening in me.

Holy lila took place on the following day when everybody sprays each other with colors. He was spraying the audience and the audience was throwing dyes at him. He came to me and saw that I wasn't really in a mood of colored clothes and colored face so he left me alone. The old mother, accidentally sprayed his mouth, and as the dyes are poisonous he momentarily felt sick, which nobody else could see. He went backstage. I followed him with a handkerchief so he could wipe off the dye. He was happy there was someone who cared. He wiped his lips, and returned to the stage. The hanky I took back, and pressed it to my lips knowing that it was the first and last kiss by Mohan as Krishna. Now it was time for me to go.

The next day found me on an airplane to London. In just a few hours I was far from the spiritual ecstasy and love, but something very special accompanied me. There was no farewell. They don't exist in this holy land. People continue living in the hearts of one another, and wherever you are they carry you in their hearts and you keep carrying them. Vrindavan lives a life of eternity in which love never ends. I was so happy that I had this opportunity to experience all those loving people and the beautiful places they inhabited. I was young and immature in lot of things, but I gained the favour of God which I had been waiting and longing for. I gained love.

I wasn't sorry for leaving. I knew I would return some day and that the relationship between Mohan and me did not terminate, and that it would last forever. This was a love a soul feels for another soul, a love which was not of this earth or tainted by a selfish need. It was something of a rarity. Gori understood our relationship, and from time to time would live it with us. He understood, and I understood, and that was enough. I now had to follow my path, I had to make my own way. We had met, we entered each other's life, but each of us had their own journeys to follow. Own steps to do. We helped each other on the way to knowledge of oneself and of God. Isn't it beautiful, to have a friend who understands the deepest and most intimate part of your heart, who wants nothing material from you, and who loves you truly and selflessly. He was my teacher along the path I must walk alone. I recognized love, not earthly love and not temporary love, but eternal divine love communicating with me through his eyes. This is the love I'd always wanted. Not only Mohan, but Dadu also carried the same love, and there were many people in Vrindavan who carried it too.

I didn't want anything more to happen to us, then this unblemished pure love. After all, could there be anything "more"?

I would be happy if he were to be happy with a girl from his caste, who would love him and give birth to his children. If it was the will of his family, then I wanted it as well. I wasn't unhappy; there was no reason to be unhappy. I was given pure emotion, real emotion, and how could I be ungrateful or unhappy about that?

When I returned to Vrindavan, Mohan and I were at a distance and our relationship was one of respect. My relationship with the family was as before, only bab loved me even more and insisted I should live in their house. Of course, I couldn't bare it being near Mohan. I realized that everything was in the hands of God and I never feared if something more could happen between us. I was happy about our friendship based on love which had grown between us. Now, he was no longer performing as Krishna, instead devoting himself to the reading of holy books and studies, in order to become qualified as a professional reciter at Krishna's festivities. It was an esteemed profession in India. Yet I hated commerce combined with religion hence I hated this profession as well. But Mohan really loved Krishna. He knew nothing else but Krishna. Since he was so handsome and talented, he had been offered roles in Bollywood movies. Later, he told me he didn't like that world and didn't want to be a part of it. He simply wanted to live in

a temple, to talk about Krishna and Radha, and to preach the path of love. His heart and his mind cherished nothing but the world of wonderful music, beauty, and emotion, which he had received by a miraculous providence of God and predestination.

There is an interesting story of his birth. Namely, before he was born his parents had a daughter who died after only a few days of life, and after that they had two sons who were not able to play Krishna. One had talents for dancing and music but it wasn't enough because he was not enough handsome, whereas the other, who was really handsome, was not motivated enough to play lila. Having no proper heir to play lila, the father felt miserable. The boy had to be handsome, talented, a musician, an actor, and pure-hearted at the same time, so that he could think of God, selflessly exchanging his play with the play of God. The father decided to go to his guru and live in his ashram (temple), to meditate, pray, and serve in the temple. He visited his family only once in a while. After two years of this reclusive life, his guru blessed him and told him that he was to expect a beautiful son who will be the pride of his family and who would play Krishna. Thus happened, Mohan was born.

When I saw him now after a few months, he was a devotee. He had entered deeper into his relationship with Krishna where Krishna was now his master. Until now he was privileged to be a friend of Krishna, or even to be very Krishna. I liked it. Somehow all of this brought us even closer. We both were now small in front of Krishna. I felt love, deep and hidden. I felt peace. All the more I was realizing that at least for the time being, I was not ready to enter into such a strict way of life, my parents are far away...

Mohan was the only man, in my heart and in my mind. I think he truly understood and loved my soul. He deeply comprehended my inner self, true being of mine.

This kind of love was the only one that mattered to her. It only had sense for her, when the most intimate part of the human heart communicating with God could be understood by the person one loves, or could be led to the way of understanding. Tara was granted this kind of inner love. She tasted it and was grateful for the way she was directed to take, although that love may never be realized in the world of earthly living, or it may, who knows? She wanted to find the essence of love, the meaning of life, the meaning of existence that has never been so clearly unfathomable in

any other aspect as it was unfathomable in love. She wanted to understand the meaning of the universe, the meaning of reality, of truth, of happiness. She wanted to know it all, to understand the totality within herself and the world she inhabited. She wanted to feel constantly and strongly. She wanted to love selflessly, not wanting emotion in return. She wanted to be fully awake and alive, and this was possible only when she loved. And who could understand a young heart which loves with the love of infulfillment, the love of the impossible, and the forbidden? She understood the deep and the powerful pain which tainted her love, the pain of having to love, rational within irrational sufferance and indulgence. So many confused moments, so many tears within the boundaries of thought and within the indulgence of forced eruptive emotion.

Who can tell how, when, or where we will meet our love? The secret of divine predestination to await and salute, to find and to uncover love, from this moment became the greatest mystery for Tara. What does the world around her meant, and all those people? They become a signpost to the real aim, which remained so painfully close and distant at the same time.

**I searched for a distant world,
walked far lands and unknown volition
I beckoned the unknown**

**where all have I been
having not approached myself**

**I've found the transcendent world
walking the paths that are no more**

**encountering the ancients
recognizing my old self by pain**

**a time of peace is approaching
the perennial joy and mirth of revelation**

THE MUSICIAN

„ All is, oh Lucille, property of others, only is the time the property of ours."

Seneka

I saw him in Vrindavan, in the theatre, at lila in the old temple called Sudama Kutir. The audience were mostly elderly inhabitants of Vrindavan. The performance of lila was on when five or six men and one girl entered the temple. They carried a huge cameras with them. I recognized a logo of music television MTV on the shirt of one of the boys. Instinctively I turned back and saw that one of them was standing by the staircase behind us in the audience, and that he was climbing onto the second floor. I could not see his face although through the wooden staircase could I glimpsed the blonde hair. When he reached the second floor, the planks started squeaking so loudly, making us, the audience turn in curiosity to see what was happening. It seemed that if anyone decided to join him in that courageous advantage of walk on the dilapidated terrace, it would have all come tumbling down on the audience. Maybe it wouldn't but that was how dangerously shaky that second floor appeared to me. Now, his face was to be seen clearly and that modest, and shy expression of his. It was him, the unknown, magic, young man. With the face of an angel, the sad angel. By my side, quite close to me, Mohan was playing the harmonium and singing a song, whilst looking at me for it was my favorite song. The one, I fell in love with, when I first heard it in Kanpur. I looked at him gracefully when Gory, by touching my shoulder whispered: "Do you know, he is singing this one for you?" I smiled because I did know, it was that my mind had inexplicably and uncontrollably fled to the second floor throwing my glances at the odd newcomer. In my thoughts I reprehended myself "I am here, next to my love, next to the person I infinitely love and I am almost falling in love with someone who is now here and in the very next minute maybe never again will be...am I...that impure...can I love two men at once...Oh God, how filthy in my heart I must be". I condemned myself and my feelings of strong and strange connection to that man.

While, he, not even taking a notice of me, was with great curiosity and attention watching the lila immersing into the atmosphere of the old temple at the edge of Vrindavan's. A twilight of a new riddle entered my heart. It was a wintery dusk. Not as cold as those in Germany and Montenegro. December. I merged into a pleasant fine woolen shawl, covering my face, in order to not to see the interesting new man and to avoid being recorded by the cameras.

He wore a beige jacket, a very simple western one. According to my understanding of human facial expressions and reactions, he seemed new and unfamiliar with Vrindavan, India, and the lila. There was something lascivious and also something saintly on his face. Miraculously my attention was completely focused on him. Modesty and depth and a kind of mystical nobility of a prince or king mixed with hard and lived grief was the encoded cryptogram in my head, which shined from his face. Those rays affected my heart and my now completely confused consciousness. His grief and gentility were as if from another world. It was a sufferance for something distant in the past, lost in the past...I thought. Strange was this first impression of mine for I had met this person by chance and for the last time, probably. People come into our lives, and pass through them, but with him something was truly binding me somewhere inside of myself. Outworldly it all made no sense, really. Soon I started suppressing the "nonsense" which was as if a magic had charmed and put a spell on me. I thought what stupid thoughts my head can produce and I tried to concentrate on the lila. But it was as if I have responded to an inner call, hearing the call of something distant but at the same time so close. I couldn't know why everything was so intense within me. As if something deeply hidden far beneath and fully unconscious was knocking on the doors of my consciousness. Something inside of me urged for its appearance in the outside world. Which me, the present me, or some different and past me? Why did I feel this closeness and this great separation from him at the same time? Who was he? A logic wasn't my friend now. There was something which connected us but I couldn't think of anything comprehensible. Both of us were here and now, on the holy ground of God, in the secret kingdom of the Queen of Vrindavan. It was, realistically observing, the only thing we shared. We were two beings who, at this very moment of life, belonged somewhere beyond the circle of confusion and the pain of transience. Our imagination, glances and our awareness could now fly and feed on the mysticism of the far East, Vrindavan, and the lila at the winter's foggy dusk. We were a part of this unusual world. He had a birthmark on the right cheek, and his eyes were blue, clear, and somehow sad. It felt as if my being was soaking his sadness in. Within my prism, and my vision, he was emanating a somewhat strange pain. Oh, I thought I would go mad with the images that suddenly started streaming through my mind. I saw him in the humdrum of a mortal life, in the tearful despair of London's nights, searching for a potion for his thirsty soul, and I was so sorry for him. The picture of him in the somberly world of darkness and smoke, the world of empty pain that bites a living beauty of the soul, ran through my mind, like a movie... Why sorrow? I didn't assume that he would know...

The feeling of happiness that the unknown "he" was here now, in Vrindavan, was suddenly overwhelming me more and more. Why happiness now? "Is there a Heaven to see my bewilderment and my madness and to save me!" screamed my inner disturbed harmony. No rational answer came, why did his presence make me happy. He was only a stranger whom I was seeing for the first time and, perhaps, the last time in my life. He never paid any attention to me, although the colour of my skin made me stand out. I felt that I was as insignificant for him, as it was logical to be. I didn't exist for him; at least it was my impression, the impression, nevertheless, which allowed me to look deeper into him. In my mind I started repeating the prayers; I had learned from Dadu, that people should be happy, that he should be happy. Besides, he didn't look sad to anyone else but me. When later I asked Gori about him, she described him as a "fine cultured boy from the West." She never mentioned the sorrow on his face, so I decided not to pray on this woman's life with my strange impression of this complete stranger. Slowly I extricated myself from the net of my thoughts and feelings. The mess in my head was calming. I came to my senses. I was looking for the reality that didn't favour me at this moment, neither was it close to me. Oh, how sometimes, the most ordinary reality of the everyday surface can come handy, can be a saviour. I was searching for it to stop the thoughts and images brimming in my head, because he had a work to do here and now in the temple. He was making a movie about the holy place. From the dilapidated floor of the old temple he was directing the shooting, silently as not to disturb the ambience and the experience of the audience. He would carefully turn to the members of the crew and instruct them, whilst being composed, serious, and yet smiling. His eyes were as glued to the actors, to Krishna actually. I was happy to see his spontaneous attraction to lila. I wanted him to love lila. I don't know why he mattered to me, I could have watched other people wishing the same for them, but I didn't. After some time, I sensed the yearning of his eyes attending lila. Was it simply a yearning for the feeling of divine emotion or was it something distant, he was facing just now? It may have even been the adoration of one who loves. That was more out of question now, even impossible, but I was bewildered by the fact that he was so serene. As if Vrindavan was not that distant to him. But how?... I thought how nice it would have been if he learned more about the place, about the lila and the life philosophy of this people around us. For a minute, after the performance ended, I thought of approaching him and telling him about Vrindavan but I never dared to do so. A strange, strong, inconceivable feeling of connection to him and the embarrassment which came as a side effect of the feeling of connection stopped me. I stayed "sober" as far as my comprehension and behaviour were concerned and let him go, to wherever and for how ever long it may be. They were all gone the following day. Should we perhaps meet behind the doors of children's hearts?

The Canadian

May mirth be born at your home, and born it will be if it resides in you."

Seneka

Never before had I seen a person so free from envy. She possessed a gift to heal the soul; she always had a lot of friends who all loved her, a nice word to say, and enough time for the others. As if there was a saint in the body of this young girl – a saint and a child. She was carrying the message and the permanence of love. But she was no weakling, it was as if she contained a fire in herself that would burn all the bad and evil attentions of those wishing to be in her company.

She resembled an Egyptian or a Greek woman from the old time of Socrates. He would love her for sure. She reminded me of the words on soul, from Plato's "Feast," "the soul which develops the seed of love in the heart gains wings to enter the world of perfect forms." Her beauty was in the clarity of her eyes, the strength and the peace of her mind, the permanence and the watchfulness of her spirit, and in the purity of her soul. For a moment I would think, she was not from this world. Close and unknown at the same time. Her face was beautiful and oval, chubby and gentle, with deep, calm, dark eyes, like two lakes which had found their peace in the land of the eternal life. Her smile chaste and maternal, revealed the secret of her inner maturity. She was composed and swift when needed, but always dignified. As if she came from an antique time or from by Leonardo

painted Renaissance world of heavenly virginal angels flying on the wings of purity and a rare human gentleness, but in the years of youth and underpraved.

Our origins were different; mine were rooted in the Balkans, hers in the great Canada. Big and spacious, cold and flat, Canada with its culture of pubs, big companies, automobiles, industry, never had any influence on her. Mitra's life was different. She was special. She had grown up in the temples of Canada and India. There she had acquired her education, but her family couldn't afford her further study. She had a mother and two sisters, she never ate meat, and she didn't have any vices. While the majority of her friends were swept up by the storms of the adolescence, she was never hesitant on her path to love and on her quest for God, following the voice of her heart. She was twenty two when we met. At that time she was already earning for her own living. Nothing could break her or discourage her. I think I have never seen her crying for herself, whereas she often cried for the others. When I met her in India she was in a humanitarian mission which by chance I had also joined. It was almost by an automatic reflection that the two of us immediately became friends. There were simply no secrets between us, and there was really nothing either of us should have kept hidden from the other. Her intuition was so strong that she could almost read people's minds, in such a way she deeply pierced the intentions of anyone. She was a living, embodied X ray of human character.

When we met she inquired about the country of my origin.

-“Mitra, do you know that your name is also an old Montenegrin name?”

-“In Sanskrit it means friend. Tell me about your country, I'm burning to know.”

-“Yes, there are lots of the same words in Sanskrit and in our language. You know, my country is Crna Gora, where Gora means mountain, or woods in a mountain, but Gora in Sanskrit means gold or golden. It is also the name of the goddess of happiness, Shri Radha. There is a river and also a mountain in Montenegro which is called Tara, which in Sanskrit means the all-radiant or the one who liberates. It's interesting, because it is also one of Radi's names.

There is something special about my land, and the rocks where God is so absent that His absence paradoxically makes Him so intensely present there. Fearing His power and mystery on that land of rocks, the monasteries grew and all kinds of miracles happened opening the merciless rock desert and that terrifying isolation from the world and God towards the Heavens. Like my ancestors, I grew up among that rock. Strange is that land of ours, as if all the beauty and cruelty were intertwined there, so that one can't live with or without either of. Some of our old customs are similar to the Vedic ones. Strange. I've been carrying that rock in my heart and I have had to find a soil where my rock should melt, and I found it in Vrindavan. Oh, how much time did I solely need?! I don't know. Now, I know that I have learnt from my country. All mess of rocks and stones, but of a beauty rarely bestowed by God. Something makes that land unlike all the others. As if all

the roads of heaven and hell would cross there. In previous times Fairies used to live there, and our elderly told and wrote numerous stories about them. But there is also something creepy about the place. The loneliness and sorrow of the land, for its distant past and a distant God. Thirsty for love, and flooding with the blood of past warriors. Too much pain is there, but once the pain is transformed into love, in hearts pure and longing for love, it will become the doors to heaven, that little country of mine. It is from there that my path leads me to infinity. From the prison and the tomb of my dead heart, like a phoenix born from the ashes, my realizations of the self took their births far from my homeland. As in the dirtiest marshes where the most beautiful and sweet-scented flowers grow, so let my heart be the fragrant and gentle lotus, and let there be enough space for all the people and for all the love. "Do you think that I could be so, will the revelations happen to me?"

"They will, they will, Tara, it is already happening to you. You see how far you've come from your beginning, and how intensely you feel that you have just come home. Isn't it beautiful? Our lives are over-watched by God's mercy! You are entering the world of knowledge and reality, the world we carry in our hearts. Look at all those around us searching for their eternal selves. Will they find their lost world? It is what you should ask yourself. Our teachers and the Vedas have instructed us on our paths. We are only to walk along those roads, we have started, Tara, we do walk, regardless of the stones thrown at us by the illusion of this temporary world, or if we may stumble, still we have our aim, and it is the most sublime one. Pure love, whenever we recognize it, we shall take it and give it. We shall bow to the hearts that carry it and give it selflessly. In front of the saints, the beggars, in yours, or in mine, or in this country... I feel as if there were no countries; there is only one land, the Mother Earth and only humans of the heart!"— She spoke, with the purity of an angel and the gentleness of heart, soft as sponge capable of absorbing the nectar of true existence.

We were together all the time, visiting festivals, lectures, or just traveling around. Often we would visit Dadu, bringing the fruits he needed for the offering. She was mostly the guide as we went on our pilgrimages, to various temples, knowing Vrindavan quite well at that time. This is where she came even as a child. Once the two of us attended a parikrama around Vrindavan, just like the one I did with Mumy on Ekadashi. People believe that if one does those circumambulations around Vrindavan one annihilates the sins once made. Mitra constantly went for parikramas and she often fasted. She loved to fast. It's good for purification of one's being. So, once we went for this beautiful walk around Vrindavan in twilight. It was cloddish and magical. The sun was withdrawing and we were hurrying up to finish before nightfall. The road led us along the river Yamuna, the same one where Dadu used to bath in. It is the river celebrated in the sacred scriptures, by saintly poets mystical in the color of dark cloud. We passed by a tree which is said to be the place wherefrom Krishna used to jump into the water of the Yamuna. During the day, many tourists and pilgrims swarm all the famous places in Vrindavan and around the Yamuna river. We were

really happy that this place was peaceful and solely for the two of us. I loved the Yamuna river for its beauty and unbelievable stillness. Also for the atmosphere of inner vividness I absorbed while bathing in it, and because of the memory of Dadu. We arrived at the river bank and bowed, paying our respects to the river Goddess. Mitra was praying and wanted to have a swim.

“Mitra, it’s too late and we must hurry home. Please don’t bathe now, you might catch cold. The night is falling and you won’t be able to dry yourself...” – I uttered unready to bathe and because my faith in the mystic river and holy place as yet wasn’t as strong as hers.

“Don’t worry, I’ll hurry, I have to have a swim, I’m not here that often, and it’s advisable to have a bath on this day. No, don’t worry, I won’t catch cold.”

It was Ekadashi.

She took off her sari, a long piece of beautiful cotton she used to wear, very finely designed, and remaining in her petticoat and choli, the upper part wore with the sari, she paid respects and went into the river. First she scooped up a little water in her hands and offered it to all the four sides of the world and to all the divinities and only then she dipped in. She even wetted her hair. Sitting on the bank, I was watching Mitra showing her God all the respect and love of an earnest and deeply religious devotee.

I didn’t feel like bathing, not now, it was getting dark, "I don’t want to catch cold," my mind was telling me.

She emerged from the water, happy.

People in Vrindavan believe that the Yamuna is the melted love of God and that we all should bathe in the holy bodies of water as often as possible as to let the water clean our hearts and souls.

“The water is warm, and it’s so pleasant, now I will dress quickly and we go,” she said after the bath.

On the following day Mitra was as healthy as ever and I had a cold.

