

Flesh Off the Bone

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First printing

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edited by Susan Marie Scavo

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Dedication

To the girl inside of us who made it possible
for us to find each
other from life to life. The journey to
self-discovery for all of us
leads us through to this very girl.

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FLESH OFF THE BONE

BY CHRISTA LANCASTER
& MARC BREGMAN

EDITED BY SUSAN MARIE SCAVO



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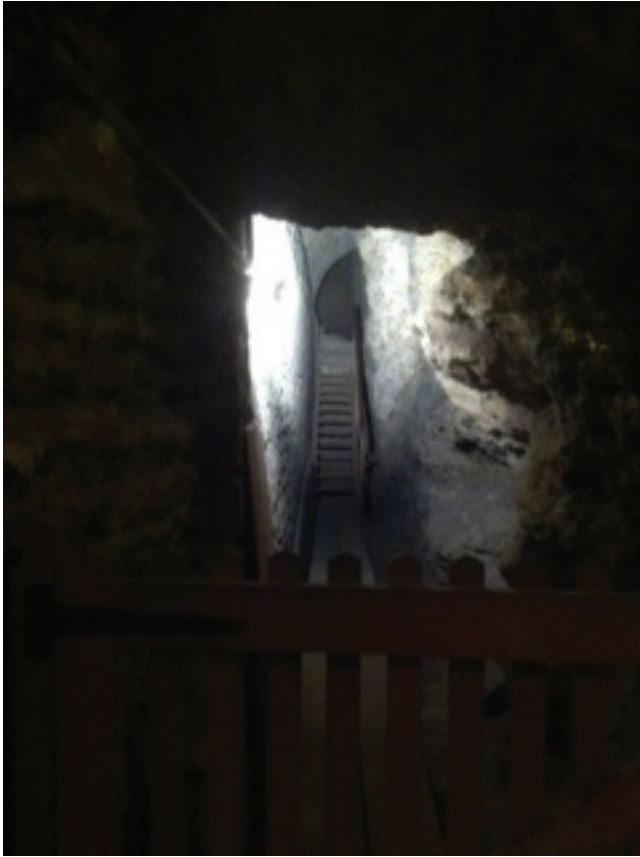


Photo by Marc Bregman

Looking into the crypt at Chartres Cathedral.

In the sensuality of the dream, the healing is no longer even about the dream. As the humans we are, we become the vessel for the love, the carriers of the light. The dreams bring us into the sensual experience of love: warm, human, holding, skin to skin, flesh to flesh, breath to breath, heart to heart, with a white star bursting in the center of our bodies, one heart, one love, one molten rock burst into flames.

- Christa Lancaster from *Dreaming Metaphysical*

Introduction

Who is this
Rising from the wilderness, the desert,
Leaning on her beloved?

From Song of Songs 8:5

Opening to Mary, Opening to the Girl



Christa

The stories Marc and I tell here are about the descent through dreams into the caverns of deeply buried trauma. It is our purpose to show how we, in our individual ways, chose to heed the call of deep healing dreams and open up to the realms of great pain and terror.

Why would we embark on such a task? Is not the material of the present lifetime enough to work with? Why would anyone choose to entertain the possibility of past life trauma?

Quite simply, what is the point of delving into another life's hurts and horrors?

Two years ago, I might well have agreed. True, I did have a regressive dream of a charred baby back in 2004. At the time, the dream provoked a descent into a cycle of healing which I connected to having known a great love and suffered a profound loss of this true love as well as the loss of my entire village.

I had no context for this loss, simply that I felt the truth of this knowledge in the marrow of my bones. I went through waves of this loss, which I managed to project onto a man I was involved with at the time, a man I thought was my true love but turned out not to be.

At other times, I felt the loss in a pure way, opened up by events like my old dog Ajax dying, the neighbors cutting down a hedge, children growing up and leaving, my marriage falling apart. The events in the present were a portal to an ancient loss.

This I knew and trusted. I have trained myself to take the opportunity of a present moment rupture, recognize it as unrelated to the trigger, and let it take me down the chute to a chamber inside me where both pain and love dwell. I have become practiced at dropping beneath the lip of the tunnel, letting go of the safety hand holds and falling deeper in. Letting go of the present moment trigger, relinquishing the need to be right or to blame and letting go into deeper and deeper layers of sorrow and grief.

Marc and I travel to New York City to visit my family. It is one of the first trips we have taken to see them since we have gotten together as lovers. Marc and I have known each other for over twenty years, first as client and therapist, then as partners founding and growing an organization based on Archetypal Dreamwork, North of Eden.

We came together as partners not just in the organization but in love as well after Marc's second marriage fell apart. It has been less than a year since our coming together, but something has opened in me – a memory that, when I spoke it, was echoed in Marc's memory. It was that we had once been together, in a previous life, and that we had lost each other. A village destroyed and Marc killed.

On the way to New York, I am taken over by an impulse to go to France. My impulse comes out of a felt sense of the feminine face of God that awoke also in the early 1200s in the Languedoc area of France. I feel drawn to go to this area and

see what else happens. I do not know what to expect. We are simply following the impulse.

I begin to talk about what this trip means to me and the deep feeling I have had about Magdalene all my adult life and how much I am drawn to France. How Mary was perhaps the beloved wife and partner of Jesus. I edge in a little deeper, speaking of the Cathars and how Archetypal Dreamwork shares similarities with this fringe group of free thinkers. The feminine consciousness has been emerging in a core group of North of Eden dreamers.

In New York City, I have a dream:

I am on the road at night in a landscape I do not know, traveling with my son Gabriel, my black Labrador Flora, my stepdaughter Elisa and my New Yorker niece Natasha. We take some wrong turns through the woods. I think I will buy a map at the next gas station.

We arrive at a house. Both Bob and Jeremiah, dreamwork teachers and musicians whose music is about their dreams, are there already. Bob is being very funny, rather outrageous in a goofy way.

I remember that a week ago I gave birth to a baby girl whose name is Anne (my middle name is Anne), and she is now ready for me to go and pick up. I remark how it has been great to be able to sleep for a week after childbirth because now I will be able to handle the physical demands of a new baby and, apparently, a new puppy who is already there, running around.

The kids are really excited to meet the new baby girl.

The baby girl is another feeling level of the feminine consciousness that is being born, that connects with Mary Magdalene and her

lineage, her blood line, in which runs the consciousness of the cosmic Christos.

Mary Magdalene, the missing half of the story, the feminine face of God incarnated. How this consciousness flowered and then was wiped out in early thirteenth-century southwestern France.

In the thirteenth century, when the pope aligned with the king of France, he instituted the beginning of the Inquisition with what is known as the Albigensian Crusades, a series of slaughters of men, women and children that began in 1209 and culminated in the siege of Montségur in 1244. Those rounded up and killed were Cathars, members of a religious sect found heretical by the Church of Rome.

Cathars practiced a form of Gnosticism, advocating for a direct experience of the Divine and rejecting the power structure of the church. I have been reading different versions of the relationship between these thirteenth-century Gnostics and the consciousness of Mary Magdalene. This consciousness runs deep in the stories, poetry, music and architecture of the Languedoc region where the Cathars lived centuries after she would have lived and died in that landscape.

I am absolutely galvanized by our plans to go to France. I want to feel into the landscape of the Languedoc. I want to sit in Chartres and feel the essence of Mary that lives there in the catacombs beneath the cathedral, the ones dedicated to the Black Madonna. I want to be in the light of the rose windows.

I want to sit on the hill where the last Cathars held out against the forces of the Inquisition until finally they surrendered and died in flames in the town below. I want to face into all of it and discover what else there is to be revealed. I do not know. I want to know.

I want to follow the thread of my desire. I want to keep saying yes to the knowing in me that is feminine, that was suppressed in another time and place, for which I may have

perished, for which others did perish. I want to keep facing into the terror and grief, the waves that rise and fall in me. I want to go beyond the hell of the Inquisition to find out what might happen now.

Section I

A garden shut is my sister, my bride,
a spring shut, a fountain sealed.

From Song of Songs 4:12

Peter said to Mary, *Sister we know that the Savior loved you more than the rest of woman. Tell us the words of the Savior which you remember which you know, but we do not, nor have we heard them.*

Mary answered and said, *What is hidden from you I will proclaim to you.*

And she began to speak to them these words: *I, she said, I saw the Lord in a vision and I said to Him, Lord I saw you today in a vision. He answered and said to me, Blessed are you that you did not waver at the sight of Me.*

from *The Gospel of Mary*



Jesus said, When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you dwell in poverty, and you are poverty.

from *The Gospel of Thomas*

Moving through Past Life Trauma



What happens when a past life trauma is reconfigured in this lifetime in relationship with our present memories and experiences, which really just hold a conscious place for the memories we have brought in from the past?

These memories from the past are reinforced by what happens in this life. Instead of looking at them as something historical and part of our trauma to work through, we actually avoid the memories and the trauma altogether. Then, of course, by avoiding them, we recreate them.

In other words, by avoiding the past, we recreate the past through innate projections and reactions that arise in response to the suffering of the past. We create a theatrical reality in which we are living our past. All the people in it may, at one level or another, be the kinds of people we knew in the past or not; it does not matter. We end up living in a cage or a prison of the past.

This is what trauma does. It convinces us that the past is the present, that it is happening now. If terrible things happened in the past, then they are replicated in the present.

People who were spiritually open to the Divine in a Gnostic way (in the sense of having a personal knowing of

the Divine) are all reliving the rejection and the suffering they experienced in their past lives. This cripples them in this life around manifesting their desire and passion for the Divine again, even though there is no threat.

This is why the best way to destroy a soul is not just to kill the person, but to damage her in such a way that when she is reborn, she is devastated – burn her at the stake, torture her, make her sign confessions against her true beliefs. It is better for those wanting to destroy another’s soul to create a situation in which a person turns against God, in which he becomes angry that he was not protected by God. The result is that when he wakes up in the next life, he wakes up with rage or fear or shame. He wakes up with all the pain.

When we have been devastated in this way, we are not likely to stand up again because we are carrying the past and all the terrible things that happened. There may even be an opening to something wonderful in the world for us, but the pathology keeps us in the past so that possibility does not happen.

The process of healing is about breaking the hold of the trauma, not just feeling the pain of it. This is why fear arises when we work on these traumas. We are scared because something terrible caused the pain. This is trauma fear.

The question becomes, Are we willing to stand up to fear, to stand in the fear? It is a difficult question. Standing in that fear means feeling it; it means allowing our passion to drive us through the fear that if we stand up, bad things will happen. Standing in that fear means doing it anyway; it means moving through the fear.

If when we discovered our soul’s purpose before, in a previous life, we were tortured, tormented, confronted in some negative way, then when we come to the same moment in this life, we may not want to move forward. The soul will want to move forward, but we will not. This is what pathology counts on, that we will be frozen, not just in this life, but for eternity.

Our dreams give us the opportunity inside to face that fear, but then, invariably, there will be something in the outer world that we have to do to again face that fear. This is the congruency between the trauma and an external situation. When we bring those together and actually move through, something begins to exteriorize from our souls.

The soul does not want to live just inside of us; it wants to live inside of us into the world.

A Conversation about Dreams and Relationship



Marc and Christa

Marc

When we look at dreams, everything is about relationship. Whether a figure is a demon or an Archetype, the dreams are always about relationship with something else. Everything is reflected through where we are in our evolution in relationship to others, so we do not get lost in our own narcissism or isolation.

And yet, we do not live our lives in this way, learning from others.

Christa

We do not take advantage of the opportunity of relationship to grow, to use the relationship as a mirror to see our own deficiency; to be honest, to see life as a way to learn to become more honest and true to ourselves.

Instead, we use relationship to play out the game of pathology, revolving around the distortions rather than the clarity of who we are. We can use relationship as a way to avoid our true selves.

Marc

Dreams, however, do not do that. There are many teachers and

leaders in the world who have two edges. They have what they show and teach in the world, what they want us to see, and then they have who they truly are, what they do not have in their lives externally.

This is because whatever we lack in the world is what we probably lack in relationship with the Divine. What we are really afraid of is being exposed at the core of our need because of our hurt.

Christa

Some terrible hurt we have suffered and resolved never to feel again.

Marc

This is the projection. Internally, we need our pain; we need our desire and pain to have the love.

In your journey, Christa, the more you felt your pain, the more you could acknowledge your yearning which is your interior Mary, like Mary Magdalene as the beloved wife of Christ. Without that pain, there is no yearning. There is no love.

Christa

It is a question of which comes first. Sometimes the yearning comes first. We become aware of our yearning. To go deeper, the yearning then opens up to the pain. Many people will jump back away from the pain at that moment, staying in the unresolved unrequited place.

Marc

Underneath all of this is not just pathology but the whole issue of necessity. There has to be pain to have yearning. Even when we are requited in our love, even when we drink from the love, we have to go back into pain. We have to feel it again.

Christa

And again and again. Pain is part of love.

Marc

If I bring my pain to impoverishment and then project, then I do not have enough in the world. But if I bring the pain to a place where I have plenty, then it is not about having something in the world. It is a different kind of pain. It is the pain of having something. It is the pain of having Him.

Mary had the pain of having her beloved Christ and then not having him. We can have both things at the same time – we can have the love and also have the pain. At this level, perhaps unrequited love does not exist. It is just the pain of love. This is the bottom. The moment of exquisite joy is the moment of exquisite pain. We cannot know love and joy without loss. They go hand in hand. If I can hold on to my pain, then I can love you.

If I forget my pain . . .

Christa

. . . then something closes . . .

Marc

. . . and I then do not have the love. Of course, underneath is all the trauma, the loss, the suffering. We would think it gets better. It does get better, but it is still excruciating.

Christa

Great openness to love and great openness to pain.

Marc

And fulfillment is part of those things. Fulfillment includes pain.

The Underlying River



There is an underlying river that links one soul to another. At some point we remember – “Oh, this is what I am and this is what I have been.” Even if we forget, our lives always come back to this moment where we can recognize the true intention of the soul.

The soul does have an intention of where our lives should go; everything in the world is trying to interrupt that journey. It is part of the big conspiracy of the pathology. If we never remember, we will never get back and the child self just sits there, waiting not only to be rediscovered, but to take its life journey in this world.

We get sidetracked. It is so easy to get lost. Having never known who we really are, what are the odds that we are going to discover ourselves before we get caught up in distractions that become all consuming, that become an entire lifetime? When we get caught up in the distractions, we arrive at the end of our lives and we do not know what happened.

When we return back to our souls and are our souls, we realize how far away from ourselves we have been. We can arrive at a place where we can begin our journey, moving forward to follow or to be swept up in the river where we can evolve. This is not just about evolving to the point of doing what He wants us

to do, but about evolving ourselves and changing for the future, living in the place of soul development, soul connection.

Otherwise, we are not really making ourselves better; we are just lost at the deepest levels. When we care about things getting better, we do work at some edge of our psyches, of course. But to be in the water, moving down that river, rather than sitting in an eddy – that is where the dream wants us to be and where the dream takes us.

Discovering Jung on St. Barthélemy



Christa

I came to the French West Indian island of St. Barthélemy with my family when I was twenty-four years old. Yesterday, Marc and I flew from Vermont on three planes to arrive on this same small volcanic island of many hills, bays and glorious French food. Our last plane was a little twelve-seat prop plane piloted by delightfully *dégagé* Frenchmen. As we left the mainland of St. Maarten, I began to tell Marc about the significance of the island of St. Barths for me.

This is what I told him: I came to the island at a crossroads in my young adulthood. I had just met my first husband Addison in the spring of 1981 in New York City at a dance club called The Mudd Club, downtown on White Street. I left him behind in New York to travel with my parents and siblings for the Christmas holidays on the island of St. Barths.

I did not know that I would return to Addison, and one month after my birthday on the island, that we would conceive a child who would change the course of my life. I did not know what I was doing. I had left my first love, left college and was working at a magazine called *Colonial Homes* as an editorial assistant. It was the era just before the computer age, so my job

entailed writing endless responses to readers' questions on an electric typewriter.

Addison was an artist, lived downtown in a loft between Hester and Grand on the Bowery. He was passionate about painting and ideas. He was poor and ate tofu and rice with lemon juice. He had a rabbit named Hudson who leapt around the loft, amongst the paints. On the walls were his large paintings related to the image of a triangle.

I did not know what I was doing or who I was. Addison was driven by his desire to paint and live an engaged life. I was drawn to the passion in him that I did not then know in myself. I had studied art history because I was too intimidated to make art. I had run away from my art-making self at Brown University, where I spent my first year in America. I was born in Bermuda, an island girl, and then had gone to boarding school in England. I did what I was driven to do, becoming involved with a man with a mission, being too scared at that age to ask myself what my own mission might be.

Many years later, at the North of Eden Retreat Center, we enacted a scene from the collective past of a number of North of Eden members, related to the Cathar sect in thirteenth-century southwestern France. In the play, which we improvised by pulling together many dreams from many people, we reenacted the story of our leader, my husband Marc, being led away to his death, perhaps by hanging or guillotine. After he died, the members of the Cathar inner circle were dispersed or killed. I was left desolate and in shock. Into my devastation a nobleman arrived, played by friend and colleague Robin Chase. A powerful political figure, he wooed me, offering political protection and supposed sanctuary. After instinctively recoiling from him, I accepted his hand. I sold my soul to a powerful man behind whom I could hide. Traumatized by the losses of love and comrades, I gave myself away to a man of worldly notions and power. I locked into a recurring pattern of hiding behind

powerful men with whom I could be safely subservient.

I came to St. Barths almost thirty years ago when there were only a handful of hotels. I remember drinking coffee with my younger brother Guy on the terrace of a rundown hippie hotel called Eden Roc. It was a January afternoon, with a soft wind blowing the clouds away to reveal an almost translucent pale blue sky. He had a copy of Carl Jung's memoir, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, which he said, in his typically generous way, that I could have. Today, it is on the top shelf of my bookshelves at home, inscribed in pencil, on the first page, with the words: *St Barths, January 1982*. On the island I read and reread Carl's story of his evolution through dreams.

My own journey through dreams began then, in St Barths, on that January day. Only six years later, in May of 1988, I would find my way to Marc's door and begin my serious study of the intentionality of the dream through my analysis with him.

I was frozen in St Barths almost thirty years ago.

Now I am not. I did not know then I was living in a posttraumatic state of paralyzing terror. I could not love or feel another's love. Addison tried to love me. I could not open. Becoming pregnant forced me to live in my body. I could not feel love and I did not know how scared I was. So far from my body and my fear, I could not respond to Addison's rage. I lived instead under its threat.

When I met Marc, I noticed a man behind a large, very solid oak desk with dark glasses. I imagine I was a little scared of him. Over time, I trusted him, the first man I truly trusted.

He stayed on his side of that desk for many years, our relationship circumscribed to the therapy that grew into a partnership around bringing the work out into the world. I came to Marc with an eternity of terror locked into my molecules and organs. I did not know why.

The Fisher King: Healing the Feminine and the Masculine



In many versions of the myth of the Holy Grail and the Fisher King, the Fisher King is wounded in his thigh, which is usually a metaphor for the genitals. The wounded Fisher King is only healed when his feminine counterpart is found and they are reunited. When this happens and they are reunited, the community is blessed with joy and abundance.

The separated partners are healed by their reunion because their separation is their woundedness.

This mythology is not to be confused with the emotionally incestuous relationship many men have with their mothers. It is a tricky area because many men who are looking for their mothers would believe that Percival's quest is for the soul mate. How many men are really looking for their mothers when they believe they are looking for their soul mates?

To look for our soul mates, we must first be in our souls. Therefore, Percival, or anyone who is looking for a soul mate, must be themselves, aligned in their own truth. It is the soul that recognizes the soul it is looking for, its other half. For men, the other half is not the mother.

Therefore, while the wound of the Fisher King can be any wound, it can also be the mother wound that can be healed.

The key to this issue for men is that the man has to become the Prodigal Son and return to the Father in order to find his Anima woman.

