

Sophia
Creating
a Soul

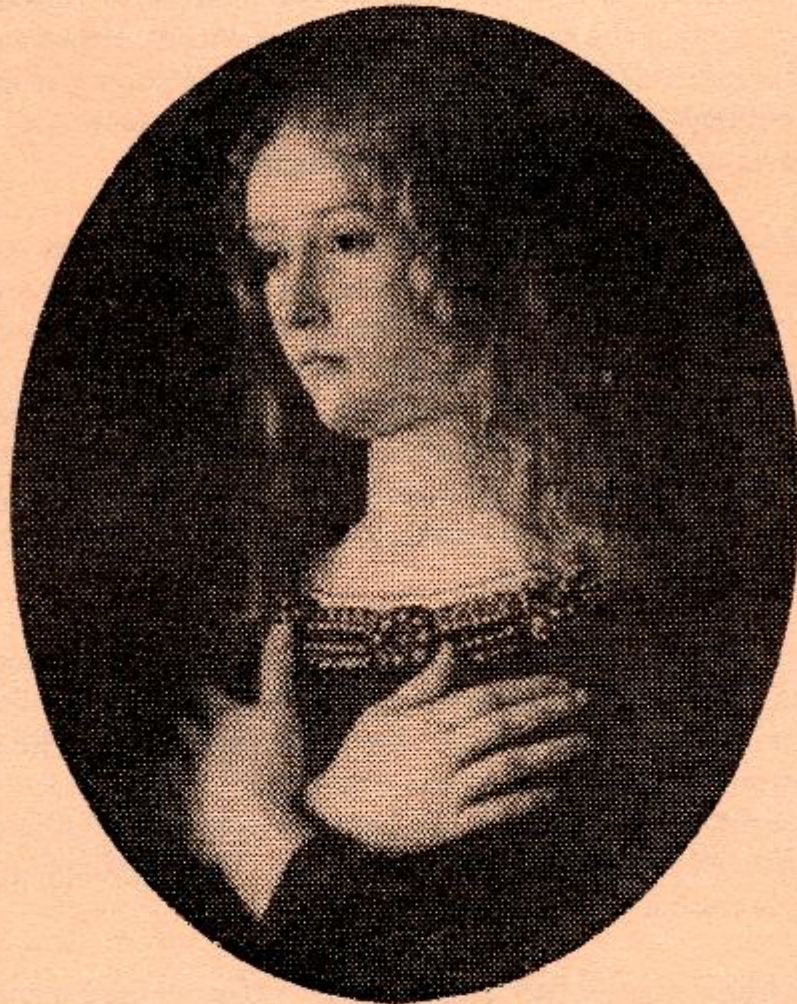
Wise
Woman's
JOURNAL



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Recognition

One of my favorite women in the Bible is Mary Magdalene. She was loved and accepted despite her faults, her seven devils, not to mention that greatest of privileges bestowed upon her: it was she to whom the Christ appeared first, after his death. Just imagine her joy, beholding her beloved, alive, after such suffering, and death.

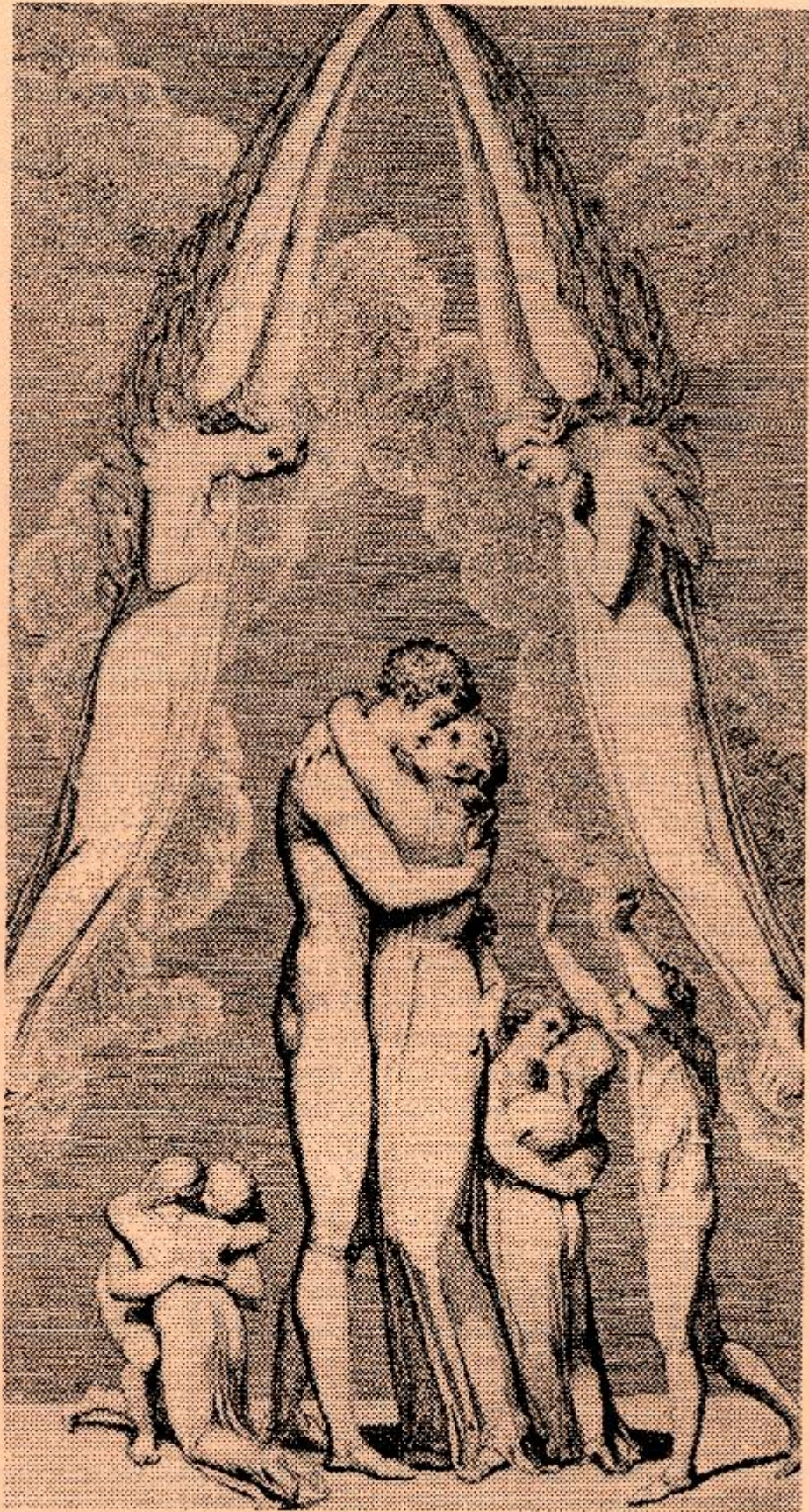


A tenet of the Teaching is "See the Christ in everyone you meet." This means to look past the Not-I's clamoring for attention—asking you to complain or demand with them, quoting some so-called authority, pleasing with ulterior motive, whimpering about their inferiority (and calling it yours), or blaming someone or something for some moment's discomfort... to look past all this and see and recognize the Essence of the person within. When a student makes up her mind to practice this, it is amazing... first, of course, it is amazing how hard it is to remember to hold such a simple intention, secondly, when one does remember to do it, it is amazing what one sees.

Think how Mary must have felt, realizing her Friend had not really died. Can you imagine meeting up with the Christ? Imagine that you are at the supermarket or in the library or at work... The Christ walks in, comes right over to you, extends his hand and says, "Hello!" or better yet, calls you by name. How glad would you be to see him? If meeting up with the Christ is too rich a fantasy for you, imagine meeting up with an old friend or relative who has died. How happy would you be to see them? Overjoyed, of course. And imagine that doing this particular Work gave you that joyful feeling every day, with almost everyone you ran into. Imagine.

I have been practicing this for years, but alas have not perfected it. Often I forget. It has been brought home so powerfully lately, to me and to my friend B., both of us sister-students of the same beloved Friend who left this world recently—what we would give to see him again! His Essence was Love and if we could recognize that kind of Love again, it would indeed be a reunion. We had both recently vowed to renew our efforts to Work at looking past junk and greeting Life's Essence, to look with Love.

She was in a fabric store when a rather goofy little old lady wandered over and started touching B.'s lace, asking her what she was going to make with it, yakking that she was going to make something exactly like it, and so on. The woman looked much too poor to be buying anything, she seemed to be just another bag lady wandering around a store, seeking attention. B. chatted



absentmindedly with her, eager to pay up and get away, which she finally did. The next day it hit her hard: "I completely dismissed that old lady and how do I know it wasn't my Friend in disguise when I didn't even bother to look?"

The same day this happened to B., I was in a restaurant with a friend. A well-dressed woman stopped by our table and stared down at my plate. "That looks good!" Among the Not-I's that I am prone to entertain is a loathing of interruptions to what I am doing, so "naturally" I was a bit miffed that this woman stops inches from me, stares and points at my food, interrupts our conversation. I try to ignore her but she stands firm so I "had" to glance at her—more reaction—and she said, "Can I get that in the other room?" With forced politeness I said, "Yes," gratefully dismissing her.