The two of us often went to all kinds of parikramas, to other pilgrimage places. She felt at home in Vrindavan, knew a lot of people, and was able to speak at least a broken hindi. We often used to sit in front of the temple of Radha Shyamasundar, eating our favourite sweets, just like children. Little by little the natives got to know us and started inviting us into their homes. Sometimes we were together with her friends from Gurukula. Gurukula is a school for children whose parents served in the temple. Aside from the usual subjects, they also studied the old dead language called Sanskrit, in which Vedas are written, and the Vedic philosophy, spiritual music and, reciting. The children would create performances

like lila. Mitra's friends from Gurukula were as unique as Mitra. They had lived in the temples all their lives; some too were born in the temples. Their lives were predestined in a way. Somehow they were brought up with a potent feeling for others and God, having something the rest of us didn't have, Krishna was so close to them. They were similar to the inhabitants of Vrindavan, having spent a lot of time there, although some had grown up in the West. Most of them spoke fluently Hindi. However, most of their fates were cruel. There were some deviations taking place in the institutions in which they grew up. Unfortunately a lot of children were molested by some of the teachers. Some of Mitra's friends were burdened by terrible traumas and complexes from the childhood. She would sometimes say: "I often wonder how possible can it be that so many suffered abuses around me, and I didn't... have I perchance forgotten that something as such took place, or it's true I've never been hurt?"

Everything in Vrindavan was natural to her and any other way of living would not make any sense to her. While I was gradually getting accustomed to another culture, without knowing its language and people around me, and adapting to hot spicy food that made each meal a crying session, everything was familiar to her. Beside her I learnt about Vrindavan and I started loving it. She became my new sister. We belonged to the same family and our origins were the same. It was our mutual Vrindavan. Strange, she came from an other part of the world, with a different culture, and language, but we shared one home, one culture of the heart and one language and good intentions. During a long conversations, we would analyse our inner worlds and the revelations we intensely experienced in Vrindavan. We were happy living the beautiful life of Vrindavan, forgetting that there was a world of transience and suffering around us.

Together, they were children playing real life, playing purification and growing up and maturing in a world completely different from that of their peers. They grew up together, tasting both the beautiful and the hard aspects of a life of maturity and responsibility. Somewhere at the bottom of their consciousness they knew this maturing was like a game that could be painfully serious. It wasn't for them. Their problems were small and somehow barred no real weight. They were growing up far from the world of alienation, untruth, and the ephemeral. That the moment they would have to leave this beautiful world and to return to their countries of their origins, would come, was clear to them but now they only wanted to live in the present. To learn and to realize, to travel.

I am thankful to God for giving me a chance to be friends with Mitra. Finding our mutual reality of truth and beauty which lived in Vrindavan, was such a divine gift of this precious moment in my life. We learned the language of the spiritual and blissful being in us all, with the only aim to know and to understand and to feel a human heart that was clean and

tasted love. We had one aim, to know love and to live love such as the inhabitants of Vrindavan lived. Thus kind of love we wanted to take with us when we return to our homelands, when we would be far from Vrindavan, externally. We strived for Vrindavan within.

Mitra and I were saying goodbye and meeting again and again in Vrindavan, during few years. Soon after we left India, she got a job on a luxurious ship. She wanted to see the world, and had to earn a living. The wide spaces of the world's seas was never her fear for Vrindavan was always within her as the only reality she desired and she was aiming at. She took that which life gave her in order to survive. Often would she write letters, saying she was missing our Vrindavan, writing in the delight of her youth about the fulfillment of her desire to know the world, and describing the places she visited, and the people she encountered and all she saw there. A few years later she met the nicest man and married him. She still misses Vrindavan. Now she cannot be there as often as she used to be. The past luxury of living in Vrindavan, the pilgrimages, bathing in the Yamuna, always begs for more! More time, more happiness, more of the divine mercy. Life brought new obligations on the way of realizing love. Now, she lived that love in her marriage and with her children.

**I have found
the higher ground
rising high above
the circle of confusion**

**take my eyes
between the lines
all in all we've found
is mortal world and
losing time**

**it is all
we've found
waiting for tomorrow**

CDM

**Far from Vrindavan,
the journey doesn't end...
new insight**

WEST

THE MUSICIAN

Part II

“Oh, sons of immortality, who once lived in the kingdom of god.”

Svetashwatara Upanishad

Several months after we had met at the lila, in Germany on Tv I saw a movie he had made about Vrindavan. Oh, how great my wonderment was realizing that only he, among the filming crew, was the only one to know about Vrindavan. I couldn't believe he was living according to the traditions and wisdom of my Dadu. How could I be this much mistaken? How could he be so hidden within? Remembering the confusion which arose in me that moment I'd seen him for the first time, and which at that time I could hardly subdue, lacking answers or solutions. Now I couldn't find anything more strange or confusing about him. A feeling of confused wonderment culminated in my heart. Now, to understand his being, I had to break new limits of myself. A thought of him, or whenever he would become the object of conversation, would incite my consciousness' most intense tension

and quickness of perception, and my heart would be moved in an unusually strong manner. I could be all but not calm or clear to myself whenever I was thinking of him. At the beginning the turmoil rested within the deeper levels of consciousness and would remain not loudly announced. Yet, in time, its way up to the surface, and to the outer manifestation was reaching the end and it was definite that i would need to face a problem that came as if from nowhere, in the shape of a blonde young man. The problem lingered and was getting deeper and deeper. Like a volcano or whirlwind, unexpectedly and out of the blue, without any real motivation in me, this queer problem continued to grow. It was obvious that the confusion would abide for some considerable time, and that its existence would re-direct my life. I was confused and bit afraid, because I had a presentiment that something great was going to happen.

He was a musician. A star from the west. Since living in India for almost a year I had been out of touch and couldn't have cared less about western music trends, as my heart was fulfilled with beauty springing from the invincible divine source, from nature and the people on their way to pure love...his music was distant and unknown to me. I wondered about this strange connection as it seemed but a fantasy. For God's sake, he was so unapproachable, so distant. He was yet another impossibility in my life. Life seemed to be playing games with me again.

His movie was about the relationship he had built with Vrindavan over the years. He was talking about the all-pervading magic of the place, how nothing secular existed in Vrindavan to impede what he had learnt from it and its people. His intention was to invite all the people of the world to learn about love and the spirituality the people of Vrindavan lived. He said he felt to be but an insignificant inhabitant of the Earth who had been looking for spirituality and love and found it there in Vrindavan.

"Once I was there, I got so ill that I spent the whole time lying and looking at the ceiling." That was one of the first experiences of his Vrindavan. It is believed that when one becomes ill in Vrindavan one is actually being purified from the traumas and sins committed in life. "Vrindavan heals one's soul, and one's state of mind is reflected onto the body," he was saying on TV, while I was watching, stoned by remembrance of the strange experiences from the lila, as its frames were passing through my mind. He portrayed the ancient tradition of

India, Vrindavan's life in accordance with God, along with the pictures of various holy places of pilgrimage. Highlighting the same ancient temples, those of the magical times from the past as well as the future which presently, for me, rested in Dadu, in Mohan, in the children from the theatre, in Mitra, and in all the people I met in Vrindavan. He was becoming painfully close to me, and his music more familiar and dear. It seemed that by representing Vrindavan he was revealing the most precious part of his inner world, which was so grandly similar to mine. He walked through Vrindavan like a child moving freely through his parents' garden, but a child who knows respect and gratefulness. Now I was watching the Yamuna and Govardhan and the customs of India from his point of view. Every picture, each movie frame, I felt, belonged to me. I could feel his verbalized thoughts, and his laughter and it all pained me. A deep opaque pain wanted to escape through me. Vrindavan pained me. This all ailed my inner being. Was it that I was falling in love with him through Vrindavan? Why? Through his portrayal Vrindavan gained even more unbelievable magic, saturating the audience with a world of deep but not blind faith. Through the eye of camera showing special, approachable abode but only for those able to love. With his quiet and even shy demeanor within himself he carried the delight and joy of Radha and Krishna's place, and a whole world of answers to the questions of existence of man and of meaning of life. His sorrow still dwelt within me, swelling, although it seemed he had found himself in this place, a long time ago.... It was through him that the place was given the reality of the world Dadu was heading towards, Mohan knew, and Mitra spoke about. This and the other Vrindavan were becoming more and more palpable and real in my mind, with the noble and magnificent mystery of a life of unblemished love. In the movie he remained a modest man, a man of good intentions, who, walking along the dangerous precipices of illusory glory remained the truth quester. His quest was to find answers about reality, eternity, life, love, and himself. I felt him so closely. My heart was becoming more and more alive.

The odd encounters and emotions that suddenly, as if out of nowhere, spread over one's heart were brought back again by his Vrindavan, and I, confused and ignorant of the language of my own heart, wait and plead for an interpretation. Why? Why? Why is life as such? Why must beauty be so inextricably interwoven with confusion and pain through ignorance? If I only knew what it was that suddenly erupted out of me and what was happening to me.

REAL BORDERING THE UNREAL

Along a path through the woods of my distant memory, I walk. The sun shines on my face and the face of the mountain which like a sentinel surrounds the lake I am heading towards. The transparent water projects crystal reflections of the sky and the mountain. The water surface is perfectly calm and the wind is chilly as I regard the scene from the edge of the lake. I see a castle on the opposite shoreline; it is a deep red, almost purple and mystical as in a fairy tale. With a curiosity bordering euphoria, and fearing something intense and deep, something waiting to burst forth any minute and disperse within me, I approach the castle. The huge doors slowly open themselves. I'm anxious. I enter. I climb the stairs. The room I enter is bright, with huge windows and white curtains penetrated by the sun glistening in the wind. I feel music that I don't hear, but I know it is sad. I enter another room with a young artist at the piano. He is playing, but I don't hear him, and he doesn't notice me. I watch him as I pass through the hall with only him and the piano in there. I've met this man in Vrindavan. He's the stranger, the musician I felt such a strange closeness with, the moment I saw him. What is he doing in the castle? Who is he in my life? His hair is blonde and his face is the noble face of an angel. He looks a little bit different. Gentle and dressed in a black suit and a white shirt. I didn't want to disturb him. I could sense that the music was his friend, his only friend indeed. I could feel the darkness and grief in him.

To his left, the stairs lead to a mezzanine. There are a few doors to the right and only one to the left. I enter through the door on left and discover a dark deserted room. I can feel the dust. It's been a long time since this room entertained any people. The bed on the left and the wardrobe on the right are covered with a white transparent lace. I can see a picture of a young brunette, on the wall. A cry. Terrible pain. Through the solar plexus and spine. As if by a saber inflicted. A strong feeling of something deeply written within me and the scars I've been carrying without even knowing why. It is the pain of being stuck in my subconscious which is coming through me now, which is being freed through tears and laughter. The pain of resurrection. It was another me. A life of a distant past. I was the wife of the young man who was playing the piano. The illness cancelled all. Death. Terrible pain. I experienced my own death. The terrible pain of departure, the pain of a dismembered love. I can see the images of the face of an angel. I go out and I pass him by. He is playing. Again I don't want to stop him. What am I to tell him? For some reason I am happy. He notices me and smiles at me, his eyes smile first and then his lips smile. I'm leaving. You have

Krishna and the time will come... a message. I move outside. I walk the green clearing and the flowery gardens of another time, wearing a billowing white dress. For some reason I am happy. I have discovered something beautiful and painful. I am leaving.

Now I'm here again, in the reality of the phenomenal world. I am fixed and I wait for my body to come to its senses and regain control, after a short paralysis. What has happened? Should I find answers to the premonitions and awareness which are from the time before birth? Why always England? Why love saved for the other? Why music? Now everything made sense. Is this another beginning? Or an end?

I walked through my past and now, perhaps, I can better understand my self and my conditions. Just at the right time. Thank you God for the lessons and the answers. I understand the secret, the little part of my consciousness wrapped by a veil of forgetfulness. I almost don't believe myself, but this was not a dream. It was the reality of some my forgotten life, etched into the subconscious along the way to infinity, roaming on the quest for truth. Now I know who he is. Aren't the ways of man entwined even more than a labyrinth? Is this all really possible? What else has Vrindavan for me?

**Superficiality.
Is there a greater punishment?**

**Incapability of seeing
the reality**

**how long
and how difficult
will my quest be
along the infinity of a dark
unknown world?**

Uncertainty...
... only one way is predestined

“When a person starts to love Krishna, then she or he becomes capable of loving endlessly.”

Shrila Narayan Maharaj

Vrindavan or the whole reality. Vrindavan is no longer just a place. It is a time, and a purification, interweaving, emancipation on the way to sublime love. As if everything is already written down. This is not a simple place, everything can change here. Everything is being changed. This is the land of Gods, and their will is Almighty. They change the lives and fates and hearts of people. As if the labyrinth of my fate is being more and more entwined. My distant past and my present, unfathomable and unreal in its existence, are meeting now. I was in the room with Lali, and we had a conversation. She is always entertaining, because she is deep, but lively and thorough. We were talking about the lilas. She loved them too. Suddenly, in my heart, I felt an unusual call, almost an impulse to go out of the room and start towards the shops. The shops were opposite the temple we were staying in this time in Vrindavan, and I went to one I had never went before. I was singing my favorite song from lila. I can see nothing around me when I immerse myself in a melody from lila. It seems that God directs my movements at those moments, protecting me from being hit by a car or falling into a manhole. This time too, I was moving, and oblivious to anything around me. I entered the shop, bought some sweets and turned to leave when, by a miracle, my eyes plunged within a pair of blue eyes. We were looking at one another. With each second of suddenly slow motioned time I was becoming more and more aware that I knew these eyes. Then my perception widened towards the face which was covered with a white wrap. It was him. The musician. It was the first time our eyes met. After a year of first encountering. He then lowered his eyes, without removing his thoughts. A short shock, although I'd expected it. I'd seen him in the progression after that painful insight into my past, in Germany few months ago. Instinctually turning my head and smiling to a girl sitting opposite to him, I passed by. I was moved by crescent joy and pain. Everything was moving again.

Here I was again, with the same person from our past life in the castle. Our relationship was broken by death. Severe is the pain of memory. He came into my life again. Embodied, alive. He was here. Mohan is here too, my miraculous love. What a pain I treasure, how harsh and delirious! The man from the distant past times is here, we were not introduced to one another, but we both experienced the painful recognition. He became my walking, my alive, embodied pain. He was

with his wife. I didn't want to come too close, I didn't want to disturb their relationship. Why was this happening to me?

I am observant with Mohan. I don't want to come too close to him either. He is my pain too. I don't want my heart more imprisoned than it is. Lila was beautiful and he was a beautiful Krishna. In the evening, my friends and I went to the old temple Radharaman, our favourite place in Vrindavan to cherish the five centuries old atmosphere on the evening prayer. For us, it was the most beautiful gate to the divine world of bliss. We were sitting on the floor, listening to the flute and the harmonium, waiting for the altar to open. Tired and happy to go to the Lila with eyes closed I was letting a beautiful melodious ragas to enter my consciousness. They were messengers of another world, a fragrant world of pure divine emotions, truth and everlasting love. Again, I experienced the old, distant, yet close world of these people and this place. For a moment I felt free of the pain which had been present in my heart. It seemed as if, for a moment, that same pain was turning into happiness, and delight. Enormous things were happening to my petite human heart, and the temple music led the way from me towards the infinity of real beauty. Of life in God. I felt that somebody had entered the temple. I knew who it was, but I almost couldn't believe it. I opened my eyes and there he was. He, whom I had to leave once upon a time, due to my own death. The priest opened the altar and the evening service began. I stood up and went to the far end of the temple. I prayed for his happiness. I didn't want my eyes to meet his. I didn't want him to know anything about my feelings. Suddenly he turned and looked in my direction. Who was he looking for, why did he turn at that moment? I wanted to go outside. When we left Ida said to Tanja-Krishangi and to me: "Didn't you see that he paid his respects, the moment he entered the temple right in front of Tara. I thought he would touch her, that close he was. But, let's forget it; he is with another woman, although the two of you seem strangely similar to me, hm." I was often pestering her to explain to me my premonitions, sometimes she approved of them, but sometimes I must have been really boring and she would only tell me to think of God and forget all the other feelings.

The lila started. My relationship to Krishna at the lilas was different now. It was more and more apparent that he had become the Mohan I had inside. I loved him more and more. I suffered. He was watching me sadly. I appeared cold not wanting to surrender to any emotion and I saw that this pained him. After the lila when we were walking home

with a couple of friends and babujee, Mohan and I were silent. He tried to communicate with me, but he couldn't because my heart was completely confused. All there was inside of me was pain. Past and present and future. Only now, the pain held a strange, indescribable, deep joy, because it was now that my love was finally breathing, seeing, existing! The pain was about the terrible confusion of my emotions. I wasn't sure what to do with all those emotions? Their strength was destructive, and devastating. I had to either put up with them or die and I opted for the first. I knew it was all about the pain of rebirth, the pain of a new creation within myself. The pain of life. It ought to be challenged, the intellect should play at maximum, the entire available ratio gathered around to advise me. How to cure the pain I'd been carrying for so long in my subconscious? How to remain sound in this all? How to continue with Mohan? Oh, what confusion, what intertwinement, what a strange lot. It seemed I was undergoing therapy for infelicitous loves. All this time in Vrindavan had been the greatest test of my life, a test of awareness and of my maturity. Painful and happy at the same time. Pain due to a deep connection with a man I could not be with, I couldn't be with either of them. By a strange thread of youth and of the forbidden, the unapproachable one, a strong connection with them both I shared.

She knew all of this would be over soon leaving the richness of these strange loves. A sense of refined fragrance of the unknown but tender to her soul, was breaking its way towards her consciousness and her reality. As if a current, from a deep level or from the top of the heavens, or somewhere from infinity, was shaking her, striking through her heart, changing it, making it grow, blossom, open, and become fulfilled. The metamorphosis initiated by somewhat odd pain and joy had begun. She knew all the time it was enveloping that it must be this way, and it should be because her God was taking care of her. The invincible belief in God's presence beside her was too her trust and belief in the positive outcome of the inner vortex, which bordered death and madness, and which carried her over the ruffled ocean of her mind. The only guideline and the only safety along this dangerous road of awareness, of one's self and love which was returning after such a long absence, were the surrender to the reality of life and the present world around, and the surrender to time. She felt the power of inner purification in the fire in which she was being burnt, and in all that, at the very depth of her self,

she was happy. It wasn't easy to restore the happiness to consciousness. It needed time, but not only time. She needed the entire substance of vividness that was burning within her heart to be transformed into new life, waiting for its rebirth and its resurrection.

Would I finally find peace? Another lila took place on the following day. In my heart I was sad because I would once again be near the man who was closest to my being, the one I must not love, who brought Krishna to me in such a vivid way. And again I met the musician. Actually, I had left the lecture earlier so as to avoid him. When, suddenly, it was him at the exit of the temple enticing a dog out of the temple. The dog obeyed only when we both attempted the mission together. We briefly exchanged eye contact. His eyes revealed eternity and an entire universe of love and sorrow. I was frozen inside. Luckily an approaching crowd of people startled me. I walked on quick as an arrow while he remained waiting for his friends. How heartbreaking it is to stand beside someone with whom you share a painful memory of a long lost love, and you know that you must not, cannot and would not do anything about it. You can only watch and choose to love with your soul. He carried another experience of Vrindavan, different from that of the lila. I went to lila, transferring to the world I was more familiar and comfortable with than the one from the past few minutes. I took shelter and an unsuccessful attempt at forgetting, by filming a video of this lila. The boys had already started dressing up when I arrived. I was recording Mohan. He was serious and wistful like me. He was always like me. As if he was my mirror. As if he understood my conditions, without even knowing about the musician. He wanted to come closer to me. He asked me to lend him the chador (fine woolen garment, wore in India) I was wrapped with. He never ever usually attempts the aforementioned, not with young women. I gave him my chador and I was already happier. I could give him something, although I knew he didn't need it and that he only wanted to show his inclination, his love and care, because he was worried about the sorrow only he could recognize in me. He was sitting with Radha in the dressing room I had access to. While sitting in front of me he was watching me with a sorrowful expression. I had never seen such sadness on his face, and it was hard to know if I was the cause of it. He wanted to tell me something, but it seemed I didn't want to understand what it was. "I

must stay away from him and his love,” was my only thought. It seemed I no longer had the right to love. I didn’t want to go any further, any deeper with this love, but he did, he wouldn’t let me suffer.

Pure love can fight time, can fight the rules, and it goes straight to heart and cures it. Mohan’s love was not a superficial love, which starts on the bodily surface and ends there. His love was the love of a suffering soul. His feelings for Tara were refined and he would be insulted by the same thing that insulted her. He wanted to bring her out of suffering and he succeeded. How?

He was offered cakes. I couldn’t follow his movements because I was shooting other children. I wanted to use the footage and to make a story on lila. I saw Mohan wanted to give me something. I looked at him. With the mimicry on his face he said “take it” and holding out his hand, he gave me a cake. I was very happy about this but when I looked closer I saw that a part of the cake was missing. I realized he had bitten it. This usually never happens, and if he had not been dressed up wearing Krishna’s crown, it would mean he was proposing to me. He was watching me, knowing I understood the depth and the importance of this exchange. In Vrindavan, if a girl ate something a young man had eaten before her, it would mean that he was obliged to marry her. Therefore the food Mohan ate was always monitored. Usually he would eat alone. The fact he gave me the cake he had tasted before me was very significant, but my consciousness was so ruffled that nothing could calm me and free me from the unrest. Lila started. It was a beautiful lila. The audience was delighted; they enjoyed the music and Mohan’s beauty. Krishna was performing through him. He was completely absorbed in Krishna, transmitting true feelings of divine love to the audience.