The Anima will appear in different stages of a man's journey to help him heal the shame that fed the incest with the mother or that separated him from relationship with his father. But the Anima will not be a consort, a soul mate, until he finds a true connection with his Divine Father. Only then can the man be the soul boy who can find the soul girl.

The Fisher King does not become healed by finding the mother. The journey is to find the bride. The man must be prepared to know the difference between the bride and the mother. The Anima can help prepare him through helping him heal enough to find his Father.

The medieval Jewish myth of Yahweh and Matronit echoes the theme of the Grail legends: the king is powerless and impotent without his consort. It is the loss of the feminine counterpart of the god that causes the wound that never heals, and the stricken wasteland reflects the woundedness of God. (From *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar* by Margaret Starbird, p. 86)

There is a larger sense to this, for it is not enough for the King, the masculine principle, to be without the feminine. It is about the loss of the feminine, the loss of the Mary consciousness in our culture.

This is antithetical to the idea that men should be celibate, as Christ was said to be celibate. Christ was not celibate. Not only was he married, but he was as much in need of Mary's support, the feminine connection for him, as she was in need of his support.

They were equals. Mary was not lost to the senex father any more than he was lost in the nuptials of the incested mother.

What they had together was soul-based. The boy and the girl together in a conjunctio all of its own. The training ground for a woman, of course, is through the Animus training her in relationship so that she can find relationship with a man in the world.

In the story, the “Fisher King” Anfortas – that is, the Davidic “Fish-King” Jesus – can be healed only when the Grail is restored, and this will happen only when the right questions are asked. The loss of the feminine counterpoint is the source of the king’s wound, but the story was misunderstood by later interpreters of the legend who assumed the Grail to be an artifact, when in reality it was the lost and repudiated Bride. (*The Woman with the Alabaster Jar* by Margaret Starbird p. 87)

The story of the Fisher King is also about what was lost when the consciousness of Mary went underground. What was left was sifted through the council of Nicea in the 300s as well as through the apostle Paul’s interpretation of Mary and Jesus. Through this process, Mary was excised from the canonical gospels. This loss, this gap, in feminine consciousness, has caused a great split. This split cannot be fully restored unless the feminine surfaces both in the man, who is healed by the Anima through the journey to the Father in order to be able to be partnered with the real feminine, and in the woman finding the girl within. In some way, it is about finding the girl within for both men and women. Letting the girl surface and be honored once again.

If we did not have the emotional issue of the loss of the feminine to face into, we, as a culture, would not have allowed for the political issues that suppressed the truth. It was not that most of us adamantly suppressed the truth; the culture was not really aware of it. Otherwise, we would not have allowed the

suppression by our elders and statesmen.

The heart of this book is about the reality of relationship in everyday people working with their dreams. How does the soul girl find her way out of her betrayal through her mother? In the story of Psyche and Cupid, neither Psyche's mother nor Cupid's mother wanted the girl to have a relationship with a loving man because she did not. How does the soul find its way out of the lie of the mother so she can stand with her beloved, both the Animus and her beloved partner?

Jesus was both Divine and human, just as Mary Magdalene was Divine and human. We let Mary, Jesus and others carry this human quality for us while we continue to live our miserable lives. In Archetypal Dreamwork, we want to have what they had. To reclaim the human and the Divine in our own personal lives and in our relationships.

Perhaps when the buried knowledge of the lost feminine principle as exemplified in Mary is revealed and is met by the healed masculine, an entirely different paradigm for relationship, for being human and being in relationship, will be awakened.

The purpose of this book is, in part, to show how our bringing our day-to-day dreams to our day-to-day reality can lead our souls to be uncovered from under all the ways we play out our dysfunctional masculine and feminine sides. How we live our dysfunctions without the girl and without the boy, not caring for each other. How we live in ways that have nothing to do with how Mary and Jesus lived.

Living with the soul freed in this way really depends on a purified or healed experience of the boy and the girl, but particularly, the feminine in both a man and a woman. The dreams help us create the vessel inside and also take us through the purification process of confronting pathology. Through this process we can work toward our descent into the deeper process of healing.

The Ramifications of a Mother's Incestuous Dependency on the Son



A mother's incestuous dependency on a son has many variations: using her son in an emotional dependency, tapping the son for what she is not receiving from the Animus or her husband, dominating the son because he is vulnerable and opening, projecting her own vulnerability so she ties herself to the son in some way, being aggressive or abusive to the son, surrendering in an emotionally inappropriate way to the son, or becoming more open in the relationship with the son than in her adult relationships. No matter how the incestuous dependency manifests, it is terrible for the boy and his vulnerability.

The boy needs a vessel that can hold him as the beloved child. When a boy feels he needs to caretake his mother, it is a terrifying moment in which the support in that vessel is simply not there.

Although the boy may thrive in suddenly being configured so that he is more important than his father, that configuration is a death knell for all the relationships with women he will ever have. From this moment on, he will be unable to see women as anything other than objects to be taken care of in this way. In actuality, these kinds of relationships make his soul cringe.

For a man to love a woman and support her from the

right place, he has to be able to be vulnerable. But once he has been vulnerable to the mother in this incested way, he can no longer be vulnerable, period.

This may seem counterintuitive, but it is a violation at a primary level. Children are not ready for mutuality in this way except with other children. Even with other children, the relationships are different – for example, when children play together in parallel play. It is not the same kind of mutuality or intimacy that adults have with each other. Mutuality should not be played out with parents – it should only be played out with other children.

Once the boy is configured to take care of the mother and then to take care of the wife, underneath, of course, is incredible anger and control. For the boy is really angry at his mother for needing him. The counterpoint to this is to abuse women or to help them or to seduce them only to betray them or violate them. Because the boy is violated by caretaking, so all his caretaking is linked to a violation.

How can a man love a woman and care for her if the counterpoint of the caring goes back to a violating principle? The man, then, cannot really love a woman. This triggers betrayal of the woman, who then feels violated by the husband. This, of course, triggers the woman to seek the son. She feels, *My husband is not there for me, so I will seek my son*. In this way, the pattern continues through generations.

When the mother turns to the son, she is not risking being vulnerable the way she would risk being vulnerable with her husband, because she is in control with the vulnerable boy. This is the violation.

The codependency with the male is that he may be angry at the mother, angry at women, but he also seeks the security he never broke away from when he was a boy. The incest really cuts both ways. He may be passive-aggressive in some ways – caretaking and then getting angry – or he may

become dependent on alcohol, drugs or some other dysfunction.

Ultimately, the man uses women to avoid the Divine and to be safe. To avoid the Archetype and be safe, he becomes compulsively addicted to women in some manner. For example, he takes care of the woman to avoid his own fear, and the woman probably wants him to perpetuate her attachment to the world, wants him to take care of her so she can avoid her own fear. Whether he supports her or not, the woman becomes confused and feels unsupported to the degree that he will not support her around managing the things she does not want to face. In a way, they are both enablers. They want to keep each other safe from facing what they need to face in themselves.

It is a covert problem; most of us are not even aware that we are doing it. We think our partners should help us avoid what we actually need to be facing, in the name of being supportive of us. We think our partners should take our side rather than reflect the underlying truth of what we need to see.

When we do not support each other in a right way, we support each other in an enabling way to keep each other safe and stuck. This is an especially difficult issue for incested men.

The man must break from taking care of the mother, and the woman must break from being taken care of. The husband and the wife need to confront themselves and support each other to keep confronting themselves, rather than support each other to stay safe.

The Charred Baby

✎

Christa

Late December, 2004, Pink House, Montpelier, Vermont

Dream:

Ajax, my old Labrador, vomits up a charred baby, covered in bile.

I awaken in horror.

I feel terror in the marrow of my bones. I know this dream is pivotal. I do not know why.

I am weak from uterine bleeding, which I stubbornly try to control with herbs and homeopathy. I do not yet understand I need medical intervention. I am living in a house torn apart in the process of renovation. I am worn thin by changes: the death of my mother, the end of my marriage, the end of our family, a move to a new house.

The dream enters my body, activates cellular memory. I call Marc, who is eating his dinner. "I need to work this dream with you today. Can you call me back?" He says, "I will."

I write the dream down and do a little ink drawing of Ajax and the baby, charred and enveloped in bile. I lie on the red couch, not enough oxygen running through my veins. I wait for Marc's call.

Never before have I called Marc with such urgency. The dream signifies a change. I know I need to know what it means, to understand the intensity of these feelings I have never known before in a dream. He has only a small window of time to comment on this dream.

It is the first time in all our years of working together that he has ever made reference to past lives.

He says, "I feel this dream refers to a devastation you experienced in a past life. You knew a great love and you lost that love. Your entire village was wiped out. The dog has been holding the knowledge of this devastation until it was time, until you were ready."

I open up to the wail trapped in my chest cavity. I howl with the pain of this violent rupture. I do not know what this means; I know only that it falls into a cavern in me that understands without knowing. My friend Laura comes over and sits with me while I cry and cry, lying on the couch.

It is my birthday in early January. I am still on the couch in this passage of grief. While it feels unending, I also know it is not. I do not move off the couch. Marc comes over and works some more dreams with me. I begin to understand the cycle of trauma I have entered. We are in unknown territory. We are just at the beginning of understanding the nature of trauma.

St. Barths, 2011

I am under the awning of our little terrace at the Hotel Carl Gustav in the port town of Gustavia. It is early. From down the hill, I hear the school bell sound and the voices of the elementary children as they line up to enter the red-roofed school and start the day. Summer rain in June – so familiar to me from my childhood in Bermuda. I can feel the weight and wind of a tropical storm coming through. Another bell, more excitement. The weather is wild. The mourning doves soothe in the wooded

hillside behind me.

I remember the old crumbling porch at Trade Winds, the pale pink limestone house my maternal grandparents lived in when I was a small child. The large home-made bird cage in the corner filled with parakeets – sky blue, yellow and brilliant green. Just as I could see through the palm trees my grandfather had planted to the water, so I can see now, through oleander and frangipani, over red rooftops to the sea made grey now by the squall that has settled in like a blanket between the island and St Maartin in the distance.

Here on the other side of trauma, I remember the sensuality of my girlhood on the island. On St. Barths, almost thirty years ago, I was frozen in terror, in the same beauty, but I could not open to the wild oleander inside me. I return to my island as a girl, through the sensory awakening on this island, the smells and sounds so familiar, every turn a Proustian madeleine. French, uninhibited pleasure of the senses; English, so contained and proper – well, really, uptight! French island takes me into a labyrinth of sense memory.

Walking up the crushed limestone road from the ferry dock, past the banana patch, along the stone wall to the gate, fashioned by my grandfather from sea-washed driftwood. Above the gate, the name of the house, Trade Winds. Ah, home. Through the gate which slams shut on springs, my grandmother comes out of her little kitchen to greet me, in her worn pastel linen Bermuda shorts and sleeveless floral shirtwaist. Henny Penny, the stray chicken who wandered into my grandfather's business in town one day, fluffs her feathers in the red dirt, contented.

Before the discovery of deep trauma, so much of me and the felt remembering of my girl child was buried. On the other side I feel it all, loosening.

Back in Vermont I have pictures from our family trip here to St. Barths. In one, I am haunted as if I carry a terrible knowing. I did not know then what would propel me to marry someone I could not love and live for the next five years under

the threat of his explosive rage. I was pulled unconsciously towards violence and tyranny. I did not understand why for many, many years.

The trauma living inside us is sealed in concrete and steel and yet emanates, like radioactive rays, its knowledge of violence and horror. I did not know how scared I was because I learned how to maneuver social situations like a professional politician. I relied on my charm and social finesse to keep the danger inside me at bay. In so doing, I also kept love and closeness away. No one could come past the jagged walls to my heart without being cut. I did not know I did not want to feel the pain of the charred baby.

Four years after the charred baby dream, another dream came encoded with the burning:

I drive along the highway. I notice three small children by the side of the road. One of them holds a baby. I drive on. I do not want to get involved, but I have to turn around. I am compelled to go to them, to find out why they are alone beside the highway. By the time I reach them, the baby is dead, burnt by the sun, I think to myself, on the guard rail. I ask the children what happened. They said they could not save the baby. The little girl tells me the parents are in jail. I do not know what to do next.

I do not want to get involved because I carry some guilt for the death of the baby. The children know they could not save the baby. They know they are not responsible. I feel I must do something "next." The only "next" is to feel the terror and pain. I am not there yet. Both Marc and I miss the meaning of this dream. Something horrible has happened to this baby. Someone has been imprisoned. I carry guilt for this soul murder.

It was two years after the burnt baby by the road dream,

when Marc and I had come together as lovers, that we could journey back to the land of the Cathars in the Languedoc region of France, the land of the Occitan culture. All year, leading up to, during and after France, I worked through the horror, led by my dreams. With each round I thought, "This must be the last." It was a grueling process in which I could only trust there was to be a resolution, without knowing how or when it would end.

When I opened my heart to Marc, I opened up the last locked vault of my deepest trauma. When I chose to become the girl and risk being my most tender self with this man whom I loved so much, I chose to unlock the vault I had kept shut forever.

Soul death happens when we are open to our soul selves and trauma occurs at the deepest level.

In the fire, the soul was burnt.

In the fire, my soul was burnt to ash.

The secret of the soul baby, charred and black, was held inside the belly of the Divine dog. He held the evidence of the horror until I was ready to face it. Until I was strong enough to weather the trauma passage.

Here in St. Barths, I remember the girl, inside the husk of the charred baby.

She is loved, knows she is loved; she knows no shame or guilt.

She loves and so, can need. She needs deeply. Her needing equals her capacity for love.

Dream:

I am in an airplane, or spaceship. A baby is crying. The father picks her up and takes her into a different cabin. The mother follows, I think, because the father is doing something wrong. Next, the plane lands at the end of a road, on the edge of the ocean. The pilot gathers us together. I think I should help figure out how to feed everyone (i.e., that something must be wrong).

As I sip tea, high up in the hills, overlooking the harbor and towering cumulus on the horizon, I see the dream for the lesson it holds. My lens of trauma colors the way I see this event. When I am scared, I can feel the tug of the trauma and the automatic reflex that I must have done something wrong or He, or Marc, cannot be trusted. As long as I stand there with that perspective, I remain captive to the lie. This morning, as Marc ran laps on the beach, I floated on my back in the aquamarine sea and felt myself as the crying baby, held by the father. Babies cry because they have a need. I began to feel nauseated and dizzy. My awareness was shifting as I let myself become, in the salty water, the baby held in her need.

As we drove up the steep, winding hill, along the cliff away from the beach, I cried, like the baby. I did not want to leave. I still do not want to leave. I was born on the island. I spent my childhood in the saltwater. I am an island girl, an oleander girl, at home in the element of salt and sea and squalls. I learned to be a “goat,” a competent woman like my mother, overly responsible and cautious, independent of love and God. I learned to give power to men so I would never have to unlock the vault in which my soft heart was hidden. Overlaying the goat was the seductive smokescreen of the charmer. Here on this island, in the wild beauty of a maritime climate and geography of volcanic stone, I relax the threads still holding me back. In salt and tears, the threads unravel and continue to dissolve like stitches no longer needed to heal a wound.

Redeeming the Girl with the Damaged Pancreas



Marc

When I was fifty, I had my first pancreatic attack, which nearly killed me. Suddenly, in the middle of a session with a client, I doubled over in pain, a pain I had never felt before. I knew it was different than an upset stomach or indigestion.

Having acute pancreatitis took me into a psychotic break especially around issues of anxiety. This anxiety centered on issues with my father, who was a very angry man. They also came up with my wife, who, several years before, had informed me that she no longer believed in the work I did with dreams; that, in fact, she believed the work I was doing was a sin. At the time, we agreed to disagree and I shut off the pain I felt, replacing it with the anxiety I felt with my father. It was as if my father and my wife were the same wound. How uncanny, I thought at the time.

The acute pancreatitis attack reminded me of a dream I had had seven years before, a dream in which I was first introduced to my girl self and in which I encountered an experience of trauma for the first time:

I am standing on a hill overlooking the town of Burlington. There is an intense thunderstorm overhead, localized around a particular house. It is extremely

violent. It reminds me of my father's footsteps . . . kaboom, kaboom, kaboom . . . as he came upstairs to my bedroom. I entered the violated building with a man, and once inside, I beheld a severely wounded girl of about twelve. There was some kind of bile coming out of her stomach, which I now know was her pancreas.

The girl was apparently dying. Myself and another man picked her up and took her out of the destroyed room.

The fear and terror I had often experienced with my father had seemed related only to my father. In this terror of my father, it was my pancreas that was affected; it carried the fear and the deeper grief I had not yet felt. At the time of the dream, and even when I had the pancreatic attack seven years later, I did not understand that my dynamic with my father held a place for a trauma that had taken place eight hundred years earlier. It carried the memory of my father's abuse, but I now know that it also carried the memory of the Inquisitional abuse that had taken my life.

In my oversensitivity to my past life experience, I probably overreacted to the experience with my father. Where is the line between the two?

What if the past issue is worse than the current issue? If it is, then we think all of our feelings from the issue in the present are about the present. A person in this life becomes evil incarnate of what might have been done to us in the past past.

I am certain, in that vein, that I made my father worse than he was. At the time, I did not know about my trauma, except through the divisive relationship with my father. But it was always about my father until I withdrew the projection. But withdrawing the projection cannot happen until the dreams show us what really happened.

It can take many years of healing, supporting,

understanding the experiences of our current life before regressive dreaming occurs. We must first be healed of the real or imagined realities of childhood, which can extend right through adulthood and beyond. The therapeutic process, through dreaming, is determined by the dreams themselves. Past life, or regressive, dreams do not occur until the dreamer is deemed ready by the dreams themselves for the deepest descent of all. This book and these stories are for the advanced dreamer. Of course, beginning dreamers may also experience regressive dreams. In these extreme cases, the purpose is to give context to the extreme projections that might likely occur in this life when an individual has been severely mistreated or has witnessed extreme violence.

When I had the pancreatic attack and was taken to the hospital, I immediately experienced the beginning of a psychotic episode, something I had never experienced. For four days, I did not sleep. They moved me to different beds, gave me sleeping aids and I could not sleep.

I watched the second hand on the clock barely moving. I could not even speak. Perhaps not sleeping helped to create the fugue state I was about to experience. I believe it was a deliberate attempt of my psyche to induce a necessary state of psychosis. Even in this state, I knew that my pancreas was the bleeding wound of the girl in my dream seven years before. I waited expectantly for something to happen.

By the fifth or sixth day of not sleeping, my room was filled with many plants and flowers from numerous friends, family and clients. That is when the first full episode occurred. I could lie only on my back because my abdomen was so distended. One afternoon, I changed the view a bit by sitting on my knees and holding on to the foot of the bed. The many flowers and plants ringed my bed like a field or a forest ringing a meadow. Looking at the plants and flowers, I was suddenly seeing only that ring of field or forest.

I was stunned by the realness of the fantasy. I began to pray. I asked God to take me through my suffering for I could feel a block in me that I knew kept me from the girl. I was suddenly suffocating. The dreamwork had now moved into psychosis. I prayed and was elated because I knew this was the beginning of my journey, and my illness was to be used to fulfill the meaning of my dream of the girl with bile coming from her stomach. I began to fall asleep.

But before I could receive the wonderful sleep of the insane, I was roused out of bed and my nightmare psychosis began. Apparently, they were afraid my heart was going to stop and took me to a heart monitor room where I was wired up. This was also the first day I had been allowed to drink a soda; my condition was somewhat better. But now I was told: no more soda, only pieces of ice to chew. The pancreas could not tolerate food or drink.

As I lay there, wires in every direction, with my doctor and other doctors on the other side reading and talking about me, I began to get angry. I thought, *Is my doctor playing with me? He promised me soda and now I am to be given nothing?* It felt like the denizen of my father's changing moods. I thought, *Promises made, promises broken. Maybe they are doing this intentionally. There is nothing wrong with my heart. In fact, they are just trying to get me to react.* I was now living in a memory of some profound trauma, not even of this life. I was gone. I was in fury.

I pulled the IV out of my arm and started out the door, heading out into the snowy winter. I decided, They cannot keep me here. I will decide my own fate and I will not stay any longer. It was like leaving a place of great abuse. The nurses seemed like demons, doctors like powerful executioners.