Next morning I awoke and was chastened and humbled. I remembered my so-called promise to seek the Christ in everyone I meet, to look past bad manners or other unpleasant characteristics and recognize and greet the Christ, or Life, or Love. Not to mention seeking my beloved Friend, who may be wandering around in disguise just as the Christ is! B. happened to phone just as I was ruminating about this to tell me her story and we both laughed at how we will get all the lessons we could ever use, if we just pay attention to them! And we got some pleasure that by both having had the same lesson the same day, we felt again like sister-students, just like old times. And then... we forget. Don't we.

Yesterday I met a friend in a restaurant who was having a business meeting with a man I have heard of but hadn't met. We introduced ourselves and he said, "We've met before." "No, we haven't," I was sure. "Yes we have. You were thinner then." No man has ever been dismissed so fast and so surely as this poor chap! As I turned my head to my friend, I was even a little surprised myself at my near mastery of motion... the quick turn was a mule-train whip severing the offender from my esteemed presence! I told my friend I would meet him later and I departed. No way was I going to join such a Cretin. It was the stupidity of his remark even more than its reference to my personal appearance that annoyed me most. "The guy owns a company worth millions of dollars and I don't and he's a lot dumber than I am!" Completely justified my demeanor... and my forgetting my promise to Work, and my Friend... Because the next day I awoke and realized what a wonderful invitation his remark, "We've met before," was to practice seeing Life, seeing the Christ! And I had missed it, reacting, letting Not-I's handle the encounter, snoozing away while little demons took over an opportunity to say "Hello!" to my beloved.



Would you like to meet up with the Christ? With your dearest departed old Friend? You can... but you're going to have to practice and practice. And so am I.

Reality

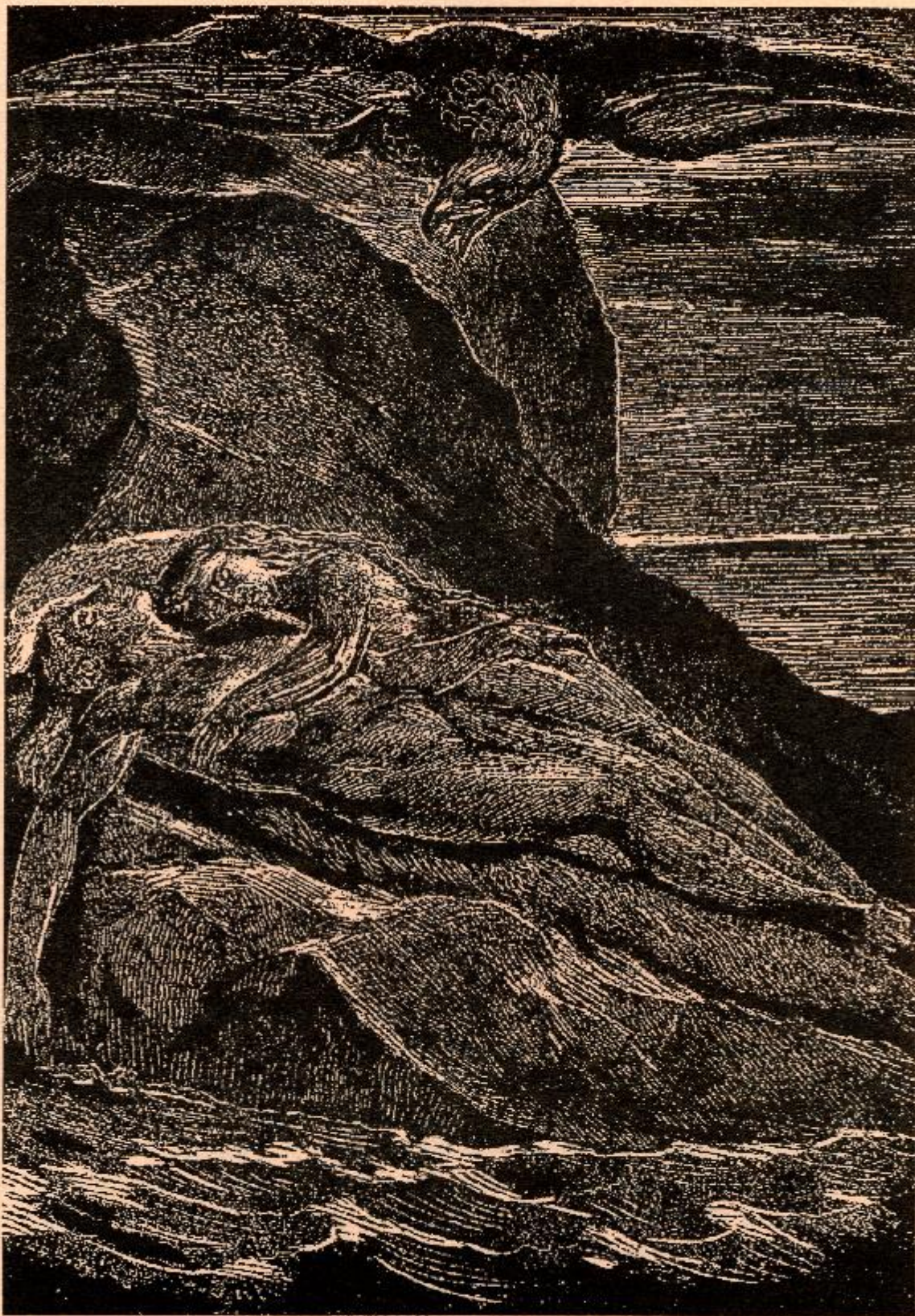
Anyone bothering to read publications such as Sophia, Wise Woman's Journal has been seeking—maybe found—transcendence from the world of misery to what they intuitively have always known exists: a place of serenity, love, harmony; something more real than the pursuit of pleasures and the terror of pain, something permanent, called in the Teaching "The Real World." That there is a different, other world called "real" implies that this one is not so real, and surely we know that nothing is permanent about it. Students have all heard, many times, the statement that this realm in which we live is illusion. All major religions hint at this, or say it outright, and it is a chief tenet of any esoteric Teaching. What we can touch and smell and feel and measure is fleeting, "it came to pass." It merely represents reality, in form. Those who are honest students have had moments of another world, moments of something altogether different than what we experience here in this vale of tears, a bliss that is unbounded, a knowing, an experience that proves beyond a doubt there is something more... when we return to "earth," we may have lost the complete feeling of it, yet in our minds we know that we KNEW, and so we KNOW.

I would like to share an experience of this sort that happened to me recently... I don't know what value sharing it has—maybe none. But I offer it to you to put in your "notebook" of Work ideas, because this is not just platitudes written down by someone who heard things from someone else, but is Reality, for me. At the very least, I know that those of you know and love me will rejoice with me that I was given this gift. If somehow its grace spills over to you, too, I would be very pleased, indeed.



Most of you know that my beloved Teacher and Friend left his earthly body behind in December... and I say moved permanently into the Real World, where he visited over the years, in my presence and out, often. Although I suspected this event of his leaving might come to pass, in no way was I prepared for the tremendous shock and grief it was to produce in me. I have dealt with this as best I could, Working hard when I could, descending into the anesthesia of sleep when I could not. I am almost healed now, from the shock of this change, and of continuing comfort to me these months is the certain knowledge of something I saw during his last hours, a glimpse of Reality in the face of death.

She was alone with him at the end... the room was dark except for a very dim light in the corner. He was in a coma, and she knew this meant he was already



gone, for this conscious man would never allow his inner state to get that low... the body was winding down, it was comatose, he was... elsewhere... she didn't know know. She sat next to his bed for hours just holding his hands. She Worked very, very hard to keep the mood up, the only thing she knew to do to be of any assistance at all... certainly tears and groaning would not make this any easier for him... or for her, for that matter. She sat quietly, holding his hands, and occasionally asked, "What are you now? ... Where are you? ... What's going on, darling man, what are you doing? ... I will not leave you... though you seem to have gone..." Every time she closed her eyes she saw a beautiful star. She is not much of a "seer" at all, she usually perceives the Real World in other ways. But for hours she saw a beautiful star, just like the Nativity star on Christmas cards, with light showering down, beautiful... It was a message of some kind, she felt certain... but it's precise explanation eludes her still, though she has ideas.

"Where are you, darling?" again... and suddenly the little corner light surged bright, it responded to her. "Hello, Robert!" and she could not help but beam, she was delighted, despite the extremely grim scene of which she was silent witness.