Mohan would look at me from time to time. His eyes were sad. He wanted the beautiful fluid of love to start running between us. But how should I behave? It seemed that the musician was predestined to come my way, to save me from the emotions and thoughts flooded by Mohan, the emotions that were brimming and threatening to suffocate and drown me. Or was it Mohan, who was sent to teach me about unselfish love I was to give back to the musician. Vrindavan and the mood which Mohan carried were different from that which surrounded the musician. Am I inside either of them?

She avoided going to Mohan's on the following day. She needed space, to be without him, although her emotions were swelling. Before the evening came, she felt a strange pressure in the region of her heart. She felt something important was going to happen. Thus her heart always reacted when something important was to happen with Mohan. Her heart communicated to her in a strange but in a real palpable way. Ida had also come to love the lilas, so the two of them went to Mohan's house together. There was an inner pressure that made Tara go, although for some time she had been fighting Ida's insistence. The weather was unusual for Vrindavan at this time of year, a strong wind was blowing and heavy showers were expected any minute. It wasn't the time of the monsoons, so the rain was out of place for this time of year. Autumns are magical and warm in Vrindavan. It would be summer in the west – a lot of sun, dry and warm, but on that day, a gale was preparing. The clouds were gathering thicker and thicker, dark blue in colour, carrying the atmosphere of Indian mysticism to the place which already was a mysterious throne of Gods. The air was penetrating now into the heart of the girl, who was traveling by rikshaw towards him. Him with whom her heart was so closely and strongly connected, sometimes despite and sometimes in accordance with her will.

We entered the house. Mummy was with her daughter-in-law and Mita, preparing the red fluid kunkum to paint on her feet. It was a wonderful sight. This ancient custom of India to decorate one's feet and arms in this way in the month of kartik, October-November. He was there happy to see us. The women instantly invited me to have my feet decorated, while Ida and Babujee were watching the footage from the latest lila play. He wasn't watching. He wanted to see it by himself. Babujee was talking to Ida, and I was talking to Mohan. It was the first time we had talked since I'd returned to Vrindavan, and the ice between us was melting. He was telling me about a friend of mine whom he had met several months before, but he didn't succeed to say much because Ida and his father interfered. "You must get married, you are 27 already and you aren't married," bab was telling me. I looked at them, then at Mohan, and kept repeating, "Yes, when God wills so." At first Mohan acted as if he didn't know how old I was, and then as the others were pressing me to marry, he became serious and distant. Arati, a worship commenced in the family temple was starting. I loved the atmosphere of arati in their home. It was modest, full of a

beautiful, slightly melancholic energy and yearning for a love that was constantly swelling. A love which could beautify and fulfill the hearts of men so that consciousness is transmitted into a world of hidden inner reality, in which Radha and Krishna and the real Vrindavan are nourished.

Suddenly a conflict was provoked between them. She had the impression that he was hiding something. She didn't want to look at him or to speak to him. He insisted to know what was wrong with her but she refused to reply. Her eyes were brimming with tears. "Does he love me at all?" I suppose love which is equally felt on either side and love which must not hope for a happy ending must be like this. It seemed as if an ancient time had resurrected from this new situation, the time of Rome and royal Europe, when origin was the sole reason for marriage and when marital love didn't count. As if the dark past of humanity was shaping her emotions and everything was inaccessible, inexplicable, and unrealizable. The very thought that the love she intensely felt would never be realized, sharply cut through her heart and soul, just like the too intense atmosphere of an autumn evening which once saw them dining in the back yard. She couldn't taste the food, although the recipes Mummy and Mita made were her favourite. She couldn't feel the outer world because her senses were turned within, and her heart was dying and drowning in the pain of unachievable love. She was paralyzed by the idea that he didn't love her, but she was wrong. Why is it that the feelings of two people who love each other are always so far from understanding? He felt the same strong emotion for her, and she knew it. Is it the magic of love, which turns the whole world and its consciousness around? Or is it the thorny road of love which must be strewn with blood? Maybe, love has always been depicted by the colour red, therefore.

Some time soon he went out. Ida was angry with me. She told how I'd hurt him without reason, how he was so happy when we came and how he wanted to make me happy, and how I couldn't comprehend anything right. It pained me that we would never be. It was the horrible truth. I didn't want to offer feelings which would never be blessed before God and the people, and he, he was always moving forward. Why? Wasn't he afraid of the pain that was coming when you love somebody without the possibility of sharing your life? Who can tell what love really is, and what life really is? I knew so little about

everything. His brother came to ask what the problem was and thanks to Ida I succeeded in explaining my feelings. Mohan's brother said that there was no reason to feel so despondent, because I didn't understand Mohan. The five of us, Mohan's, his two brothers, Ida, and I met at their telephone office to talk the problem over. It seemed that I was the problem. Mohan tried to explain and his brother was translating. He said how he liked my behaviour, my character, and my nature and how happy he was when he saw me for the first time in Kanpur. The brother added how a couple of days prior to this meeting, after a lila, while driving in the car home, Babujee said he had never in his 52 years met a western woman with a better character than mine and Gori's and one more lady. The brother retold Mohan's story, that since he played Krishna, he was expected to be open to everybody because everybody loved him, and therefore he belonged to everybody, but only a few could enter his heart, and that I was among the selected few. I had a difficult time apologizing for being so rude, and for building such a barrier in the way of our communication. Ida was so angry with me and said I was but a fool because I couldn't see he loved me. Then he asked when we would visit their home again, "tomorrow", but he wouldn't be at home. He was heading to parikrama around Govardhan.

God alone could see through their hearts and their mutual love. This was the event after which their relationship got deeper and tougher. More openly now he would take care of her, and read her soul and inner being with just one look. He would reply mimicking, by an accidental touch of hand, or in a few English words. He was happy when she was happy, and he wanted her always to be happy. She felt fulfilled and happy, forgetting the musician and subduing each thought of him. But the thoughts would resurrect again and again mixed with an uncertainty about the existence of love. "If he really loved me he would fight for our life together, and he couldn't," she thought. Mohan couldn't do anything else but love her. He knew how to love selflessly. He knew how to love the soul and how, without touching the body, to gently shape her heart and thoughts noble within her. His happiness didn't matter to him. He respected the laws of his culture and the wishes of his parents. He was in agony, but she was unaware of that. A lesson about unselfish love was forced upon her by the will of providence and she was thankful for the friendship with this wonderful man, Mohan, for Vrindavan, for love, and for an awareness

which came at a price she had to pay.. When the priest from Shiva's temple put the flowery garland around her neck that day, the garland which prior to that was around Lord Shiva, the priest did it in front of thousands of visitors, she knew the Gods understood her confusion but that, at the same time, they were watching her attentively. It is said that Shiva gives women a good husband, so that in Vrindavan, especially on Mondays which is Shiva's day, a great number of girls head towards His temple to pray and offer flowers, incense sticks, silver or some other offering. Most of the girls in Vrindavan pray that Krishna be their husband, or at least a devotee of Krishna. Tara prayed to God to explain to her what it was that He wanted from her.

I realized I must learn to abide by my heart, not by my mind. My heart was happy and peaceful and fulfilled. My mind hesitated, it asked why give love and enter a relationship without a future. Had Radha and Krishna seen my crucified heart, were they watching it, what was it they wanted me to learn? The way of the heart, in my case, had nothing to do with logic, nor with the world surrounding me. As if listening to my heart, I was living a completely different inner world of emotions and awareness and realizations. It was the path I wanted to take. I remembered Paracelsus, "truth should be sought in the image of the Divine Person dwelling in us, and His light charging our spirit leads us through the darkness of the subconscious towards the conscious in the process of self awareness," or something like that. I tried to understand myself and my present struggle. I participated in the struggle, and I wanted to be an onlooker. Victory over my self and over the ocean of flooding emotions was so far away and so impossible. I had to surrender to the mercy and the cruelty of the waves of emotions, while desire for truth was the only motivating force in my struggle and in my surrender. I was frightened of my emotions. Their strength was withering. God was now always around me in the shape of time, which was my only shelter. How painful patience is, when there is no patience. I wanted my youth to pass as quickly as possible; I wanted everything to become the past. I could feel what it meant to die of love. Maybe I really did die in that relationship and in those emotions. I knew I was being born again and that I was learning the hardest lesson of selfless love. Mohan didn't even know his age. His life was a play, playing the Divine. Was my life to become the same? Why did he have feelings for me? He knew my heart. It wasn't mysterious to him, but it

was to me. I was angry because he had access to my heart. It is painful to feel you belong to someone you actually don't belong to. The fear of pain receded. Real love cannot hurt. It needed to approach real love. Mohan was my guide, and God was my aim. The cause of our love dwelt within him. My suffering lasted for days after the argument. I saw all the Divinities at the altars in various Vrindavan temples I was visiting, those days somehow not as kind to me. I was attending liturgies and masses called darshan, but something made them so far from me. My heart was somehow cold and empty. I must have offended the man who knew how to love selflessly? Did I inflict pain, out of my immaturity, my impurity, or because of the conditioning of my vision? I had never felt such pain before. Maybe this was the end. The end of all my illusions and the end of this love. What was the course our relationship was to take now? That man owned my heart and there was no helping it, except there was a final discontinuation.

Spiritually and bodily she was half-dead, after that day they "quarrelled and made peace." There was nothing in her but pain. It took her five to six days to recover. It wasn't a lover's pain. It was the pain of a hard lesson. What to do? Yet again, her only adviser was her sad heart. As if the Almighty will prompted her to follow her heart and to recognize his voice, she realized that all that was happening was a part of her heart and that by her will, she could colour reality.

I could have played with the wondrous pinkish-purple-silvery dyes, I could have smeared his consciousness, why was I so cold and cruel? Why did I let the thoughts and emotions of such low origin slap his soft and magically beautiful heart? What was it that made me hurt the person I loved? And he was patient, standing the storms of my denunciations, while the heart was clearly speaking to me, but I couldn't hear it. I had to bow my head and attend to the voice within. There was no other way out. All I had was my heart, and it was bleeding. I could hardly pray. As if the life-giving air didn't want in. As if the heavens waited for my repentance and my apology.

The truth about the two young people, so insignificant in time, which felt and were, experiencing the most intense part of their lives, carrying love within themselves, pained both of them. According to her heart it must have been for the last time, and it was. Her heart, the holy and secret part

of her heart, was to be touched by no other. It was rejuvenated in its everlasting belonging to Mohan and to God who came through Mohan. It was protected now, untouchable, as if it were from another world, and from a rare, unusual substance. Like melted glass, sprinkled with colour, her heart was sprinkled by the miraculous colour of reality of perennial love which was becoming its lasting feature. It was the mystery of deep sorrow and joy within her.

How only, embroiled our paths are. I excused myself. He came that instant and smiled. Sat by me and said he had been on the parikrama around Govardhan. I asked if he'd prayed for me, and he said he had. I didn't believe him. Perhaps I would never believe him again. Then I said I was sorry, but he acted as if he didn't know what I was talking about, and that everything was all right and forgotten. He just smiled. He looked at my hands to see if they were decorated. He said "it's gone." I felt shy and I quickly hid them. I also felt light and happy. My heart belonged to him and there was no denying it. I thought if someone else was to enter my heart, I would have nothing more to give. I didn't want to love again. He was the first, but was he the last? My heart was happy, but it belonged what messed my thoughts deeply. As if it couldn't free itself from Mohan, as if he'd become its life substance. It lived with him and the break I made almost meant a break of life. Unbelievable. I didn't want to repeat it; ever again, I didn't want to hurt anyone for anything, especially not him.

Her ratio understood that really there was nothing to look for between the two of them. She was ready for a purer and deeper relation, in which she wouldn't be restless in thinking of the future. She couldn't free herself of him, and it was as if he knew that. He seemed calm and satisfied.

Was he calm because he didn't love me any longer, or because he clearly knew my heart was his? I didn't believe his love, but my heart was infinitely calm and happy. Crazy, wasn't it? Nothing made any sense any longer and everything lacked logic. Vrindavan was working again, leaving its trace within. I felt there was no need to see him again or to be around him. I went to learn about the eternal Vrindavan, about the parties Radha and Krishna made, about the philosophy, to peer into Vrindavan and its people.

She wanted to be a part of Vrindavan, and it wasn't easy. In Vrindavan things happen fast and unpredictably. It seemed as one can inflict an outcome, by one's thoughts, one's feelings, and wishes. It seemed thoughts were becoming alive and embodied as soon as they appeared. The mystery of Vrindavan preoccupied Tara progressively. Connections which seemed more important than life became abstract thoughts in Vrindavan, unreality, and the parody of truth. What is this atmosphere that raises man above himself with its inherent blindness of emotions, desires, and wants? A wise man said: "The atmosphere of Vrindavan is such that whether you believe in it or not, it affects you and changes you, like water, once you get in it to bathe, unavoidably wets you, whether you believe or don't believe in its power to make you wet." Everything quickly loses importance in Vrindavan, but love, and only love should be the answer. Only, where was her true love now?

In the course of the days that followed their relationship was becoming more and more open. Their mutual growing up and purification that, looking from the outside was nothing special, was within for the two young people, the greatest destruction, death, growth, and being born again. As if their God was there with them, so that each thought about the future troubled them less. His marriage or hers became insignificant, because they knew that such things belonged to the future. Neither time nor events mattered. What was important was their learning. God, this place and the present time were their teachers now. He helped her rise above the material secular suffering of an infatuated girl, who no longer was feeling that suffering as such, without her knowing why... Mohan's pure love and understanding of life went far beyond Tara's grasp, but he allowed her to come close to him and led her along the road, which she would sometimes get lost on in search of truth and pure love. He carried such love within him, a love he shared with her.

She was grateful for the insights she was receiving in the holy land of gentleness and beauty Queen, Shri Radha's land.. She was growing disconnected from this transient world. It seemed that within her the gates of eternity were opening to the close but still unknown world of perennial and expanding love. Lila and the feelings she cherished for Mohan made this and the other world come nearer, intertwine, and overlap. From the very beginning she was already enchanted by her new inner reality. As if it were something she had yearned for all her life. Now it was here, right in front of her.

One day we organized that Babujee, a couple of musicians, Mohan, and I visit the garden of a nearby temple in order to record some spiritual songs used at lila. Babujee was crying as he sang about Radha and Krishna. Those people really had a sentiment for God. I was recording the performance. When his father finished, Mohan started singing. He was so happy when the recording was done, he started jumping around the garden like a child, saying "I liked it very much, very much, I'm so happy." It was so nice of them to decide to do for me something they had never accepted before, to record songs in front of a western camera, for a strange world which had nothing to do with theirs. They never wanted them to be recorded, separately from lila because they didn't want to expose their traditions and their holy songs to commercial exploitation. Those songs were their most inner expressions of their living with God. I still don't know why they didn't reject my proposal. I wanted to make a documentary of Vrindavan. I wanted people in my homeland to learn about Vrindavan and these wonderful people who lived for God and with God.

My trust in Mohan was restored. Everything was a mystery with us. We were like children, joyful and careless, although we were imprisoned in the harsh reality of impossibilities for our love to get realized. During the Indian New Years eve and the Divali festival we played around the house with other children, firing rackets and pop-guns. We were playing and he approached me remarking what a simple and pure heart I had. I didn't hear what he had said, but his brother repeated. Everything that happened between us was like a fairy tale in which we waited for the happy ending. And, if it was not to happen, well, what could we do, what one do, except be grateful for the happiness and emotion, which we had experienced at one moment in our lives, and which would feed us ever after. He is a simple and free person. I wanted us to be true friends. He is the most mysterious person I have ever met, but he certainly must be very unassuming and innocent. My dilemma continues. Why invest feelings in a relationship without a future? Should one be unselfish and just love? Taking a logical stance and the stance of the culture I was living in, our relationship didn't make any sense and was prohibited. I was crucified.

Then I got to know an astrologer from America. He had devoted some decades of his life to astrology. I described to him the situation I was in, and it somehow happened that he took a liking to me. He wanted to

help me so he drew up my natal chart. Long time did he talk about my spiritual pre dispositions, as the horoscope of a devotee it was, predicting I would reach a high spiritual level. It did not matter to me that much what he spoke now I solely wanted to know about the excruciating events in my heart. Soon after that day, the answers came. He told me that his calculations and some of his unique ways of predicting the future had told him that it was God's will that I was with Mohan at this time. At this moment we were together for some unknown reason, but there was a reason. Later on, he predicted, there would be a great misfortune, or a delay, that would impede my coming back to Vrindavan. There would be a separation, but it would be followed by better things because someone else would appear in my life. Someone more suitable than Mohan. The unfortunate thing, our separation would be caused by a supernatural cause, a world catastrophe.

She was crying while listening to the astrologer's words. She was afraid Mohan might die or might marry another, someone he had never met before... ugh... so many thoughts passed through her head. But the thought that someone better than Mohan was coming into her life comforted her. She could hardly believe there could be anyone better than Mohan. She realized that life was not going to develop exactly as she wanted. The advice was to open to Mohan without any fears, and to learn, because it was God's will that the two of them were together, at that moment. She should be more relaxed about everything and should open her heart and understand that he was present in her life because such was the divine will.

He had been open and carefree since our first encounter. Sometimes I thought he didn't love me and that's why he could be so unheeding about the future, but now I knew that he simply possessed a greater faith in providence and Krishna than I did. He took me as somebody Krishna had sent into his life. He never thought of the future, neither did he think of the past, he lived only the present. I couldn't believe it at the beginning, but as our relationship progressed I was becoming more unconstrained, too. He was teaching me what was important, to love selflessly, without expectations and attachments. The advice the Gods sent me, which the astrologer repeated, was to learn from Mohan. Now I had to switch the ratio off and obey my heart. Again. To

love selflessly. Was it possible for me? Could I do it? Would I ever understand what was happening within me and around me? Vrindavan gave me a present of fabulous worth which I was to learn how to respect. This is the holy land and its people are holy. What I was learning at that moment was the most precious magical secret. The secret of love, the secret of eternal life.

Her relationship with Mohan was more peaceful now. Would they be together and when would they be together were questions that didn't matter now. They were together, in the same place, passing one another secret looks; and, sometimes, passing by and coming close to one another they would feel love and their hearts' beating would accelerate. By the will of God, in their shy and innocent way, they were close yet simultaneously separate. They were becoming true friends. When she was to leave he gave her his necklace, the one she had once asked for, because such things didn't matter to him. That her heart belonged to him was the only thing that mattered. They didn't say goodbye. They never did. In their hearts they remained together. She was happy. Separation was so unreal now, so unimportant, even if they were never to meet again, they remained together. The heart was happy. Strange isn't it? Mohan asked for nothing, he didn't even ask for the freedom to marry whom he wanted. His life consisted of giving of himself. He loved in such a beautiful manner.

"Why did Mohan have that power over me? What kind of power was it? I felt close to Vrindavan through Mohan. Who was Mohan? How could he burrow so deeply into my heart?" she thought commencing another analysis of her inner spiritual condition, and she would always be surprised by the messages and lessons she learnt. There, at the holy place, she was experiencing a new feeling, in the closeness of the person whose language she could hardly comprehend, but whom she loved with her whole heart. She went on. Then there was the matter of the musician from her distant mystical past. They didn't share any contact, except the accidental glance in the streets of Vrindavan. She was confused from time to time, but her feelings for Mohan overwhelmed her, so that the waves beating down from her unconscious reality never touched her. Mohan was her shield. All the people she met were her teachers. Her learning was still undefined by words, but it was defined in time and her inner reality. Life was getting deeper and more intense. She was infinitely

happy, even when the severe turbulence of thought, feelings, and wants rushed through her consciousness like gales, when she could hardly explain to herself how to go on and what the lesson she was learning at each moment was. Her heart would always remain peaceful, situated in a deep base, and it was telling her: "Keep going, don't be afraid, I am with you, and go on, that's the right thing to do..." And it was. The most intense emotions and conceptions of life and desires would crash down like skyscraper illusions, suddenly becoming insignificant ruins of something utterly superficial and unreal. They would turn into dust which could easily be swept from the mirror of her heart and her consciousness. That dust would then turn into a substance and energy of an utterly different world. A reality which loved her. Only experience would stay and a new impression of life, freed from another coat of illusion. Vrindavan confirmed once again that the experiences and changes her mind and her life were going through were far from ordinary, that an unravelled deep reason was hidden behind all her experiences and that it was beginning to reveal itself.. It seemed there was someone good and divine who guarded her and took care of her. She was happy feeling that she belonged to those who loved most and loved most innocently, who were within her and also outside of her. She belonged to them like a spark shining in the endless light of knowledge, eternity, and happiness.