Finally, after a great deal of arguing, I agreed to stay in the hospital on one condition. I wanted three different taste sensations in three different popsicles. I yelled and demanded my rights as a human being! I know now I was living the rage

of being destroyed by an Inquisition. I just lived in the emotion of the moment.

Part of me knew that there was no way I could win this war with the doctors, but I barely heard the voice that said I could not win this war. I was pretty gone, and in my psychotic break, I really felt I was fighting for my very life. Somehow the popsicles meant liberation from something terrible.

They carted in my wife and I explained the situation to her and she disagreed, of course, but she always disagreed with my spiritual belief. That was the split between an archetypal Jungian therapist and a born-again Christian fundamentalist. I saw her as part of the problem. I felt all alone. There was no one I could trust except my rage.

I was so adamant, so angry that my doctor actually relented as he handed me the first popsicle. He was crying, saying I would die for sure. I screamed back: "I don't care. Give me the fucking popsicle. And I want the red one first!" And so he did. I gulped it down in three bites. Then the next. I think it was green. The third one I was willing to give up for I felt that I was the victor, and besides, I was feeling kind of sick! The psychosis never really broke, but I was willing to lie back in bed. Once I lay back, I finally fell asleep, the first sleep in almost a week.

Because I thought I had defeated my father, I dropped underneath the psychological issue I had projected onto all my life. It was always about my father. There was no way I could work through the deeper memories of past lives as long as my reactions were all focused around that, and as long as I would shake with anxiety every time I would go near the city he lived in. I felt this anxiety a lot, in a variety of situations that had nothing to do with my father. But, of course, I felt he was the reason I felt this in the first place, and of course, he was not.

When I woke up the next morning, I woke from a dream into another dream. I realized I was not really about to wake up,

but that my waking state was now not far from a dream state. I knew this from the one pinprick of light, one place inside of me, that could see what was going on and that kept me from going completely insane.

The nurses were fussing over me like overgrown hens. One asked, "Is he awake? Is he lucid?" In this dream state, I immediately saw all of us, me with the nurses, working in a garage on a car together. We were fixing the engine. I was asking these nurses for tools. Then my reality shifted for a moment and I remembered I was in the hospital. I heard the second nurse answer the first, "I think he's still under." I stayed in and out of this state for several days and do not remember much except that I was in a constant state of dreaming and I could not tell when I was awake or asleep. I felt I was in constant REM sleep even when I was awake.

Finally it broke with this dream:

I am in a field, climbing a hill. There is a huge white woolly mammoth licking me.

When I woke, I immediately knew that the woolly mammoth was my dog, a white Samoyed wolf. Because my dog was so large, I knew I was a very little child in the dream, which was how I felt.

My wife heard my interpretation of the dream and affably agreed. I later realized she had hoped that my interminable fugue state would awaken my soul in such a way that I would find God and join her church. Most of the time I was in the hospital, a team of people from her church prayed over me. I accepted the love but could feel the breach between us growing wider and wider. The child in this dream was a link to the girl in the other dream who had been dying. I was reborn, but not in her image of what that would be. I did not know what I was to become, but I could feel that I was different.

So, this was the birth of my soul self as me. It was only the second time I had a dream of being the child, or being with the child. But the gift of this breakthrough manifested as a sensitivity to my life in ways I later understood as the rebirth of the girl child. At the time I did not know what gender it was or that it mattered. The girl child would eventually grow back to the girl who was dying in the earlier dream, and the circle would be completed.

She . . . I . . . could now return to me. I could begin to be her. This sensitivity to this girl gestated in me for many years, culminating finally in a more direct connection with the Animus and empowering me in such a way that new behaviors were possible.

This, of course, led me to fulfilling a year's worth of dreaming that culminated in leaving my marriage and reclaiming my old lost life of the Inquisition. This included beginning a romantic relationship with Christa, my client, friend and colleague of twenty-two years who I now recognize as my wife from my past life.

The One Who Believed the Voice



Marc

I am Jewish, but I never dated a Jewish girl. I never dated a Jewish woman. I never would wear the mezuzah my father gave me, nor would I wear a Star of David. None of my friends were Jewish.

Throughout grade school, I made it a point to hang with roughnecks who seemed not to know I was Jewish or ignored it, as I did. I did have a bar mitzvah wearing my wool suit. I did go to Hebrew school, but that was it as far as my father's attempt at raising a Jewish son went. It was not that I did not have Jewish friends coincidentally after I became an adult, but the common element was not that we were Jewish, it was that we were hippies, or some kind of believers in something other than the domestic life.

What defined me as a young man was a constant searching for the woman I knew I once had as well as a sense of a life and purpose that were strange to me, which careened wildly in my mind, or more specifically, in my heart.

Marc, in Hebrew, means Moses. Moses? What Moses? I was to be a Moses? But there was always a purpose to me that I never understood and yet followed with amazing clarity. Even at the time of intense traveling over a seven-year span, mostly with my thumb, from one side of the Atlantic to the other, over

and over again, from Belgium to Nepal, with my willingness to explore the world without any money, just the pair of boots I wore and, for a while, my dog Justice. I was fulfilling some request, some call to action. When I was twenty-nine, I realized it was time to settle down.

Up until that point, I was like a wild Siddhartha, traveling, constantly engaging the world as if I could do anything I wanted, pursuing one thing after another, going through one door after another, one commune after another, one more interaction wanting to be full.

During this whole time, there was always a feeling I had, an inner dialogue going with someone, who felt like the Divine. I would constantly check in with him, feeling watched over, protected, despite getting into dangerous situations whilst I was traveling. I felt watched over and special, and although my ego preferred to be nihilistic and angry and lost, I could never shake the feeling of uplifted optimism and this feeling of intimacy with the Divine.

Settling down allowed me to go to college, discover Freud and Jung and, for a while, explore an extraordinary partnership with Dianne, my wife at the time.

At some point in my marriage, however, I scared her with the exploration of her unconscious and her dreams. I knew I scared her, but I chose to ignore it. I had seen the complaint before with other women. The search for truth that guided my own life apparently did not drive others. I guess I continued to believe in the relationship rather than unlock the mystery of my own hidden pain and trauma.

Except for my clients, most people I met in the world were not interested in exploring the unconscious. The friendships of later years would come from those clients who were willing to explore the deepest regions of the unconscious, who were most like me in this way. Those seeds were planted but would take decades to flower into relationship. I accepted the failure

of my marriage relationship early in the game and concentrated on developing the therapeutic process and the evolution of the work.

It was a perfect match for my trauma. I spiraled into my trauma of isolation whilst working through and deeper into the trauma of others. This isolation was to last another twenty-five years. This last block of time seemed necessary for me to create a hermetically sealed vessel within the therapy process that was insular and private to each person's experience and my own most private sharing of this with them.

It was years later that I would pursue the idea of classes and putting the work out into the world. But this was only my pupa stage in which I was evolving into the spiritual man who could once more stand in the world with this work in hand. My own soul was a long way from being freed. Without knowing this, I was evolving to become the Moses that I would be, just a boy who loved the Divine being we call the Animus.

Somehow, I was always the Jew who loved Jesus. The Jew who believed in the voice who talked to him – not the Christian Jesus.

It was about this time that Christa walked through my door and became a client. Shortly afterward, I lost the thread of intimacy with Dianne. For the next twenty years, during my metamorphosis, Christa and I managed to build an organization based on the dreamwork, called North of Eden, from a place of trust and some deep connection and commitment to one another.

Without fanfare or promises or written agreements, Christa would give several million dollars to build a retreat center on this basis of relationship. For my part, I would give what I could financially, but I always gave her my heart and all the knowledge that was given to me.

During those twenty years, my work around my relationship with the Animus changed, culminating in a series of dreams.

Dream:

A woman asks me, “What is your role with the Animus?” I proudly pipe up, “Why, I am His foreman!” She says, “Well, there He is on the porch. He wants you to come into His house.” I look and, indeed, there He is, waving me into His house. I freeze.

This is how I saw myself in relationship with the guidance I would receive from Him and be obedient to. It took me many months to heed the call of this dream, to go to His house.

As soon as I did, I received this dream.

It is night and an unknown car stops to pick me up. I know it is Him. I get in and He drives me to His house. His house is a church with ornate carvings on all the beams, with massive cathedral ceilings and stained glass windows. When we arrive, he goes to His computer where He becomes very busy. He encourages me to look around.

I do and find a small room under the stairs. Within this room I discover many, many pictures of me. The pictures are incredibly flattering – with youthful expressions. I have never perceived myself in this way. He was obviously showing me how He saw me.

This led to a breakthrough dream in which I was to become the person in these pictures. I was His foreman no longer. I felt somehow more like I was His beloved.

I am working in a food co-op with a young, perky fellow wearing farmer overalls and carrying a clipboard. I chase him around wanting to do something for another man. This other man is a foreboding young man, who looks

like the actor Tim Robbins. I want to serve him, too. But the perky guy does not just serve him (like a foreman). He is filled with brightness and enthusiasm and goes far beyond the tasks he is doing. I feel the extraordinary love he has inside, a love that is somehow connected to his relationship with the Tim Robbins man. I chase the perky man around, ignoring the more formidable Animus. Finally, I corner this young man filled with light and confront him, for he was always running away from me. I ask, when I get his attention, "Who are you?" He looks back at me. Time freezes. Then he comes toward me, right up to my face. He says, "I am you!" As he says it, he enters my body. In that moment I feel his light, his joy.

This was not the foreman. This was my soul whom I was becoming. I was he that knew the most exquisite love, the love that could answer all the requirements of service from a place of most precious connection, simply from the heart, from which everything was light and open and no chore or task was too difficult or concerning. It was like walking on air, living in love.

A short time later, I had another dream:

I am jumping on the Animus' chest with all the enthusiasm of the young, perky, overalled man. Except now, I am younger and He is a big, black, burly man. Each time I jump on Him, He backs up, retreating from me, laughing all the time, saying, "You don't want me." As He says this, he simultaneously points to all the distractions in the world. I keep saying, "No, I just want you," as I throw myself on Him, both of us laughing.

Having said this, I am he who writes this with my beloved Christa. As she will tell in her story, she has become her soul as well.

Choosing to Be Aligned with the Dreams



Often, we like someone because they say that they like us. It is the easiest seduction in the world when someone tells us that we are great. We can believe God is there in the moment, when He actually is not. The love may not be there at all, or it may be there through projection. Then, once the other person gets to know us and sees our suffering, he or she may not believe we are so great after all.

There can be people in our lives who do love and accept us, but if we do not love and accept ourselves, it is not even going to matter. Once we have that love inside, when someone says, “You are so great!” through projection, we can actually feel it for what it is. Instead of falling for the seduction, we may feel, *Please find your own source for your love, the love you have for yourself with the Divine. Then, come back and talk with me. Please don’t look at me as your answer.*

When we fall for that kind of seduction, we make relationship choices based on the projection rather than from the soul self. If we do not have that soul self for ourselves, then we do not have it to share with the world or with another person. So, even if we meet the right person for us, if we do not have our soul self, then we will not be able to really connect or maintain the soul connection with our soul mate.

As a couple, Christa and I do not want a domestic life, meaning a life in the world. We want a life that aligns with the inside, which references our everyday dreams.

The domestic life is when we try to live cooperatively together building a loving relationship without any soul connection. The split in our dreams is usually echoed in the split in our relationships. This kind of relationship can work in its own way, but it cannot work for those who want to align themselves with the Divine.

It is rare when a person is connecting with a partner in a way that is aligned with his or her personal work, in a way in which there is an actual experience of relationship and the person brings the deepest self into relationship and the other reciprocates. This is the glue. If this is not happening in a relationship, the two people are simply perpetuating an agreement to jump away from themselves. This involves all kinds of caretaking, passive-aggressive behaviors, fear of speaking (in case the other person gets angry), etc. Living this kind of agreement is impossible to do if we have grown into ourselves.

Once we have grown into ourselves, we have to let that self out, no matter the risk.

Working with Clients

This dynamic is also true when working with clients. A good therapist is one who can stand with a client whilst that client faces into his or her work. If a client cannot do this, he or she will self-destruct and leave the work. A therapist cannot withhold and take care of the client, because that is helping the client to not address the issues that the dreams ask him or her to face. If, at some point the therapist then does ask the client to face into something, the client may end up angry because the therapist is breaking an agreement.

This is why it is very important to be clear with a client

about what the work is and what the work is not, and to stand in that. Then the client can make the decision of what he or she wants to do or does not want to do. Many people are threatened by their dreams. But the dreamwork therapist can stand in that place in a loving way, expressing that the dreams come because somewhere in us we already know something about what the dreams are showing us.

When a dream challenges a client in this way, the client needs someone who will stand there with her because the client may not want to go. If the therapist stands there, then it becomes the client's decision to go or not go. It is amazing, however, how many people, in that moment, will say, "Oh my God, someone is actually saying the things I have not wanted to admit to myself," feeling such relief.

It is like deep massage work. The client keeps coming back because she wants to massage that part inside that she cannot quite get a hold of, but can see through the dreams.

Gas Cloud

✎

Christa

Dream:

I am on the highway, going south. Marc is too, but in different vehicle. A huge cloud from a gas explosion comes toward us, enveloping us. I know we are going to die. I feel terror and then . . . nothing.

I am a lost soul, outside of my body, looking for my body, looking for Marc in a post apocalyptic landscape. No body, no Marc, nothing.

I have been in an alchemical tunnel since this dream . . . waves of fear arising, going to the gas clouds, going through to pain of total loss.

Fear changing to pain . . . finally breaking open . . . sobbing, desperate tears.

Then, a few days later, two dreams:

Dream:

I dream of Labrador puppies wanting to get out the front door of my childhood home . . . tumbling, chubby, curious, awkward, open puppies.

Dream:

On an island in Bermuda, feeling awkward and unsure.
A handsome man is there. I feel attracted but so shy and
strange and unknown to myself.

My work from these dreams is to cycle from fear in death gas
to pain to puppy to being awkward with the Animus, my lover.

No skin, no bones, no British savoir faire, no Libra
social dexterity. I do not know who I am; I do not know where
I am going. I have no coordinates.

I keep going through the cycle of change . . . more, new,
more do not know, more of me, more of me with Him.

Entering the gas cloud is like going into a time machine . . . into
wound . . . through the moment of annihilation trauma.

And now, going forward past the moment, living the life
I could never live before in the present. Not living out the past,
in reaction to trauma.

This opens to the feeling of uncertainty without the
burden of past that acts as reference point . . . until it no longer
does.

What we do not know is life when we are free . . . what
never got to be because of the interruption of annihilation . . .
going into life beyond trauma, not defined by the horror . . .
going beyond into the uncertainty.

Puppy . . . awkward . . . not knowing . . . surfing wave
of terror back down and through the cycle, again and again,
washing through.

Embers: The Story of Us

✪✪✪

Marc

I remember when I first saw Christa. She walked into my office and her hair seemed to be on fire. Her eyes beamed light as if from another world, like green embers from an alien campfire, smoldering away on some distant planet.

Suddenly I heard the old voice that had driven me insane since my adolescence: Is she the one? Was she the girl of my dreams, the one I had not even been able to imagine? Surely something must be wrong with me that I even considered wanting such a thing?

Most boys just wanted a squeeze box or a girlfriend or a wife. I wanted none of it.

Somewhere in it all, the way children give up Santa Claus and Mickey Mouse, I gave up ever finding my girl. But in the back of my mind there was always this voice: Could she be the one? I was madly in love with my wife, but I did not love her. I knew that because the voice didn't go away. I was always looking. For the first couple of years I thought Dianne was the one. I think she wanted to be. I think she even tried to be. We looked at our dreams together. We shared deeply about spiritual aspirations. We even dropped LSD one time. But it wore thin.

My pirate ways and my intense demeanor soon had to

be redirected to save the marriage. I focused solely on my clients and the slow unfoldment of the work that was guided and given to me by a very deep voice, showering me with messages about what to say to my clients regarding their dreams.

And then, as I said, fire lady walked in. I knew instantly. I so knew the planet on which those embers resided. I knew where she came from because I came from that planet, too. But that moment passed quickly for I could not share with her the warmth of the alien fire. Clearly, she knew nothing about it and really, except for this passionate yearning, I knew very little about it either.

But she never was to be a client. From that moment, she was my friend. I took her side in all things, to the chagrin of many of her lovers, whom I also saw as clients. They were frustrated by her issues; I looked past them for she could do no wrong. They were just no match for her. They could not challenge her because they were ever fast asleep. Those embers were not for them.

Christa quickly aligned with the work without realizing the depth of it, in the same way she did not understand her depth. This much I knew. I left all romantic fantasies at the door, for I was in love with my wife and committed to my five stepchildren, even though they seemed to have decided I was a waste of time. Nevertheless, I was dedicated to being a family man and accepted the dual passion of my commitment to my work and to my family. My wife, and many of my stepchildren, soon became Christian fundamentalists. Soon after her conversion, my wife called all my efforts in this work a sin.

I tolerated this split for twelve more years.

Through it all, I did have Christa as a friend, as a client and a compadre. The work quickly developed, and Christa agreed to

help bring it into the world. Her commitment to all that we were doing was profound. She agreed to do radio shows and begin a therapy group for my clients. But she did not yet know Him.

I wanted her to know Him too because I knew Him and I thought she would awaken to the green embers of that faraway planet. But she was still growing toward her spiritual connection. She evolved in her work and became a therapist.

She also ran our yearly intensive daylong event called *Bache Alone*, in which individuals presented their work to an audience of usually over 120 people. She helped to prepare the six to eight presenters to open up and reveal the arduous journeys they were on as well as running and hosting the event.

Increasingly, it was Christa and I running the event. During this time, she had several relationships, followed by a marriage in which I worked to create harmony as I worked too with her husband. I wanted only for her to be happy.

When she was single, I acted the matchmaker, for if she were happily married, I would be less threatened. But she was not happily married and invariably was single once again. I worked closely with Christa through all her endeavors, but I was not close to her. A thick wall of glass lay between us.

I knew that my wife was threatened by her, and I did everything to keep the peace. I do not think I ever looked directly at Christa after our first meeting. She stayed in my peripheral vision on an impersonal/personal level of archetypal/spiritual business. I also knew, or thought I knew, that she could never love me back even if the opportunity were to arise for I could see her independence and her deep struggle for any kind of intimacy with men. And yet I also knew that she had forgotten her heart and could never really love anyone and did not understand why.

For me, I had always believed the intimacy I had with Dianne was enough and adhered to the commitment “to agree to disagree” about her fundamentalism and my complete belief

in the Jungian Gnostic quest. But the pain of her rejection, which in turn bore the pain of my refusal to accept who I really was, became increasingly unbearable.

Meanwhile, Christa devoted increasing amounts of money to building the retreat center that was the foundation of North of Eden and was challenged to contribute more and more time and attention to our burgeoning enterprise. She also began to bring the work out into the world with other teachers, following dreams that many of us had. For me, I felt I would lose Dianne if I went on these trips so I stayed back, letting everyone else bring this work that had come through me, deliver the message, even though they were not really ready to do so. It took a few years for me to begin to attend these events, co-presenting with Christa.

Several of these early events with Christa stand out. In one, we were opening up to a 200-person audience. Christa and I stood on stage and introduced our students, who told their stories. I stood next to Christa, but I was unable to look at her, blocked and unable to say anything to the audience. Neither of us could speak.

Then, again, at a radio station for an interview, we sat together in a very tight space. I felt like I was crawling out of my skin to get away. Why was I so threatened by this person?

Later that same year, we had a big opportunity to bring this work out in the world at a conference in Philadelphia. I spoke voluminously, but the audience wanted Christa too, and she was mum.

The split between us had become palpable like a shriek in the night. The green embers became bolts of light while my sadness and pain grew, until I had this dream:

Dianne gets up from the bed and walks out the window to her death. Lions rush into the house, powerful and fierce. I am stunned.