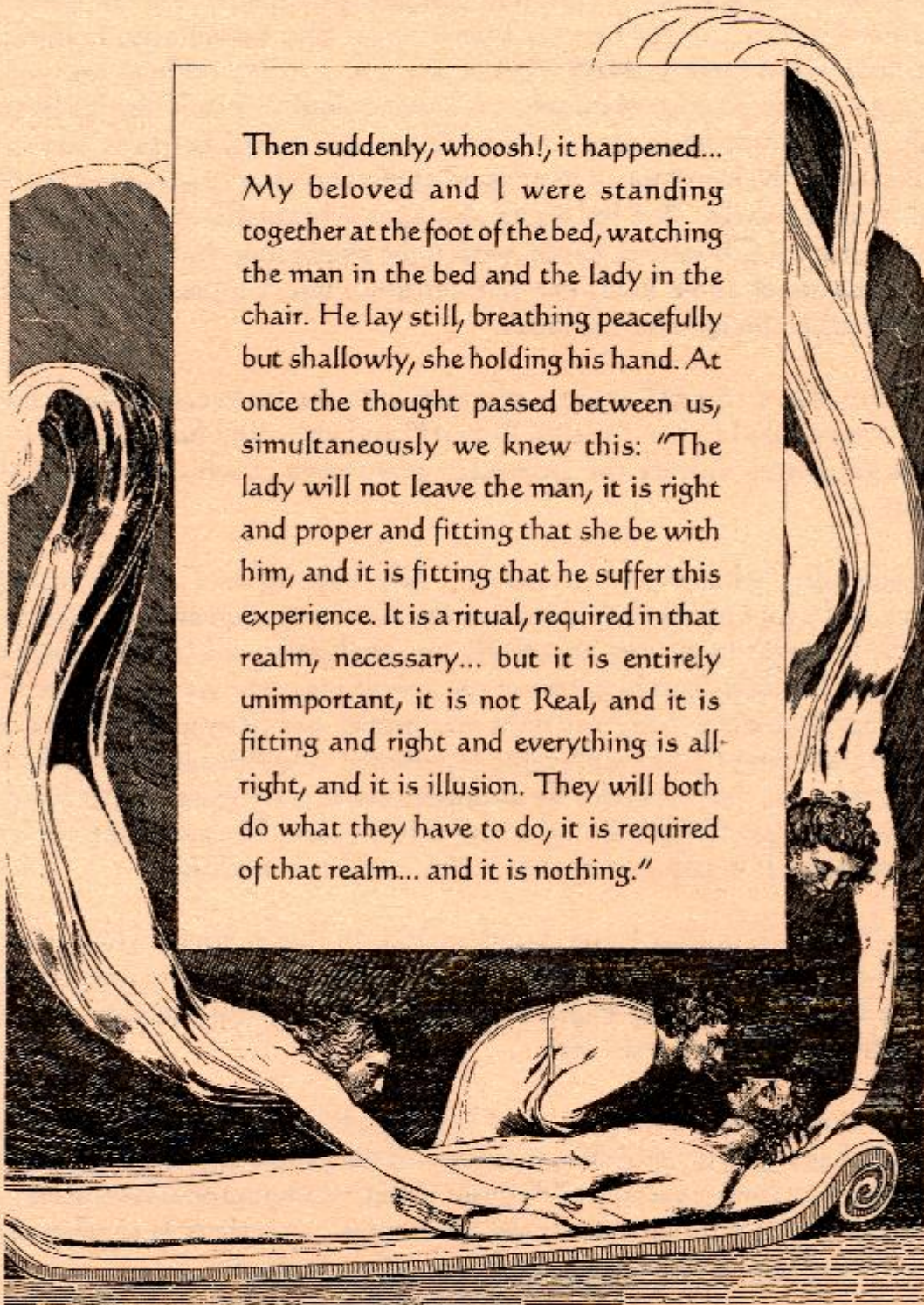
Then suddenly, whoosh!, it happened... My beloved and I were standing together at the foot of the bed, watching the man in the bed and the lady in the chair. He lay still, breathing peacefully but shallowly, she holding his hand. At once the thought passed between us, simultaneously we knew this: "The lady will not leave the man, it is right and proper and fitting that she be with him, and it is fitting that he suffer this experience. It is a ritual, required in that realm, necessary... but it is entirely unimportant, it is not Real, and it is fitting and right and everything is all right, and it is illusion. They will both do what they have to do, it is required of that realm... and it is nothing."

Paradox? Truly, it is. But I saw. I understood. In that moment I knew what I had read and heard for years, this realm is illusion, death is illusion, the Real World is Love and Joy and Peace and Permanent and both worlds are valid, they are fitting for what they are.

Does know this now, this minute? What she knows at this minute is that I KNEW at that moment, and that will have to do. I have experienced the utter knowledge that this place we call "home" is but a temporary way-station, it is valuable and it is not important at the same time... that there is another place, at hand, but allusive, to be sure... and everything is okay.

I would give just about anything to be able to impart the knowing of this to you... alas, I do not know how. But please know that she knows—I know, and if I do, anyone can... and if you don't yet, someday you will, too.

Then suddenly, whoosh!, it happened... My beloved and I were standing together at the foot of the bed, watching the man in the bed and the lady in the chair. He lay still, breathing peacefully but shallowly, she holding his hand. At once the thought passed between us, simultaneously we knew this: "The lady will not leave the man, it is right and proper and fitting that she be with him, and it is fitting that he suffer this experience. It is a ritual, required in that realm, necessary... but it is entirely unimportant, it is not Real, and it is fitting and right and everything is all-right, and it is illusion. They will both do what they have to do, it is required of that realm... and it is nothing."



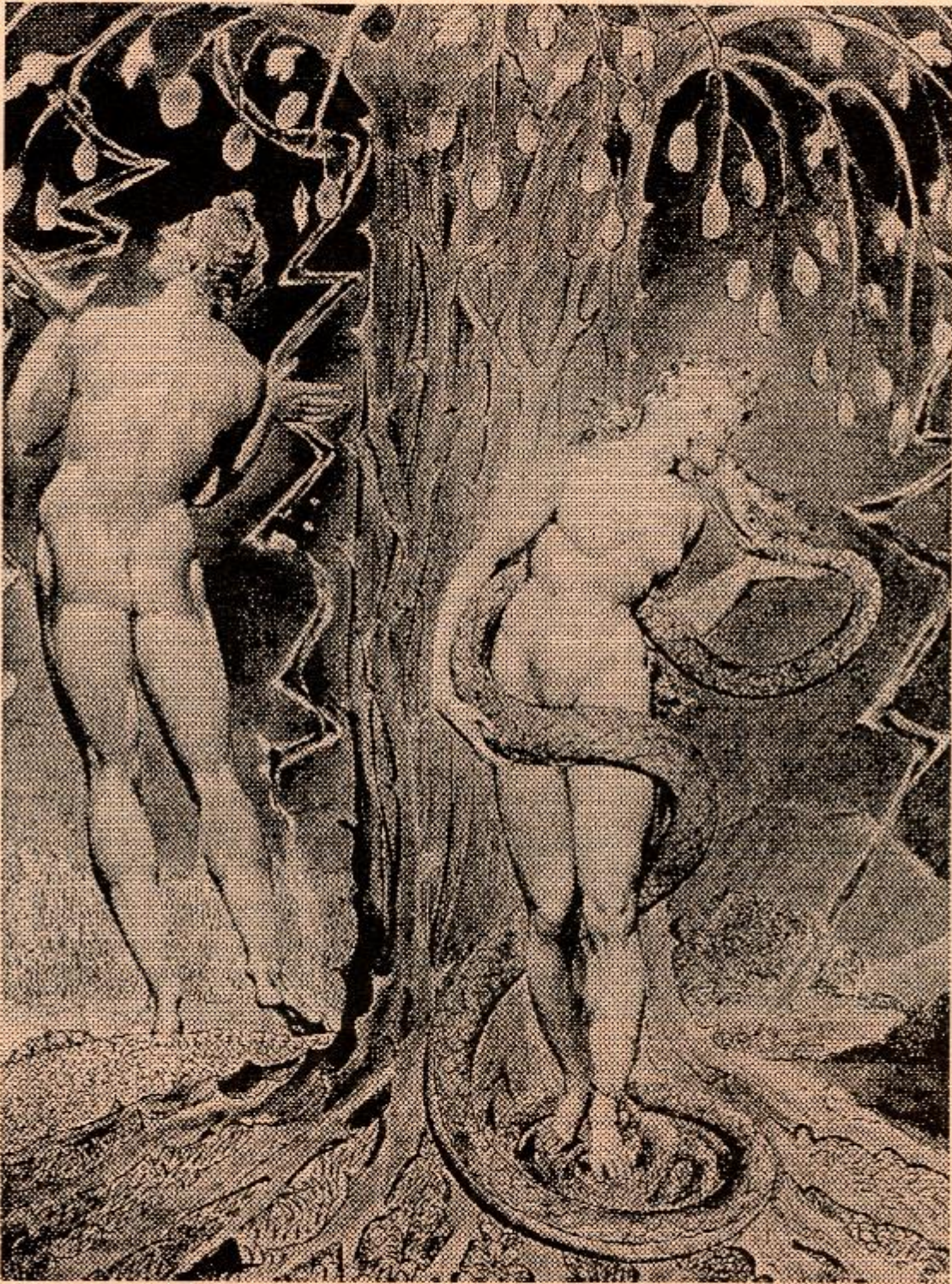
Edwards at the Bed, 1900

To "listen" another's soul
into a condition of disclosure
and discovery may be almost



the greatest service that
any human being ever performs for another.

Prose by Douglas Steer, From "Gleanings: A Random Harvest" Sent in by Georgia H., Chattanooga. Painting by Adolph William Bouguereau, card sent from Kelly C.