We met and talked only for a while because we didn't want Bab or Mummy to suspect. We talked about philosophy and his feelings for Krishna. I gave him a book as a present. He promised he would read it. Then he told me his secret, how as a child he met his guru, his teacher, who had told him that he would be a Thakurjee - a Krishna actor. As child each Thursday Mohan would go to his very old teacher on Govardhan, and ask him for a book to read, and the guru would say: "What do you want, you are but a child?" but he loved Mohan greatly. The teacher would sometimes be so absorbed in his meditation on Krishna lila that he wouldn't even recognize Mohan, and occasionally confusing him with Krishna, would offer him milk.

Sitting in the hall yard we talked about his allergy treatment for which he often went to Mumbai. Despite the numerous methods he tried, his allergy persisted, and this was the last one left to try. It was a problem with his stomach and digestion. We agreed that upon my next visit to Vrindavan we should go together and see a doctor from Russia who

resided there from time to time. And then we separated. He almost didn't say goodbye, but very softly he said "Radhe Radhe." It is a greeting in Vrindavan. The inhabitants of Vrindavan call their queen when they are saying goodbye, when they meet, and when they pray. I couldn't really comprehend Mohan's relationship with Krishna, neither could I fully understand his life philosophy because he was born in a completely different world, and he grew up in a different atmosphere. He had never heard of rock, gothic, metal, or punk music, he didn't know about psychoanalysis or Yeats, he had no idea about the capital of Mozambique, or socialism. However, he did know about the human heart, the beauty of art, dance, and emotions. He grew up on the stage of lila. He spent his whole childhood traveling and playing lila. It was his entire cosmos, and all he wanted and was expected to know. Vrindavan was in him and all around him, for Mohan, Vrindavan was the pinnacle of his desires, his path, and his aim. Radha, the queen of Vrindavan, was his only shelter – which is why he greeted me by her name as not to feel the pain of our separation. And I didn't feel pain, well perhaps just a little.

My heart recognized his inner beauty and purity, and therefore loved him but soon it would all vanish. He and he were gone. Vrindavan remained, the divinities, Mumy... I was leaving in a couple of days. I was leaving for even further East, but wishing to come back for the Vasant panchami lila, the spring lilas.

I was alone again but Krishna stayed with me. I wanted to be in that eternal world where you are never alone, where lilas are eternal, and where there is no saying goodbye. I realized that love was the secret I was looking for. Love was the air without which my heart was dead. What kind of love is it? Love for Krishna and Radha, for Vrindavan and Mohan, for the musician and for my teacher, my family in the distant Montenegro, my family in Vrindavan, love for my friends and for human and God and the nature and the universe. It was love for the smallest grain of dust, and for each temple in this holy place, and for all the holy people, love for earth and for the infinity of creation, and again, the most simple love in my heart, love for myself. Was I ready for such love? Did my heart have the capacity for letting all the enormous love within? Could my heart do it? My roots were the roots of a far and cold past, a past forgotten by Gods and men. I wanted to find within myself the love I recognized in the world outside of me. Although neither

Mohan nor the musician was with me, I felt I was moving through their thoughts, suspended in their emotions, because their hearts were in Vrindavan.

Were we to meet again? I realized we would never really be separated, we belonged to the holy land of eternity.

GOVARDAN
and the encounter with an interesting woman

*“The great virtue in life is rare courage that knows that knows how to face
facts and live beyond them.”*

D.H.Lawrence

It was one of my last days in Vrindavan and I was preparing myself for the departure. I wanted to complete the parikrama- pilgrimage around Govardhan which I had done five years ago. On the street, in order to wait for the lift to Govardhan which is about an hour's travel from Vrindavan I saw a woman whom I used to meet in the temple. She was in her early forties, youngish, with deep, lustrous eyes framed by black liner and long, black hair. Tall and slim, dignified and very beautiful. She was married and had two boys. Her entire appearance suggested that she was a person with special character and an unusual personality. We traveled by moto-rikshaw which is called tempo and which was a means of transport for the poor. We wanted to be a part of the people from the holy place. There was no crowd, so we felt at ease in this noisy tricycle. She had been living with her family for years in Vrindavan. They had practiced a spiritual life and raised their children in the sanctuary. She enjoyed all the comforts of marriage and maternity but her prayer and consciousness rested deeply in God and Vrindavan, on the threshold of the world of Dadu, lila, and Mohan. This woman from the West was completely different from any western people I used to meet on my travels.

She was unspeakably calm and pensive. Our talk unusually started with her revealing about the journeys to her inner self, about the ways of going one's separate way, the ways of intensifying, about the ways of love. Some of her words and thoughts and those lustrous and calm eyes seemed familiar and awakened unexplored darkness of my inner universe. How much of all that exists within a man? Whilst we spoke, during our journey to Govardhan, it seemed as if we had both and Vrindavan been a part of some secret, coded message, as if we had been closed doors of the undiscovered universes which had to be found and opened while meeting perchance or on purpose. But always for a reason. I didn't know who either of us really were, nor how to travel within. I turned to the landscape we were passing by, resigning myself to the beauty of nature which was filling up and connecting to its spring that now partially rested in me and in that marvelous woman. We were close in that divine duration. The woman said: "The most important thing for me is to get to the bottom of myself and to feel the state of my heart. I've been learning not to repress and to reject my feelings, but to restore them to my consciousness and start loving them. We have to love our sorrow. People are often ashamed of

their sorrow, so they try to hide it, but I believe we should live it and try to understand it. Why is that feeling here now? God lives in our hearts, and He creates the state of mind in order to enable us to understand who we really are. We can do that only if we honestly want to get to know ourselves. In that case we take every feeling seriously and we live it, even if it lasted for only one moment. We will start to love ourselves and other people. We will love our God then and our relationship with Him will become clear to us. I am trying to become aware of my feelings, desires and Krishna in this phase of my life and I feel that I am more calm and happy than I used to be when not concentrated on my inner self. Now I know what the way of contemplation really means.” I had been thinking about her words. I realized that she, in that moment, was an embodiment of my current condition, she was my guideline and my example.

The time spent with her brought Tara a feeling of inner mystique and aspiration for contemplation and deep reflection. It was a premonition of immense peace and calm that can only be found by a soul surrendered to God and His will, a presentiment of divine eternity and compassion in a man that has, by some secret part of himself, touched his own God and his own eternity, traveling through the various regions of unfamiliar feelings and aspirations.

With Jana, an Italian woman who has lived in Vrindavan for almost ten years and who entered a monastic order there, I met at Govardhan. We went on parikrama, a 26 km walk around the holy mountain. She was very funny when she spoke English or Hindi because it always seemed as if she was singing in Italian. Sometimes she would only speak in Italian, although back then, I didn't understand it very well. I never interrupted her, because our heart understands good intentions and emotions referred to us. I felt wonderful while we were walking around Govardhan. Every step we took was a step in the direction of invisible and beautiful beloved whom, no matter how hard I tried, I could not reach. We felt the presence of Krishna and Radha as we heard their names sang in melodious ways all over the pilgrimage road. We met the glances from the holy men who lived in Govardhan completely surrendered to God, and who being fully surrendered to God's will, resided there. Heaven, earth, and the good will of the passers-by were the only shelter they had. I felt a profound connection

to that grayish stone hill which was Radha herself by tradition, and which recalled the stones from my childhood. The holy books say that when Krishna was on earth He raised this hill when being five years old with the little finger of his left hand. He wanted to protect the habitants of Vrindavan during the flood because it was raining cats and dogs for seven days and seven nights. In this way Govardhan became a hill and a temple at the same time. God himself walked on it with his friends and cows being a simple cowherd boy. Some pilgrims spend months in the pilgrimage while some of them stay for the rest of their lives at Govardhan. There are many sanctuaries, ponds, temples, and holy places along the way of the pilgrimage. I saw Krishna's footprint in one stone and his eyes in the other and one could plainly see that they were not carved by man. The natives call them the self-expressed wonders. I even shot that stone with the eyes since I had been invited to the temple on top of the Govardhan by a local priest. Westerners are not usually permitted, so I don't know why this native brahman decided to invite me there. I said: "I will go with you, since you have invited me, but..." I was afraid because it was a well know fact that a foreigner was not allowed to walk across Govardhan. It often happened that skeptics and tourists broke their legs there; or even hurt themselves seriously and I didn't want to derange the holiness of the place by walking over it. The priest, who was walking towards us, who we for the first time in our lives saw, just joyfully said in hind that i did not know much: "Do not worry, I will take on me all the reactions so you come with me on the top of the hill!" I just laughed and agreed to join him. It is very low hill. Few dozen of meters. We came to a beautiful little temple on top of the hill. The people were doing an offering and worship when we arrived. It was a kind of festival. There were a dozen older men and a few old women from a nearby villages attending the prayer. The women carried pure vegetarian food on the plates on top of their heads while preparing the offering. They were looking at me bashfully and with smiles. I had an impression that they were ashamed of people with white skin. I forgot about the shame when they showed me the stone with the eyes. They called it "The Eyes of Govardhan." The stone that had opened its eyes which were beautiful and even coloured. It was a miracle to see the grayish-blue stone strings form the shape of the eyes. It was amazing!!! Everything was so beautiful and mystical, the villages and the little hills, the cows on the meadows, the peacocks at the foot of the hill, the little woods and bushes, the

monks we were passing by and the quaint cottages of the natives. Distant music could be heard. I was watching the purple horizon embrace the mystique of the impending evening. I enjoyed the beauty and it was fulfilling, it was, as usual, working on my heart with joy that changes and shapes everything. I felt an immense closeness to that atmosphere of Govardhan because of Mohan who was my inner and external relationship to Vrindavan. Mumy also came from a village near Govardhan. Everything I was looking at became mine through them. I hurried downhill. Jana was waiting for me at the foot of the hill, so I quickly greeted the priests and villagers and left. I felt that I was accepted and blessed. An amazing feeling engulfed my heart.

How can we live and get to know our own feelings? Is the real way to God a way of understanding, or maybe it enlightens your inner reality with a torch carried by the Holy man? Inside himself. The enlightenment was just beginning for her and the master, who would introduce her to the immensity of Krishna's world and the world of divine love, was coming through an old monk from Vrindavan. How many masters are needed on the way to eternity? She prayed for their mercy and love, which she received from all.

Back... West, or...

“Cast a cold eye on life on death, horseman, pass by.”

Yeats

I am far from the world of temples and games. Again, I find myself in the world of people with a lost expression on their faces, and eyes coloured with bitterness.. Here, in the evanescent world of lies and hatred. I feel the air bursting with the crushing truth of forlornness and confusion in the race for complacency. It seems that this fear and wandering doesn't exist. Is it really so?

Well, I became acquainted with a different world. A world which is happier, calmer, and more authentic. This world is here. How can we reach it? Poverty is everywhere. Is this the way? No, it isn't. This world is covered with the dust of the eternal imprisonment of our existence in a corner of our hearts. This world cannot be observed, but only reached via our hearts.

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Is it really possible? Where is reality then?

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Come on, try to recall it. What did you learn, what did you acquire knowledge of? What did you bring back with you?

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Love.

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Have you really found love? What is love? Is it something existing?

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Yes, yes, yes. I know what I've been talking about. I've seen it and found it. It really exists. It is weird. It is hidden in ourselves and it can't be seen till we call it. It responds from the deepest parts of our souls, like a creation. Love is a good intention, a soothing word, care, even the feeling of giving and receiving, not the feeling of taking, it is the freedom of being alive and it is of divine origin.

Why would you think it doesn't exist, what make you thing in such way? It exists in my mother, my brother, in all the people that I know and don't know. It even exists in an evil man, but he strangles it. Love exists in a quince, in an apple, in the soil, in a stream, a our cow in the stable, in my dog Žuča. ***You can find it everywhere if you observe it through its own eyes.***

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saw it in the eyes of Dadu, in the eyes of the children of the theatre, on the face of Mumy from Vrindavan...I saw it in the smile of pretty Canadian girl, shy and noble musician carried it, I saw it on the faces of Vrindavan inhabitants, Mohan carried it..

It made the air sweet for breathing, the water sweet for drinking, it made every man close

and every grief temporary and unreal. It seems that finally it makes sense to live. Its origin was found in the nearly unreal blissfulness of that elevated place, in the human of pure hearts and thoughts, and in the nature of my long-suffering soul which has finally succeeded, after all these wanderings on the roads of pain and solitude, to find its own peace and the eternity of existence on that lively earth. It seemed that a search for the lost identity of mine and for the lost eternity of life and God whom I had once lost, came to its end finally.

It was a feeling of calmness of one who gives not expecting anything in return. It was a feeling of strength, a feeling of inner tenderness, a feeling of safety while being on your own with your own. My soul free and in mirth flies over the horizon of the absolute and benevolent sky of the inner world of the most beautiful emotions.

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You've been looking for it. Now you've reached it. It is a peace in your soul. The eternal endurance and the quality of your own self, uttered the teacher from a page of an ancient, holy book.

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For how long have we been looking for it, my ancestors and yours, my friends and yours? This entire sad world has been looking for it sliding down the spiral of its own hopes and aspirations, of its own pain, while it rests in us. Asleep alike a Sleeping Beauty waiting to awaken, with the kiss of innocence and truth.

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Here, take the key.

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Where is it?

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In the heart. Everything is here. Turn to yourself. Look. Hear. Listen to the music of your soul. "Patience, oh patience" said Michelangelo's mother. The hardest way is the way of love and knowledge. Only the brave can step along it, ready for the battle for the blood of lies. Only those can step along it, freshening their souls with the purity and beauty of our Creator without giving up before the storms of beasts in themselves and others.

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The torch of truth and knowledge will glow to enlighten the path of warriors and artists.

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Where does it come from? I asked.

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It will be carried by your eternal fellow-traveler. By the one who lives in your heart forever, who is immortal. He will be forever young and benevolent. He will show you the way. Oh, you, little warrior, descendent of great warriors on the sole stone of sorrow and solitude, of a distant land, your heart is of a feminine nature and you could slacken, but don't be bewildered by that. You belong to the all-attractive cause of yourself, you who will find your peace in the unity with Him.

That's the message that I wanted to send you my child, my hero. It's up to you now what you're going to do. Will you have strength to step over the heated and cold deserts of your desires, without paying attention to a mean or beautiful word without stopping for the sweetness of youth and the beauty of the ephemeral? Will you be strong enough to keep walking when the tempests of hypocrisy erupt from the people dear to you and when the storms devastate your hope?

Will you be willing to proceed when solitude puts your soul to the test, and when your own desert becomes your sole friend and fellow-traveler? First you will be followed by pleasant and stormy weather and the duality of the world will cut through you. If you proceed bravely, will the warmth and shine of the sun of beauty and mirth be with you. Darkness and inner dryness will be rare followers of yours, till, in the end, the very feeling of fulfillment of your mellifluous heart becomes very you yourself, drunken by the beauty of divinity in you. Of that beauty, you will die, eventually, and you will die entirely happy! Don't be afraid when your steps through the emptiness of your human existence with its virtues and faults will lead, it will disappear eventually. Everything will pass, eventually. All that you need is patience and modesty, humility! Only then will you be able to reach reality. When the contours of your face in the mirror of chastity and innocence of the child would be to find, thus will the unalloyed happiness, like a voice from heaven, your fellow traveler become, a robe of your soul.

Pride, cruel and stupid, will be no more. You'll see the reality of yourself, eternal and blessed, and the reality of your brothers, sisters and all other souls. You'll see reality through the eyes covered with a balsam of love, a blue and bright reality. You will be perfected, conscious, gentle you and pure and meek as you've always been. The spring and the conductor of divine emotion.

Come on now, daughter and girl, child of our only God, head to the way of reunion, on the way of truth and love for eternity and perfection. May your travel and path be lights and in luck. May those you meet be the transmitters of the messages of God. You will be given my blessing to learn forever, to be happy in better and worse, knowing that you are never alone and that your guide is always with you. Don't you ever forget Him, please, and if you do, pray for His presence and mercy.

Let your mind always be your friend, and not your tormentor, let your thoughts find a shelter in the endless and, at the same time, distant and close truth; the truth of your divine origin and nature. Find yourself a shelter in the games that you will play trained by your guide. Don't you ever forget them and pray, sing and cherish, be a friend and listen. Be always at the service of the holy truth and its stems that will hold your heart from flying away in the glooms of troubled times. Be always followed by auspiciousness and let everything be a play for you, the game played by Dadu, by your sisters, and by the actors in the theatre...

You'll find the love that you've been looking for, you will walk on it and with it until, in accordance to its own supreme volition reveals itself to you. Sincerely.

So, believe and go.

I left the Holy land by the feet of a sinner but it seems that it didn't abandon and leave my heart which was trying to survive, which was fighting and surrendering to a feeling given by the providence. It seems that everything that happened somewhere outside, happened inside. And it did happen inside. It happened at the place where everything begins and ends, where the ocean of pleasure and eternity of love abide, it happened...

Now I just have to walk and observe my inner self across the path of beautiful and eternal music, the colorful and lively music of my soul, music of my desired home.

Let that music be heard, let it be seen and let it be peace. The respect of the holy music! Let it rule the hearts of those who would once read this novel. St. Teresa de Avila would say that love calls for love, the Indian Master says.. Love is contagious, like a most noble illness...That knowledge is a secret of the Universe, which is easily recognized on the path of love. Love causes love. I have learned a lot from Dadu, from the musician, from Mohan, my family in Vrindavan, from the young Canadian girl, and from all the people. Their love wasn't an ephemeral

storm of this world consisting of strong feelings which drive your thoughts crazy and then leave forever. It was a different kind of love, a love caused differently. It was a divine love, enabled by the purity of their hearts. It was a love of sublime origin which was real and palpable at the same time. It has embellished our hearts and the reality of living, and existence in the world of pain and disquiet, raising the one who loves to the level of perfect feeling and compassion with all our brothers and all living creatures. Entering into our souls and imbuing our reality by an everlasting beauty, persistent as stone is.

Now my future isn't important any longer. It is in the hands of a person who loves me the most. I suppose, my living started just now. The feeling! My dear Krishna, please be with me through every millionth part of a second of my living and my loving. I belong to you, endlessly happy...

It seems that everything starts new. I am entering some other dimension of understanding and experiencing reality, into another dimension of feeling, thinking and living. Now, my teachers are with me and I will never be alone again. Thank you, Vrindavan, thank you Dadu, Mitra, and Mohan, thank you musician, thank you my family in India and Montenegro, thank you my Lali, Ida, Gori, Krishangi, thanks to all of you who have thought of me even if you weren't aware of it. I am on the path of reality and love, on the path to God and to myself. Oh, I love you Shri Radha and Krishna. I want to go back to Vrindavan, my home.

I am no longer afraid. I feel that I am on the path of permanent love, on the way to myself. I've found my world which, covered with the dust of forgetfulness and ignorance, and covered by passionate desires, resided solely within myself. Far and unreachable, like the blue colour of the sky and the silvery Moonshine. The world of a real and eternal joy has been found in the purest love. The flight and revelation of eternity remain with me now. The door of ancient truth has been opened and I have passed through it. The freedom has embraced me and it carries me on its wings. Freedom will reveal different emotions from which my world has been made, by which it has been decorated and in which it lives. Not any more am I so painfully far from those who I love the most. Whole life of struggling, stumbling, and learning is in front of me, said the teacher and the holy book. Proceed! Love! This is one of the most beautiful paths I've ever walked. The human heart is an immeasurable enchanting space for new emotions. I can hear the music. It is really magnificent to walk to You, my dearest. God.

Katharine Tara M.

Mystery about people

“By touching we could kill though by keeping away we could posses.”

Tagora

What had happened? Since God gives everything, he gave Tara disconnection from Mohan. She loved him with her whole heart and soul but she couldn't belong to him. The relationship between these two humans ceased or metamorphosed. A beautiful memory and the gift of love she received from that beautiful, pure being remained within her heart. She decided that she must deliver her life to God who has always taken care of her. And she did. There was no longer a mystical and indescribable connection with him, whom she loved as she had never loved before. Don't believe that her feelings were at all lighter than those described by the magnificent Shakespeare. After the regression many a thing changed.

In the company of her old teacher, during his lectures her heart was changing, as it used to change with Mohan once, only this time it was not the same kind of love. It was love for a friend, a guide and an old man, who entered her heart and changed it painlessly but unfathomably deeply.

Everything was telling her about the mystical connection with Mohan, and now she was leaving him. Then she remembered the unbridled regression, the prince, who was he? She returned to Vrindavan again. Their first moment she retrieved her heart was at a lila.

She had never seen him so serious. Lali accompanied her, almost screaming as she noticing the way he looked at Tara. Just one millionth part of a second had passed and her heart was in his hands again. Why was it so? She was confused. Did he know her heart had already gone? How could he know? What kind of understanding was there between them? Everything was different between them now. It seemed that now he was running away. Her desire grew so that she had to see him again after a few days. At first he was distant, then he would come close, which was when they could finally communicate. He would say that the two of them were partners and he would share his sweets with her, cutting them in two pieces. He also remembered and understood the letter she had written to him the year before. They would discuss different moods in which Krishna appears at lila. He would never discuss these things with anyone else, and all the time, talking to her, his eyes penetrated deeply, embracing her confused soul. She sometimes thought that everything she saw in him was but a game by her imagination and she was waiting for the day he would confess that none of the emotions were real. She was learning to obey her heart again in the frenzied world of insecurities and feelings she had to experience, on the road to emancipation from all the delusions.