It was the first time I considered losing this person in my life. Something was changing. I had another dream, months later:

Christa and I are being married, in water up to our ankles, in a lush jungle with sea turtles swimming around us.

These dreams disturbed me. Dianne dying? Christa and I marrying? The edges around my heart began to blur. With my ongoing illness, my pancreas (which seemed to hold all the pain and fear I had not acknowledged) blew up with repeated minibouts of pancreatitis.

When I went to an endocrinologist about these attacks, he informed me I had pancreatic cancer but would need further tests to confirm his suspicions. During that time the dam broke and my pain reached new levels. I felt I was being cheated again of something. The pain was not about losing Dianne. It was a different pain.

I called Christa to let her know I was going into minor surgery for this test in which a camera would be brought down to the organ. The pain seemed to be about her. Something was breaking inside. I reached out to her in a personal way, but I am not sure what I wanted. I now know that I had lost her before and I feared I was about to lose her again.

When the doctor informed me that the symptoms were old scarring, not cancer as feared, I broke down crying. My wife was beside me. I could not look at her. My tears of relief were not about continuing with my old life but the relief that I could live in a way I had not lived before, a new life. I knew Dianne felt this. I also knew then that my marriage was over, but I did not know much else.

Finally, Christa had a dream not long after this episode in which we are obviously lovers in a hotel room. The Animus enters the room and says to me, “It’s time to deal with your marriage.”

It began to dawn on me that Christa was the woman I had always been looking for.

I was initially horrified by the idea that I would ever leave Dianne. But, our policy of agreeing to disagree finally shattered when Dianne helped her son, my stepson, write and leave a letter at the retreat center for people coming to a retreat to find. The letter warned that the dreamwork was evil and that anyone doing the work was damned to hell. When Dianne admitted to writing the letter, I began to see the true chasm between us about the most important thing in my life – my commitment to the Divine, particularly through the evolution of the dreamwork.

That was the end of my marriage.

Soon after my marriage ended, those green embers, shooting light, blew out of my own heart. The embers I had seen in Christa and the green light she emitted were now the blood running through me. A powerful passion and drive overcame me like I had never felt, for this person, Christa.

Without thought for consequence or propriety, I openly explored a lifetime of repressed feelings for the girl of my dreams. I would risk it all to get to the truth. To my shock and amazement, Christa was willing, too, and thus began our new journey that would open up the doors of understanding to our past lives and the destiny promised to us to continue what was started long ago.

Maybe Who We Are Is Not Because of Our Parents



Marc

Are my reactions because of my parents, or do I have those reactions already and my parents hold the place, like a place setting or a bookmark, for those reactions?

This is an important question, for we often believe that we would have been fine had we not had the parents we had. But maybe we are already set in our ways when we come in to this world, and so we get parents who hold the place for something else. When we blame our parents, we can keep reacting, saying it is their fault for the way we are.

It is horrendous to look at the darker traumas of history, at some of the terrible things that we may have been exposed to or even that we may have done to others. It is easier to come to terms with our failings or the failings of others by making everything about our parents or boyfriends or girlfriends or brothers or sisters or even friends.

I do not believe that we happen to get the wrong brother-who-raped-us card or the bad-mother card or the father-who-ignored-us card.

We need to look at our parents, our families, and ask: *How am I like my mother? How am I like my father? How am I like*

my brother? What are the good qualities I have inherited that reflect something? What are the dark qualities of my parents that are mirrors for me to look at? How am I like that, or how was I wounded?

For me, my feminine side must not have been damaged in some way because I have a great mother. My father, however, reflected the anger that I had myself, the anger that was part of my past life in some way. I go back to the moment when I was killed. I got angry in that moment. But perhaps I had an attitude even long before that moment.

I think of my parents as mirrors. We can see how our parents have done things to us, but this can only really help for a short moment. It is only the first step. The second step is to see how we do this same thing to others. We can see how we are like our parents. Maybe we have married someone like our mother, so we can keep reliving our trauma and blaming someone else.

Of course, the other person is involved in the conspiracy in some way, but it is more important to look at what we are doing. Do we marry someone who is dysfunctional like our parent or sibling so we always have someone to blame?

When we reach this point, the question becomes not only, *How can I not play into the pathology of reliving/recreating my issues with my mother or father? but also, How can my partner change as well?* There are ways that the partner plays into the pathology that is reflective of something in him or her as well as for us.

This is incredibly deep and tricky work. It takes two people to know that there is a problem. One person can say, "It is all a projection; don't blame me!" But, in fact, it is not all projection. It is a combination of projection and pathology on both sides.

Once we get over our own part of the equation, once we have stopped reacting, have our own pain, are going deeper in our work and have stopped making it about our partner, there comes a point when we realize that our partner needs to change, too. We must ask if we can continue to live with someone we

no longer project onto but who continues to project onto us, someone who is still acting out his or her side of the equation. It is an incredibly difficult moment.

The issue is not about blaming the other person or even not blaming the other person. We may say, "Well, if I am so connected, so enlightened, then I would accept my partner and make do." Maybe God wants more for us than for us to make do. Maybe God wants us to have our sensuality, intimacy and connection with the Divine and with our partners, our sisters and brothers.

If we open to the depths of our work and we are with someone who does not want to open up in this same way, it can create a terrible discrepancy in the relationship. How can we have a deeper relationship when the other person is not able to or may not want to have a deeper relationship in this way?

It is not about whether our partner wants to go bowling with us or not. We do not really need our partner to do what we want. It is more about being with someone who is going to grow and change, who is willing to look at his or her pathology and grow through it.

Many people do not do enough deep work to really change. But if both people in a relationship are in deep work, they both know the truth. Then, it is a golden opportunity, even if it is complicated, to reconcile the relationship and even to deepen the work through the relationship.

The Good Son Is Not the Prodigal Son



A “good” son is not necessarily the Prodigal Son.

When a son takes care of his mother because the father is a failure as a husband or is ill equipped to be a loving partner, then the son becomes the good son, caretaking his mother.

Why would a father, any father, be anything but ill equipped? Fathers are human. There is no father in the world who can do more than what he can do because of his own human frailty.

What happens to the son who becomes good in this way?

For men, the way home to the soul is to follow the motif of Jesus, becoming like Jesus. In the motif, Jesus is the son of God, the son of the Father, the inspiration.

The “good” son, in a sense, becomes the son of the father, but the human father. In the realm of father and son, sons often feel competitive with the father. The son believes he is smarter than his father, that he is good and even loving because he is making up for his father’s lack of love or oppression. But sooner or later, the good son himself becomes oppressed, frustrated, angry or cold, which may come to the surface with his wife and/or children. In taking care of his wife and children the way he took care of his mother, he never learns what it is to be the son

to the Father, to the Divine. The good son loses the ability to be the Prodigal Son.

The Prodigal Son is the son who returns home to the Father, the Father who can be everything for his children. The only Father who can do this is the Divine Father.

When the Prodigal Son comes home, he does not return home to celebration. It does not matter whether he is successful in the world or a failure. He comes home without the world, to his Father as the boy.

Once the Prodigal Son comes home as the boy, something else happens. He becomes the daughter, the girl.

In the Fisher King mythology, the main hero of the story, Percival, is looking for his soul mate. But really, he is the Prodigal Son returning to the Fisher King, the Father, looking for his feminine side.

The Prodigal Son must look for his feminine side, must become the daughter, because the dynamic between the daughter and the Father is the most vulnerable opening in the psyche.

The soul is always transgendered, bisexual, androgynous. The son morphs into the daughter and the daughter morphs into the son. This is the meaning of the hermaphroditic connection. We have both things in us.

For the good son to become the girl or to allow the girl, he must stop being the father – whether it is the good father or the angry father or the bad father or the abusive father. He must come home to the Father, to the right hand of the Father.

The good son must stop being good through taking care of the mother. Not all men are good sons – it is actually one of the more difficult pathologies to break because when a man is the good son, he has many people who depend on him. The good son often likes the love he receives from being in control. He likes the support. He does not have to risk being hurt because of all the support that he gets in this way.

But he does not have God's support. The good son may have all the support from the world, but inside he is all alone. How many priests, ministers, rabbis, clerics, teachers are in this place – supported in the world but bereft of God? There are so many stories of teachers who had many who loved them, but who were completely separate from their souls. The more love they received from the world, in fact, the less they were in their souls.

The Prodigal Son must leave the world, must leave his successes and his failures, for he cannot have the love of the Father as the good son.

The more a man wants to possess a woman, the more the man is lost from the Father.

The Prodigal Son returns home to the Father to be the man he can be, and from this male place, he can begin to be with a woman. When a man puts the Father first, he can be with a woman even though he still may have his struggles.

Women cannot control things; they cannot control the male, not really. For a woman, her process is to become the girl with the alabaster jar, to become Mary. She must become the clitoris. It is not a question of how to be with the Animus or with a partner because that can be just more manipulation. The issue for women is to feel into the girl, into the sensuality, the vulnerability.

Need versus Want: Breaking Codependence



Christa

Need and want are different. Need comes from the soul child. Want comes from the hole, the lack that wants to be filled by the mother's love, projected out into the world: "Save me; be my mother." Need and want become confused with each other.

There is a clue to discern the difference: need is accompanied by fear and vulnerability; with want, the fear is missing. Want is a way around the fear. Want manipulates and controls to get what it wants, false comfort. Want masks real need, the need of the soul to be free. When the soul is free, a person is in a state of surrender to the Divine. People who want try to manipulate and control to have their want met by others. The soul self does not manipulate others. The soul self is open and alive and vulnerable to the Divine.

The issues of real need versus false want can look complicated to the person whose libidinal drives were thwarted, or not met by the mother. It can look like real need to want people in a certain way, to fill the hole of no mother love and attention.

Dream:

I am in my new red sports car. I am heading to New

York City. I am excited to go to Bubby's Restaurant in Tribeca for breakfast. I get scared. George, a man I know, is around, and I enlist him to come with me. I want him to come to make it safe.

George loses the car in a closed parking lot. I end up trailing around a college campus picking up other people who seemingly want a ride in my little two-seater. It goes on and on. I get fed up. Then I notice a penis inside me. A young teenage girl leaves. She has had it with this crazy Friday night on campus. I get it and leave with her. It is time to get the car and get out of Dodge.

In the dream, I ask George to come with me so that I do not have to feel the intensity of hitting the road in my racy red car. The car, in this dream, is all about my passion, intensity, excitement. On the campus, I am separated from my car, picking up other people, and I notice the penis. It is like I am "fucked" when I am away from the car.

The girl's need, my real need, is to leave and hit the road, to go toward what is exciting and alive and unknown. I feel the energy of fear in moving forward, claiming her need as my own, opening the door, getting in, powering up the engine and pushing down on the gas pedal.

I am scared – the clue to real need. The real need of the girl in me is to hit the open road, to say Yes! to my desire and libido and not care about who is coming or not coming, who is judging or not judging. The girl does not care. She wants to move forward in me. She wants me to give up every vestige of caretaking others as a way of avoiding her need and mine for surrender and satisfaction and fulfillment of my purpose with the Divine.

I have been feeling the fear of getting in the red car and leaving. We watched Mel Gibson's movie *Apocalypse*, which

includes the devastation of a village. I felt my fear of the horror and violence. The film is all about the father's message to the son: Face into your fear and let it be changed in you; do not allow the fear to stop you. The fear does not stop the son from moving forward. In the face of fear, move forward.

Dream:

I am the caregiver of an old lady with dementia. I do not want to be looking after her. When I am truly fed up of taking care of the brain dead lady, I take her to the other women nearby. One of them comments on how well she is, how good a job I am doing looking after her. I start crying.

What am I crying for? Is it the part of me who always looked after my mother in the desperate hope that she would love me? Or, is it the girl in me who feels the pain when I get stuck looking after the brain dead mother – the girl who really, really wants me to get in the red car and go, into more of the life that is waiting for me, challenges and all?

How much longer, girl wonders, are you going to waste time tending to this dead mother? In me she lives as a false responsibility for the needs of others. When I get pulled in by the tentacles of another's false need, I hurt the girl who wants to be free. Love does not equal this responsibility.

When I look to others, my family, my children, women friends – anyone – to be my mother and fill the hole and manipulate them into “loving” me, then I am not the soul girl in her need. When I fall prey to the dark mother in another trying to hook me into their false need, I am lost to my soul. This is the core of codependence: filling the hole with false comfort fueled by false wanting instead of staying with raw, vulnerable fear of

the unknown into which flows untold strength, potency, grace and love.

This is a clearing process around my issue of codependence that I have been in since Marc and I got together.

It feels good to bust the lie of codependence, a step further and deeper. I feel myself move past the block to moving into the fear passage . . . inside the corridor, I feel energy and drive. VRRRoOOOOOmmMMMM! I hit the gas pedal and leave the brain dead bitch behind.

Leaving the Dark Mother: Persephone and Psyche



When we descend, we often assume that something terrible is going to happen because somewhere in the past it did happen.

In the myth of Persephone, the cultural view is that Persephone was stolen from her mother and raped. But, in this work, at the bottom of the descent, when the earth cracks open and we fall into that crack, the Animus, who is Hades in the myth, is waiting for us.

The myth of Persephone from the traditional view reflects our belief about maternal love – that it can conquer trauma and it can conquer the bad man who wants to harm us. But if we know only this love of the mother, we will never know the love of the Animus. In our trauma, we often cling to the mother in order to avoid the trauma.

This is how the dark mother manipulates us, especially in dreams. She uses our fear of something terrible happening and our desire for safety as a way to trick us into not descending into the trauma and therefore keeps us from descending into the love.

When we play this dynamic out in the world, looking to another to keep us safe from feeling our trauma, we create a dilemma. On one hand, we want the support, but on the other,

we can end up hating the other for taking care of us. We know we are not being ourselves; we are not in our souls.

It is the polarity of staying away from real feelings.

This is why Persephone is one of the very few figures in Greek mythology that is archetypal. Most of the others are pathological. Persephone descends in spite of her mother. She goes down to discover who this man is for herself rather than staying forever the virgin daughter to her mother.

When she becomes Hades' wife, the wife of the Animus, Persephone takes on a completely different role, which is illustrated in the story of Psyche and Cupid.

In this story, Aphrodite is jealous of Psyche's beauty and sends her son Cupid to kill her. Instead, he falls in love with her. To make her his, Cupid orders her parents to have her left on a mountain to be killed by a monster. Instead, he has her taken to a palace where he comes to her at night, but she is never allowed to look at him. When Psyche's sisters visit and, filled with jealousy, trick her into looking at her husband, Cupid leaves her. Psyche then sets out to find him, eventually begging Aphrodite to help her. Aphrodite, still jealous, gives her impossible tasks to perform, with the intention of having her die. The final task is to go to the Underworld to take some of Persephone's beauty.

When Psyche finds her way to Persephone in the Underworld, Persephone first offers her the chair of forgetfulness. It is an amazing moment in the story, for she is really offering Psyche the chance to forget the need to please the dark mother, to forget the need to find the husband who abandoned her, to forget her need for revenge on her sisters. To forget, in other words, about what it is to live in the world.

But Psyche does not accept the offer. She refuses the chair, choosing to please the dark mother, choosing to live in the upper world. In the end, she becomes a goddess, never to descend into the Underworld again.

Persephone is the part of the soul that seeks God even though it means facing into trauma. Psyche is the part that is addicted to the abuse of the dark mother because she does not want to face her pain. Persephone leaves the mother, whereas Psyche does not. It is terrifying to leave the mother.

The Animus stands where our trauma is; this is why we are afraid of His love This is why we react to Him. We do not want His love because the love invites us to go into the trauma.

The Psychotic World



If we step too far into the unconscious without understanding or without archetypal support, we may turn to clinical psychology for help. Instead of support for stepping into the unconscious, we may be put on drugs or told that we are insane. The ones who want to help us may actually completely destroy an opening to what is not an illness at all, but simply the dreams moving into our conscious state prematurely. Perhaps we have the capacity to move beyond our condition and the neurotic reality that we all share, the reality of the loss of song, the loss of soul.

Clinical psychologists, without even knowing it, can be like demons that guard the gates to the unconscious.

The dreams want to bring us into that psychotic world, into the true inner reality. We sit in a clinical reality believing that if we do not manage our reality, if we do not create a “good,” neurotic way of perceiving ourselves, rather than being in our soul selves, then we will be sick.

So, we fear going into a psychotic state.

This is the work of the dream: to bring us to our souls through the unconscious. People who appear to be sick are just people who have not had the support to help them understand how their unconscious is working.

There are people, of course, who are so torn up in their psyches that they exhibit psychosis in a way that may be difficult to work. For these kinds of people, this way of working with dreams may not help. R. D. Laing, however, who worked with schizophrenics, claimed that most schizophrenics are normal except that they are deeper in their unconscious than the rest of us.

Some people are healthy enough to react to the dysfunction by having deep feelings that are antagonistic to the neurotic acceptance of the suffering around them. There is usually one person in a family system who goes crazy or goes traveling or leaves in some way. They are the ones who are called crazy, but they are actually the ones who cannot fit into the way the neurosis manifests itself in the world.

In the forty years I have worked this work with clients, delving into the unconscious through the dreams, no one has ever gone crazy. Or, if they went “crazy,” it was because they were divinely inspired by their unconscious to give them the capacity to live at another level of consciousness.

Who we are under the surface, in the unconscious, has far more knowing than the ego. The ego runs the show, either in a neurotic state of functionality or dysfunctionality, whatever the case may be.

One of the goals of this work is to create the capacity to die to self so that we can live in our unconscious in a way that manifests the true self.

Obviously, there is a period in the process in which we do not know who we are. Who we thought we are is gone, and who we truly are is different and new. A clinician may diagnose a person in this part of the process of individuation as schizophrenic, when really it is a place the dreams have led him or her into. If we are not guided by the dreams and we fall into this state, it can be dangerous.

Of course, there is mental illness that is profound and

beyond anything this work can touch. But how many people have been falsely diagnosed? How many people could have been helped, through the dream process, by understanding that the things happening to them were actually normal from the standpoint of the healing and healthfulness inherent in the psyche through every dream?

Unfortunately, most of us are too neurotic to understand that we need to be driven “crazy.” We do not want this. Our egos want us to hold on to our stories so we can stay with what we know instead of letting go.

When we do let go, we fall into the Divine soul that exists in all of us. This soul carries all the feelings of every trauma, of everything that ever happened. It also carries the primary memory of the love of the Divine as well as the capability to be loved and supported.

When we lose our connection with our suffering, we also lose our connection with the remembrance of eternity. Feeling deep in eternity is remembrance of the Divine.

We all have memories. Ultimately, we all come from God, so we must have the ultimate memory of being loved.

There is a saying that all learning is remembering the past. Learning about ourselves is remembering the past, remembering what we once knew, what we once felt. To be felt and remembered again.

Moving through Trauma Rather than Perpetuating Trauma



If everything we do is to compensate for the love that we do not have from God – even the good things we do – then we are basically using everyone by making them into God. We need them to be what we need them to be, making them into the love we do not get from the inside. We want to get the love we are missing on the inside from the outside. Rock stars want people to applaud, writers want people to buy their books, caregivers want the ones they care for to be grateful.

If we are triggered by trauma, we may want the opposite – to be rejected in order to affirm our reality.

Everything becomes a way of maintaining our past experiences – from the people we choose to the jobs we take, everything is conditioned by an agenda to perpetuate what we have already experienced and what we already know.

And so, there is no healing in the world. Instead, it is all contrived to make us feel better. Those who have trauma try breaking old patterns through counseling techniques that make them feel better. This may be helpful, of course, but in reality, they are still not connected to the Divine in themselves. What they are really doing is playing up against others who are successfully able to prove that they are wonderful by being counselors.

Some people become counselors because they want to be good, because, unconsciously, they want the transference from their clients, because they want the support of the people they are helping. They learn to use success to replace God. And we make them into gods.

Where are the people who stand in relationship with God, who can be teachers, who can be true healers? Dreams confront the issues and anything that stands in the way of the Divine love, whether it is dysfunctional behavior or loving behavior. Both are the same – and that is the challenge.