Text from "Out of the Garden—Women Writers on the Bible" Edited by Christina Buchmann and Celina Spiegel, published by Fawcett Columbine. Women write their thoughts and feelings about the Bible. Some see beauty and paradox, as in this "Meditation," while others rage or reflect on the conditioning it imposed. All are thoughtful and interesting. A Harmony Workshop Book Group selection (July).

A MEDITATION ON EVE

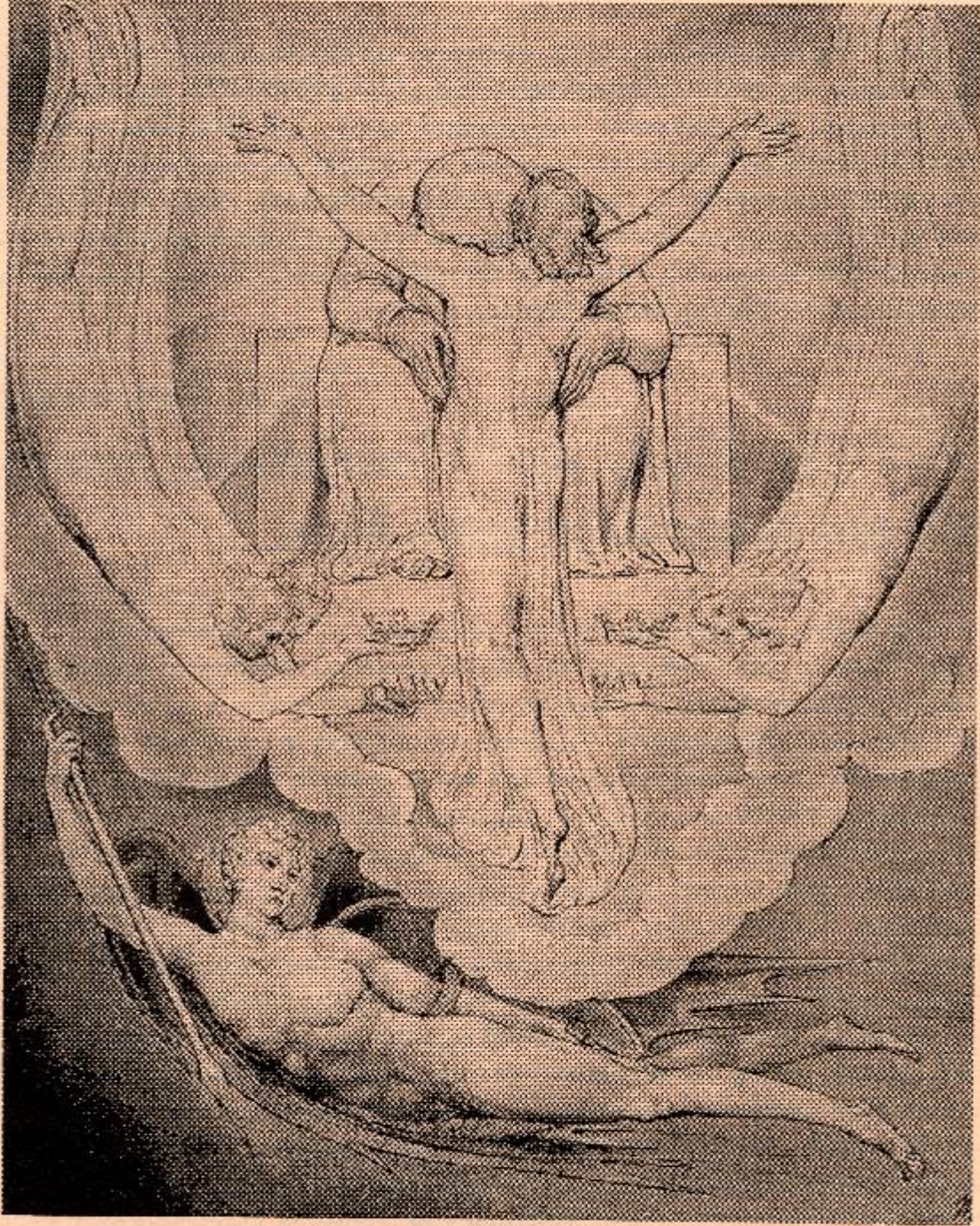
by Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

From "Out of the Garden: Women Writers on the Bible"

When Eve bit into the apple, she gave us the world as we know the world—beautiful, flawed, dangerous, full of being. She gave us small-pox and Somalia, polio vaccine and wheat and Windsor roses; she gave me the computer I am writing on, and planted in my blood and bones and flesh a variable human love, the intoxication of the body. She (not Mary) is the mother of my children, born in travail to a world of suffering their presence may refresh. She is my sister. Even the alienation from God we feel as a direct consequence of her Fall makes us beholden to her:

The intense
desire for God, never satisfied, arises
from our separation from him.

In our desire—this desire that makes us perfectly human—is contained our celebration and our rejoicing. The mingling, melding, braiding of good and mischief in every human soul—the fusion of good and bad in intent and in act—is what makes us recognizable (and delicious) to one another; without it—without the genetically transmitted knowledge of good and evil that Eve's act of radical curiosity sowed in our marrow—we should not desire to know and love God, we should have no need of him. We should have no need of one another ... of a one and perfect Other. Eve, the occasion of our fall from grace, is also the occasion of our salvation. From her first issued need. She set in motion the wheels of salvation by her sin ... such a little act, in which are contained all human actions, past and present, large and small, good and evil: a cosmos in an atom. Of the salvation she engendered she will be the recipient, in heaven, where we "repent not, but smile; not at the sin, which cometh not again to mind, but at the Worth that ordered and provided." In heaven there is no remorse. In that heaven for which we yearn but which we cannot imagine, Eve is united with Mary, carried by flights of angels to Mother God/Father God. She has become Mary's twin in purity, her sister. Without Eve, Mary would not be our sister. All we know of heaven we know from Eve, who gave us the earth, a serviceable blueprint: Without Eve there would be no utopias, no imaginable reason to find and to create transcendence, to ascend toward the light. Eve's legacy to us is the imperative to desire. Babies and poems are born in travail of this desire, her great gift to the loveable world.



'T was a long parting, but the time
For interview had come;
Before the judgment-seat of God,
The last and second time

These fleshless lovers met,
A heaven in a gaze,
A heaven of heavens, the privilege
Of one another's eyes.

No lifetime set on them,
Appareled as the new
Unborn, except they had beheld,
Born everlasting now.

Was bridal e'er like this?
A paradise, the host,
And cherubim and seraphim
The most familiar guest.

Emily Dickinson

Mary's Journal—"Goodbye"

How could it end like this? With so much unfinished between us? We buried you today.

I never believed you would—could—die. You are immortal—I know it! Yet I was there, I saw... your beautiful body cold and lifeless... My Teacher-Lover-Father-Mother-Friend, dead. How is it possible?

I know I will not sleep tonight. This body hurts, the head hurts, the heart hurts. I am exhausted and yet I am full of energy and have to do something. I will do what I most love to do, talk to you.

Remember the little ritual we did on the eve of the Sabbath? We told a childlike story about a forgetful girl and her forgetful father who got into all sorts of calamity and were rescued from peril when they remembered to separate from their troubles and call upon Spirit. "If your need is greater than your want, Spirit will appear and remove all difficulties." And one separates from one's troubles by telling one's story, to Spirit.

To talk to you, to talk to Spirit—it is the same. ...

Life is a mystery, indeed... perhaps because we make it so

...

And tonight is very much like one of those knowing days, where pain is there and deeply felt, and to to be escaped, it is part of living—and it is all right: I am whole. And as I write, vaguely I am aware that it has happened yet once again, you have gone away... irrevocably this time. And that you will not return is absolute. And only when I stop to reconsider what I saw, your lifeless body, your Spirit gone—where?—do I really begin to grasp what has happened.

And your every leaving was painful, and each a precursor of the next, and now I see, of the final, irrevocable leaving. Where are you my love? I know you are immortal... yet I saw—I cannot reconcile what I saw with what I know, so I will leave it be for now.

And this is how I have learned to deal with pain. It is here, I may not like it, but alas, it is here. So leave it be. Over there. I am strong enough to allow it, now. And "she" sits in the corner mourning, and I go on, living.

...

O how strange I am feeling this dark night. One moment I am numb, apparently with no feeling at all, another I am wracked with pain. It seems we are separated irrevocably... you have left me before, and I longed for death to ease the pain. And now death is yours—how is it possible? Irrevocably... what a peculiar word, what strength one must have to comprehend it. And I do... I think...

*Excerpted from "Obsession... The Secret Life of Mary M." © 1993, Loaned to Harmony Workshop for Sophia



But when we met, this strength of mine was but a babe, curled up asleep deep within. What a state I was in! Surely, it was the eleventh hour, for me.

The girl I speak of is gone, she died, I have appeared in her place. Though there was a spark of the current me even then, but O how buried. And yet you saw it there, asleep. You looked past the demons running rampant through this one, you aroused and spoke to the babe and said, "All is well. Walk with me."

Your words, beautiful and straightforward, and always considerate of all aspects of a situation, are sparse. You live your words, you make them rich and real, Spirit acts through the flesh, and therein is Life personified. You are The Word that you speak.