Again he possessed her whole heart and he was testing her. She wondered why she should begin again. Some days his attention was focused on her sending her infinitely deep love, and other days he would be gone. They would be like two strangers, and then she would be alone thinking he would never come back and she would never see him again. But he came back, he always came back. Everything between them was unsettled and mystical, always the same vagueness. What had they been in their previous lives, how could there be such a connection between two people born in two distant parts of the world, in different cultures, yet sharing the same feelings and mental outlook? They were so connected that she sometimes thought they had nothing at all in common. What one felt was so perfectly harmonized with what the other felt, they seemed to be one person. It was a mystery. Why did he play such a game? He loved her and his game was painful for both of them. What else could he have done? Their future was more than impossible. His play or the play of God who played with her through him was becoming more mystical and incomprehensible, solemn, even divine. She was surrendering to it more and more. Her love for him and Vrindavan kept growing. Mohan was becoming her reality. She started to study him as a human being, and she asked herself, who this young man could be who was so in accordance with her innermost feelings towards God. Secret roads were opening, leading to the chambers of the inner shrine they lived in. She felt she was inseparably connected to Vrindavan and felt herself belonging to it, for he, who was born there and whose love for the holy place and its Lords ran in his blood, had taken her into his heart. She didn't see him as God, but as a friend. When she looked at the man in him, he would mysteriously disappear from the horizon of her perception of true behaviour and manner, and then everything would again turn magical, mystically uncertain. He would come to her in everyday situations, taking care of her, attended her, asked about her well being, whether she needed anything, if she had eaten enough? His next move was far from her deepest imagination. It was impossible to be certain of his feelings when they were together. She was unrestful. What an infinite unrest. He had plans about his future and career. Why did he torture them both emotionally? She wondered in progressing agony about the most demanding lesson in love, the hardest and most beautiful part was yet to come. The lilas commenced again. They would last a couple of days and then another inevitable separation. Both of them were leaving. Would they keep one another in their hearts

again, or would there be a final end? The end had already taken place for Tara, yet everything continued intensely. His ways of showing his love and at the same time mystifying his love were perfect. She could read them through and through still not fully believing in his love again, which only made their relationship more intense, perplexing, and magical. Another end or another beginning could happen any minute. Both of them were free within and felt the same intensity of connection at the same time. He was leading the same play again, she was following. She attended to his feelings trying to understand them. God, great were the lessons she learned from that man, how forced she was to learn.

Once he told her that when he was a little boy, his father would tell him which lila was to be performed on that day, and that he would play without any preparations or books. He never read the role he was about to play. He would stand on the stage and just know what to do. She said, "It must have stayed with you from your previous life," and he nodded, shyly and a little distrustfully, "It seemed I have seen lila."

He feared she wouldn't understand. His intention was to direct her to his deep and unbreakable bond with Krishna, which was in no case accidental, learned, or forced upon him. When she saw him that first time in Kanpur, she was certain that Mohan had seen the real living God, that he had seen Krishna. How beautiful Mohan was. How much of that beauty was his and how much was endowed to him by the God he portrayed? How enormous his inner world was, and how rich? Once, I would like to accurately describe Mohan to you, but I'm afraid it will not be an easy task. The sides to him Tara liked was his simplicity, purity of thought and words, his refinement and stylization of movements, his expressions, his masculine but gentle beauty, and his knowledge of Krishna, music, and acting. He was a beautiful young man, He was a being on this planet but not of this planet. Mohan had his mission on earth and he was accomplishing it successfully, Tara was certain of that.

A friend Tanja once told her that what was happening between the two of them was no ordinary relationship between two people. It surpassed the limits of infatuation, of either the young or the mature. In the eyes of her friends there was something divine in their relationship. "It's not of this world, I'm sure. I know because I have had a relationship with a man. Although I loved him as much as my heart was able to love, it seemed nothing compared to what's happening between you and Mohan," said Bavi at a lila in Haridvar. "Your relationship isn't human; it goes beyond

all the postulates of relationships between two humans, by being divine. I'm sure God is doing this to you. From it you are getting something difficult, huge, and life-saving."

Everything Tara ever wanted and had been waiting for all her life was in him. Was it that she had everything, through him? Was it this possession that mattered? Tara was learning about herself through him. And what was the purpose? It was mysterious unpredictable and intense. Everything took up again, although she, for the millionth time, wanted it to stop. He led the game and continued to do so, but to what end? Maybe to an ordinary end, an end predictable for her, an awareness that he may have never felt the way she felt for him. An end that will follow his disconnection from this world, or a continuation that would culminate in an intense desire to spend their lives together, to die together, and to be together with their God. In eternity.

1998 Haridvar, lilas...

“Love will tear us apart.”

Jan Kurtis – Joy Division

Mitra and Tara were together in Vrindavan. One of its temples had organized a pilgrimage and excursion to Haridvar, because of the kumbha mela festival (the holy bath) on the Ganges. Several million people always take part in the pilgrimage because the festival only takes place every twelfth year. They wanted to go; they were in India, near the Himalayas, brimming with youth, strength, and longing for new insights. And India was infinitely mystical, and unpredictable. It was theirs for the taking. For months Haridvar was divided by tiny paths and covered with tents wherefrom sprang music, singing, and prayer 24 hours a day. Those days, especially on the main day of bathing, the town is swept up by an incredible crowd but also by indescribable peace. On April 14th, it was 1998, was the most auspicious day to take the holy bath. It is believed that all the wishes come true if one bathes on that particular day on a particular spot on Ganges. The pilgrims pray for general good and peace of all people in the world. The heavenly beauty of nature and the Ganges, the fragrances in the air, and the smiles in eyes and on faces, on that day shape and change and curve the hearts of sojourners and by that

sonorous and vivid atmosphere of beauty make the impressions of an eternal heavenly world, real and truly sensed. Touched by eyes, by hearing, and a flesh. The holy books state that on that day, at a certain moment, due to a special star constellation at the sky, the nectar of eternal life and happiness falls on the pilgrims bathing in the Ganges, where God bestows priceless blessings on them.

The journey to get there was not easy. After some initial hesitation, Tara left for Haridvar. It was because of Mitra she decided to go. She knew Mohan was there with his lila and she was afraid of their being together at the same place. She wanted to escape from his presence. She fell ill just before the journey. Symptoms of jaundice and malaria. A clairvoyant doctor from Russia gave her medicine made of oak and pine crust powder, some spices and on the following day she was cured. It was a true miracle! She was only going because she'd promised Mitra she would accompany her. However, a woman from Delhi delivered news that Mitra wasn't coming after all, but Tara's heart told her to "go". Buses had been organized from Vrindavan main temple, so she joined them and went. In Delhi, she had to telephone Mitra who didn't have permission from her office to leave. In the end, Mitra managed to get permission, quickly prepared and went to the temple where the pilgrims from Vrindavan were having a lunch break. Tara was waiting for her. Time ran short and the departure was due, but still no sight of Mitra. A young student priest called out to Tara, yelling it was time and the buses were waiting for her, only. The two of them started walking towards the buses. What did they see when they came out of the temple? All four buses had already gone. They had been left behind and they couldn't believe. A short minute after that Mitra appeared, saying: "I knew I would be late." Yet no one was anxious about the incident, they simply laughed at experiencing the play of life in India. Unbelievable things happened, when one least expected them to. A student priest was there too, because he had also been "deserted". He talked them into going to the bus station and taking an ordinary bus to Haridvar which will take way longer, but no other solutions seems to be possible at the moment. They hired a moto-rikshaw taxi to the bus station, which was somewhat ten minutes drive from there. They discussed the strangeness of the situation – buses leaving just like that, and taking all of Tara's things, and although all the passengers knew that she was going with them, they didn't wait. She said: "If it so happens that we meet the buses on the road and succeed to catch up to them, it means Krishna is playing with us and His

lila is with us.” But in a city like Delhi, with millions of inhabitants, it was almost impossible. Thousands cars passed them by on the crowded streets of Delhi, as people were coming back from work in the afternoon peak hour traffic jam. In a loud smoggy afternoon drive in the loud Indian transportation Mitra added: “On my way to the temple, I thought, Krishna, I know I’ll be late but what is it you have planned for me now, why am I to arrive late at my destination?” A couple of minutes after this conversation, the priest, who was on the first seat jumped off the motorikshaw and started knocking on the door of one bus. Tara thought it was a tourist bus, but it wasn’t, it was the same bus that took her from Vrindavan to Delhi. They all jumped on enormously happy and relieved. As a matter of fact, their Haridvar bus had taken another road, but there was a blockade, and since they had lost another half hour there in the jam the bus had turned into a street it wouldn’t otherwise have taken because it led in the opposite direction towards the bus station. And so, they finally reached the bus, or was it Krishna playing with them? After eight or ten hour long trip they arrived in Haridvar. The atmosphere of the Ganges, the sand on their way to the tents, the moonlight, all of it fed Tara’s soul with the mystic, irresistible beauty of the holy place. It was all new for Tara, but yet again it felt familiar. Many a time did Tara experience the mysticism of India which was why she loved the place. She loved India and all its strange unpredictability, the magical feeling that one is on life’s stage there, and that from the heavens and earth God is attending you closely and attentively. This stage was not a strange unknown world of a distant far east land, it was her home.

They got lost in Haridvar, actually there was a woman with whom Mitra suddenly disappeared. It was late after midnight when they arrived at the very centre of the pilgrimage. Thousands of people passed them by heading towards their campsites. To the sound of a silent song on the radio at almost two o’clock in the morning, Tara, without feeling tired after the long trip, was touching the infinity of beauty all around her, walking barefoot on the sands of the Ganges which was glimmering in the distance. A small group of elderly women passed by, exhaustion was reflected on their faces but their eyes glistened with the eternity of spiritual youth. Tara was happy, she was very happy. Only, where was Mitra? She reached the campsite, following the pilgrims from the bus. After a couple of minutes she found Mitra, with the old lady, getting out of a car. They were lucky to be spotted by someone from its camp, in that mass of people, and so late in the night, and taken by car to the camp, because the old lady was really exhausted...

"It must be that we were here in our previous life," Mitra used to say. They bathed in the Ganges every day. They would leave early in the morning, find a solitary place, and stay there for hours. They prayed. The morning sun shone on the maiden's innocent desire for unyielding love. Prayers filled their thoughts. Prayers for love. Indescribable, and thus far unexperienced peace filled their hearts. When they went bathing in the morning, or walked by the Ganges in the twilight, listening to music and the booming of the huge mighty river, or when, in the evening, they went to lila or other events taking part in Haridvar, they felt incessant peace and happiness. They strolled barefoot along the sandy shores of the Gang, visited markets, squares, and the people would stop them asking various questions, because they were white and therefore a rarity among the enormous mass of people. They met beggars, lepers, and snake tamers, but it seemed that nothing any longer could bring them pain. They only felt joy and happiness for being there, for being a part of the delightful stage of another world. The border of reality and duality was being eradicated, disappearing in the feeling that became their major quality, the feeling of love. Once, while swimming in the Ganges, a small group of people appeared as if out of nowhere. They brought a wrapped dead body of a man. They placed the body on a cemented platform wherefrom the light of stairs, where they were seated, descended into the Gang. A young woman, wrapped in a white shawl, wept aloud. She was escorted by a man. Her clothes reflected her middle-class. The priest performed the service with mantras and prayers, lighting candles and throwing flowers onto the body. The body was then given to the river. The group went, and the two young girls stayed looking at the sinking body. Both life and death were strange occurrences in India, quick and devoid of fanfare. "Indians do not make significant show of live and death rather they flow with the river of life towards death, and then they enter life again," Mitra said gloomily. A great number of them lived with the clear aim of heading towards the Divine world. And the gathering there was the gathering of religious people, who came from all sides of India and all around the world, bringing their families with them, to send prayers for eternal life and eternal love. The girls were shocked by the event, realizing all the more that a creation of their minds and conditioning only was the border of life and death they were experiencing at that moment. "Death is the greatest truth and the greatest lie!" Tara said.

They went to lilas. They met Mohan after the lila at the ashram of mother Vraja Devi who had organized the lila. He wasn't surprised to see Tara and that made her unhappy. It was the first time Mitra saw him, although she was informed of all that happened between Tara and Mohan. Back in the campsite, she said: "No doubt he feels deeply and strongly for you. As far as I can tell, such was my impression, he is very considerate."

They came back to Haridvar several times. The atmosphere of the lila and the unbelievable spiritual energy in the town stirred in Tara's mind that old terrible agony she thought she had relinquished several months ago. It seemed she was to withstand another hurricane of emotions, which, she knew deep in her subconscious, would take her close to death but also awaken her fully. The lilas became so intense for her; she would spend the time there crying. She felt shy and distant from Mohan. The feeling of God penetrated deeper and deeper in her. Her friends at the mother-nun's camp, and Mohan, all worried about her. He sent his brother to check on Tara. Since he was always the focus of attention in the temple of the guru-mother, who was the only person he communicated with, he was distant from Tara. Only when he was on stage was he hers, and gave her all the attention and his most beautiful looks. It was killing Tara and also creating Tara. Bavi, Krishangi, and Mitra all witnessed her inner struggle and flowering of love which was no longer considered human by anyone.

Mohan initiated the first move and came to her in front of everybody, openly, and publicly. The attention he gave was risky but also represented proof of his love for her. She was almost stoned by the intensity of emotions. Although distant, she was within him, and the distance linked them. She started to love the beautiful old woman who had devoted her whole life to Krishna, and enabled Mohan to grow within his art and live happily in her temple. His heart completely belonged to that world. Duality was disappearing again. Proximity and distance were the same. To be together or not to be together was the same. The border of emotion was non-existent, it had touched the root and spring of itself... a circle was becoming perfect.

"Approaching you he wanted to express his love, which is passing through a million conflicts in his heart too, he must abide by his tradition. There is nothing in the world for which he would risk his

happiness and the reputation of his family in Vrindavan, and you know very well how strict they are. He would rather crush himself and his heart and his feelings underfoot than hurt his family. And the guru-mother who takes care after him, and all the rest who came to see the lila and be with them in the campus. He is theirs, but he is also yours. Don't torture him," Mitra told her. Tara cried: "Why everything? Why all this? Why not stop, where is this taking me?" "You have already tried to stop it several times. This time you must pass through that relationship with him. That's your fate, choose whichever way you want, but that's something you have to do," Mitra replied. Tara decided to allow herself the emotion and was calmer. She loved him infinitely. Finally she was convinced of his love. She was no longer running away.

The main day of bathing was approaching. The time of the greatest attendance at kumbha mela. Euphoria in the town was growing. Thousands and thousands of pilgrims were coming every day. The atmosphere was special and wonderful. The girls enjoyed it with all their hearts. Yet something unexpected was happening. Mohan was embarrassed when Tara was near. It was difficult for Tara, because, even without communicating verbally, they were becoming closer. He was introducing her into a new world of people he was close to and belonged to. The elderly women in the old nun's ashram recognized the old priestess as their guru and followed her. They were grandmothers and mothers who loved Mohan as if he was their son, and were able to see in him their very God who came to play with them. It was a relationship of respect and motherly love, unblemished and spiritual. By a miracle, Tara became a part of everything. Mohan secretly wanted her to become friends with the old nun and the rest from the temple, only he had to be distanced from her so as not to provoke doubts within the women from the temple. He closely followed her eyes, movements, and smiles when she was talking to them. Each day they were closer, without uttering a word. Their communication developed through eye contact. She was to stand it all, the most subtle form of communication between the two people in love. The power of his eyes was great. Tara was approaching her limits and also nearing the breaking point of this relationship. She could no longer stand her oceanic emotions, while, all the time, he had to stay silent. It didn't take long for Mohan to realize that her strength was leaving her, being in such a complicated situation. He started suffering on her behalf. But, again, only his eyes and his smile expressed

it. Instead of being consoled and at peace, Tara wanted to break from it all and run away, but her good sense told her to stay. Her friends worried for her again. For her, it was the most intense period of her life. The high tides of her ocean of feelings were flooding and threatening to drown her conscience and her life. The borderline between life and death in her was slowly vanishing, disappearing within the current of strong and destructive emotions that were gradually adapting the form of the swift and deep eternal River Ganges. Tara's condition was even more peculiar due to the fact that she also felt infinite happiness in her young bleeding heart.

It was an indescribable state of mind. At any given moment she could laugh and cry, and she looked just like a maiden. After a terribly long period of loneliness, her heart was getting used to love. Like eyes which after a long period of darkness embrace the light of the sun, a new reality, feeling simultaneous happiness and pain. All she needed was God to open her heart. Mohan was His best instrument. Her friends were so anxious for her; they thought her strength of feeling and enormous pain would drive her insane. The secret link with Mohan was being perfected within her, destroying the transience.

She couldn't wait for it ALL to stop! That she could be left alone finally. Something else happened, contrary to her expectations. His brother told her that Mohan was very worried, that he was observing her behaviour and could tell what was happening. He told her that Mohan loved her. Once, when a lila was over, and the audience was climbing the stage to pay respect to Radha and Krishna, Tara came too. Mohan addressed her in Hindi: "How are you Tara?" This should NEVER have happened. A lot of people from the temple approached her afterwards to ask: "What was it Thakurjee asked you?" It was an unbelievable thing for them, but it was also infinitely good and beautiful. After Mohan addressed her in this manner, the others started to look at her with more respect. Everybody felt there was something divine taking place between the two of them. They started favouring her and the guru mother would often observe her carefully and call Tara to join her. Tara paid little attention to her surrounding, if Krishna Himself had come to her at those moments it would have been nothing unusual to her. Mohan responded to her pain again. He inquired about her problems, was she ill? Why did she stop smiling? Why wasn't she happy any longer? She remained silent while her

eyes were brimming with tears. Mohan regarded her with the deepest love, almost parental love, enduring it all. He loved her so much. Early morning on the day of the great bath, they went to the Ganges with the guru mother, driving in her car. All the way to the Ganges, Mohan was attending her movements. He would often turn and send her looks that only the two of them were able to understand.

They stood together in the Ganges reciting prayers. He was making the whole group laugh by his grimaces. Tara was withdrawn as usual. Ma, as they all called the guru mother, performed a ritual of offering flowers and coins to the Ganges. They were rare old silver coins. All the people from the guru-mother's camp participated in the bath ritual. A little bit further on were the lila actors. Tara, her friends and the rest of the women from the temple, having waded into the water up to their waists, were reciting the hymns of eternal wisdom, while Ma and Mohan were performing the ritual. The offer of coins is a symbolic Hindu ritual. The prayers sent to the Ganges were of love and peaces. When the ritual ended it was to catch one 100 years old silver coin for they believed when catching it brings eternal happiness and well-being. When the offering was over, Mohan threw the coins into the air. Everybody but Tara wanted to catch a part of the offering that came from his hands. She thought: "May the others be happy," she was already the happiest for being where she was, in the Ganges with Mohan, Ma, and her friends. Mohan was to throw the particular special coin, he kept it in his hand, and then she saw he was gesturing to her to come closer and stand by him. She was somehow behind them, and she was embarrassed when he suggested her to move closer in front of everybody. She then stood in front of him with Bavi. He threw the coin towards her and she caught it. She was immensely happy. The whole group started to celebrate; everybody had wanted the gift Tara received. People approached her to make sure she understood that she was the luckiest person on that day, blessed with lifelong well-being. Even Ma came to congratulate and tell Tara that she had received the greatest mercy, because catching the coin meant something most fortunate, a special gift from God who, it was obvious, loved her. Tara was most grateful for the coin and for what it represented, but it was even dearer to her that he actually compromised his reputation within everybody's vision, by throwing the coin in her direction. Now, with this piece of mind she could withstand and endure the pain.

Early in the morning, on the last day, just before departing Haridvar for Vrindavan, Tara and Krishangi, as they used to do, went bathing in the river Saraswati. The camp of the guru-mother was one kilometer from the mouth of the Saraswati, where it flows into the Ganges. There they met a woman, who was with her husband, and came to the mela from a distant town in India. She taught them the ritual of the river Saraswati worship, as the river was given its name after the Goddess of wisdom, knowledge, music, purity, and honour, who had appeared in the form of Radha from Vrindavan. The holy books say that Radha as the supreme goddess is the source of every other goddess. They offered scented incense sticks, a little ghee lamp with burning fire, flowers, the red powder of kunkum, and rice. Delighted by seeing them so devotedly respecting her religion, the woman explained what and how to offer to the river. She saw in the girls two white goddesses smiling and dancing with her. "You are goddesses because you love my God Krishna, He has chosen you," she smiled at them. People in India possess pure hearts and divine thoughts, because their love of God is so mighty, they can see God all around them. Thousands of people were all around them; almost none were white, so that their white skin colour made them different again and attracted attention. People would come to ask all kinds of questions, two white girls, but the lady and her husband were their bodyguards as they assured them to be let in peace to perform the ritual and offering to the river Saraswati. In the holy rivers, women bathe in their underskirts and short cholies, sometimes even fully dressed in saris so that their bodies are completely covered.