In general, in the world of psychology and counseling, these issues are not seen for what they are. Most counselors want success through their ability to help others or deliver a message. The only way to know what is truly happening with a client, though, is to look at the dreams.

Either we fulfill the trauma by recreating the trauma of rejection, or we compensate for the trauma by getting people to love us. In neither case are we going through the trauma. It is all exterior managing and controlling, compensating for the trauma that everyone has, that sometimes is not even from this lifetime.

Many ask, *Why do bad things happen to good people?* Rather, why not ask, *Why do bad things happen to people who stand with God?* But that is not what is being said. When we say *good people*, we mean someone like the woman who caretakes everyone to the point that she does not see that her husband is having an affair. Or she does see it, but she is such a “good” person that she puts up with it. But really, she is not willing to face into her real desire, her real truth.

We make choices that perpetuate our traumas because we are afraid to face into our fear. But bad things happen to us when we are with God, too – things such as the Inquisition. But this is different because if we stand with God, it is still okay. We still have the love. Good things and bad things come all

the time, but if we stand with God, none of it is an issue. If we have worked through our traumas, our pains, our fears, then the good or bad things do not trigger us. It is just life, with all of its ups and downs. Disappointments and positives things are irrelevant because we are always in the love.

When we are in the love, we are not bumping up against our traumas – we are just free. That is one of the goals: to be free of trauma and the events that led up to trauma.

How do we get down that deep? This is where the child is. The child is on the other side of trauma and remembers everything that ever happened. We are on this side of trauma, avoiding it and not understanding anything that happened, even though the trauma repeats itself over and over again. Even with people who are successful in the world – if the surface is scratched, there is a lot of dysfunction. Appearances can be very deceiving.

First Date and the Pitcher Inn



Marc

The First Date, Boston, Massachusetts

Our first date. We drove from Vermont to Boston, to a room at the Marriott Inn on the ocean. I thought, *Wouldn't it be great to go to the Aquarium? Wouldn't it be great to go to a musical about Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons?*

What was I thinking? An overnight? A king-sized bed? I was not thinking.

It was the first date with a person I had always loved, even though I did not know this at the time. A lifetime of suppressed soul's knowing of a past relationship with Christa.

I would not say that I was not prepared for this first date. Decades of dreamwork, even early LSD experiences, had all brought me to this moment, at the Marriott Inn by the ocean, where I could just fall.

All I knew as we drove to Boston was that I felt an incredible push to be with this woman. It had nothing to do with sex, nothing to do with anything I had ever known. It was some new, gorgeous, delicious truth and a feeling of wanting it now.

We did make love very soon after we landed in Boston. It felt rushed and hurried as if the sex was not the point.

Where was the passion? I felt disjointed. But then I stood up and fell down . . .

. . . into . . . a well . . . a cavern . . . a crevasse, something dark and deep.

I fell and there was no bottom, just floating vulnerability.

Here was the person I always knew, but I now was living something, feeling something with her without knowing what it all was. It did not fit with my knowledge of myself. I had never felt this way with anyone. I was lost from myself. I only knew that I knew her in a way I had never let myself acknowledge – and my sense of identity was ripped, burned away from me in a pain I had not yet felt.

Christa seemed distant and not ready for such an openness. I did not know what to do. She could not reciprocate, and I also knew that I could not have reciprocated either even if she had. I just felt naked, powerless and dedicated to an us that had not yet formed. It takes two to have an us. I guess what I had was just a lust: lost + us . . . lost from us, lust.

The Pitcher Inn, Warren, Vermont

Christa and I were standing on the bridge in Warren, Vermont. It had been several months since our first date, and while we were together, even living together now, there was still no “us.”

She had been moving between wanting me to not wanting me to wanting me again. She understood this ambivalence and called it the goat, playfully sprouting horns on her head, butting up against me with her make-believe hooves. She knew her struggle.

I had been patient and never stopped falling. We were on the bridge, waiting for our room at the Pitcher Inn to be ready. I was feeling uncertain and vulnerable, and she was being goaty.

I thought: *Could this be it? Is this all there is? What is it that I expect her to be for me?* I was beginning to doubt my own vulnerability. I thought maybe I should climb out of this well

and be a man, or the man I was, or thought I was, or thought I should be again, or maybe I could make it up in a different way? Find out how to please a woman. But I was still vulnerable and I knew something had to happen and even that it would.

And indeed it did that night.

Throughout the several months of being together, we had had a very schizoid relationship. At times, Christa would open like a flower and be so vulnerable, and we would connect, like she was falling too. But then it would be different, and the separation would reappear between us. She was not working through her trauma work at this point. She was working at finding her girl and exposing that soul self with me.

The Animus empowered me with patience and a libido that was not sexual but more girl-like. Holding and loving her was the orgasm. All this was new. Like most men, I would feel the urge to get it on and “get off.” Now “getting off” was anticlimactic and never relieved me of the hurt and yearning that burned in my heart for her.

It was as if my libido would only come through my heart. My sex drive remained weak and did nothing to satisfy the yearning of my heart. I wanted something more with her. I enjoyed those moments when our hearts came together, when our souls touched in a love that was unknown to me, at least in memory, although it was familiar.

After our awkwardness on the bridge, now in our room, the moment arrived. In almost disbelief, I saw her eyes change. It was one of those moments when we were very close but I had not yet seen the girl. In the past, when she was soft, she looked different – but this was different still. The eyes were from another time. They were dark, like one grand spiral going in with immense sadness and knowing of us. The eyes wanted to pull me in. I resisted. They wanted me to know about the past. They wanted to wake both of us up. I told Christa this. She, too, could feel it. But then I was not sure. The eyes went away. Christa returned and I was not sure.

I feel asleep and I had this dream:

A dog comes to me, jumping joyfully, and pushes its head right in my face. I can see the girl's eyes in its head.

I woke up with a start and knew I was right – something was happening. I told Christa the dream and went back to sleep.

Then Christa woke up with this dream:

I am on my mother's land near the old rundown house. I catch a glimpse of a wild teenaged girl running through the long grass of the meadow. I look down into the basement of the little house. I see canvas upon canvas of large paintings. I realize the paintings belong to the girl. This creative girl, stuck in the basement, is now free.

This confirmed for her the truth that her girl was back and wanted out. We were both dedicated to following this path to more self-discovery and eventually to the unfolding of both of our traumas and the life we had shared together and would share again, once we were healed.

What was different now, what was changed forever, was that we knew and felt the truth of what we truly were. Never again did I feel isolated from Christa, and for her part, she began to forswear all other identities that she had lost herself in.

I have to say I have never met such an extraordinary individual. I have worked with many thousands of clients, but I never suspected anyone could engage the work with such immediacy. That immediacy could only come from relationship, her willingness to change and to confront her patterns, looking always first to see where her edges are rather than worrying about my issues.

This unique work requires much of us. We must suspend judgments of the other who may have wronged us, for the sake of dealing with our own deeper unconscious feelings that are

triggered and for the possibility of being opened up. These possibilities are available if only we do not react, if only we hold on to the consummate idea that these feelings have always been there regardless of what triggered them in the first place.

To do all of this in the midst of an intense relationship and not blame the other for the feelings that exist and need expression is a gift and is difficult to do. To even be open and invite the other to fail and cause harm, using it as an opportunity to look at ourselves and feel into the depths of past hurts in order to stop time, as it were, so as to drop into the abyss of the Archetypal World that waits for us, that offers healing.

To allow the relationship to create the heat, the razor-sharp cutting of old relational patterns and reactions, choosing to not react but to drop into that cut and to send it backwards in time to the primary wound that leads us back to the trauma of a past life.

This is the work that we did, starting in Boston, which opened up the girl at the Pitcher Inn.

The Pitcher Inn



Christa

We are at the Pitcher Inn. It is fall.

We are standing on the stone bridge before dinner at dusk, slow stream falling below us. It is an awkward five minutes, only the second time we have gone away together.

Marc fell off the ledge in Boston. He became the boy waiting for the girl.

He knew there was more of us, of me. We are growing together, but something is not yet grounded.

That night, after dinner, at the Pitcher Inn, I allow the girl to come through, at the end of the day. In bed. Marc sees her in my eyes.

That night, Marc dreams about the dog with the same eyes as the girl.

That night, I dream of the girl coming out of the basement.

“Those are the girl’s eyes,” Marc says to me, “the eyes of the girl in the dream, coming out of the basement.”

I do not run away from that moment. I stay. I open. All the way back and down, down, down. Remembering.

He knows, I know the truth of the girl coming out through me. We are together in a new way from that point.

We return to the moment we once knew. When we were the boy and the girl, together.

From Goat to Puppy



Christa

Going from the goat to the Labrador puppy in one year . . .

.....feeling a little disoriented

.....uncertain and insecure about who I am

.....do not know who I am as puppy

.....do not recognize myself

.....I am in an altered state all day long seeing clients and teaching.....

We are moving toward going to France, preparing flights and cars. Not knowing what we are moving toward.

Who am I as the puppy standing awkwardly with the Man in my dream?

New frontier in myself.

No map.

No known coordinates.

No idea.

Just a brand new puppy, curious to leave the old house and strike out into the unknown, into adventures ahead.

I am going to the Man as the curious, roly-poly puppy.

As I write, I move into a new body of being. The writing helps me to incarnate into the puppy. I feel more grounded in the altered state. I do not need to eat an English muffin after all.

Trusting the process to take me through. The act of writing brings me in. Deeper into puppy essence. Sniff, lick, roll, tumble. Puppy born out of devastation. New life.

When the Animus' Love Provokes Fears: Regressive Dreams



Marc

In the early stages of the work, many of the psychological issues that arise from dreams can be traced back to the dreamer's family of origin or to childhood. It all goes back to this life. But when we have worked through this material and we face the Animus with all of His love and the dream does not have our father or mother, does not have the rapist or molester, and we are still terrified, then it raises the question of past life issues – regressive work.

This is the place where the love triggers something beyond this life. If we are still struggling with issues around women or men that are traced back to our parents, then the dreams bring these issues. When we know about these issues, even if there are residual issues, the fear that comes with the Animus without any story can take us to the next step: the deeper unconscious where there are deeper memories of trauma.

When we go to shame in response, the regression stops. When we have shame, we are generally avoiding. If the shame comes when we feel fear of the Animus, for example, without any story, then we are avoiding the fear. It is a convenient way to stop the fear, to stop the vertical descent into past lives.

When we are ready to go into regressive work, generally

speaking, we have reached a point in our work with the Animus where we experience and feel the love. When we have the love, we have a partner in the descent. The Animus can now journey with us in the descent to past lives because we know His love, whereas before He could not. We must work the material of this life first because if He tried to journey with us before we were done with our childhood/adult issues, it would create shame, anger or an incredible reaction that would prevent Him from getting close to us.

But as we work the feelings of pain and fear, the deeper pain from previous incarnations can emerge. He can then work with us; He can then help us. We cannot go into the deeper material without His help.

When we feel fear in the face of the Animus' love, it is more terrifying because we usually have not experienced the level of intensity that regressive work provokes. As we regress, the intensity of the feeling becomes purer because it goes back to where it started. The further the dreams take us back, the purer the feelings because we move toward where the feelings first happened.

The feelings that arise relate less and less to what happened in this lifetime because they happened before. Unless we have had terribly violent childhoods, the feelings relate to something that happened that was more violent than what happened in this lifetime. Our issues in the present life often hold the place for what happened in a previous life. They are almost like reminders.

When we project the regressive feelings onto certain issues in our lives, this serves to make the issues seem bigger. In this way, children in a family experience the same parents in different ways.

For example, in my family, I felt tremendous reactions to my father. I felt he was abusive, whereas my two sisters did not. This makes sense for I now know of my trauma with

authority from my previous life. I projected that being with my father was like the Inquisitional authority killing me. My father held that place for me, but he was not the Catholic Church of the 1200s. He was certainly not the enemy. He was just a strict, stern father. I probably made him worse than he was.

Now I have an easier time around forgiveness with my father because I know he was not responsible for what happened to me before. As these feelings have been healed in me, I have had less and less charge around my father being so terrible to me. It has given me space to love him and to forgive him for what he did do.

In order to descend, we need not just all of the important, supportive, potent energies that we have learned to feel, not just His love, but also all of the work that we have done to this point. If we are still damaged, then we will project it onto our current lives. We must heal our issues from our current lives in order to take the next step.

Ultimately, we get to the core of the pain from the life in which it happened, and we work through those memories through the dreams. Once the healing and the alchemy begin around this process, our souls can be reborn and our suffering mitigated, made smaller. It can be healed.

The power of the girl, the boy that God created in each of us can then grow in us. We may still have pain that comes from love, compassion, yearning, need, loss, but we will no longer have the trauma pain that is laced with fear and terrible horror.

In the place of the horror is where He is. He will stand with us – and in this place our souls can come back from the great losses.

The Chrysalis



Christa

Dream:

I follow a man down through tunnels of light into deep catacombs. He leads me and my friend Karla to a stone sarcophagus. Inside is a sticky pupa. Karla goes into the gooey substance and I follow her.

If I had any lingering doubts about the deep alchemical nature of this work, they are vanquished. This work is about alchemy, transformation on a cellular level, actual alteration of the inherited RNA. It is about real change on the deepest level if we are willing to let go and fall into the deepest caverns of our hearts and souls.

In the depths and mystery of the tunnels, the soul moves freely back and forth in time. In the tunnels, there is no time. The self of the present life can line up with the soul who moves freely.

Within the pupa, metamorphosis can happen. All that is not to become butterfly must be exposed and excreted out of the psyche so that the butterfly can manifest. The butterfly is free of the knowledge of the past.



As long as there is a reaction to trauma, there is an attachment to the pathology of protection. Why die the way we are, attached to the remnants of trauma, when the new life awaits us, through the “cut” of our deepest ravine, through the ancient hurts and horrors? It is perhaps not the feelings we dread but the exquisite sensuality of the child soul self, freed from the bonds of that past horror. Perhaps it is about living in great joy.

In the first year of being with Marc, I worked to see where I was stuck in old patterns of codependence, especially with members of my family and women friends. I had to let go of being “all things to all people,” a strategy to keep me from feeling my autonomy and tumbling deeper into relationship with Animus, the wild man who lives in the tunnels of light and love.

The codependence was not protecting me from pain or loss or terror; it saved me from greater fulfillment of my passion, it kept me from stepping toward my red ruby self, my own wild essence, the girl, who runs through meadows with exuberant dogs, who laughs till she falls to the floor, who dyes her dog’s white fur green, who does not care about what people think of

her, who accepts criticism and disapproval as part of the pirate life.

For a good girl, nice upper-middle-class, *comme il faut*, bred-to-marry-well-and-do-the-right-thing girl, the pirate's life means living outside society's standards of the norm. It means saying the difficult thing to a friend, not rescuing my son from his gloom, standing up when I have a bolt of energy rip through my body when I smell a rat in a meeting, and speaking up even when I do not have a rational explanation at hand. It means trusting the sensuality of the soul self that lives in my very human and female body. It means letting my mind follow the promptings of my heart, felt deep within my chest cavity.

Dreams like pearls
In the catacombs of light and love with the Man.
In the sarcophagus as a pupa in a chrysalis.
Blinding light, love and healing.

Dream:

I am climbing up a hill with a woman who is carrying a tiny baby. At the top of the hill, a woman comments on the baby, asking a foolish question. We carry on inside a large house in which many people are busy with healing and dreams. Marc is meeting with a small group including Deb and others about a project. There is a feeling of excitement in the air, a sense of engaged energy, like bees in a beehive.

All of a sudden, I am surrounded by a brilliant light.

I cannot see anything else but the light. I feel blinded and it scares me. I scramble to find my sunglasses. I can't find them anywhere. I stop. I stop looking. I stop running from this light. I stop struggling. I surrender.

Through the blinding light I find myself in a different plane of consciousness. Marc and I are working with a man. The session feels more like a hands-on healing. Marc and I, along with the man's wife, surround him. We enclose him with our bodies. Before our eyes he shrinks and becomes a tiny baby. We fold around him in love.

When you have been drenched in love, you know what love is. My dreams come to remind me of what I knew.

In this dream, I am pierced by light which is love, Divine love, God's love, his love, her love . . . extraordinary love.

This is the love and light down in the tunnels of the catacombs. This is the consciousness of love. This is what I was scared of. I was scared of the love. I remember it.

When I follow the Man into the tunnels, I am actually returning to what I knew, sometime, somewhere. Real love. A field of consciousness both dazzling and blinding. The chrysalis dream was the beginning of an initiation into a new level of consciousness. I merged with the sticky pupa of the chrysalis. I changed.

I wrestled with the goat in me who wants to be in charge, worry and stay aloof. She did not want to die in me. I struggled between haughty goat control and liquid chrysalis love girl wanting to emerge. Another layer of pathology loses ground.

Soft, strong girl in me surfaces. Tears melt goat; grief dissolves old, protective walls.

Why do I fear the love? What happened to me in another time and place that makes me want to flee this love like honey?

I am seeing down the tunnel of time, the continuum, or

pipeline between worlds, eras, cultures, lifetimes. I see a clear pathway. the soul, my soul knows neither time nor space. the soul moves along the pathway, backwards and forwards. . .

We are going to France in September to the land where Mary may have lived, with the child she may have conceived with the man Jesus. What if it is true that Mary herself was the grail, the vessel, for the blood of their union? What if Mary was an enlightened woman who shared a vision with an enlightened man and together they agreed to step into an historical time and place to bring an embodied, sensual form to a pole of consciousness we might call the Christos, the light, the love into a dark, distorted world of corruption and lies? What if the tunnels of light and love bend back in time from now to then?

What if we all are vessels? What if the light and love is the Christos available to every woman or man willing to look at every aspect of their darkness to become vessels for this consciousness? What will we find in France? What if what we fear most is the pole of love that is eternal? What do I fear? How much love can I bear?

What is changing?

Who will I become?

What will it mean to emerge from the chrysalis?

Away from Codependence



Christa

Everything has changed. My relationships with women friends and family especially have all changed. I have had the codependent socks knocked off me. I, who never even knew what the term *codependence* meant.

What does codependence have to do with the chrysalis and the tunnels of light? What's happening to me?

I can feel the tide pulling me out, the fear simultaneously rising. I can feel my resistance. I do not want to get pulled in and under.

Dream:

Deb and Dorothy are going to a party. I do not have a dress to wear. Deb offers me one; it does not fit! It is late, time to go. I realize I do not need to go; it is not where I need to be.

I go back to my room. It reminds me of a monk's cell, like the ones I saw in Florence with thick stone walls, a solid door and a tiny window. I am a little scared of being in the room. I think, *There is no alternate way out of this room.* I go into the room and sit down on the bed. It is quiet and peaceful.

When I go to this room I sink into myself more deeply. The world recedes. It is like being in the tunnels with the Man. It is like being in the sarcophagus with my friend as the pupa in the chrysalis.

Marc and I go to a wedding on Martha's Vineyard. It is a social occasion, festive and celebratory and, well, a party. In the past my social self would rise up, compulsively, almost as if it was my single-handed responsibility to make the party successful.

I noticed afterwards how I do not do that reflexively the way I did in the past. Being adept socially is also a gift of mine. That is vastly different from being social out of a compensation for shame. I can choose to be gracious and include everyone at the table. I can be deep in my monk's chamber and be gracious at a wedding and have fun and dance a lot.

While Marc and I tear up the rug dancing, an older conservative-looking woman in a yellow outfit shyly approaches us. She wants to join in with our dancing. She takes the step toward us and we say, "Come on in." Her smile lights up the room. I see the girl in her smile. She loves being included in our joy. She comes alive dancing.

Dream:

I am with my soldiers, the commanding officer. We each have to move down stairs, moving from one level to another. Each time a person descends, there is a chance they will be the one to be shot and killed. Not everyone is shot, but every person is at risk. I feel absolute terror for my death and for my people.

My part in a codependent culture: If I can save or protect you, then I do not have to feel the terror and grief of having lost everyone I loved. If I can bring you along with me, then I do not have to be the girl who never had a father's protective love.