So you peered into me and recognized your own, despite the chaos filling this temple that I am. And eventually you showed me and taught me to overturn and overthrow and dispatch the greedy beggar demons within. You and I together, we purified this temple.

The rumor-mongers snigger about me, too. I know what people say, and despite their untoward malice, their gossip is true!

They say you rid me of seven devils. And you know and I know that this is true, and what they do not see is that they, too, accommodate these same demons, each of them!

I always knew I was possessed, but I never understood why or how or what could be done about it. Until you showed me the way.

...

Little Mary was a precocious child, intelligent and personable, and vitally interested in the world around her. ...

The family was large and always there were people around and she watched them all with great interest and noticed at an early age how miserable they seemed to be. And she saw that their misery was self-imposed, but indulged nonetheless, and she marveled at this and ached over it and vowed someday to make a difference.

And the child grew and developed her intellect, this wondrous and prized "male" gift. And pondered in her heart the unhappiness around her, and the meaning of existence—surely it was not for the sake of misery? ...

The household was more or less religious. All the appropriate phrases were uttered daily and the usual rituals observed and the traditional threats and promises were commonplace in and about the family circle. But this house was not a home—it was a prison wherein hatred abided.

The misery the child observed around her seemed to be encroaching much too closely. And because misery is contagious and infectious and consuming, because her purpose of living was to gain pleasure and escape pain on every level, she succumbed and it penetrated and it hurt and the child became as miserable as everyone else.

Thus was the foundation laid for demons to nest? Or was it made earlier still?

Of course I did not recognize it then, or pretended not to (but in fact had forgotten), but since, you have taught me to see what had happened and how it happened. And O, I cannot blame my parents, nor anyone else, for the decision to allow contamination.

Possession was made possible by me and me alone, from the beginning, allowed by me. And my parents, in the same condition themselves—it was their inheritance, too—merely fostered what I had done, myself.

You told us that the womb seems Paradise compared to the world that follows. At birth we emerge from warm dark safe comfort into a place of noise and cold and hunger and pain. Upon meeting these unpleasant sensations the little one decides with great feeling that the purpose of living is to regain the undisturbed state.

The first of seven devils to appear you call the Master Decision because it is the foundation for living—chosen—from this moment on.

And it is error! Life is so much more than gaining pleasure and escaping pain! Why, that is the way of the beasts! Human life is a glorious opportunity to experience the development of talents, to reach for the stars in the name of God. Instead we narrow in on what are properly just by-products of the great privilege of experience in this realm—attention, approval, feeling needed, being rejected or ignored, feeling useless—and thus the foundation is laid.

So little Mary, like her people before here, doomed herself by inviting that snake into her garden of Awareness, a snake that told her that whatever she liked was good and to be sought, whatever she disliked was evil and to be avoided and this lie was the purpose of living.

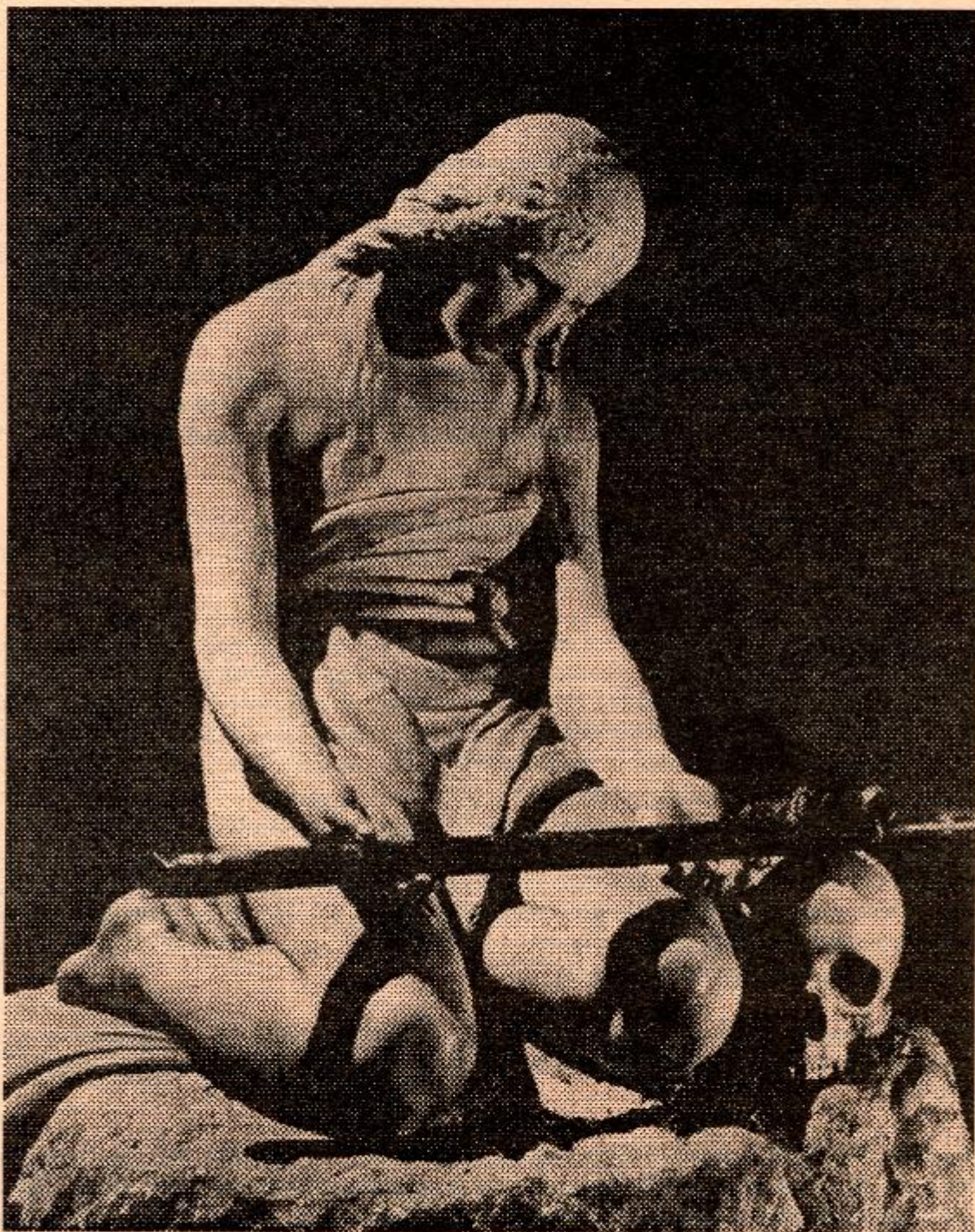
Her environment of hatred and chaos encouraged its taking hold and this weed rooted in her heart. She made six more decisions in order to facilitate—she thought—her insatiability for pleasure and abhorrence of pain.

Mary and every little baby before and since learned first to complain to get her way and when this did not work she demanded her entitlements. And one day her mother had had enough of this and punished her. And she learned that being pleasing and obedient were perhaps better methods of getting her way, surely she would be more likely to escape discomfort with a smile rather than a scowl. But to please when one wants to complain and to obey when one wants one's presumed rights—now!—created still another most unpleasant and disturbing condition: conflict. And to ease this frustration, this internal war, she folded up into guilt. If she were not such a bad and hateful girl, if she would just do what she were told, improve herself, not act out her feelings, everything would be all right. And when this cold shriveling self-destructive pose became just too much to bear, the heat of blame took over. Blame and rage toward everyone and everything for her condition.

And so the Master Decision fearful greed was accompanied by his six henchmen and Mary was, indeed, possessed by seven devils. And this Papa's girl daughter of a witch lived in hell.

I remember as a child, sitting often, alone, gazing at the sky just certain God had abandoned his creation. No God I could conceive of would permit such misery. That the universe was not made by man, obviously, implied a God. But surely he had turned his back on his handiwork and left us to our own devices.

Abandonment and betrayal are my earliest memories of deep feeling. And I began to search for answers. Why did God leave? What could be done about this? Even then I was convinced there was a solution, and became determined to find it. And despite the chaos of years living under the control of entities not really my own but claiming to be me, something within never ceased seeking the "solution" to the great mystery—until I found you... Or did you find me?



Looking back with the wisdom that only years of experience and Work can bring, I see that our second meeting as a perfect symbol of what you taught: Let go. Only an empty cup can be filled.

The multitude was vibrant. I sat quietly and watched, and I watched. You were so full of Life! Tall and handsome and golden and so confident and, especially, radiant. Most remarkable were your eyes! Deep and brilliant and the most penetrating eyes I have ever seen—or felt.

O God! How can it be? Those eyes closed now, forever gone? The light—gone?—where?! Impossible, utterly impossible that your light should—could—dispel! Where are you my love? O darling magnificent man, love of my life, mirror of myself, salvation of my soul, beloved lover who made me whole! Where are you! Call my name—touch me now! I shall never bear this loss!

This wrenching feeling is a cacophonous echo of times past... you have abandoned me before. This pain is so familiar—is it my companion? How many times need I endure this? Will it never end? Is this the last time—are you really, finally, irrevocably gone? Or is this pain just continuous, the texture of my life, merely more defined one day than another?