They returned to the camp. Ma, with Mohan and almost all the rest from the camp had gone to bathe in the Ganges. Tara, together with Krishangi and Bavi, went out on the street, took a rikshaw taxi, and drove to the place where they expected to see Ma and Mohan. The place was several kilometers away and it was swarming with people. There was a huge bridge crossing to the other side of the river to a large cemented platform and a wide flight of stairs which held lots of bathers. It was an enormous crowd. Thousands of pilgrims were bathing. Everywhere was jam-packed. Their chances of finding Mohan and the others were very slim. Standing on that bridge, which was at least one kilometer long, they waiting for Bavi, who was always slower at finding his way through various situations. Tara and Krishangi were just about to reach the other side, when they suddenly found themselves facing Ma, Mohan and the whole

group. Their surprise was even greater because Tara with her friends was heading towards the opposite side then she was told they would be, to look for them. It seemed that an invisible arm brought them to the right place, and it was not the first time. If Mohan and Ma's procession had not appeared at that moment, and with Tara and her friends leaving that day, they would not have met to say fare well for the next unknown amount of time. Mohan was the first person Tara saw.

They climbed down to the cemented stairs. The River Ganges was huge in that part of the town, swift and dangerous. The Indian National Army had installed special metal grids in order to protect the pilgrims from being swept away by the rushing water. The very entrance into the Ganges was partitioned off by narrow wooden passages which had lead hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to the river bathing spot every day. It was also the central place of town, where a few smaller temples had been erected. Taking the stairs covered by flower petals they descended into the water of the Ganges. The morning smells, the fragrance of incense, the sun of the east, and the bells of the nearby temple created a unique atmosphere of beauty which made Tara feel her being was melting into that moment in time, into the heaven, the river, and the universal love, becoming a part of the perpetuity and the indestructible joy unleashing within her. She alone became the joy whose source was streaming now through her heart, so silently but so mightily and truly. There was something so life-giving, so true, so powerful, yet something so earthless and timeless in this moment, this bathing place, and her consciousness. The Ganges was swift and mighty there. A thoughtless or clumsy step could be fatal. They were standing in the strong current of Ganges waters, praying, reciting hymns from ancient books that celebrate the Queen and King of Vrindavan. When they came out of the water, a girl approached Mohan. She was anxious and trembling with feelings of desire for him. She said she desperately wanted to dive into the water, holding his hand. He scooped up a little water, sprinkled her hands and said: "come on, come on..." not at all concerned by her outburst of emotions. Tara, in her soaked sari, stood aside watchful. He turned and looked into her eyes. She replied with a smile. They belonged to one another. Their eyes told everything.

Their pilgrimage was about to end. The visit to Kumbha Mela was over. Everything was approaching an end, and Tara, to the greatest surprise of

her friends, was happy. Suddenly, the strong pain that had shaken her for days had now disappeared. She could leave, and without any knowledge of when and if ever she might come back.

She was happy because her knowledge of Mohan was deeper. She was happy that in spite of all the strong shattering emotions, and the public revelation of their feelings, they had drawn even closer to one another, although they still resembled the sad heroes of a novel about forbidden love. Although she resisted giving her heart away, the battle was over. Her heart was arrested. But who was the real conqueror of Tara's heart?

She knew she would come again, she would return to this place. She knew the present she received from the Mother Ganges was rare and enormous. She knew it only happens once in a life, to be with Mohan, in the Ganges, in such a divine and with a beauty immortalized way. A beauty that changed her and made her soul more beautiful. The timeless beauty of love. What was her reality now, and what was her longing? What was the precious stone of holiness and mysticism she was to bring with her from this holy place? What was the secret of beauty from the life-giving source that she was to bring to the distant and cheerless world of the west? The west which doesn't know the purpose of rebirth and revival that feeds and carries one into eternity and bliss? Shrine within man. How many questions found answers within her? She felt light and happy. To infinity. Her awareness that love is not space and time, and that nothing really changes if it is real love, intoxicated her soul. "It was not a human relationship, it approached the divine feeling and happiness you passed through was almost incomprehensible. Your separation, how false it was. You were leaving for a year, or more, but not one smallest grain of sadness in you. I think it was more difficult for him. He really loves you. I will never forget it. All what happened in Haridvar, at the lilas, changed my life. It gave me strength not to give up in the hardest moments of my life. We really witnessed the living God there," said Bavi. Krishangi and Mitra all agreed. What was it these girls had witnessed on the road to eternity and Divine love?

Return

“In love, no one should not know its place, there is only one thing, and it is those who love.”

Nightwalker

Slowly the shy morning sun was rising over Montenegro, the land of her ancestors, shyly as a virgin bride in the home of the unknown but people dear to her heart. In the blue water of its sea, he merged with the sky and the earth. He shone as never before, as he too carried a deep love within. He was close to her heart like the eye of a dear but distant person. A morning prayer. A prayer to the sun, the moon, mother nature and the holy people. A prayer for the love of him who gave his love to be a decoration for her soul, clothed in a robe of perpetual happiness and knowledge.

There was no difference between the world within and that without any longer. They were one and the same. Like a lotus flowering the forgotten world in which every step is a dance and each word is a song. She rested on the peaceful but mighty path of her desires. Now she was facing the mouth of the holy truth, the eternity of beauty, aware of her freedom... Was this Tara's return to herself, return to those she belonged to, return to heart? It was a

return to Vrindavan and the return to love. Love that had been waiting eternally for one drop of life. Believing and truly longing, love was waking up on the way within. She was immensely happy that these great changes were developing within her. She saw that the world she inhabited was different now. It seemed she alone created her own reality. She was entering a dynamic world of deep feeling, and of a divine presence. The eternal nature of her own self was closer to her knowledge, she learned to love, and feel... for everything... for God and people. Her teachers along that road were all the people she loved, Dadu, Mohan, the old teacher, and most of all she loved Vrindavan and Krishna. Happiness merged with sadness became the basis of each feeling. She was becoming a part of a magical world she carried within, an imaginary real world. She was becoming a part of eternity. There were no more secrets and turbulence within her. The unrevealed and inexperienced were more and more a Divine play that she is invited to perform. Each trace of melancholic coldness vanished from her heart. Another coating of illusion and duality departed her consciousness. She knew that she was at the beginning of the path to eternal truth, that there was a long way to go, but she could now more clearly glimpse and feel the beauty of the desired aim. She could still want and understand the outer world but it was closely connected now with her heart and her God. It was a beautiful world of new reality of ordinary men. She saw that whatever happened was directed by her heart's God. She feared no longer. She trusted her and his love. Life was given new meaning. It was no longer a life of eternal deprivation, nor a life of loneliness, as one was prompted to associate to a life with God. She was free to marry, to have a family, and friends. The difference between her past and her current reality was the miraculous feeling that flooded her heart, the feeling of connection and rootedness, of belonging to someone who was unapproachable, real, and almost unreal, so close and yet so distant. Her life was a living interaction with Krishna in her heart. It was the life she had always yearned for. He knew her love and her feelings, and He so perfectly knew how to respond. Their love was a dynamic feeling of inseparable connection of life-bringing air and flesh. She could no longer go without Him; neither could He be without her. Eternity had commenced, it had always been there, but it was only at this moment that it was intense and she was consciously aware of it. She found the world of joy in her own being, by the mercy of the Queen of the holy land of Vrindavan and all the holy people. They were teachers on the difficult and divine road to love's eternity.

Let there be peace in our hearts, let childish innocents befall, the power of truth and the desire for beauty and gentleness of the holiest love...

Katharine Tara M.

The time these words were written doesn't matter. I simply had to put them on the paper. Maybe one day they will reach somebody's hands or, even better, somebody's heart. Maybe these letters that make words describing the deepest of feelings I experienced during important moments of my life, will mean something to somebody one day. I love you, most beautiful world of true feelings and true love. I love you, when I find you in the open hearts of people; I love, you who continues with such an infinity of love within yourself. You are close to me, there's nothing closer than that. How beautiful and free is our mutual dance under the protection of purity and refinement of continual perception and life. How happy we are. How happy? How long will this eternity last? Do you remember the beginning? Remember how difficult it was? We have forgotten almost everything, there is only the word, and memory that once, somewhere within us, pain was developing? Now it has all turned and changed into the most beautiful feeling. Can you feel it, how free we are? How different our lives are, yours and mine? Live it my comrade, my dear friend. Live.

To all the living and those who have lived...

PS. Don't betray yourself. Don't exist out of yourself. Don't be dead and never stop thinking and feeling! Never stop being. Never. I will miss you and I will miss all the infinity of your love. Come and be with me, be with us, with all of us... in infinity and eternity.

Some years later

“Till real and true love sacrifices are needed to be done, and time. I will always watch you, always...my heart swims in blood and when it sails with the words and feelings it calls only your name. OH LIGHT my DIVINE!”

Cliff

A few years had passed since her last time in Vrindavan, since she last saw Dadu and Mohan. Dadu had been moved to another temple because he was too weak to perform services in the previous one. Now, with many other elderly priests and priestesses, he attended daily prayers and lectures held in the temple in which he lived. In a tiny crumbling room at the little lake Radhakunda, he waited to depart from this life. When they met, Dadu told Tara, in Hindi since he had almost completely forgotten English, about his expected departure to the world of eternal lila. He spoke of it, as if it had been a most ordinary series of events in a TV report. It was obvious that his life was moving beyond his body. Disobedient tears betrayed Tara while her face remained peaceful. Dadu simply smiled. His eyes were gleaming with joy and desire; he was obviously looking at another world and a different reality within and around himself. He stood up sobbing due to the pain in his back, grimaced and went to his little room. He wanted to offer Tara some sweets, which he kept in a metal dish. They sat on the floor and ate them. Dadu chewed the food in his own toothless way; he had become very sick and old. Tara helped him about the room and put some medicine on his back. She left him a small bundle of money, so he doesn't go without cow milk for the next couple of months. He needed it and it was expensive and rare. He reclined to take a rest. She left and they temporarily departed, but not forever.

She was in the process of learning, in an inexplicable way, what Divine peace and love meant. She threw back one last glance at the old hut where Dadu lived, at the entrance of a temple, and continued on.

Afternoon sun had driven away all the people from the streets. She walked along the streets with a deep sorrow in her heart, escorted by an unusual peace emanating from little shrine by the lake. She thought of her old teacher. His eyes were like Dadu's, and his life, like Dadu's, was an example and proof of love's existence. Love was life, sacrifice, beauty, joy and transformed pain. Her heart could speak now, it was almost audible.

Mohan truly loved her, but her intuitive female heart told her, almost immediately after the Haridvar lilas, that he was not the eternal one. Her feelings for the withdrawn, dynamic, and sometimes playful musician were growing stronger. There was a regression, and two years later they had their first conversation.

It was unusual. A love relationship is always unusual, when the very providence watches it. Whenever she thought of him she could feel the pain he felt. The terrible pain of his loneliness. She was supposed to bring him some letters. They had never been properly introduced to one another. The last time they met was in the temple in Vrindavan, India, '97, when the astrologer foresaw her separation from Mohan.

When the concert was over, she was standing in front of his bus and talking to a man who was celebrating his birthday on that day. It was his tour manager, who the musician had introduced to the audience previously at the concert. Tara asked about his age and a reply came from another direction, "Forever young." It was the musician. It was him. She wasn't confused, but an indescribable and so far unknown energy filled her consciousness. When he saw Tara on approach, he seemed surprised, recognizing her, without knowing who she really was. They looked at one another. She proceeded calmly, as if she had known him for centuries, saying she had some letters for him, from the people he knew. "Where? Give them to me!" He addressed her happily and intimately. He stood next her while she rummaged through her bag for the letters. Immediately, they were surrounded by a crowd of fans whilst standing in the centre. Tara didn't seem to notice. She only felt the palpable connection with him. The enormous beauty of the moment was touching eternity. She lived her love for him. The delighted youth, euphoric people, came asking for his signature. He talked to them, making jokes, but she felt his attention was focused on her. She asked

him how he was, and he suddenly seemed confused replying "How am I?" "Yes, how are you?" "How am I?" In the end she answered by, looking him straight in the eyes: "You're tired." He nodded that he was, and got on the bus. He thanked her for the letters he still didn't possess as she continued looking for them in her bag. Finally, she handed the letters to the bus driver.

It was the first time in this life that she had been so close to him. They talked for the first time. Her heart was happy. She felt a kind of reverence for him, as if he was a saint. She felt she was supposed to be there, to approach him further, but why? There were two girls, fans, who approached her after they had seen him talking to her, and with whom Tara went to another concert. They hitchhiked. The journey took them one whole night. They slept in a truck, only a few hours separated them from the morning. It was a real adventure for the two young girls, but not for Tara. She didn't care for the adventure even if it was her first experience of that kind. A spontaneous decision to attend the concert was born seeing the sadness in his eyes. The last time she saw the same sadness was a year ago, but then it was not as clear and devouring as now. Before his second concert, he came to her, and asked about the letters. He ignored her after the concert and when he got on the bus, about to leave, she told one of the other girls, loudly so he could hear: "He ignored us." He flinched and turned replying in a half-sarcastic manner: "Sorry if I was rude to you." Tara felt hurt, it did hurt, although the other girls had hardly noticed he was ignoring them. They told her that he was nice to them, he talked to them, and they were beside themselves with excitement. But they were not connected to him in the way she was. Only Tara could feel his pain. She spent the night crying, on the train home. But her tears didn't spring from sadness but rather from emancipation. She felt happy whilst crying. She felt his sensibility and vulnerability. She didn't feel wounded. Her pain was coming from herself. Maybe because of the inconsiderate words she had uttered. Maybe she shouldn't have, but she always had to voice her feelings. How much did their feelings coincide?

In ten days there would be another concert in Berlin. She didn't want to go, especially not now after they had almost had an argument. But her teacher talked her into going, he almost insisted she should go and support the musician. By then Tara didn't tell her teacher about the

regression. He was the one who introduced the musician to her, showing her his photo. It was after she met him in Vrindavan, but that photo did not make impression on her. It is by time that inner spring of remembrance after the regression was obvious to her. When her teacher showed her a photo from a concert she didn't want to attend. That concert took place one day after she arrived from India. At that time she was still subconsciously avoiding him. She feared to approach him and didn't want to go. The teacher told her about the concert and about the musician. In a mysterious way, whenever he was talking to her, the teacher would talk about the musician. She had wondered about this and she didn't want to listen, as if she was running from a vortex which threatened to implode her and transform her completely, to either break her or give birth to her. Fear. Old memories were knocking on her heart's door. Regression was still happening. Meeting him would be too intense, she didn't know why it was so and she was afraid. "What do I have to do with him?"

She went to the concert. She stopped half way there and thought "if I am supposed to be in time for the concert, then someone has to drive me there directly and immediately." She was in Frankfurt. A moment after, a car appeared and in six hours she was 600 kilometers away, in front of the concert hall door, in Berlin. At the same moment, her teacher was standing at the entrance with a group of mutual acquaintances. Seeing her he cheerily called: "It's wonderful that you're here, take this VIP card so you can see him after the concert." She was surprised but, accustomed to the games of the Divine. She smiled and gave into the new situation, feeling uneasy in her heart because she had almost quarrelled with the musician the last time they met. A few years ago she would never have believed that relationships could be this strange. How she had resisted Mohan! How much she resisted the musician, avoiding him on purpose for years, although she was aware of regression all the time! Aware she'd become the object and the subject of the very game, in her lesson through her relationship with Mohan, and India, and Vrindavan. However, with a healthy dose of fear in her heart, she decided to play. When the concert was over she went backstage. After all, it was her obligation to obey her teacher. There, behind the stage, her shyness turned into courage and strength, although, at the same time, she could have died from the thought of being there. She had to be there. It was her destiny and her emotions she wanted to escape in the first

place. He was in the room and didn't want to leave. She didn't want to enter, although their mutual acquaintances had invited her to join them. She felt she was fighting him. She waited for him to come to her. She was talking to a girl and the other members of the band in the hall, when a young man suddenly appeared at the door of the musician's room. She knew him, he looked at her smiling: "Yes, I know her, that's Tara," he said and disappeared back into the room. Then, the musician appeared. She quickly turned around and faced the other side. She didn't want to say hello. He passed by her, wanting to meet her teacher, his acquaintances, and fans waiting in the concert hall. She thought that was all that was to happen and that it was the end of her illusion of a strange connection with him. She wanted to leave this place, to run away as far as possible, but her heart, heavy as a mountain kept her there. She stood up, preparing to leave when the bus driver appeared. While she was standing in the hall talking to him, she could feel the musician moving towards her. She could see him pass by all his acquaintances and friends towards her, but also towards his room. She turned away, thinking that he was only going to pass by, the way he did before. He was approaching slowly, looking at her, and when he was in front of her, he smiled in a most beautiful way and with joy in his eyes, made a theatrical bow, as a lover to his beloved, as a King would bow to pay respect to his Queen, and said: "Hello." In this way, his expressed intimacy automatically destroyed the wall between them. She walked into the room after him, and said: "No more ignoring." He laughed. A stream of questions was unleashed and conversation developed with such joy and insatiability. "What sign are you born under?" "I have Moon in Cancer," "Cancer is my second sign," "Then I'm sorry for you," "Why?" Tara felt insulted that he should be sorry for her. "Because you too must have suffered in this world, because you're too sensitive. This world is so painful, it pierces one's heart." He was pointing to his heart holding a knife he was cutting a cake with. "What makes you think so? There is some beauty in this world." They ate cake together. He asked her if she was the girl he'd seen in Vrindavan two years before. "Yes, it was then I saw you for the first time!" They stayed together for more than an hour. A mutual acquaintance joined them later. They talked about Vrindavan and the latest songs which were considered "hits" at the moment. The musician was happy. He didn't want to go. The manager came in several times to tell him they had to leave. This encounter pleased Tara because she knew he was no longer as unhappy as before, although her foreboding

that he felt deep grief was confirmed. Ten days later they met at another concert. He seemed very content on the stage. The atmosphere was beautiful, the audience was happy and his jumping and dancing made Tara glow with happiness. He was here again, and so close. From the stage, he mimicked her emotions she didn't want to believe. She didn't want to go to that concert either but her teacher had once again asked her to. Oh, the struggle she suffered! The turbulence from her confused heart.

She remembered the prophecy from India by a blind old man, well recognised in Rajkoth. During her visit to her friend's family in Gujarath, the man had told her that she and the musician had a bond from their past lives and that they should be together again, but the will of God is supremely independent, so no one know the future for sure, specially the future of people devoted to higher cause. Not knowing anything about her he told about her past life in Haridvar. She then realised Mitra's words. Their past lives on the banks of the Ganges and wherefrom sprang all her intense emotions during Kumbha Mela. The prophet told her that she would meet her husband on 2 June. She listened but she knew she would never meet the musician on that date; neither would she meet Mohan..... It was as if she lived more lives, in more herself in the various places in the world. All those lives intertwined, each carrying its own fatality. She was shifting from one condition to another looking for herself, living for the reality and truth of pure emotion. She found emotion everywhere, but emotion vague, and incomplete. Love was to be realized, and it was the most difficult aim. Was it at all possible? She didn't want this encounter. She never wanted any of it, but she had to submit. In the deepest part of herself she lived for each encounter, realizing in this way the perfection of something she couldn't define. Only her conscious being was running away. As if it had been running away from the fire which was attracting her at the same time, melting her, transforming her. One rational excuse was she didn't want to disrupt the life of a man who was already with another woman, because he was a star and each time she was with him, meant discrediting his reputation. She was crucified by feelings, yet she knew she must obey her heart whose language she had learned with Mohan in such a painful, testing, and divine way. There must be no mistakes.

When the concert was over, she went to see him. He was alone and mending his shoelace. Without hiding his happiness to see her, he said: "Thank you for coming. You gave me a gig this evening. Whenever you come... in Berlin, too... always," shaking his head, as if he himself couldn't believe all that was happening. Tara laughed and gently hit his shoulder as if it were an old friend's, and said: "Come, don't joke with me." He answered with an exquisite smile and confused expression on his face... They sat at the table. The other members of the band arrived, he stood opposite her and looked straight into her eyes, as if searching for their depths, said: "You're such a kind person, you just smile and it's enough to make everyone your friend. It's such a good attitude. She made my gig this evening!" Tara smiled whilst, reading another question in his eyes: "Who are you?" She didn't tell him that, she couldn't, she didn't dare resume a deeper conversation with him. Feelings had started to swell, feelings so painfully experienced during the regression. She could see him now, in front of her, the real him again. Real in relation with her. Sometimes our fate is hard to withstand, even if we know it and love it. Her magical tale and all her visions now stood in front of her, embodied in him. Her heart was ready to truly love again, without any expectations. "Even if nothing realizes between us, I only care about his happiness." Her own happiness didn't matter. It was most important, that he was happy! She was already happy about meeting him. Unreal, the distant one she loved. She was happy that he was there, that he walked the same earth and breathed the same smell of reality she breathed, lived the same music she lived, loved Krishna as she did. She gave him some books as a present and they said goodbye. Not a word about when and where they should meet again. Those things were up to Krishna.