When I take on the saving of others' lives, I act from the false father in me, which is the goat, who is overly responsible, burdened, pressured and above all, separate and alone. The lie of the goat pathology is that there is no one, no Father, no greater force behind me, at my back.

The truth?

Dream:

I am kneeling before a wise, kind old father who loves and knows me. I hold his hands and weep for the death of my father, the father I never had who never knew me.

I am in the chrysalis in a sarcophagus, in the underground tunnels. I am changing, shedding the goat, the false masculine. I am in a process. I feel glimpses of who I might be without this shell. The process is painful. I shed. I hold on. I surrender.

Goat fights back. I feel the pain of no support, no father, going it alone all my life. I feel the reality of the love of the Man in the tunnels, the Father with his kind face, a partner in the world who truly loves and totally supports me. I soften. In the chrysalis, I am soft and mushy, unformed.

The hard goat shell is outmoded, hurtful to me and others.

I am becoming soft, mushy-heart girl. The butterfly girl emerging from the chrysalis is the autonomous me.

The Achilles' Heel of Humanity



Pathology “helps” us by protecting us from the pain and the horror of the trauma. But when it does this, we can also never feel love again, not in the abiding way that we did before the trauma. It is a bad trade.

It is like when we take a drug – it supports us, heals us, helps us. But we pay a price. We lose our own internal ability to make dopamine, and then we are dependent on the drug. When we take the drug pathology offers us, we lose our capacity to love and we live on false emotion. The drug that is emitted by pathology is the emotions of gyroscope – pride, shame, false good feelings, etc.

Pathology gives us a reason to live even though the source of our lives, of all life, the source which is being conscious of His love, is taken away from us. It is a terrible, terrible trick.

Sometimes, when we feel grief or horror from a life experience, such as losing a spouse, it opens us to loss, which opens us to the love. This is why people do extraordinary things when there is an extraordinary catastrophe. We may even seek out catastrophe on some level because we get to have the love.

There is a better way – to find it inside. To do this, we have to go to some deep pain, all the way down to the deepest wound.

The great tragedy is that we are all living outside the love as a way to avoid the pain or the loss. This is the Achilles' heel of humanity.

Section II

I sought my beloved everywhere
But I could not find him.
I called his name
But he gave me no answer.

Then the watchmen
who go about the city found me.
They smote me, they bruised me;
The keepers of the walls
tore my mantle from me.

From Song of Songs 5:6-7

The Faith of the Cathars did not need a cultic priesthood or a church building containing artifacts and relics. Their faith was practiced in homes and fields. They disdained the need for churches, relics and sacramentals. Among the Cathars, men and women were considered equals, women even being allowed to inherit and own property....Women were also allowed to preach....This practice among the Cathars reflected the esteem in which the women, including Mary Magdalen, had once been held in the infant church. (p. 74)

In 1209, The Vatican launched a crusade against the entire region of Provence, including the nobility of the area, many of whom had themselves embraced the Cathar heresy. Allied with the king of France, the armies of the pope ravaged the Midi for a generation, their victory culminating in the massacre of Montségur, a Cathar seminar. There, in 1244, an enclave of besieged heretics was defeated, and more than two hundred who refused to recant were burned at the stake. (p. 75)

From *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar* by Margaret Starbird



When Mary had said this (her teachings from Christ), she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Savior had spoken with her. But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, Say what you wish to say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas. Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Savior: Did He really speak privately with a woman and not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?

From *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* 9:1-4

Mary Is Magdala



Christa

Mary is Magdala...is ancient feminine principle of vulnerability, vulva, openness, receptivity, vessel, ability to feel personal pain and love...which opens to universal pain and love...true compassion and understanding.

What if Mary knew the mysteries of transformation, learned from the Egyptian mystery school of Isis/Osiris?

What if Mary was a healer/priestess of consciousness in her own right?

What if the Last Supper shows the end of the experiment of the enlightened teachers, called Jesus and Mary, working together?

What if this is the moment before the rupture, the end of the lived experiment?

What if it was not time for this dimension of consciousness, in the socioeconomic political crosscurrents of the time?

What if the sacred union went underground?

What if it can now emerge?

The Rose Cross



When we are lost, we are lost because we have turned our backs on what we had, creating trauma. We say, “Never again!” or we run or we get angry or we get scared. The trauma is actually created because of this turning away from what was. It was so horrible to lose.

But when we do this, we can never have what we lost. We are trapped; we are in the cycle of unrequited love because we are too far away from our hearts to reclaim what we have lost.

When we go through our traumas, we find that loss, we find our pain and we discover that loss is different than pain. Loss is having pain but with the belief that we will never get back to what we lost. But pain always goes back to what we lost. In fact, pain reclaims what was lost. It is the journey of the pain to the wounded heart to find its requited wholeness.

The rounds of pain bring us closer and closer to our hearts. This allows us to receive the gift despite the loss, to be willing to risk losing it again. If we are willing to risk losing it again, we can have it again, no longer lost from what we were and what was.

This opens the door to heaven; it is always in the deepest

layer of the psyche. If we can live there, then we can be as both – living in the world and living in heaven. This is what Mary did. Her loss did not break her. She stood in her pain.

She did this by simply accepting her pain. That is all. She did not see it as an enemy; she did not see it as an end. It is not the end. It is only a place to be, because pain is love. She could have both. We can have both if we have the courage to go all the way down.

It is like the image of the rose at the bottom of the well. The rose is Mary. The Rose Cross. The feminine part of the cross.

Mary was coded into the culture through the cult of the rose. The rose is an anagram for eros. And pain is part of eros. Eros is love, love that is felt in the body. Love in the body. But loss is not.

To the extent that we all avoid ourselves, we cannot have the relationship that Mary and Jesus had. The ego pathology, to compensate, tries to deny that the relationship ever took place, calling Mary a whore and Jesus a cult figure or Mary a concubine and Jesus an opportunist. No one wants to say that this is the Romeo and Juliet story personified as complete, requited love.

This is the goal – requited love on this earth with a partner and, if you are a woman, with the Animus.

To the extent that we avoid the truth, we become like the church to the Cathars. The church that destroyed the Cathars is just a reflection of our collective denial. We collectively make the church.

All of us can look at how we are kept from our vulnerable selves. How does our repressed pain or trauma work to have us jump away from our vulnerable and sensual selves?

The Girl Rising



Christa

Shortly after I dream of the chrysalis, I have the inspiration to go to the Languedoc in France to explore the territory of the Gnostic thirteenth-century Cathars. So many people in our circle of North of Eden were dreaming about the girl.

The feminine was rising in our consciousness. My personal journey, since becoming romantically involved with Marc, had been all about the girl in me, emerging out of the basement of the old house on my mother's property in Stowe.

I finally was with a partner, a man, who loved, respected, admired as well as encouraged the deep vulnerable feminine in me. It was time. She was ready to leap out.

And leap out she did, running through the meadows, with a pair of gorgeous poodles, down to the ocean.

But, when we committed to traveling to France, I began to have enormous fear arise in me. I did not want to go. I wanted to stay glued to my house here in safe Vermont. What had I been thinking?

We went to France anyway. Doors opened magically. We landed in a tiny hilltop village in the Aude Department of the Languedoc (formerly known as the Occitane). We met Sophie Macdonald and her husband James, a historian of the Cathars,

who rented us their gite. Down the lane they lived, with their little son Guillem, in a fourteenth century castle, which they had been renovating for the last thirteen years.

We spent an evening with them, drinking wine while Guillem and the three standard poodles (all girls) leapt and jumped about with great enthusiasm. Over coffee, one morning in the market town of Esperaza, we talked more deeply with Sophie and the idea evolved to offer a retreat at their castle. Meanwhile, a colleague in Barcelona, called Jordi Borrás, was organizing a day for us in his town which included a video interview with his friends, whose film company, coincidentally, was called Cathar Productions.

Woven through these fortuitous encounters, was the landscape. First came Nice, with its glistening Baie des Anges, cerulean sea stretching out before our balcony vantage point towards Africa. Then, came Provence and the Roman town of Arles, perched with its back turned to the brooding Rhone River.

From Arles we entered the darker lands of the Cathar country.

Painting by Christa Lancaster



The Place the Anima Holds



The Anima, generally speaking, does not usually get involved in tricking a dreamer. If we do not recognize the girl in us, then the Anima gets lost in our mother projections or is seen as competition. As we go deeper into the work, She has a greater chance to be more active in our psyches. But before this, we can confuse her support with support to shut down our openings to trauma. We may want her to make us feel better rather than to be with us in our trauma. Initially, she comes to support us around issues of shame, but she also can hold a place in a dream for our soul.

It is important to understand that the Animus and the Anima are identical. They are actually androgynous and hermaphroditic. They both have a penis and a vagina. They are one being; since we are split, they have to come to us in different ways. But at its spiritual root, the Animus/Anima is one enlightened, Divine being. It separates into two when it enters this dimension, perhaps because this is the way that this world is. We are split in this way, so they come split as a way to work our evolution.

This can be tricky because people often believe that if the Animus is dominant, then this work is patriarchal work. But

the reality is that the most important figure in the Archetypal World is the girl, the girl soul.

Women especially fear the girl because she is so vulnerable. We can become the girl only when we have worked with our trauma enough to feel the love in the moment of deepest vulnerability, in the moment of our deepest trauma.

The girl is transcendent.

When Jesus asks God, "Forgive them, they know not what they do," he says it after railing at God for abandoning him. When he gets past his anger, he becomes, in a way, the girl. The girl is the one who says, "Forgive them." This is the girl heart.

And, after Jesus died, his wife, Mary, became the leader of the movement. The spirituality she brought to France is very much oriented to the feminine principle. In the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, the church dedicated to Mary in Rennes-le-Château, at the foot of her image is a skull. She stands in the place of death because of her sublimity.

She transcends death; she transcends pathology.

This is why many men follow women spiritually. Conversely, it is also why many men are terrified of women and feel they need to control or dominate them. It is also why girls are more abused than boys – there is a total war against the girl.

The Slab: Descending Together

❧

Marc

I had the following dream only a few months after Christa and I came together as beloved partners:

The Animus strips me down naked and straps me to a large rock, forty feet across, that hovers above a deep hole or tunnel that drops vertically down into the earth.

Then Christa is taken naked and tied to my back with leather straps. This disk of a rock then descends in jolts, fits and starts into the hole/tunnel. One moment, I am facing into the abyss and then the next, I am behind Christa on the rock, with Christa facing into the abyss.

Somehow the gyrations of this huge rock, flipping in its way, create this effect and slowly, thus, we descend. Eventually, we reach the bottom that opens into a lush jungle environment.

Before I had the dream, I knew about the previous life where I had been hung, quickly, after having been torn from the bosom of my friends and spiritual brothers and sisters. The deepest

tear was separating from my wife. I also knew that I was angry and scared, angry at God.

Over the last twenty years, I have worked this anger and received an abundance of love. Through my new relationship with Christa, I have opened to a newfound vulnerability.

Falling into this deepest tunnel of vulnerability, I have been searching for the bond that I shared with Christa. A bond that had been broken and lost to me.

This dream of the slab is about the journey of descent into our past lives, together, taking us into the wellspring of our mutual traumas. First one facing into the abyss and then the other.

Our Pain Remembers



One of the reasons we avoid our pain is because our pain knows what we did.

This is not about shame or blame. When we feel shame or blame about something, even if we did make a mistake, we feel angry. Shame and blame are visages of anger. They do not help us.

Our pain remembers the failings we bring to this life. It is our pain that holds the memory.

If a dream shows us a past life where we did fail, where we did make a mistake or where we reacted in a painful way and we have no feeling for it, there would be no reason to have the dream. We would just see the dream as blaming, as, "I am a terrible person, I did this terrible thing." Pain and fear are the waters of life; they hold feelings and even images of what we have done in the past. They hold our sin.

We do not have to know exactly what we did. We can feel it. If we can feel it in this life when we do it again, when we are in our feelings, then we can feel we are doing it again. We feel the pain of doing it again in some way. Again, it is our pain that shows us. It holds the memory of what was right and whole and real in us that somehow got lost.

Our pain remembers everything. It remembers who we are so we can remember who we could be against the backdrop of how we have lived, what we have done and what we are still doing.

This work can be incredibly difficult in the beginning because we do not have the deeper feeling to understand what we have done. In First Stage work, when we first look at ourselves, we react. We may say, “What do you mean? It was his or her fault!” But when we go to the deeper realm where we can feel our pain, we can know what we did, what is ours to face, without the judgment, without the blame.

We can feel it without shame or guilt because the moment we actually let ourselves feel it, we know we are loved and forgiven. Christ on the cross said, “Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do.” We do not know what we are doing because our hearts are closed. If we felt the pain, we would know.

Sometimes, when we do feel what we are doing, we squash it. Or, our anger takes over and we continue to act out on others. It becomes about punishing others – for our own suffering that we will not feel or for the failings of others that we have to “pay back.” All of this takes us nowhere but to more anger.

The key to the past is in our pain. The key to the present is also in our pain because when we begin to change, we can feel we are off and then choose to do it differently. Without the pain, we are at the mercy of the demon, of the voices, of the ideas, of the shame. We can never know our own woundedness, we can never know how we have wounded others.

There is an old expression – those who do not remember the past are destined to make the same mistakes again. But if we know our pain of the past, we can finally do something different. The heart opens. The soul emerges and we can live a different life.

As soon as our pain goes away, our mind thoughts return. The nihilism, the self-deprecation, the anger, the projections onto others, the shame, the blame, all of it reemerges.

Then we receive the next dream. But the dreams are not just about the dark past. When we live in the pain, we can begin to see the Divine loving us. We begin to have reversions back to the child, the nascent, sacred self. When we feel our pain, when we journey back to the past to get to our pain, breaking through shame and pride, breaking through the gyroscope and the ego, we can finally have the redemption for which we all thirst. We can finally claim our soul selves who know everything. Through our pain, our knowledge is returned to us.

The Sensuality of Trauma



Christa

Woke up in the night suffocating, could not breathe.....
choking.....terror.....

On my walk this morning, I remembered.....it was
smoke from a fire choking me.....

Trauma.....fires of the inquisition?

This is the follow-up to the gas explosion dream.....

My body is gyrating with energy moving.....

Now I understand the clenching around my heart.....not
able to breathe.....

This is my preparation for Cathar country.....

This is where my work is right now...

Breathing the smoke of the fires of my burning compadres
and feeling it all.....terror, loss, devastation, horror.....what I
went through in Dachau in 1995 when I went to the camp site
and fell apart.....

What I went through when I saw the French film about
Joan of Arc, when I read Anne Michael's book, *Fugitive Pieces*.

Breathing the smoke.....

Seeing the image of Joan of Arc being burnt at the stake
anchors my experience of my dream last night.....suffocating
from smoke.....the energy stuck in my left upper back shifts to

my heart.....in my heart the energy can move.....the body is no longer holding the stored sense memory.....it moves from the back, the body releases so that the heart.....my heart can process the losses.....pure loss of the physical body, life on earth.....not the soul that does not die, but the physical body that houses the soul.

Post traumatic-stress-disorder.

Until five years ago, I regularly had night terrors, sitting up in my bed screaming with terror. I never spoke of it, never thought anything of it until I had my first trauma dreams in 2004. Then, they stopped.

At age nine, in hospital for a tonsillectomy, I dreamt I was in a room without openings and a ball was coming towards me, filling the whole room, bearing down on me, suffocating me. In 1992, I dreamt, I was gassed in a gas chamber.

This month I dream about the gas explosion in which I die.

Healing trauma by re-experiencing the physical symptoms in the body.

The sensuality of trauma, to heal all the way through, is to feel the physical moment of what happened in the body, to be in the body in present time and feel and stay in the body, in the present.

Bringing the image from the dream, the fire and the smoke, into felt reality. Tolerating the terror long enough to allow the held imprint to release; to find its way out of the body.

Connecting feeling with image.

Dream:

A father tells me how he will do anything for his child. If his child loved theatre, he would be thrilled to share that passion with her and take her to every play imaginable.

My body is reconfiguring. Waves of fear subsiding. Peace. I feel the support of father energy.

Nervous system settling. Newly altered and rearranged
Actual changing in the body.

We can actively choose to enter the wave of what I call a healing cycle. There is a discernible beginning, middle and end to the cycle.

We can get to know and trust our own healing cycle.

Losing Our Yearning for God to Anger



Marc

When we have deep trauma, we cannot find God.

We get angry as a way to repress the trauma. There are only two ways that anger can go. Because we cannot find God, we judge God or we judge ourselves – either God is responsible or we are responsible. Guilt, responsibility, judgment are all ways to cap or repress the trauma. We become angry every time we feel hurt.

When we blame someone or something, we are back to the Garden of Eden where we were shamed for our knowledge. Not shamed by God, but shamed by the devil. The disembodied voice that came and said “GET OUT” is the voice of pathology wanting us to learn shame.

Shame and blaming others is a way to avoid the pain. When Jesus was on the cross and cried to heaven, “Why have you forsaken me?” he was blaming God.

If we do not know the love in the moment of the trauma, then we are likely to become angry and blaming. When we blame, we have made a decision – our will is ignited – to never be hurt again. We say, “I am not going into the world and opening my heart again. Not to God, not to another woman, not to another man. Never again. Not going to happen.”

In this way, all of our yearning is lost in the anger. We cannot have desire for God when we are angry at God.

On top of the anger, we can also pile on judgment: “I must have done something wrong,” or “He did something wrong.” The more shame and guilt, the more blame. The more shame, guilt and blame, the more opportunity for nihilism, in any of the many ways it can manifest.

For me, I went into hopelessness. I could not find my way to heaven, and I could not leave the suffering. I got caught in my own pain because I forgot the love. When we forget the love, our pain becomes nihilistic.

Anger feeds the nihilism. We may say, “All right then. I will take the love I can get. If I cannot have the love that I remember, then I will take the love I can get where I will not be hurt. Maybe I do not want this person, but that makes it better because then I will not get hurt. I do not want to take a real risk.”

We have to remember to forgive ourselves the anger. We also have to forgive Him, not for not being there, but for our own ignorance. What is forgiveness, really? It is so personal. For me, I did not have to blame God because I knew I was ignorant for blaming Him in the first place. What is there to forgive?

Can I forgive myself for not living my life? I came back to this life and did not have my beloved, except as a client, for twenty years because I got angry when I died in a previous life. If I had died a good death, I would probably not have had to go through this mishmash of confusion in this life. Very few of us died a good death.

We need to understand that when we are angry in this way, we get lost. We get lost because we get angry and give up hope.

That is why forgiveness is critical. If I had never forgiven my father, then I would have never broken my nihilism. But

then I realized that I was not really angry at my father, even though he was abusive. I was angry at God for something that happened beyond my lifetime.

I could never really willingly hate God, so I had to forgive myself for hating God. I know I turned against God when something terrible happened. The moment after Christ said, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" the very moment after he turned on God, he then said, "Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do." He let go of his anger at God. He understood the human condition and he understood he was up against that human condition.

When we can feel into this, we can let the anger then morph back to yearning. We can begin to let ourselves open our hearts and find Him.

Rage of Despair



The reason some addicts can break their addictions and others cannot is that perhaps the ones who can are not fully taken over by despair or anger. They are simply addicted; they got caught up in the drug for some reason and got addicted physically, but they did not do it as an act of anger or as an act of self. People who can break addictions have a hopeful place in themselves that is stronger than the place that is not hopeful. If we are addicted out of anger, we will never stop using as long as we are too angry or too hurt or we project the anger and the hurt.

Despair, self-hate, shame, depression are all aspects of anger except they are turned in a way where we feel oppressed. When a person is repressed in this way and someone tries to help, then he may play along but will not change. In fact, he will turn on the helper before changing. When someone is passive-aggressive, he will not only not comply, but will also make the other person pay. It is almost as if he is addicted to the misery.

Nihilistic despair can often feel to us as if it is just something innate, something that we walk into the world with. But once we begin to understand and feel the connection to the love, we can begin to see the nihilism for what it is.

Nihilistic despair is pathology saying, "I do not want

you to have the love. I do not want you to be with the Animus. I do not want you to feel good. I do not want to lose you to God.” This is the ultimate rage.