Or where are you Love? I cannot accept that you will not return to fill me... once again... Where are you? I need you!

And I sit here bathed in tears and infinite pain and longing, longing.

To try to gain control—O, I must be strong—the demons feast on misery—I must take charge and banish them... I hear the grating flapping of their scaly wings stirring in the rafters—circling overhead—how they relish your death! And what it is doing to me! I must take charge—to feed them now would be to mock you and everything you stood for—lived for—and taught me.

As much as I love you and would love to have you here to comfort me, I know I no longer need you, everything I need is within. I need only summon It.

So all right, I will... I Will—to calm down and continue my chronicle of our life. I will take charge and let my suffering be subdued. It is there and will remain, allowed to be, but in its place—there and not here. Yes, I shall put it over there—pathetic abandoned little Mary can weep there in the corner, weep for her loss, while I sit here and try to express my boundless joy for all that I have gained.

And so. Yes, you spoke to the crowd with majesty, you were a living demonstration of your every word. And the group, that second time, and every time, always, was rapt and reflecting your love. You always set the tone and weak little puppies we gathered round and wagged our tails and loved you because you loved us.

We had met but once before, and it was all business—well, almost. I had listened to your words and was overjoyed as they—and you—broke the spell of my mad desperation. I knew I had found what I had sought all those miserable years.

And I listened carefully and made many notes, always the little intellectual, so proud of this—had I but known, then, what a hindrance is the intellect in Spiritual understanding, unless seen as merely the tool that it is... You never preached. You described What Is, and welcomed our responses. By now I was fairly educated—I thought!—and tried to compare some things that you taught with some things that I had read and heard.

I recited to you a little litany from my notes, questioning this and that, and trying to tie in the new with the old.

You weren't having it. "Be thankful for what you already do know ... and then perhaps more knowledge will come."

This unexpected and rather odd retort surprised me. And you were teaching me even then... so much, and I did not realize. Greed for the lofty object of knowledge is but greed, after all.

...

Patience. You told me the foundation of conscious living is a three-legged stool: repentance, service, and patience.

Brighter than average, pushy Mary had had little use for patience. Lots of things came easily to her, and others she just took.

And here was a man who was not for the taking and who was teaching her this alien attribute, patience.

I have learned so much since those early days, and now, at last, I do indeed have patience. But it did not come easily, and I earned it.

Is patience some kind of discipline or punishment or mortification? No. Well, yes and no. The demon-controlled Awareness, the false self made of greed to gain and escape, has no patience, and the practice of it will go a long way toward mortifying demons. Yes, they wither and die in the calm climate of patience.

But in reality—the demon world is not reality, it is illusion—in reality patience results from the understanding of the way things work, understanding holy universal law.

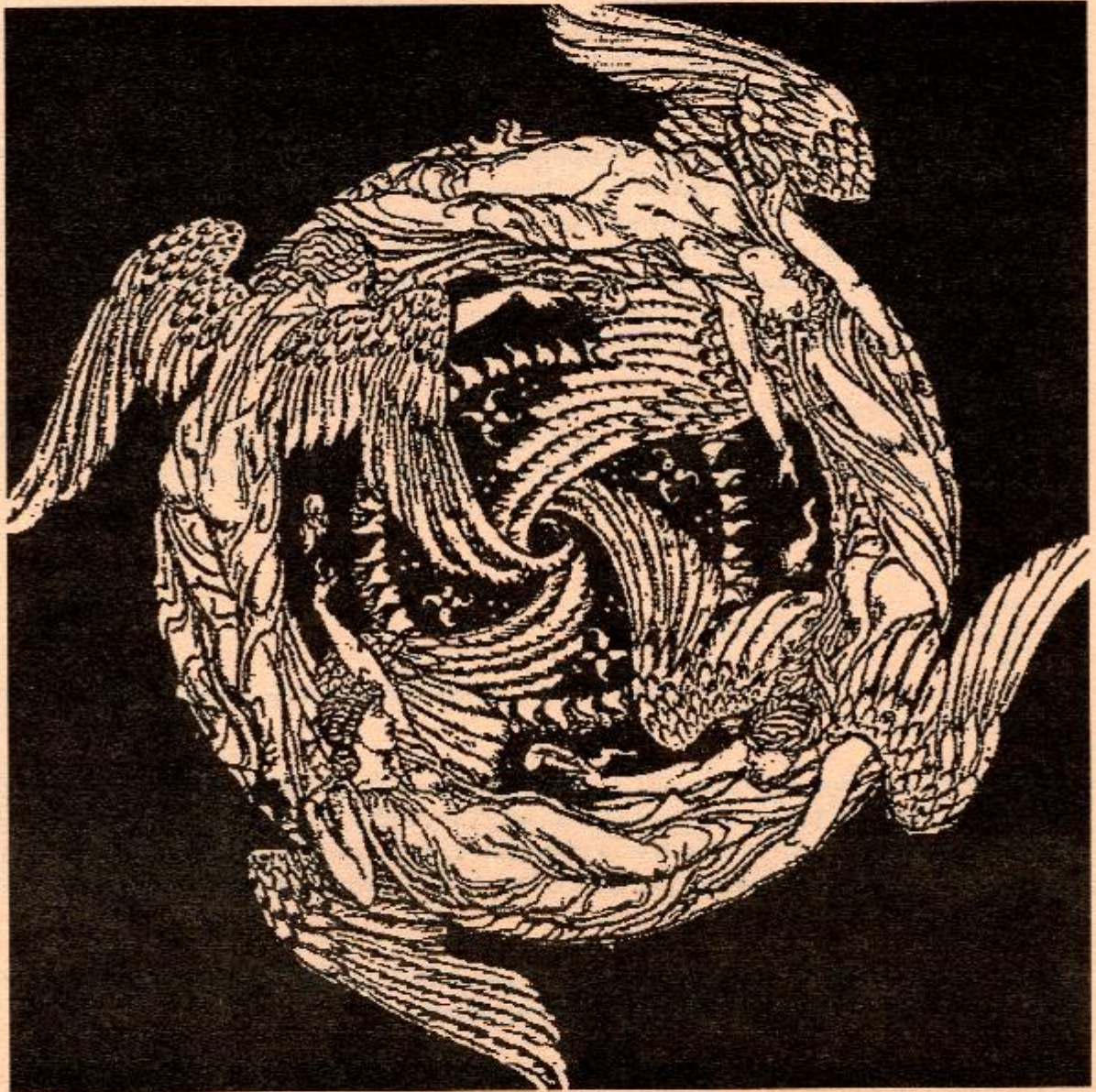
All things are the result of process. A process of four forces working together.

How you made order out of chaos with this Teaching! You showed us the incredible harmony in all creation. Our world is the unending dance of the four great forces, working together always and everywhere.

First there is Initiative, the Master, leading the dance. Spirit, the idea—Intelligence—the penetrator and inseminator, masculine. It goes forth with the Will to create.

The great Second Force is Resistance—matter, large and heavy, dense, and physical, the receiver, a force that shapes and molds First Force, and is feminine. (And this is where the demons act, if we let them.) Resistance arises, in dancing embrace, always, to oppose Initiative, providing the tension needed for First Force to manifest.

First and Second Forces dance together in nearly equal strength and power, and they



beckon and retreat and advance and mingle and Work together, and out of this tension Form is born, in time. Spirit subdues Matter and ennobles it, expressing Its Idea in manifestation. This Third Force, Form, may be something we can see and touch and feel, and it may be a slightly less tangible Event.

And the Fourth great Force is the Result of the creative event which produced the Form and the use of Form, something to respond to.

What magnificent and mysterious beauty! The starlight of the four great forces illumines all, it is everywhere, if we but have eyes to see.

And when one has eyes to see, one looks for the four forces, one lives in awe of their dance in every corner of creation, and one understands, at last, union, forming, creation, takes time. One is patient.

And the mastery of Patience is a stepping stone to another great Secret... Patience is Power. Patience is a method of increasing one's strength... perhaps infinitely... Because the tension one experiences between First Force, one's intention, what one wills to do, and Second Force, what one's body wants to have, to gain or escape, when consciously experienced (this is conscious tension rather than unconscious frustration conflict), when allowed, creates great strength. The kind of strength it takes to move mountains—and life here is so very full of mountains to move...

Did I cajole myself into a patient condition? No, I merely saw what is. And it takes a bit of looking, and remembering to look, and it takes considerable time, and even this is a demonstration of these four great forces. I live it every day of my life.

...

Where are you my love?

I haven't slept for two days. It will be another dawn in a little while, another day without you.

I started this recounting of our life together as a kind of necessary distraction from the incredible shock of losing you, not just again, but finally, irrevocably. And in our little Sabbath eve story-telling ritual, it is imperative one's story be told objectively, this is the proper function of Awareness, this is my duty. I seem for the moment to have lost any objectivity. Forgive me...

And I just read it all, our story, and I am astounded at the dramatic way I view my life—it is almost embarrassing, all this high drama.

Is this the Mary who was always so proud that she could hide her feelings, the Mary who smugly thought she could overcome and deny feeling, who learned not to cry on demand for her father, dismissed her wretched mother, Mary who thought she could traipse through life in the ivory tower of her intellect, analyzing everything and feeling nothing?