Their next encounter was at a rock festival. She didn't want to go, but as being compelled to for she could feel something was wrong with him. This time she missed the first concert. She didn't want to go, fate didn't let her, and everything was late. She felt he didn't want to see her. She arrived the following day and spent the night in a hotel foyer chatting and filling out some psychological test with a guys from "Metallica" and the crew. She was waiting for dawn so that she could go to his hotel and leave a little box for him. What brought all these addresses and acquaintances about? By a miracle, by a predetermination? She gave the box containing biscuits and tulasi leaves to a guy from the band, so that

he may pass it on to the musician. She didn't want to chance crossing the musician's path. Yet it happened later that day, in a town 200 kilometers away, backstage. He came to her and asked her something. It seemed he wanted to be "normal" around her. He wanted her to climb the stage with him and watch the band that was performing at that moment. He seemed sad, somehow different. There was none of the easiness and lightness he possessed the last time. She felt she was the reason, at least half of the reason, or a fifth of the reason. A part of the main cause of his suffering rested in her. She could feel his struggle, with himself, with the norms. As if a part of him was telling her she shouldn't have entered his life. Why was she there? She could sense his thoughts. Different, distanced, obviously suffering in his heart, he was standing there beside her.

"I must do something to shake him, get him out of the lethargy he is falling into." She was sorry to watch him pass through this turbulence. It was easier for her because she knew the origin of their connection; she already experienced the regression and the premonition. Later standing at the end of the stage, she was recording the concert with her camera. Although he ignored her, pretending not to see her, he appeared unexpectedly in front of her, almost touching her with his guitar. She knew she had moved him. She was ready for anything, even for pain. Half an hour later, she captured the moment as he suggested his manager move her from the stage and confiscate her recording. They obeyed immediately. There was a real uproar. Suddenly she was the terribly humiliating focus of the personnel. She calmed them with a smile and an excuse and submitted the cassette, as if she cared for that anyway. "He was moved," that's what she cared for. It was the only thing that mattered. He stopped being passive and reacted, although painfully for her, but what she wanted to happen, did happen. When the concert was over, she apologized and pleaded for him not think that she would misuse the recording. He behaved as if nothing had happened, and said "Thank you." "What for?" she replied. "For the tulasi." Tara was so shaken by this strange turn in their relationship that she had completely forgotten sending him the box with the sweets_ and tulasi that morning. It was always this way, only the moment they were together existed for her, as if all the rest, what had happened before and what was to happen after, ceased to exist. She shook her head and shrugged her shoulders, because how much did it matter now that he was discarding her, hurting her. He could have said thank you earlier, when they were together on

the stage watching that other band, but he did not. Now he remembered. Then he said: "See you," and disappeared. She didn't cry, because there was no reason. She had only suffered a bit. Not because he left, he could never leave her, but his reaction of distrust pained her. And he himself proclaimed... "We're close, because only such one can move you and inspire you to do a great concert, smile, laugh and be happy talking to and confess it. Only when one feels close to another can one talk, be happy and confess such a thing. He wants to reject me in this way, discard me. Well, at least he's moved on from that painful condition of mind in which I had found him. Turn away and go, if you think you can leave me!" she wrote.

Old teacher held a seminar in France. Tara didn't want to be where the musician was. He had told her in Berlin which parts of the seminar he wanted to attend; hence she waited for him to leave and attended those she was sure he wouldn't appear at. She was happy when, with her friends, she arrived at the site of the seminar. She was even happier to see him leaving in a car that passed a few meters away from her in the moment she came. As long as he didn't notice her...she would have fallen through the ground. Had he seen her or not? Some time ago, she had written a letter to him to apologize and explain her reasons for recording the concert. She was silent about her feelings. It would have been inappropriate to reveal them. She would never do it. She had sent the letter via a friend, who had forgotten to give it, and left it in his flat in Paris and so didn't pass it to the musician. He did tell the musician Tara had written a letter and promised to bring it for another seminar that was to take part in a few weeks. And this same friend informed Tara, that the musician was a little disappointed and on several occasions inquired about the letter. The two of them even talked about her, and the musician had remarked that Tara was an interesting person, and reminded him of a good witch (according to some friends interpretations, that's what men call a woman who conquers their hearts). Later he wrote a song about a good witch.

A few months later they met at a pilgrimage in Vrindavan. They were in a temple attending lectures. Tara tried to avoid the daily pilgrimages knowing he was there. She couldn't stand it. Yet she had to attend the evening and morning classes, because she simply had to see and hear her wise old teacher. Whenever she was near her teacher she was strongly

motivated to write. That old blue-eyed Indian priest often became her muse. Her heart flowered near him. She sat at the lectures and diligently wrote. The musician watched her. They were in the same place, a few meters from one another, and they never uttered a word. She refused to look in his direction, or to attempt speaking to him. This change in their relationship was unexpected and unbelievable. She had come to his concerts, passing all the iron gates to find him backstage, and now, when he was approachable, so close to her, she didn't even want to send him a glance. He was shocked. When three days passed, there was a performance in the temple, and he sat just behind her starting to wave his arms as if attempting to hit her with his fist. Once she thought he was really going to hit her, in full view of everybody. She could feel that with these mock hits he wanted to kick the invisible wall which had again been raised between them. She turned around and saw the most unimaginable expression in his eyes. There were two enormous question marks. She saw his dilemma and smiled. He was satisfied. She knew him well and she didn't forget what had happened between them, that was the message of her smile. The Indian festival was approaching the end. Kartik was over. Everybody was about to go back west. The end of kartik and the pilgrimage was celebrated in the temple on the last day of the festival. She felt she should come down to the temple. She felt he was looking for her and that, on that very day, something important was to take place between them. This situation reminded her of the one she had experienced with Mohan in Haridvar. Except that she didn't want to look into his eyes and she couldn't and didn't want to hurt him. There was enough pain in the fact that they weren't together. That they were living far from one another. That she loved him so infinitely, and that she was not able to express that love with a single gesture. She had to be far away from him, whereas in their hearts they were identical. Mohan was in Vrindavan from time to time, but that intense feeling did no longer exist between Tara and him. She felt they were true friends now. She loved him as the messenger of Divine love, to whom the woman in her did not belong to.

That morning, on that last day in Vrindavan, he had to come to her. She could feel his need intensely. They met in passing, after having spent five days at the same place, for the first time: "Hello," and when he said it, he was standing in front of her and laughing at the top of his voice, laughing with a laugh that couldn't hide his grief. Message: "Is it that I'm late?"

“Love cannot be limited, if you love, don’t let the outer world tie you up, if you can love, if you want to love that is your inner and eternal freedom and right. If you love, you’ll receive eternity and joy. Why sadness? Why grief? Everything will be all right. We can be together within. No one can take it away from us, if it’s Krishna’s will, we’ll be together. Why grief?” her eyes were telling him understood and he was happier.

In the evening, Tara went to visit the various temples with her friends. Saying goodbye to the Divinities and Vrindavan was a custom. They entered one of many temples. A temple jam-packed with devotees. She was standing towards the back, close to the doors, because they’d intended to make the parikrama around the temple, four times around that temple carried the same meaning as the Govardhan parikrama, say the priests from that temple. She never knew why she didn’t join her friends then. She was sending prayers and waiting. Suddenly she saw him coming out of a room and fusing into the crowd in the hall. What was it that turned him towards her? What made him notice her at that same moment, in the half-darkness of the temple, among so many people? The only light in the temple came from the soft lights on the altar and the candles in the hands of the pilgrims. The main lights in the temple were still switched off. He went to leave. She considered saying hello but she realized it would not be advisable as she saw him lifting his arms towards the altar, as he was finishing his prayer before his departure from the temple. She turned towards him to say “hello”. He saw her amongst the crowd in the gloom light of the evening. His head was warped in a shawl, only his eyes visible. With hands raised he turned waiving to her, looking straight into her eyes, his eyes full of love. According to the customs of Vrindavan, it was the most transparent sign of intimacy and love. She stood petrified by the gesture and the expression in his eyes. No one else could have seen it but Krishna. She was astonished by this gesture of affection. She felt a warm energy coming through the blue light he was sending her, which from his arms travelled to her heart and filled her mind. She was happy. She now had the proof. The proof of a secretly spoken affection, maybe even love, which only the two of them knew about, completely alone but close in among the crowd, in an atmosphere of departure.

She didn’t see him for another eight months. Then he returned, greeting her briefly with his beautiful smile. “He smiles only when he is with you,

it's the first time in these three days that I've seen him happy", a friend told her at a seminar in England. Was he really happy? He wasn't. Tara's friends could also see it. He was withdrawn again, and alone. Somehow she wasn't distressed by this, she felt calm thinking about the end and her final freedom from him. They were distant from one another.

After a whole year they met again in Italy. He was different. He came and talked to her. They met each others eyes on several occasions. It was embarrassing, because they were friends, and this was not how friends should look at one another. She could see that his relationship with his wife was now more relaxed, as if they were also becoming friends. She was glad that he was no longer sad. Gradually she succeeded not to think of him, even her indestructible hope was subsiding. Love seemed to burn away, although she was still its prisoner. And just when everything in her mind and thoughts was about to collapse and turn into another empty hope and impossible belief in fairy tales, he threw that deep, invincible glance at her. A glance that renewed her soul, taking her, possessing her yet again. No one else could have done it, not even Mohan. Mohan would fight her for days. In a millionth part of a second, with his pure and honest regard, this musician regained her soul, possessed it and imprisoned it irretrievably. "What can you do? There is no escaping. He is the only man in this world that can concur me this easily? Do I own him? Is this all madness? Nothing could ever come out of this! I live in a delusion, but my heart tells me that I don't."

Another six months passed and they met again. They were more relaxed, and conversed freely. She could feel by his cordiality and openness that something new was happening. He was about to be divorced. He actually wanted to get divorced there and then, at the festival with the teacher. Tara was unaware of it. All that she could feel was infinite bliss. Music was his life. She found some beautiful Byzantine music and wanted to give him a CD as a present, they were friends after all, and why shouldn't she do it? They talked on several occasions. Each time he would instigate. He knew she would never come to him. In front of everybody he would start a conversation. It was a little embarrassing, because he was divorcing, and she didn't want people to think that she was somehow involved. They may think that she was to be his new girlfriend. They could have thought anything. He was taking the initiative. She knew it had to be this way. That evening, before she was to

give him the CD, she was playing music with a friend of hers, in the lecture room. A lot of people remained after the lecture. A friend was showing her how to play a favourite melody on the harmonium. Then he came, but before he did, he had had second thoughts, as Tara was to learn later through an acquaintance who could tell there was something going on between Tara and the musician. This time, Tara started the conversation; to help him relax and feel more comfortable in this uncomfortable situation, when he was publicly near her. He resents conversation, and only communicates with a very few people. It must have been because he was too sensitive for his circumambient universe. His origin was different; his present world differed from all the rest too. It was his weak point and his strength. He could cope with it, Tara too.

For her, at that moment, he was a married man. What he was doing, in the eyes of religious publicity, could be devastating, discrediting. It meant they were connected. By what? By a friendship? She gave him the CD and natural frankincense, because on the previous evening they had talked about Orthodox religion. "Why all these presents?" "Because I like you." She could have answered him in a thousand and one ways. Her answer was a good dose of truth. Not a gesture, not a look, not another word of hers let him come closer. The time had not yet come. It seemed he wanted to tell her something in the course of the following few days, he would always be near her, and he now looked at her in a strange way, to her. He even talked to her but Tara couldn't open her heart. It screamed inside of her, running away from him. Why? Outside their relationship was only a friendship, that she loved him and that she could see it clearly now, remained on the level of an unbreakable inner connection and communication, which was still undue at this moment. Before anything else, he was to settle his relationship with his ex-wife, Tara thought seeing that beautiful woman truly suffering. She didn't want to build her happiness on the misfortune of another being, and she had nothing to do with their relationship. She didn't want to be, and she was not, the reason for their separation. The two of them had some fateful old scores to resolve, which she now felt clearly. Sad and happy at the same time, he left. It was the first time she wasn't unhappy when they said goodbye. They had said goodbye so many times. He would always leave first, he would go far away, leaving her only pain, and hope. Hope that he would remember her when they met again, and that her fairy tale would live, even only for a while. She would always cry seeing him go. Deep and

hard grief would overwhelm her, and only after shedding some tears would it deflate and recede. Then anew she would believe in that magical tale. Yet, this time she was happy even as they were saying goodbye. She felt fulfilled by this man, who moved her heart. With him she would enter a world of unbelievable, magical, and divine reality. With him she could talk and remain cold, not showing a single emotion, and afterwards she would leave and spend a sleepless night. Because of him she could go without food for days. Sometimes she could even hear his thoughts. She read each look addressed at her. How connected they were! She would do anything for him. With him there were no limits of divine blessings, without which their relationship was senseless and nonexistent. He was too holy, divine, and refined to exist only in the transience. How long had she been waiting? Several lives.

He recognized her, and he was intrigued by the unusual girl who so bravely dared, almost impertinently dared enter his world and his life. She alone knew the secret of their past. Perhaps not. Suddenly a dilemma, maybe he also knew it, and maybe he had also asked the astrologer. "Had he known everything, all the time, did he have some knowledge of the past and was he ignorant of my knowledge? Maybe he also had to wait and learn, did he know what was happening to him?"

In Berlin she saw that "his life juice was diminishing, that he was sad and alone, at the very same moment he was a rock star, and while thousands of people from all around the world screamed and uttered shrill cries at him, he felt alone and deprived of the love all of us need so badly. He only had his God, who was also his best friend, and it must be that our encounter and all that happened between us was connected to God. Why is each our existence not connected to Him a sad, a miserable lie?"???

She believed in the theory of dual souls whereby a soul is divided into two halves and when these halves finally meet again, they reach perfection. She wanted such a love. She was not the only one. Whenever she read novels, dramas, and tragedies, all the great love stories always ended tragically. She supposed that their tragedy made them great. As if all greatness was placed in human tragedy. "And why shouldn't it also be in happiness?" she asked herself. She often thought how the truth of this world is in its transience and emptiness. She was sure that the tragedy,

which escorts earthly life, lies in the termination of life. Thus she wanted to find the truth, find love, eternal love. She wanted to find that the truth of life is in its eternal being, someplace else. Within her, from the very beginning, apart from that pessimistic and sad vision of the world, a deep desire grew, to find answers to all the questions her psyche could create. She had travelled along the road on which she could hear the call of the heart. The truth was slowly being revealed to her, revealing more love. This time, the doors of eternity were opening for her, through love in which she trusted most of all and which she knew, was almost impossible in this world. She didn't want a tragedy; she didn't want tragedy to make her love grand. Although her emotions for Mohan were great and sadly unachievable, they contained a higher aim. Emancipation, acquiring unselfishness, disconnection, and surrender. What were the games of providence in which she participated now? How unreal, strong and real everything was. What confusion of emotions, thoughts, desires, and hopes inhabited her! What was this jungle she had to pass through, in her mind and in her heart, but not alone, and never, never, alone! Never alone. How her God attended her and instructed her from within!

And from without! How was His presence felt and experienced? Whilst visiting Lord Natharaj, one of the most famous and richest temples and Deities of Krishna in Rajasthan and in India. And only a day or two the amazing encounter with the old blind saint..Whilst walking the early morning, empty streets of the shrine with a desire to attend the aratik, thinking "how can God in the temple, allow Himself to be so rich while so many old and poor people are in the streets, begging"...then during the jam packed temple prayer ceremony, realising that her gold earring was missing, she ...rushed then to take the moto-rikshaow on a crowded, unknown place's road... at five in the morning and to get to the few hours before arrived bus parked seven kilometres away...spotting the bus parked in the dark and oddly enough discovering the missing earring on the very seat she spent her the journey on.... But then realising her vision of beggars on the streets was simply material and that her God was playing again and again and again...

How real was it? He lived in her and with her. She didn't see Him, but she felt His presence in all that happened to her. Now that the musician was so close to her, and their connection was so obvious, Tara was afraid. Afraid of what? For the first time she feared that if the musician enters her heart, Krishna may leave it. This would be terrible and she wouldn't be able to live. She wanted God embodied in her love and

living in both the outward and the inward spheres of her being. She knew that Indian philosophy stated that each living being comes from God, carries God within itself, and goes back to God. Why, then, wouldn't her musician be able to do so? She feared illusion, which so easily sticks to the infatuated youth. Her fear was now her great teacher and an omen of an end. Their relationship was to move another step towards the infinity of the beauty of love.

Will the tale of mystery become reality, will the prophecies come true? Tara's life was gaining on speed now, the gates of completely unknown worlds were opening in front of her, and she was afraid. A new game had started. A real one. Life had become unpredictable. After some time he returned to his wife again, obeying his teacher's advise. Still he would get confused whenever he saw Tara and it seemed he wanted to escape her presence. Did he loose his struggle for love? Did he surrender to work? Tara was learning all the time, passing through a labyrinth of life and emotions without being able to see an end to it, or the purpose of it. She had only good intentions and honesty of heart and prayed that the universe should take care of her, because she herself didn't now how to do that. There were so many things she didn't know. She grew more aware of her unawareness. And this was yet another beginning, nothing more. It seemed a new life attended her. How was she going to manage this situation, what should Tara do, did she have enough strength to proceed? She started communicating with herself. She felt fragile, yet strong and calm, because she new her life had started, and that she was living it with her whole heart. All the arduous lessons with Mohan and Dadu and her family and the musician were now turning into life. She was surrounded with people with whom she should share all that she had learned.

Indescribable is the peace in a woman's heart when she finds the person she will love eternally and infinitely. When on the wonderful roads of the universe she meets the one, giving her love, her understanding of each thought and feeling as if the one were her very self, and when she knows that nothing else and no one else could ever disturb such a peace and such happiness. Temptations were waiting for her still, but temptation of death and sadness were far behind her. She was charmed by the eyes of the man whom she recognized the moment she saw him. The one she loved. The dices were turning, would they ever fall into place? Dadu introduced her to the world of reality and to her feelings for Radha and Krishna in Vrindavan. Her teachers showed her the world of Krishna and the love within it. She would never be alone again.

Beginning

“Let this be my last word, that I believe in Thou love.”

Tagora

"Hard steps."

It was not coming through her experience, she was very young, only nineteen. Not from her sorrow, for the struggle and fight had broken her sorrow which had broken her illusion and her fate in the victory of reason. Carrying some five or six bags on her shoulders, she was leaving. She wanted to take everything, as if it was going to delete her traces from the hearts of those she had left behind. She paced slowly, although she wanted to speed up, to escape as soon as possible from the misery and the blindness of ignorance which like a black bird had circled over her life. Tara's spirit was drunk and happy with the scent of freedom of infinity that was approaching her. Full of grief, because it was the only way to cut the almost unbreakable animal instincts of belonging to a family, a nation... that wasn't hers. And apart from all the love and attention she was given, her spirit in that place at that time was like the one in Aladdin's lamp, waiting for the good hand of eternity, of love, to pay attention, and caress it at least once. She had seen the faces of fatality, had heard the

voices of bitterness and men weeping around her. She had seen the dull and dark dawn of apathy and unconsciousness within the existence of a godless day. She could no longer and she no longer wanted to be there, because of herself, but also because of others. She headed towards the answers she had seen and felt by an inner sense. One day, she would have had to take this road. Why not now? Why not as soon as possible? The answers were there, revealed and covered within the book she was taking with her, in the words she had read and remembered, in her thoughts that were turning over in her consciousness and her unawareness. She was looking for truth. She was looking for truth and love. She was looking for love which stays the same when changes take place. Deeper and more essential than all the others she had ever heard of or read about. Looking for eternity and duration of that which she carried within her gentle but strong being, growing up among the mountains of secrets and battles, she eloped on the road and by the will of the only One.

“Clock. Is it the time, stiff, continuous, and mighty, that takes away my being? Is its law relentless, eternal, and what function do I have in all the absurdity that conditions me and that I cannot escape? A current of thoughts, strange, and unconnected, swarms my mind at this moment. I wonder where they can be coming from. How long will it all last? Why is it so? And then, an explanation. Not everybody will want to listen when it appears. Why should they? However, it is my explanation, and since I have it I want to share it. This is how I have experienced and understood it all to be.

Time is not time. It is Him. It is His law of ticking away. With almost a menacing precision the tremble of my heart is carried away into the meaning of existence. The laws applicable here and only here in the shell of a transient and redolent world of our illusions, the honeyed-tongued desire and emptiness we touch with the needles of our desires, which then bursts like a balloon in the hand of a merry child. Once, everything some of us saw was colours. We ran and looked at the brave new promising world. We trusted our-elders, they had already been there. And so we followed them, followed their ideals, not ours. Learned their sciences, not ours, chose their words, not ours. Became a copy of them, not of ourselves.”