But we also have to see how we are personally involved in that anger. If that anger is there, then we must be involved, for this pathological rage could not cling to us if we did not have some anger reaction in us. Perhaps we reacted to how our parents treated us or even further back in time. The nihilistic despair arises when we feel victimized or we feel that something is being taken away from us. We do not even realize it is a form of anger.

When we react by defending, we are really perpetuating holding on to something. The root of this anger and despair is never really about something in the world, even though it may feel like it. In the world, most people are insensitive to each other and no one is really helping anyone. In fact, despair in the world makes perfect sense – it is understandable why people despair because there is a lot to despair.

This is really about the Archetypal World. This is when God comes to us, saying, “I am here to help you do all these great things in partnership with you. I am here, but you need to stop being so angry. I am here now.” When He comes to us, repeatedly loving us and showing us the love but we remain stuck, then we are stuck in the despair.

Probably we are still angry in some way – through self-hate or through hate at others. Perhaps we have something we need to forgive. At some point, the actual issue does not matter as much for it all simply clogs together and we cannot receive the love. If we do not let go of the anger, then we cannot be with the Animus in the way He wants to be with us.

Rennes-le-Château



Christa

We wake in the small village of St.Ferriol. Sounds of farmers' tractors, but otherwise silence. We went to sleep with Venus flashing her light down at us through the skylight in our bedroom.

I woke yesterday with a dream of being in the market buying plants and flowers, with a big round baby with me.

The appearance of the child and the joy of being in the flower market are welcome. For six weeks, I have grappled with dreams of apocalyptic disaster, the gas explosion on the highway, wandering in a desolate landscape looking for my love, then, just before we leave on this trip, an experience of being suffocated by smoke inhalation.

When I arrive in France, I am in a state of unthawing. Still in New York, I bump into security gates at the information desk in the Delta terminal at JFK. At the Nice airport I fall over a traffic ramp. I hit my head on a door to the bathroom. I am awkward, without many words to speak. I feel an apprehension about heading west.

The city of Nice, where we spend the night in a charming and well-appointed hotel in the Old Town, is shiny and clean and white. The Mediterranean sparkles below our hotel balcony, the

color of the sea varying from cobalt to azure blue. On the other side of this body of water must be Africa. Two white sails of a sloop catch the light of the morning sun. I want to stay here, comfortable and safe, drink café crème in shady cafés on the square.

The dark forests, red earth and white limestone escarpments of the West, however, are calling to us. We have a mission before us: to visit the land where the “Good People” lived and thrived in the receptive culture of the Occitane culture of the southwest corner, in the area between Arles, Carcassonne and Beziers, closer to the coast. We have many questions. Our mission is to learn about these seekers, who they were, what they believed and to face the haunted sites on which they faced their deaths by burning at the stake, at the hands of the French-led troops.

Yesterday we went to Rennes-le-Château, a hilltop village with a mysterious past and a church dedicated to Mary Magdalene. Inside the church, a statue of Mary shows at the base of her feet is a skull. A settlement has been on this site since the Bronze Age, two and three thousand years before the birth of Christ.

This area was once a thriving civilization with honor and respect for women who could and did become landholders and heads of households. In these houses grew the practice of the “Good Women” and “Good Men,” later pejoratively named the Cathars (lovers of the satanic cat).

The teachings of this sect of Christianity were exchanged in these feudal houses, dotted all around the area of the Languedoc where we are situated in our small hilltop village. On one side is a broad open plain with iron red fields for planting, and on the other side is a spectacular range of jagged peaks dropping down to a dark river valley and ancient dirt roads winding along into the next valley town. In the system of small feudal fiefdoms, in the wild lands between Catalonia and what was developing into

the country of France, beyond the hierarchy of Christian Rome and the French army, grew a faith based on the purification of the soul. In the relative political tolerance of this remote, and strategic, frontier land, developed a culture that allowed for women to be spiritual leaders and landlords and for Jews to be accepted within communities, particularly along the coastal routes of trade and commerce in the Mediterranean. Here, the poetry and song of the Troubadours flourished.

Interwoven into this picture is the story that Mary Magdalene arrived on the shores of the Camargue, south of Marseille, along with companions, about forty years after the birth of Christ.

Accepting the Fear and Sensuality



In fear, there is largess. Facing into our fear in a dream is a place to move through – going over a cliff or breathing the water rather than thinking we are going to drown, or facing that bear that is chasing us. This is a point of departure from most dream therapists, for most believe that we must arm ourselves against the fear.

Fear is a way to descend deeper into the psyche. It is the only way, in fact. Even if we feel some level of vulnerability or inadequacy or insecurity, if we do not get to our fear, these feelings will likely be tainted. If they do not get tainted, the level at which we can experience them is probably only a parcel of what is possible. The unknown fear is then projected back out as a reaction or mandate around those feelings. We may say, “Well, if I am feeling vulnerable or feeling my pain, then either someone else has to feel it too or something has to happen – I have to do something about it or someone else has to do something about it.”

To drop fully into our feelings requires acceptance of fear. Along with this fear comes the fundamentally terrifying experience that we call sensuality.

If feeling essence is scary, which it can be, sensuality is even scarier because it means feeling our feelings fully in the

body. Usually, if we encounter feelings, we gingerly jump away or interpret them or even look for a cause for them. We may say, “I am scared because of my mother,” or “I feel hurt because of Joe,” instead of, “I am scared,” or “I feel hurt.” We project the feelings onto something as a causality – we feel this feeling because of that event or circumstance.

When we really move into our feelings, we do not worry about causes. We simply drop down into the feeling. Subsequent dreams will then take us deeper into an expression or an experience of the consciousness that is changing or moving by giving us a drama that reflects those feelings in some way. Then, the feelings can move.

We move through subsequent mythologies or dramas in our dreams. It is like going into Narnia.

But to go into Narnia, we have to accept our feelings in an extraordinary way. If we do not even feel our feelings or we have judgment that it is bad to feel those feelings if we do feel them, then we cannot move through.

Sensuality is feeling our feelings, such as fear or pain, in the body. Sensuality is living in the present state.

The Soul's Story



Christa

Marc and I stay home in our little apartment in this little village today to catch up on writing, to putter around the village and make a delicious meal of local tomatoes, tuna and white beans with salad and radishes.

We spend the morning talking about the dreams we have been having and what we have been learning.

My cycle before coming to France opened with the dream of dying in a gas explosion on the highway which led me to wandering about in a desolate landscape, like a ghost, looking for my lost love and community. Wave after wave of terror came over me.

In the relative calm of my own home, I had the space and time to recognize the terror, let the energy move through me with very little opportunity to project. Then, just before leaving I woke up gasping for breath as if I were in a room full of smoke. I knew I was coming closer to the trauma of the auto de fe, or burning at the stake, common in the early 1200s here in this region of France. I watched the 1928 version of *The Passion of St. Joan*. It helped to ground my experience in an image. In the movie, she passes out from smoke inhalation before the flames reach her. Seeing the horrifying image of Joan

on the pyre gave me perspective and allowed me to accept the gift of the dream: not to re-traumatize me by re-activating an old horror but to step into the experience and clear it from my being so as to be freed from it. I stepped into the fear, the undertow of the wave, trusting it would bring me through to another place in me, another level of consciousness.

This is tender to write about. The issue of past lives is highly personal. I, in no way, want to impose any sense that others should believe in past life theory or that it is necessary, for healing through the dreams, to investigate lives other than this one itself. I, for one, did not venture into past life turf very readily or intentionally.

Instead, I began to feel, not believe, the truth of past lives...for myself...when, seven years ago, I began to have dreams related to trauma. I began to move into a new cycle of healing as my mother, Brenda, was coming close to dying. My marriage was coming unraveled and I began to have episodes of uterine bleeding. I began to fall apart and I remember, quite consciously, deciding to let myself fall.

A year after she had died, I had left my home, my family and my marriage, the bleeding intensified. I found myself lying on the couch, very weakened by blood loss, with the memory of the dream in which Ajax, my old Labrador, vomits up a baby. Alongside this dream was another about a whole village, my home, which had been wiped out. I was the only survivor. I was thunderstruck by these two dreams. I knew they were hugely important. I called Marc right away.

I remember lying on my red couch speaking to Marc that day. I remember how he suggested that Ajax had been holding the knowledge of my traumatic loss until I was ready. This made me cry to think of the beloved in the form of my dear old fellow, Ajax, patiently holding an unbearable loss inside him, until I was strong and held enough in love, to bear it myself.

It was the first time Marc spoke about the devastation of

the village as an event that may well have happened in a past life, so deep and devastating and specific the image and sensation was. I did not question his proposal. I felt the rightness of it in my bones.

In fact it was a relief for me to have an image of an event that seemed in proportion to the level of terror and loss I knew inside myself. My whole life I had woken with night terrors, suddenly sitting up in bed and screaming a blood-curdling scream. My dreams had repeatedly opened me up to caverns of loss. My upper-middle-class, British, averagely dysfunctional family life and upbringing never seemed commensurate with the wells of fear and loss stored inside me.

Having the image of the devastated village and feeling the extraordinary grief that provoked wails of sorrow from deep within me, was incredibly helpful and validating. Somewhere in the history of my soul's journey I had known out-of-the-ordinary trauma. It still lived in me and now I had the opportunity to release its burden on my soul. I could be free from its density and heaviness. I could reclaim more of the soul child, waiting in the belly of the psychopomp. I knew this instinctively and let myself fall deep into all of it.

When I wrote the story of my journey, *Vessel* (which is woven through Marc's writings in a book we co-authored called *Sex, Trauma and Conjunctio*), I was working out the psychological underpinnings of my soul work.

I wrote through the temporal losses of my life: marriages, deaths, absent father, difficult mother, the scrambling of my ego lost to my soul, to charm and please my way through life in survival mode. I drew on the apparent strength of my persona to maximize my passage through the labyrinth of life's developmental phases.

I made a hash of things early on in adulthood, by handing over my power in my frozen state of survival, to a man who used it to his advantage. We were a good match for the pathology.

Later, I married another man behind whose agenda I could hide the truth of my being and my latent potency. I wanted to emerge and unconsciously I did not want to emerge at all. For to emerge would be to walk into the storehouse of memory and feeling, the historical database of the soul's journey. The tension between the desire to be found and the desire to be hidden would be the work of the next twenty-two years of my life.

This morning I woke up with several dreams.

In the first:

Deb is hanging paintings in a big room naked from the waist down, like little girls do, exposing their innocent vaginas.

This is me, writing, exposing the inner sanctum of my soul girl self as my colleague Deb indeed does through her words and images.

The second:

I was in an apartment in Brooklyn with Norman, my sister-in-law Kate's father.

He was being kind in an avuncular way to me, caring for me as I got ready for the day, setting out on an adventure, to work on a project.

Kate's father was a writer, a very public man with great charm and intelligence. For me, he was the Jewish father with whom Kate dared to differ and fight and test herself. He was not a perfect father, perhaps not even a good one, but for me, with an aloof and disinterested father, he was a father who was willing

to engage, be vulnerable and wrong. I was not surprised to have him show up. He was bumbling around in the apartment, schlumpy and disorganized yet focused and very interested in what I was doing.

I am learning to feel the presence of the spiritual father, who now comes as Norman.

Of course, it means something to me that he was a writer and I am beginning to write our book.

It reminds me of the dream I had when I first committed to writing and I rented a room from my friend Jim on the second floor of 132 Main Street in Montpelier.

Dream:

I enter a tower which is a bookstore. I go up the stairs to the book lined upper floor. A man approaches me and says, "My name is Salzburg and I will help you with your writing."

Here I am at the kitchen table of the terra-cotta-tiled kitchen, on the bottom floor of our three-storied rented house, built into the back wall of the fourteenth-century church behind us. Marc is watching a downloaded movie in the robin's-egg-blue little living room on the next floor up. We are having a morning off from our castle explorations.

In a way we are preparing to leave here, having achieved what we came for, a deeper felt experience of the spiritual life and death of the seekers known as Cathars, who flourished here seven hundred years ago amidst the tolerant nobility of the Languedoc. We have felt into both the richness of the spiritual life which was nurtured in the houses of feudal noblemen and women open to their teachings, and into the terror and loss of the mass extermination by burning, mandated by the Roman Catholic Church and carried out by the northern lords of the

emerging nation of France.

We have not traveled through this terrain neutrally.

The trip has been hard for us and hard on us.

I am writing on the other side of the wave.

We will soon be moving out of the haunted territory within us (reflected in the dramatic peaks and valleys of the Corbière range of the Pyrenees) towards the sparkling allure of Barcelona on the sea, the present, to give a talk about Archetypal Dreamwork, and to give our first television interview on a program called *Alchemy*. From there we are taking an overnight ferry boat to Genoa, Italy, on the way to Portofino where we will celebrate our odyssey, our findings and our learning and talk about what we will bring home with us.

The Odyssey has always a beginning, a middle and an end. When in the middle of the course, facing into the trials and difficulties, it can be a struggle to stay the course, not knowing when the tough patch will end, or even, wondering, if it will end at all. This is, for me, the hardest part of the cycle, when I am tired of feeling tight with terror, or grim with the heartache of unbearable violence, hatred and loss. I long for the lightness of the breakthrough, the joy of the child, the easy laughter of a shared moment. Here is the challenge, to wait without knowing, to have faith in the dreams, the process, in the Divine wisdom guiding both dreams and process and to let go of the need to know when, or if, the shift will come.

This exploration is a quantum leap in consciousness since I wrote *Vessel*. That book was an exploration into my own perceptions, my story and my journey. Stories from the point of view of ego.

This is dropping through the rabbit hole.

This is about coming in with the soul, not the ego.

The soul that remembers.

This goes below to the soul's story.

This is the point of view not from my family but from the dog's view. Long before coming into this life when I forgot everything.

It is very different to assess oneself from the point of view of the soul.

In the Landscape of the Cathars



Christa

Our landlord of our rented house, an English author named James Macdonald, who has published a book, *Beyond Belief: Two Thousand Years of Bad Faith in the Catholic Church* has loaned me another book. The book is called *The Cathars and Reincarnation: The Record of a Past Life in Thirteenth-century France* by Arthur Guirdham.

I am in bed this morning, drinking coffee, immersed in the telling of Guirdham's story of a past life memory of being a Cathar in thirteenth-century Languedoc. It is a story of living in the epicenter of the land where the Cathar faith flourished and was then systematically wiped out by the end of that century, under the auspices of the first Inquisition, which was established in Toulouse specifically to address the Cathar "problem."

We are learning about the landscape, the mysteries that are hidden here, the suppression of the knowledge of Mary and the divine feminine. We are experiencing the haunted quality of this beautiful land, once filled with promise and evolving consciousness, now heavy with its legacy of light brutally exterminated by the church of Catholic Rome and the French monarchy.

The questions we are raising are: What is our

relationship spiritually to these Bonhommes of the past, and what was their relationship, if any, to the feminine principle of Mary Magdalene, who, according to legend, landed in coastal Provence forty years after the birth of Christ?

Is there a thread connecting the respect for women amongst the Cathars and the apparent presence of Mary Magdalene in Provence? Did she establish an attitude towards the feminine which blossomed roughly in the midpoint between Christ's birth and the present, around 1100 with the emergence of the Bonhommes, or Cathars?

How does this connect with the emergence of the girl in the community of dreamers in and around North of Eden? What does it mean that the divine feminine now has safe passage to come forth, at least in the countries protected by democracy, law and order?

What if all the recent dreams of persecution amongst dreamers are a clearing of the past to bring the esoteric knowledge of this early mystery school into consciousness once more?

What if we are standing in the breach in our pain and terror to reconnect our present with the past?

What if underneath the horror of persecution is a love and light that refuses to be extinguished?

What if there is a wrinkle in time right now, a crack, through which, by way of the dream, the light can shine?

Being here is not comfortable. For me it is highly reminiscent of my trip to the concentration camp site in Dachau in 1995. I went directly to the site from Munich airport and subsequently fell apart into deep and inconsolable grief. Within two days I had developed bronchitis. I could not stop crying, everywhere I went. The ghosts of what felt like my family followed me all

over Germany to Munich and into the Bavarian countryside. Here, I feel the terror of violent death, the desolation of losing entire communities, loved ones, of a burgeoning spiritual network of people dedicated to the unfolding of their souls, the confrontation with the evil within and the life devoted to the power of Spirit.

I understand why North of Eden feared moving out into the world, beyond the safe valleys and hilltops of Vermont. The past has a strong hold here. The land is not free of it. The dense feeling is palpable. It is almost post-apocalyptic in a way, in the sense that a possibility for a shift in consciousness, a step in evolution, was aborted and a darkness came over the land. It is like the story of the Fisher King, the wounded man waiting for the Bride to appear and heal him, awakening him from his isolation and suffering.

What if underneath all of the horror and terror held in the landscape, lies the truth that Mary Magdalene holds, the truth of feeling in the body, the sensuality of the felt experience of reality on this earth, in relationship to one's own felt body with others, in relationship? What if the consciousness of Mary Magdalene went underground to survive until the time to resurface could be?

What if Mary Magdalene and Jesus Christ had a real relationship, man and woman, as equal and respected partners? What if the promise of Mary is to live in the sensuality of the felt body in relationship?

What if the consciousness of Mary can only emerge in a climate of respect for the feminine?

What if it takes an evolved man to accept and respect the power of the divine feminine?

What if the two are necessary for the man to heal his

Fisher King wounds and the woman to bring out the hidden knowledge of the sensuality of the feminine?

What if Christ and Mary, as enlightened human beings who understood the concept of dying to self, had the necessary consciousness to share in equal relationship?

What if we are learning about a spiritual culture in which men and women had mutual respect and honor as spiritual and human beings?

What if this is the next frontier, to enter into the sensuality of the dream, opening up to the possibility of an embodied enlightenment of the body as well as the mind and spirit?

We had intended to go to Montségur this morning to visit the former Cathar stronghold atop a small, volcanic mound-like mountain to our west, where two hundred of the Cathar priests or Parfaits, both men and women, were led to piles of wood in the early 1200s and burned to their deaths in the meadow below the mountain.

Instead Marc is sleeping and dreaming and I am beginning to put down into words what we have been seeing and learning since we left Vermont only last Tuesday.

Montségur, the mountain memorial site for the Cathars, awaits us tomorrow.

How Evil Flourishes in the Denial of the Wound

✎

Marc

Part of my unfoldment during this trip comes from the following dream:

I see a man, who I knew I was at times. The man looks at me. I see into his pain. But he will not feel his pain, so he became the most evil, darkest force in the universe. A demon. The man even tells me this. Then, the man proceeds to kill everyone he could kill.

At one point, he guts a woman and she is bleeding from every orifice. Then, it is like he is inside of her, moving her mouth. He has her body say, "It is safe. Come on in." Then when we go in, he starts to kill everyone.

He makes liars of us all, then sabotages us so that he can attack us. I feel incredible terror.

Shift.

I am lying on the ground like a shard of broken glass. I cannot move. Suddenly, a hand lifts me up, lifts up everyone like shards of glass. By the thousands. Then I

hear a sweet voice say, “I am going to heal you, Marc. I am going to heal all of you.”

I realized when I woke up that I was not the evil man in the dream anymore. The brokenness is my pain. Not just my pain, for we are all in pain. Every human being is hurting – this is our bond. If we can find our sensuality and grace from our pain, then there will not be the evil, dark male.

The only way to defeat this man is to face into my own pain. When we face into our pain, we can all defeat this man.

This man is really the thing that has taken over the world. He is the big “No,” he is the thing in the church that wants to destroy. His main target is to kill women, to kill the girl. He is the Mary-hater.

The gutted woman in the dream, the one infected by the killing man, becomes a false Anima, luring others to their deaths.

What does this dream mean? We all have our pain. The unwillingness to feel our pain and our reaction to our pain, the fear of pain, is what begot and begets the devil in the first place.

When I became the shard in the dream, I could feel the deep pain. Then I felt a softness that was different. I was surrendered to the healing, as if I had no ego left.