Yes, it is, and she is more than this. This is my life and every word is true and that, and more, is what I am.

As I poured out my little story, I realized with what great depth I feel everything, despite my denial, and how it all, all of this deep feeling, was misplaced, all these many years.



Feeling is our function, it is our prayer, our means of communication with Spirit. And to deny it is folly. But the center of my feeling was my self, my small presumptuous false self directed by demons, and not the Soul. The Soul is not interested in getting and having and consuming and hoarding and escaping pain at the price of missed and denied experience—the Soul is a servant, the handmaiden of the Lord.

Her feeling is deep and true and compassionate and interested only in loving Life, in living with Intelligence. And if pain is part of this, it matters not. And there is so much to do!

And now you are gone. How can this possibly be? Is there a God in heaven, that you should be forced from this realm of sorrows where you are so sorely needed? Where greed and lust and fear predominate and strive to suck the Life out of the world? Where only someone one-in-himself, a real man, can make a difference? O where are you Love?

It is not unfinished between us, as I said in the beginning; I would say that your Initiative with me is finished, it is complete. The seed that was planted here is firmly rooted, now, and it is up to me to nurture it, and to let it grow and develop, and to bloom.

And now, at long last, I understand you, certainly not completely, this I never will, but I understand you better.

I understand that what I sometimes took for aloofness was in fact your refusal to join the noise of demons; that the only Love you know, and the Love you live, is generated to enhance Life, not to grasp it. To enhance and nurture and gently guide and form, true androgynous expression of Spirit, Father-Mother-Teacher-Lover-Friend, interested only in contributing to Life, with Love and Intelligence.

...

So it is dawn, and we are blessed with a beautiful sunrise. This usually would arouse me and gladden me and verify the hope in my heart that my purpose will be fulfilled. But today I do not feel those things. I feel numb, and sad, and yes, unbelieving still, that you could die.

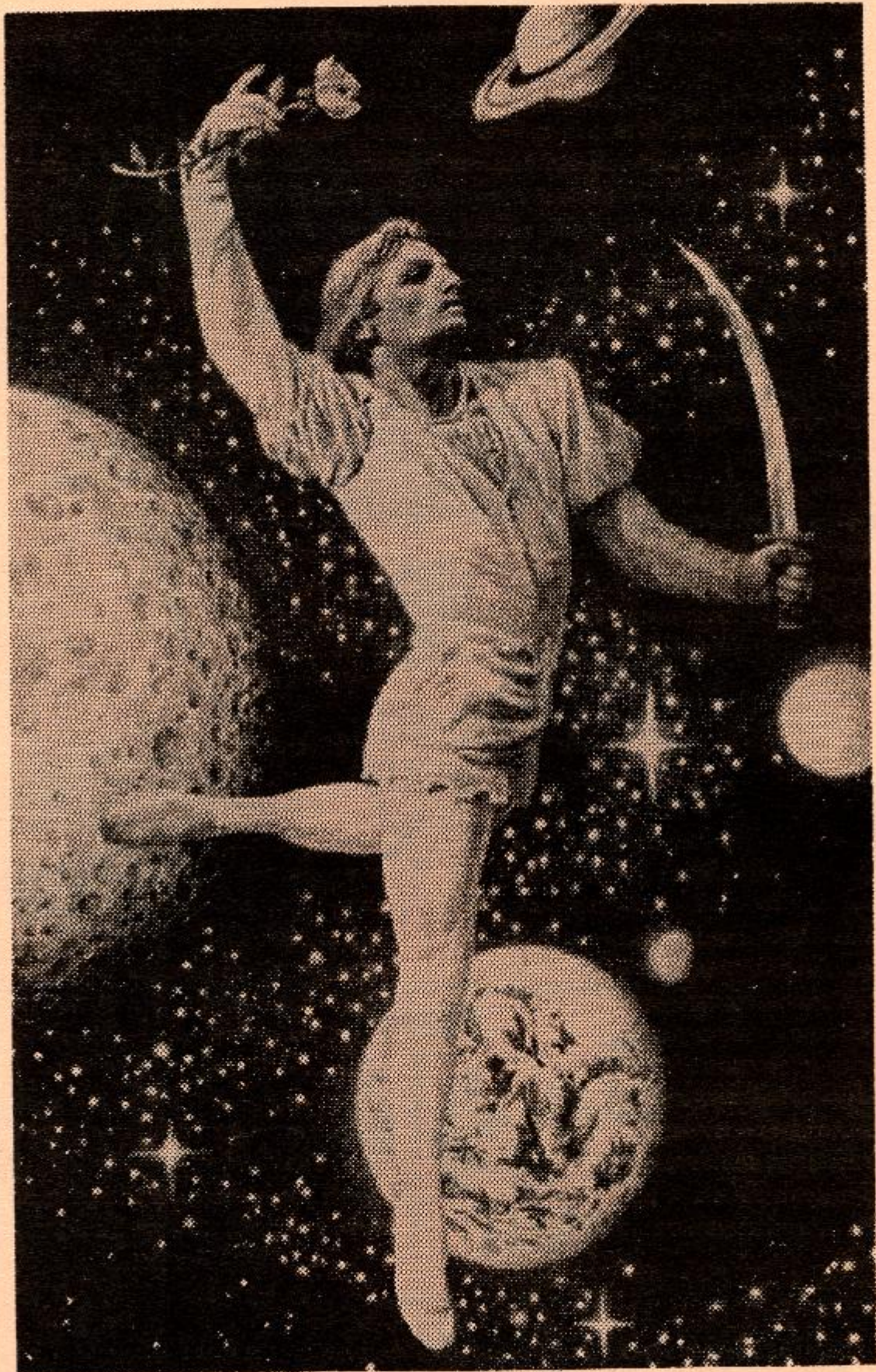
I guess I have finished our story... It turned out to be my story, not yours at all. Though I suspect, now, that it is considerable, I will never really know what influence I had on your life, you played your various chosen roles so perfectly that if ever you heard a demon try to seduce you, I am not aware of when. If you ever wavered a moment, or felt sick at heart, I do not know.

All I know is that you made every action of your life a demonstration of Spiritual Truth, a pattern for mankind, that anyone could follow, if he but had eyes to see and ears to hear.

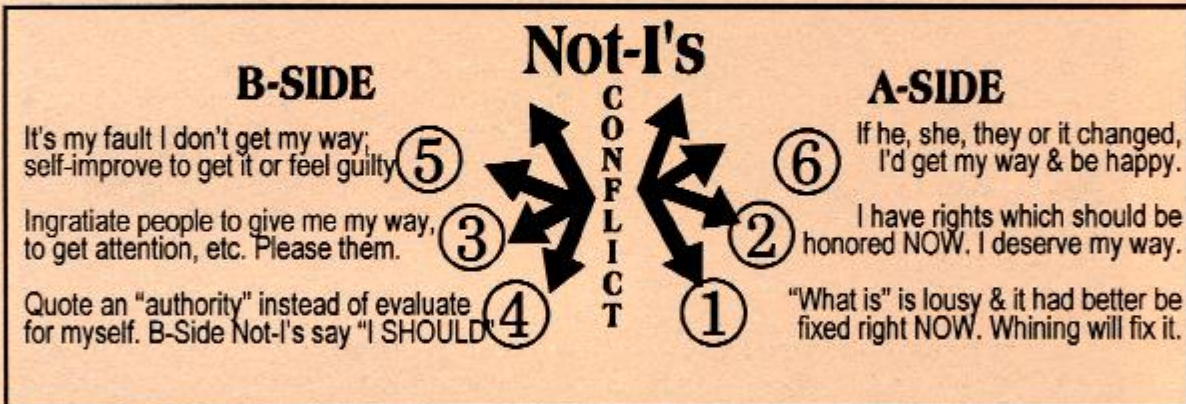
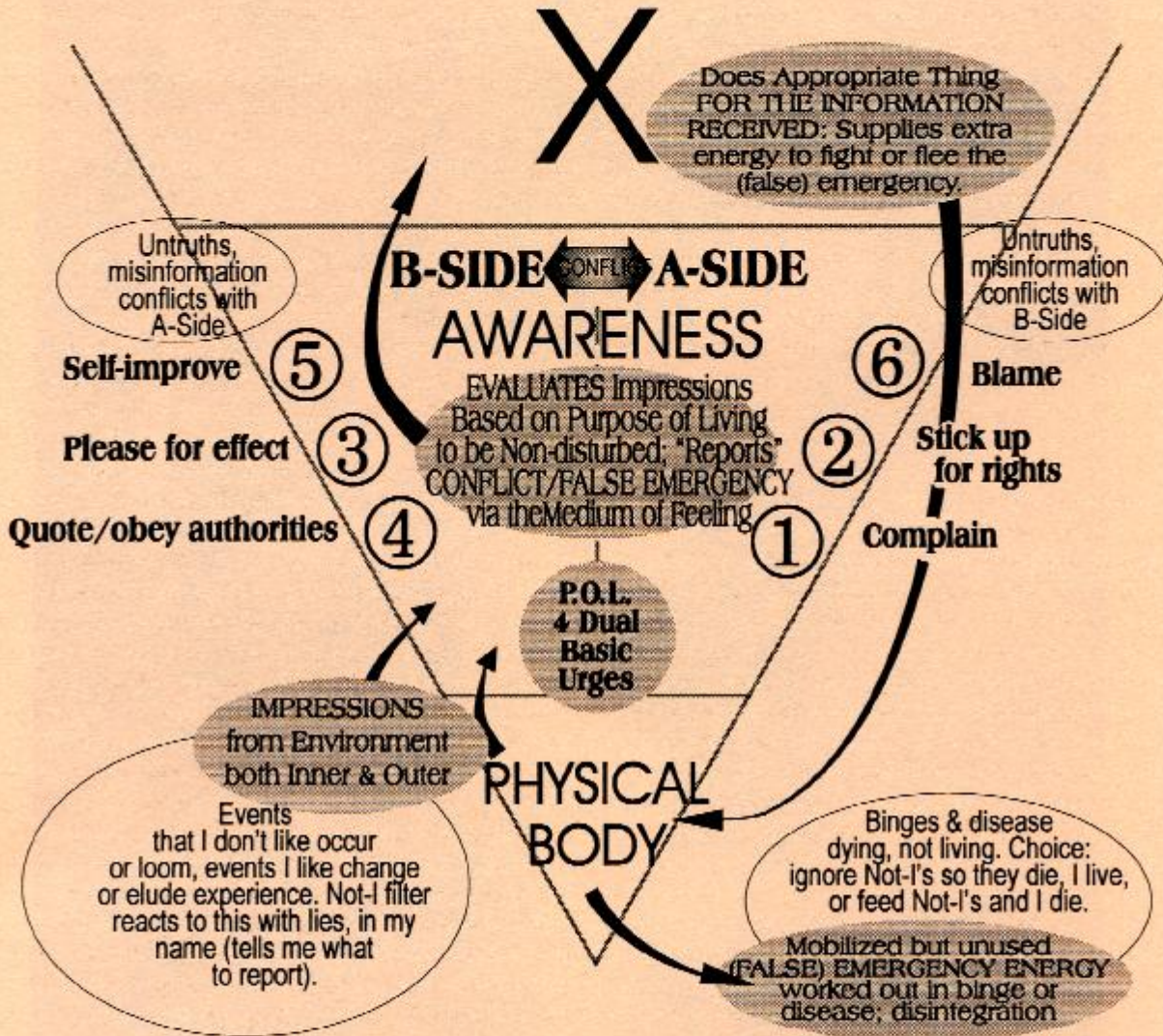
So on this glorious sunny morning full of promise and full of loss, I suppose I will go now to your tomb, and see if somehow I can adjust to what has happened, and perhaps feel your presence, although I know in my heart of hearts the grave cannot hold you.