– “Well, I won’t, I won’t, no, I really don’t want to. Not that I couldn’t be like you, but I want to take the path of my own heart, my own feelings! Whatever that may be”, said Tara.

– “ You’re matchless, aren’t you? Unlike the rest of the world?” her mother yelled.

“She just wanted me to achieve what she hadn't been able to achieve, so that my life could be easier, that’s what she used to say. Do you know how far removed I have become from all of that? There are no rules I’m running after, except ATTENDING TO MY HEART. The cardiologists will be happy, the heart is most important. IT IS! But, your hearts; are they

alive? I see people of dead love around me, of dirty blood, toxic, and infectious. I see grief for the transient gleam in their eyes. I hear the cry of the defeated existence of self in their thoughts.... ahhhh. Sometimes it's so hard for me to think of you. I know, I understand, the road of self-knowledge is not an easy one."

That's not what Tara wanted. She had her world. A different one, filled with pain because she saw the woe and misery of man and of her own self in the chain of norms and expectations, in the cold and empty reality of loveless hearts. And the clock was ticking away. Some incomprehensible and relentless strength, just like the one she had seen in relation to time, took her spreading the wings of her soul so it can flutter away to a new world and another existence. The words of the wise written in the holy books were her guides. And her heart, which never wanted to betray her and which she never betrayed, was alive and merry. The fight was tough, long, and painful, at the beginning. Only when she went beyond the false ego, stepping over delusions of her self, did she cry out with relief, feeling the curtain of reality rising in front of her. She saw another reality. Visible and palpable within her and those who were hers. Each step was a decision, and each minute a state of love. The breath of life within her!

She was in Vrindavan again. She dreamt of Krishna at the altar of the temple to which the non-Hindu population was disallowed accession. She dreamt of the interior of the temple. There would be a procession, taking out the small Deity. With a friend and Kusum_Mummy, an Indian teacher in whose home she stayed now, she went to see the procession. She heard somebody calling her name from the masses in the street. It was Mohan. How happy both of them were! Now they could talk without being disturbed by anyone. He had inherited the guru mother, lived in the temple and was now famous in India due to regularly performed shows on national TV. He had decided on a monastic life and giving alms to the poor. He was currently visiting his family. "Why aren't you staying in your room at our house? There is a room waiting for you. Have you forgotten everything? Are you married?" She had decided not to stay with them because there were four children by his brother, the manager, another child by his other brother... the noise would have been too much. She visited them and talked to Mohan for a long time because he now spoke english fluently. "Yes, I've always felt for you, but you never understood it. I could never promise you marriage. It was

unreal. Don't marry! You see, I've just decided not to marry. Life is so short, I'm twenty six already. And you could always feel the love through me. I knew all along; I knew how much you'd suffered. I think it was Krishna who used me to communicate with you." She was looking at him; she knew he still had to decide on a life of priesthood. On her insistence to say a word on living her heart , "Yes, You will be free from me. I will go out of your heart , so you be free..."

She felt something else was about to happen. That her love lived and existed, wherever she was, whoever was its object. The well known agony revolved once again. Her dreams of Divinity from the prohibited temple turned her thoughts from her emotions. She asked for permission to enter the temple. RK, the manager of the temple was a nice and educated man. He suggested she should write an application in the name of all the western devotees. A huge community was to be moved. Over two hundred families were connected with this temple. Consultations prolonged to more than ten days. She had missed all the flights due west. Would they agree and permit her entrance? Not one atom of her consciousness would condemn a negative decision. She respected their love and discipline with which they practiced the religion which was becoming clearer to her, and more intimate. She humbly waited for the result of the new game she had been dragged into by a dream, which depicted an immense desire to break the rules of the outer world. She believed in the religion of love and that's why she wanted to see Krishna in that temple. She loved Vrindavan and everything connected with Vrindavan. During the first few days after she submitted her application, her chances were almost none. Many a westerner had sent an application that was rejected. She trusted that this time a positive result would ensue, simply because of her dream. The people from the temple invited her for an interview. They wanted to know her better. Ten days afterwards, accompanied by two friends from Russia, she visited the temple. She was taken into an office, to sign the approved application and to talk about the basic postulates of the Hindi religion. They were pleased, that a white woman could speak their language and recite their holy verses. They told her that she would be the first non-Hindu by birth to enter their two-hundred year old temple and see the God at their altar. They took them to the inner chambers of the huge complex. The guards were running after them, yelling that westerners were not allowed to enter, but the man from the office calmed them down explaining that yes, from that day onwards, they were allowed to come.

The afternoon was gorgeous and calm. The building, the entrance hall which she had already seen in her dream, was now close by and familiar. And then there was the Divinity. The experience was so intense that she almost fainted as they approached the altar. She was exultant that Krishna was playing with her again. This entry meant breaking the wall of the huge prohibition and inaccessibility the inhabitants of Vrindavan displayed towards western visitors. The following morning she was leaving without having booked her ticket. Mohan drove her to Delhi. Early that morning she went with Mummy and the children to a temple at the periphery of Vrindavan. It was another special day, and she was the only white person in the temple, but nonetheless was fully accepted and respected. Afterwards, a friend of Mohan was driving. Mohan told her of his duties in the temple. They were working on various projects, such as introducing water in a poor village in Maharashtra, and acquiring clothing for the needy children. He told her their temple was private and closed for many, but that there would always be a place for her. She smiled. Her path was taking her westward now. There was one free seat on a plane to London. Krishna was letting her go, and she was already late.

She wrote a letter to a friend of musicians' to, for the one and final time asks him to confirm he would further have no intentions towards her, for he was back with his wife. She revealed her past remembrance and the emotions for the musician. The answer came " He wishes you all the best in life and asks you to never again approach him with such a questions, from obvious reasons..." Whenever they met later, she no longer felt that invisible tread which was painfully connecting her to him. She loved him as any dear person she would love. Her heart was free after seven years of pain.

She was happy and calm. It was not a nirvana, nor an easily dispersed indifference. It was nothing new, and again, her precise condition was unfamiliar. It was peace of having found love. It was a calm due to secrets answered, in which God could be what He really was, a being, a human – yet God. Many a time did she hear the stories about a God who was everything but a person. He was strength, he was light, he was in a tree, in a stone, in the sky, but this God was now in her and she was in Him. He was there for her and only her. How beautiful, their friendship and their games. What great happiness they could now give each other. Her

road and gloomy beginning of her realization of the truth, and her transformation from bitter to the sweet, had been hard and long, yet miraculous, light, and so beautiful. There was no clock from before. She didn't hear it now. It did no longer tick the time away but for her. The ticking became a song and a sweet melody of eternal. No longer did she fear the end, finally realizing that there was no end, when the doors of love and truth open and when peace becomes a dynamic feeling, in which her body is born, and by which it is patterned and fed. Touching eternity in love, from love, with love that had built the stairs to her reality, she took another last breath which had the odour of transience in the eyes of those, unable to see themselves and know themselves, were now exulted. "She too is gone." "We will all be together again. How many lives there are in eternity waiting for us! How many blessings under the hand of my teacher, in the lap of my queen, in the arms of my love?!"

To your good health and well-being, my dear reader (my dear world). Know that once my heart, like your heart now, was caned by the rods of pain and grief, pleasure and happiness. Some day, it will all be changed by the beginning and the continuation of reality. Along the road lit by truth, beauty, merriment, heading toward love and eternity. Whoever you may be, you're my brother now, my sister, and my companion, because there is only one race that marches along this road, one sort, the people courageous to love, who have been brought to their senses by the breath of holiness and humanity, giving of themselves for themselves and for others. Thank you and farewell.

To my teachers I bow in deepest gratitude. To this earth that has accepted me as its child, and to the sky infinite, beyond whose heights my soul its freedom will find. To the time present that bestowed me, with consciousness and peace and joy, because my heart has long stopped being haunted by passions and desires. To the book my mother and father to whom I was born, and to the poem, the most exquisite poem that led me to into the realm of free emotion, divine and magnificent felt only through heart in. A world of grandeur and bliss any human heart could feel. It led me to a world of indescribable and enchanting happiness. Thanks to all of you, in whose eyes I can see our Lord and recognize Him, and to you, that dear part of me I will always love. Thanks to you, eternity and continuity, towards which this ordinary but merry soul is hastening, the soul married to the joy of the horizon of a world distant for the moment and for centuries, lost within our heart. Fare well.

THE END

“Why is love so fragile? It wants to be the way it is, it looks for a space in eternal creation so that it may be filled... it is of the material you can't use to build with... lots of consciousness in a short time... it is not under gravitation low so it wonders where it shall go when the earth can no longer contain it... the peace of lovers, creative unrest... man must have someone for procreation, otherwise he shrinks in his own lack of reflexive refinement...” Shem from Sarajevo.

And now, I know nothing more, have I ever known anything? What is knowledge? I only want to feel so that I know I'm alive, and I want to live...I want to live eternally...“They were resting in one another's arms, listening to one another's breathing. The moment contained all of eternity, the future and past infinitely insignificant and nonexistent. There was only the present insurmountable beauty that culminated from one into the other alternatively. The two beings melted, rising on the wings of peace and joy. They were just sitting together in one another's arms, listening to one another breathing...and who could ever part them? Was death more powerful, than outer life? How much they have gone through to achieve this moment as their souls embrace in the timelessness of life! All the pain of separation! How many hard lessons, when their ration gets restless and starts wondering? What a strong desire and yearning for a kiss of the eyes, and when it comes, what a volcanic might springs forth through them! Lava of red-hot fluid, feelings from the deepest depths of their melted beings had petrified the life-giving air in them. They were motionless and eternal. Was there anything that could set them apart ever again, if they knew the deepest, the hardest feature of love the pain? They were perfect. Realized. Complete. They were born in love, again. Nothing can touch love, and no one can touch such a love. They were in God, the two tiny, simple human beings, and they tasted the infinite beauty and passion of pure, selfless vigour. They belonged to the all-inclusiveness of the universe and to themselves. Oh, how beautiful their harmony and their existence is.”

Is there a place where I could meet them? Is there a street in which they live, a woods through which they run and laugh? Oh, I haven't seen them for such a long time; I haven't traced them within me for such a long time. I am walking the edge of darkness in the white dress of my virginity, tears fill my eyes, winds travel through my hair, but I will stand in this way, because it is MY way. There, somewhere at the end of my quest, the end of my waiting, and at the beginning of infinity, I will be perfected, complete. You and me. And when we find one another, we will know that the quest never ends. A clear awareness of the infinity of living and the feeling of beauty will be our essence.... Ah, the beautiful, bluish gleaming, restless beauty of the universe is waiting for us, our only reality and our truth... love is waiting for us.

INSTEAD OF ANOTHER ENDING

Teron! Is it possible, on the soil of my soil, at the edge of my hope and dream? You came talking about the quest after hundreds of lives. With pain more terrible and your eyes deeper, the dark bluish gleam in them. Unexpected! Quick! All-comprehensive! Realized! Powerful! Kind! TRUE or false?

Should I kiss you with my words...should I transform the beast of you into a prince...hug you with my thoughts... carry you away with my virginity... adorn you with shyness and innocence...take you into the distant heart...scent you with mystic scents and give you sleep....Wake you up with the light of my soul...feed you with love that grows so blue only for you...free you from everything and clothe you in a clean robe of good intentions... become a feature of yourself...be the air you breathe, so that you become once more your unique self, staying close to me... let's surrender...time is running short, my love!!!

All-comprehensive beauty in this infinity of yours. You keep the shrine I come to, the shelter and protection of love. You gave me everything! Life! Took me in, and carried me away from the false masks of this world. How long have I been waiting for you, on the bench of existence and truth and yearning and desire... on roads which no longer exist? The beauty of emotions like lava wells up from my heart and burns and clears the road to life that awakens now for eternity, awakens in love and light of the totality and the uniqueness that is You. The love of oceans and volcanoes is allowed. Thank you Krishna and Radha and Vrindavan and my teachers! You have brought me to him who is giving me back to you again, complete and purely his. Duration. Incapacity. Realization?

My Essence is simple, it feels and radiates and moves the ascending path of self-creation when I struggle through Your eyes.

Have you betrayed me in such a painful way? Pain again, and suffering, an end and happiness that happened sooner rather than later, and then renewal, and more suffering, and struggle...and where are we going from here? Has the heart become hushed or is it just hiding away for a while, waiting for Eternity to COME once and FOREVER? The stars alone can tell, the heavens, and my honest heart, which hides itself...I'm off to look for it... at Dadu's, at Mohan's, at the musician's, at Teron's, at Mummy's, at Zchbirk's, my little dog, my friends', like star dust shimmering on the coats of worries and shawls of overjoyed

longing of youth carried in my friends...the present has long ago been crumpled and grounded up into the machine of time and experience, trickling onto the earth, and sky, through the winds and waves, and carried them into the infinity of oneness with God. I will find it. I know where it could be. I can feel it. I have learned the ways of heart. I will surely find it. Why live, if not in this way? Behind the curtain of unhappy consciousness, behind the cold spaces of loneliness, behind the fiery hell of mischief, behind the whole universe is my PEACE, my eternity and realization of my Love. I know it's still far away, I know there's still a long way to go, but it is and always will be MY Way. My path.. I have to find my heart, my Love, MYSELF. AND YOU! T! I have recognized your eyes. For the first time "He is same like me". This are a new times. The reality of you glance lives in me, gathering, in this pain lacerated soul of mine, into an eternal embrace. A transformation of love which finally lives. I loom up your endlessness and my peace after loneliness. My heart understands you. My heart talks. Do you hear it? You talk? We are awakening....

DO YOU REALLY THINK THERE IS AN END...

Inscription

To my teachers (Saćinandana Svami and Narayan Maharaj) who continually support and rescue me from the mouth of ignorance and suffering, enlighten my heart with the torch of knowledge of God and love, who in the depth of old age and priesthood, live to serve mankind and God.

To my parents who understood me many a time, and many a time did not, on my way to self-realization and education.

To all my good and dear friends, especially to those who will be able to recognize themselves in this book.

May the peace of God and the pure love of God be in you and for you forever.

Glory to pure selfless love, to truth, and to those who carry love and truth within themselves and are able to share.

Let there be glory for the Almighty and for the All-Pervading God, and to the feeling of belonging to Him.

To the honest seekers...those who have no time for sleeping for they know that awakening is a long and painful transforming process which leads us into the everlasting mirth....

a part RECENSION by Dr Maria Krivokapić

Vesna's experience of India, the space that keeps the secret of our ancient being, is expressed in a mixture of fiction, travel writing, and metaphysical essay. While, shaped within the epic genre, the impressions from travels gain pronounced uniqueness, the passages of abstract thought are coated in forms familiar to the general reader.

Poetically thoughtful about Montenegro, the place of her childhood and early youth and about India the place where she emotionally and intellectually grew, Vesna's voice brings out the elements of traditions of these distant but to her similar cultures. "He stopped for a moment to see what impact his story, rendered in broken English, had on me. It revealed what Dadu had within him

and what he could hardly share. I was watching him carefully, trying to discern that world through his eyes, like a child leaning over the window to see the light of a new day and of a new land.

“That world is here now, only you can’t see it. It is the world you carry within yourself.... ” Story about the quest for truth and love, not mundane and temporary but firm and everlasting...

IMPRESSUM

"Coloured footprints-Live My India", a book by Vesna Anastasija Božović was written as the author herself states " with the steps through the heart heading to eternity". This is a book of "coming closer" and tolerance and therefore it connects non connectible it conciliates inconsolable. Her words clang mystically in our thoughts and in our daily lives. Its echo warns and yet reminds that all the keys of earthly and outer worlds are within ourselves, but they need to be uncovered. To uncover another being and to get to know his or hers virtues and beauties means to awaken goodness within our own selves. To be in mirth, to give, to receive, to conciliate, to unite, to realise, to love are some of marvellous verbs of the heart on which this excellent book is based upon.

Vujica Ognjenović, author and publicist (Herceg Novi, Crna Gora)

„Three locations, at the first sight non-connectible, Tara connected...What do you get if those are India, Germany and Montenegro? You get Tara's world. A world of scents, of art, of love, of gentleness... all that will make insight into your soul and make you ask yourself, maybe for the first time in your life, if the path you are on is the right one... Do not fear this book, if you do not want to see inside the essence of yourselves it will surely make you think about going to Vrindavan... going into yourself... You will love Vrindavan, you will feel a scent of cresset, a taste of the sweets unknown to you, sweetish scents that you will not find in any other place as they were made as a mixture of spices, incense, love and belief. When all this mixed together with the western lifestyle and slightly archaic speech of Tara's childhood what you get is...indeed, all what remains is...that nothing else remains but creating a world of love and belief for yourselves.... Žaklina Oštir, actress (Podgorica, Crna Gora)

A book about life's temptations, unslaked love seeking for the solacement in the house of faith and belief in eternal love is surely a good book. Vrindavan from Vesna's nouvelle could be any place on earth. Passing through the temptations a person is closer to the heights where from one is not looking into space but into time. And even more when spoken in spiritual language and prayer that speech is as pure as child's tears are. My opinion is that those writings from India show the world that all the people are children of God and that there is not much difference between great India and our small Montenegro.

Batrić Konatar, publicist (Nikšić, Crna Gora)

"Dadu"...a light, a depth of space, a butterfly's smile, a whit of spring in the mids of winter...A Time witness, as a carrier of past within a rebirth gazing into the moment...

Jelena Zagorčić, painter (Beograd, Srbija)

Very impressive text; personal, warm, humanly, yet spiritual, mystical. From the very beginning I felt like being there with her and Dadu in Vrindavan.

Extraordinary writing gift. Pencil writes by heart!

Aleksandar Todorović (Akrura das) spiritual and professional coach, Gita Coaching (London, UK)

...If I would feel purity in one's voice, in one's sight..deed..or simply in touch...just would I cry...Tears which differently flow are not solty. Thank you for the embrace with this book and for all the tears which recreate and watere my heart.....

Vesna Baćević, poetess (Nikšić, Crna Gora)

Sometimes one goes to the end of the world to find something hidden within his own self. Love. By reading this adventure one comes to understanding that love itself made the author follow her path.

Denni Christopherson, photographer (Los Angeles, USA)

Among the authors of contemporary art, it is hard to find those who through the "ordinarity" of human literary expression breath with such a sophistication, which in an indiscernible way links; here and there, now and then, internal and external...connecting it all with a filament called LOVE!!!...Whole book irradiates love, the primeval one, non-superficial, unconditional...irradiates the Absolute. We, who know Vesna, know that the aim in her interaction with the world and with living beings is just as such; absolute and unconditional Love...

Anita Larisa Kolega, artist, mother, defectologist Zagreb(Croatia)

„A wonderful and touching story about love and spiritual experience and the grace of God, who guides an extraordinary young Montenegrin woman on her way through India. You feel like a soul-sister, when she takes you with her on her trip and you become fascinated by this holy place Vrindavan...”

Doris Schmied, lector (Munich, Germany)

India is very far from Europe. Geographical distance is easier to concur then the cultural one. Katharine an Yugoslavian girl who lives in Germany while coming to India meets the cultural differences. Dadu, a Bengali monk, a saint, helps her to overcome the cultural gap while his tears uncover a sublime world of love to Golden God to her.

Vesna's pin writes an old story familiar to all the nations, about the teacher and the disciple, about the youth elixir, offering a timelessness assured for the spiritual eye to the reader who's eye still rests in a finite. She does it in such a way that in her tale a turbid layer of every day's necessity becomes transparent like a thin film of a soap-suds, enabling thus "the world from the other side" to become accessible to the senses; as the colour of jungle is, as a saint's speech rendered in an local dialect is, as India is...

Vladimir Kosić, author, free artist (director, performance, actor etc.) Belgrade, Serbia

About the Author

Vesna Anastasija Božović was born on February 6th in Montenegro, ex-Yugoslavia.

She graduated high school and did MA in English Language and Literature in her hometown Nikšić, later she did MA in Psychology in the same town and University.

Art and philosophy and religion of far east cultures were always greatly attractive to her, that is why she went to Heidelberg, Germany and later to Vrindavan India to profound her knowledge and study it. It is there that the inspiration to write this novel came from. Her untypical life style of fighter for freedom of individuality and expression and freedom of belief seen in her art, made lot turbulence around her.

Development and establishment of positive and progressive art in the world, braking the rules of superficiality and retrograde thought is her goal. Apart from writing, her passion is visual art as she directs music videos, writes screenplays and produces documentaries in her and her brother's company. She travelled the world, met and recorded beautiful places and people, in India, Singapore, Dubai, Japan, Hawaii, Peru, Indonesia, Australia, Brazil, USA, China, all over Europe and ex-Yugoslavia, speaks several languages and does humanitarian work and studies psychology currently. She is Vegan.

Her Publications are: „Never again alone“ a Poetry book, Montenegro 2002, The Book of Hope and The World healing Book, published in Island 2002, several Anthologies 2007.

This is her first Novel.



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Dr Maria Krivokapić-Knežević