So I will go and try to commune with you, and failing that, commune with Spirit. It is the same.





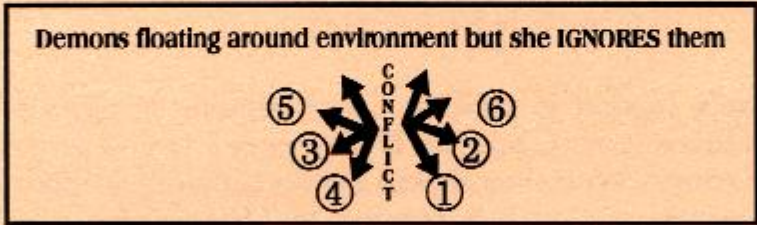
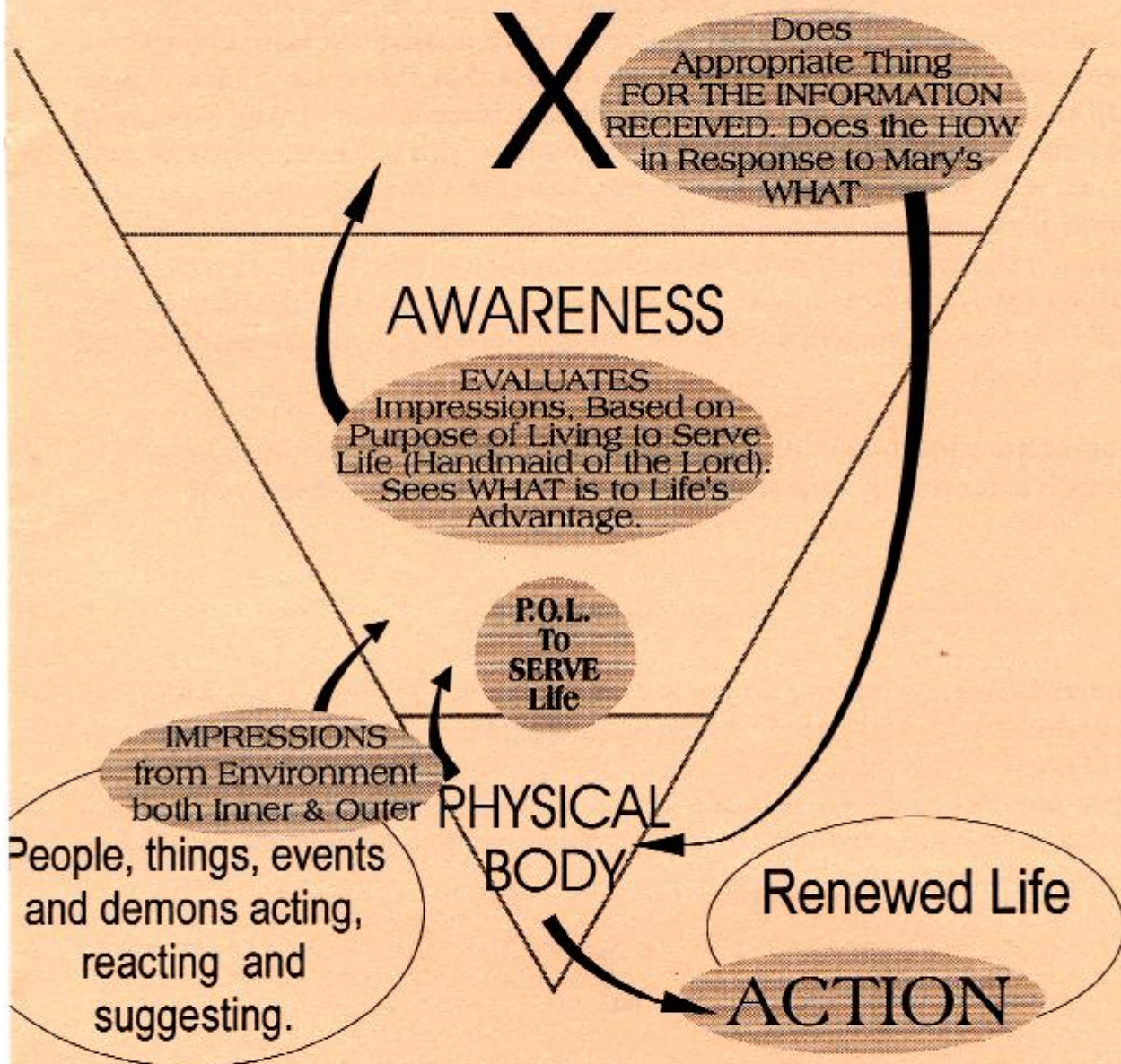
Mary with 7 Devils (Picture of Conditioned Man)



The Master Decision that the whole Purpose of Living is to be Non-disturbed is the FATHER OF LIES. His babies, the six Not-I henchmen and all their variations, are more lies. Reporting lies to Spirit is reporting war; Spirit supplies emergency energy which must be used up in either binge or disease, death-actions. We must die to the Not-I (which really means let the Not-I die) in order to renew LIFE.

Mary (Awareness) Purified of 7 Devils, Renited with her Beloved

(Picture of Man)



Thank You...

For your patience... this issue of *Sophia, Wise Woman's Journal* is very late, due to many things, not the least of which was tyrannical new computer software. I've come up with a plan to get caught up in an expedient manner. The original concept was to publish six issues of sixteen pages, one every other month. You may notice that this issue is much larger than that standard—I am combining the last three issues of your remaining subscription into two issues, this and one more, with a few extra pages as well. So you will receive a total of five issues, but with more pages than originally planned. At renewal time, I will be able to drop the price from \$30 to \$25 if I maintain the quarterly format rather than the bi-monthly. Production time and mailing costs will be reduced a little bit, which I can pass on to you this way. And it is hoped this will enable me to send *Sophia* in a timely manner, and stay on track.

I appreciate your support of this experimental Journal. Please continue to keep in touch regarding it, your suggestions are very welcome. Thank you!

Illustration Credits

Cover: Giovanni Bellini; Pages 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 21: William Blake; Page 15: Georges de la Tour; Page 18: Antonio Canova; Page 23: Edmund Dulac; Page 25: David Wilgus, from "The Jewel of Life" by Anna Kirwan-Vogel (Harcourt Brace Janovich) a delightful fable for older children about the lessons a young boy learns in his apprenticeship with an old alchemist. A Harmony Workshop men's book group past selection.



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