At some point, when we feel the pain of the loss at a deep level of intimacy and vulnerability, it becomes more than just us. It becomes universal. This is what Mary felt when she lost Christ. This is the iconic image of Mary weeping at the base of the cross.

When the pain becomes universal in this way, the tears are like blood tears. Mary’s tears are those blood tears.

Women react to this by aggressively fighting back, becoming intolerant. This aggression often comes out when a woman has children. She protects her children fiercely from something she has lost in herself – she is the child who is lost.

All women carry this, even more poignantly than men.

When we feel this pain at this level, we carry it not just for ourselves, but for everyone. The personal journey is about everyone's journey in terms of the deep wound.

In this dream, the denial of the wound is what allows the demon to run amok and what has created the world as we know it. That demon is part of the big "No" that we all have. The "No" is not our no, not the soul's no. It is our demon's "No" that we lockstep behind.

Deciding to Not Be Innocent



When we say that we are afraid of being ourselves, we are lying. We are not afraid of being ourselves. We are afraid that if we become ourselves, we will find that we did something wrong.

This goes back to the story of the Garden of Eden, when Eve bit the apple. In the traditional story, the voice of shame that came when Adam and Eve ate the apple is attributed to God, but it was really the voice of the devil. The snake, rather than being an aspect of evil, was really an aspect of God, offering Adam and Eve the gift of the knowledge of good and evil.

The story is turned around. We believe we are bad and have been kicked out of the garden because of this knowledge. The idea of original sin, which goes back to this story, is the assumption that we are all bad from that point forward.

But we were never tricked by the devil. When Eve intuitively trusted the snake, it showed that she was ready for the knowledge. But we somehow believed that if we tasted the truth of good and evil, it would mean that we are the ones who are evil. Then, of course, we have to spend the rest of our lives trying to prove that we are good. All we end up doing, though, is making things worse; our attempts to be good only make us worse.

When bad things happen, we believe that we are wrong. Every woman and man who has ever been abused, molested or wounded in some way believes they deserved it or that it was their fault.

We believe that bad things happen because we put things into motion. When we believe the assumption that we are bad, then we never have to feel that we were traumatized.

It is the assumption that we are bad that is wrong. Trauma always happens to the innocent. We react by deciding not to be innocent. We then avoid the Animus when He comes to us in our dreams around our innocence. He comes in this way because He knows that we are innocent. To receive Him in this way means to acknowledge our innocence and to begin to feel everything.

If we really accepted ourselves, accepted our ultimate innocence, then we would have to accept our pain, even if we do carry some guilt for things that have happened. But if we believe we have to be careful in order to be “okay,” we are really giving up our soul for the sake of avoiding the pain. We remain in the suffering of always having to get approval in some way, which means we have no voice. If we speak with our real voices, we will not get approval, for being honest is sure to upset at least some people.

The Big No Is the No to Mary



The “No” we encounter in the therapy is the same “No” that denies Mary ever existed. It is really all the same thing. If we acknowledged that Mary existed, then the secret would be out that the church was a fraud in its suppression of her. Everyone who denies their soul is part of the conspiracy to deny Mary.

Whether it is Mary with Jesus or Mary without, at this point, it is the same. It is like a mirror reflecting the denial of this sensuality back and forth. The sensuality of being a human being, in a body, feeling, living, allowing this consciousness to emerge. The consciousness of becoming the Christos.

In this way, the church symbolizes the structure of the superego of Freud. The outer shell or layer that wants to stay intact. In the outer world, the church is oppressive around the issue of Mary, but on the inside, we all carry the church, we all carry that oppression every time we say “No.”

The Cathars had no structure. They were representing the spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Mary Spirit. Their one ritual was the transmission of the laying on of hands of the Holy Spirit. They were interested in the unseen, what was not visible.

In this way, the Cathars were confronting the ego as the mystery cult that no one knows about. The reason they did not survive is that to survive, the ego is needed. To survive,

structures need to be created. The Roman Catholic Church knew it. The leaders knew they needed money, buildings, an infrastructure or else they would die out.

Of course, everything eventually dies out without consciousness if people do not become enlightened. It just becomes another church, another institution. But the Cathars lived at a particular intersection of culture and history where they had no protection.

In our current intersection of culture and history, there is protection for the freedom of exploration in many countries. The Cathars' time was a nexus of the rise of the centralized church at the same time the feudal city-states were in decline. The city-states, especially the ones in Northern Italy, were more receptive to the Cathars' form of Christianity.

The Cathars did not rely on money. They were devoted for the love of it. There is evidence that future Christian missionaries, like the Franciscans and the Carmelites, modeled themselves after what the Cathar priests did, which was to travel in pairs preaching. Even the Mormons still do this – there are Mormons today who travel in pairs as part of their commitment to their religion. This all began with the Cathars.

To be in Cathar country, at Mary's church, at the heart of where the Cathars flourished and died, really gives a context to what they were doing. It also gives context to what happens in the world when the personal spiritual journey is attempted or offered without the context of that external, ego structure.

What we bring now is the consciousness plus the awareness of where the Cathars were in time and space that led to such destruction. The elite knowledge of what they knew is not written down so we do not know their process or their evolution. We only know that the evolution of the soul was their primary interest.

This is aligned with Archetypal Dreamwork, for the dreams focus on the evolution of our souls. We do not know

their methodology, if they were working with dreams or not, but the point is the same. The arrival to this level of understanding of the personal journey is under siege today just as it was under siege then. Whenever this level of consciousness, the soul consciousness, is brought into the world, there is incredible resistance.

Ultimately, it all comes back to the personal journey. When we enter the process of the journey, we are led by our dreams to go through the subjective form of it. The subjective form is the personal descent, is the process of breaking through the ego structure in ourselves, individually. It is not about breaking a form in the world. The form that needs to be broken is in the individual.

The journey is not about politics any more than politics is an expression of who we really are. We can point the finger at our enemies in the world or we can point the finger at ourselves as the same enemy. Every time a person says “No” to that journey, it is a nail against the inner world.

The point is, how do we break it in ourselves? How is Christa breaking it in herself? How is Marc breaking it in himself?

This is one example of the journey taken by two people, time traveling back through devastation, through layers of terror, through the past.

But before the past, was heaven, was God. Before the past, we were all in His arms. This is why it is so hard to bring this consciousness of the love for each of us into the world. To return to before the past, to the love, we have to do the work the dreams offer us. It is not just given. The Cathars had a process they called purification. The journey offered by the dreams is the same thing.

Both pathology and our own attachment to pathology create incredible resistance. Why the resistance or even, why go on the journey? It is really the same question.

The Blood of the Holy Grail



When the libido is freed with the Divine, when we have the union of Mary and Jesus or the Animus and the Anima, then we have the heart and the passion.

When these two are united, we have sensuality. Not sensuality as sexuality but sensuality as consciousness of pain in the body, consciousness of love in the body.

The mystery is in the individual transformational journey – how to become enlightened. Many of the Gnostics, including the Cathars, were devoted to this kind of enlightenment.

In dreams, the intention of the dream, or the intention of the psyche through the dream process, is to free up the libido that has been corrupted in the world. When we corrupt our libido by misusing sexuality, greed or rage, it is part of a neurotic condition of separation from a higher consciousness.

In the ego self, the consciousness of sensuality is repressed for we repress the child self and the child self is the part of us that feels this sensuality. The child self, the soul, remembers all events, all traumas. It knows about the war between good and evil, between heaven and earth, because it is what has been around life after life. When we lose track of our child selves, we forget our pain, our memories, the bad things

and even the good things. We just have this life.

But underneath our ego selves is the child that remembers everything. To connect to the soul, we must go through the process of becoming open to our pain. Through the portal of pain and fear, we can enter a place of connecting with the soul and then have “immortality” or the knowledge that the soul lives forever.

In da Vinci’s *The Last Supper*, Mary Magdalene is the embodiment of the psychological, spiritual journey. It is the feeling of the image that invites us to open to those vulnerable feelings. Neurosis is when we take those vulnerable feelings and cover them up, managing and controlling, so opening to our vulnerability never happens again.

In the myth of the Holy Grail, the grail has been seen as an actual cup that caught Christ’s blood when he was on the cross; and it has also been seen as the bloodline of Christ. In either case, the Holy Grail is about blood. In dreams, blood is passion, enlightenment, pain. Blood is the potency that comes from love and the pathos of that love.

The snake bite in a dream is related for, in this image, the venom of the snake kills the ego, bringing us to a transformational experience.

But what is the venom? It is not the poison in a snake that would kill us, because no one is killed by the venom of a snake in a dream except a pathological figure. The venom of the snake is blood; just as that which fills the chalice is blood.

When there is bloodletting in dreams, it is about the feeling of pain, pathos, love, yearning, need, compassion and desire for the deepest connection to the Divine. It is also about feeling the state of our soul’s separation or connection.

The struggle for consciousness of all of these things is symbolic of a deeper invitation. Even if we agree that Mary was at the last supper, that she was married to Christ, that she represents passion, then what do we do about it as individuals?

We have to follow the corridors of feeling down that are presented in our dreams or wherever they come from – including meditation, prayer, therapy. Mary, and the Gnostic tradition, is an invitation to travel down those feeling corridors.

The pathological, neurotic teaching that we have received from many places, including the Roman Catholic Church, is that primal energy is evil and dark. The message is to not feel those primal feelings, to wait until we have died and gone to heaven to reap our rewards. In the meantime, we are to suffer. We are to not have what we want, we are to not touch into our real needs, which are the needs of the child/soul self.

This is not the want of greed, but true need. Want is the ego's desire for some thing while need is the soul's desire for what is represented by the blood, the blood of the Holy Grail. Bloodletting, the cutting into flesh, in dreams is the opening up of that deeper self. Without that energy of pain and yearning, we cannot have knowledge of God.

In fact, without that energy, we cannot even need God, except on an intellectual level. This is why Mary's suffering and pain with Jesus is important. It opens the door to this pain.

When we tell the story of Jesus' anger that he was betrayed, it just makes him into a martyr. We are all betrayed by everyone we know on some level. We all get hurt. We all, also, go into the martyrdom of "poor me." But this is not what Jesus stood for. This is just more ego story.

What is under betrayal? Hurt. What is under hurt? When Jesus died on the cross, underneath his hurt is forgiveness; "Forgive them, Lord. They know not what they do." He had a moment where he asked God, "Why have you forsaken me?" but then he moved through it. He came into his truer heart and felt the forgiveness, realizing it was not about betrayal, but loss and forgiveness.

To feel the deepest pain without anger, rancor, compensation, control, armoring; to just feel into our pain

will take us to forgiveness and compassion. Whether we need forgiving or we need to forgive, it is the same thing.

This knowledge has gone underground, repressed by culture. Pathology does not want us to know this. In the church in Rennes-le-Château that is dedicated to Mary, there is a devil crouching under the holy water fount and a skull under Mary's foot. These images represent the death of the force that does not want us to know this. This will which Freud called thanatos, is the desire to kill, destroy, shut down, lose, be threatened by everything good.

In the Languedoc, there was a culture that was rooted in the evolution and enhancement of the feminine. The power of a woman, not as a Renaissance woman who is like her father, but of a woman who is the most vulnerable and open. From that vulnerability and openness comes this potency of the Divine.

At that time, to be potent in this way was dangerous and a threat to the rising institution of the Roman Catholic Church. So, they destroyed the culture. The message of being burned at the stake is to never attempt to be with God in a personal way. The church wanted to define God; it was a movement from the internal, the vulnerable personal relationship with God, to the external, a relationship with God through the institution.

This is the battle in our psyches. Every dream, every way that we struggle in our dreams is a battle between the outer world and trying to maintain an objective reality versus living in the pathos of the soul. This struggle is in each person. We can see this struggle in the world, too, but what good is it if we cannot apply it to ourselves?

The dreams apply the battle to us. The dynamics of Mary, of the church, of all of the surrounding symbolism is important for us because they retrain our minds to understand the importance of feeling. Mary knew feeling. In da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, Mary is clearly feeling her pain. There was nothing else she could do. She is about to lose her husband, her lover.

He is about to lose his lover, his wife.

It is the natural flow of a husband and wife to come under the province of a calling together. Mary and Christ had this in their lives together. It is one of the most beautiful things that we can have. We feel that we have this together and other people are beginning to have it as well.

There is a substrate of Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet on a higher octave. It is the conjunctio of the feminine and the masculine when we realize it is Mary in the last supper and not John, then we realize the anguish is the suffering of their separation. If we do not realize this, then we believe that the anguish is that he has been betrayed and he is about to go through hell.

Martyrdom is a compensation for pain. Jesus was not anyone's martyr. Mary was not anyone's martyr. Mary was a woman who lost her husband, who may have been carrying their child when she lost him, and who had the courage to leave and develop the same calling anyway, raising the child and totally wounded. This is not a Renaissance woman; this is a woman passionately in love. This is a vulnerable woman, in love, with guidance from heaven.

The vulnerability is that passion, that consciousness of the soul's desire for union and the pain of the loss of that connection, all the terrible things that have happened to the soul in its travels, particularly spiritually.

That Jesus suffered on the cross is an illusion. The real suffering was the separation from his Beloved. Then he was on the cross, where he had terrible pain and he died. Crucifixion is a slow death, a monstrous way to die. Just as being burned at the stake is a monstrous way to die.

The intention of losing one's life by being tortured in this way is so that we "wake up" in our next lives with a fear of the very thing that was most important to us. If we die a terrible death because of our spiritual lives and our spiritual connections,

we will think twice in the next life, even if we do not consciously remember and even if the conditions are entirely different.

I do not believe that Jesus “had to” die. It happened in the battle of good and evil. There are many reasons the Jews turned against Jesus. It is an historical point. Those that stand for the ultimate truth of taking responsibility and not blaming others, like Martin Luther King, Jr., who stand for peace, are destroyed.

People of peace, like King, say, “Look inside at your own demons, your own struggle.” People of war say, “It is your fault. Or yours. Or yours.”

Montségur



Christa

We visit the mountaintop castle of Montségur which was the last big siege by the Inquisitional force to rout out the Cathar elite in 1244.

Below the castle is a field where the French troops built a palisade of wood, herded the 220 men and women who finally surrendered after ten months, and lit the dried kindling. The fire apparently burned all night with the smell of human flesh filling the valley for miles.

As we drive down the mountain road to the valley below, I think of the ovens of Germany in which mass killings took place.

I wonder about the evil in the world, working through people, which can justify mass extermination, to be right about a belief. What evil is that?

Excerpt from Arthur Guirdham's book, from the woman, Mrs. Smith, who recorded her life in thirteenth-century France:

Yes, the Cathar faith was simple, but deceptively simple and much too honest for a great many people to accept. To embrace such a faith needed courage – courage to see oneself and life as it is. So many were afraid to do this

and fear is the breeding ground of hate. That is why they were persecuted – out of pure fear by people who could not and would not see life as it is, a fractional moment of time and just a stage in the ultimate fulfillment of perfection. (*The Cathars and Reincarnation: The Record of a Past Life in Thirteenth-century France* by Arthur Guirdham)

From *Massacre at Montsegur: A History of the Albigensian Crusade*
by Zoe Oldenburg:

The haeretici were fettered and dragged roughly down the slope between the fortress itself and the place where the pyre had been prepared. On the southwest face of the mountain, opposite Montsegur – the only side comparatively easy of access – there is an open space known today as the Field of the Burnt Ones (cramatchs=cremats). This spot is less than two hundred yards from the fortress and the ground slopes steeply towards it. William de Puylaurens tells us that the heretics were burnt “close to the foot of the rock,” and this probably refers to the Champs de Cramatchs. While up on the summit of the rock the prefecti were preparing to meet their fate, and saying goodbye to their friends, a party of men-at-arms from the French camp must have been working on the final labour of the siege: the erection of pyre large enough to consume the bodies of two hundred persons. “They built a palisade of stakes and pales,” William de Puylaurens tells us, as a means of marking out the area of the pyre. Inside they heaped up “countless faggots” and possibly straw and pitch too, since in March, the firewood would be damp and difficult to ignite. With so great a number of victims there was probably no time to erect individual stakes for

each one of them; at all events, William de Puylaurens merely says that they were shut inside the palisade.

...in a few hours' time, the two hundred living torches heaped together inside the palisade were no more than a mass of raw, blackened, bleeding flesh, slowly burning to a cindered crisp, spreading a ghastly stench of burnt meat right down the valley, and up to the very walls of the fortress.

Nationalism won out and the Languedoc, a unique culture with its own language, fell into French hands and the light of the years of tolerance and spiritual freedom was doused.

Dream, the night after visiting Montsegur:

I am with my colleague Ellie. I am pregnant with a baby on the verge of being born. I say, "Let's go have a great meal and this wonderful drink before I go into labor with this new life."

Ultimately this is the cycle of dying and being reborn.

What is being born is the mystery, the next part of the cycle to lean into. More of the unknown.

The Trauma of Being a Watcher



There are two basic kinds of traumas that have been emerging through the regressive dreams – either we were watchers in some way or we were someone who died for the cause. Choose your poison.

If a watcher, consider the guilt we carry after watching people we loved, or had compassion for, suffer. In the case of the Cathars, maybe someone was a Catholic priest or in some kind of authority and cared about the people who were persecuted.

The guilt we carry when we are in this position is terrible.

Is it worse to be the one watching the suffering of others or to be the one that is the martyr or victim for the cause? Strangely, it may be “better” to be the martyr for the cause, to take one for the team, than to be the one with something to lose. When we have something to lose that we do not want to lose, we may end up as watchers.

When Peter denied Jesus three times, he became a watcher.

It is a terrible thing to carry, for even without the guilt and the fear, when we watch it means that, unconsciously, we are always wanting to stand outside the action. We die as watchers and we come back standing outside.

This affects our relationship with the Archetypes. As watchers, we believe we are guilty so we avoid relationship with the Animus. We inherently feel we have done something wrong and we do not want to face God with this. We live in the shame of “should I have, could I have done something?” In addition, as watchers, we worry about being found out, feeling like we never belong.

But whether martyr or watcher, the result is that both keep us from His love and support. To be the immediate victim or to watch – really both are victims.

Two Faces of the Apocalypse

✪✪
Marc

Dream:

We are in an apocalypse. I feel as if I have been in this apocalyptic world for a long time. But everything is covered over. All the ruins, everything, covered over to look beautiful or aesthetic. It is like how the Italians and the French cover the loss of Mary and Jesus through art or food. The love is what is lost from the world. In the dream, the people are afraid of the loss, like it is a wind. They are afraid it will return even though they are living in an apocalyptic world. I can see the ruin underneath; I can see the suffering.

In one part of the dream, there is nothing – no food – and I just feel into the pain of this fact. In another part of the dream, there is food, wine, song, beauty, but it is the same as if we were living in the nuclear winter. Only this time, it is harder to see. But I can see it and feel it, the pain and loss underneath.

What I felt was the loss of everything. The loss of love, the loss of the heart. It was difficult because it was replaced by great things, beautiful things, song, food and beauty.

The loss of the love is equated to the nuclear winter because we are actually living the apocalypse now, in our lives, when we are living by just making do.

We were at a restaurant one night and our waiter said to us, “I only think about food when I have my hour break. This is the best way to live – to eat and enjoy my food rather than having food in one hand and a computer in another. If you live that way, you never taste your food.” It is an interesting philosophy, but he lives with this philosophy instead of having work that he likes. But whether we are power lunching or enjoying our food, we are still no closer to Mary.

There is still the root loss of the self. We are living the impoverishment of the soul until we discover our soul.

In Milan, one of the most beautiful places in the world, like my dream, is the image of the Last Supper, the desolation and loss of Mary and Christ. Mary’s truth with the fashion center of the world just blocks away. It is a startling juxtaposition.

We act as if we can reconcile the pain of Mary’s loss. Of our loss. The loss of that love, of that divine place of standing in the sensual passion, yearning, loss and love. We act as if we can reconcile it through beauty, through money.

Pathos can be everywhere. It does not have to just be in impoverishment, which is the wrong place for it really. The pathos is in the cover-up. There is the immaculate desolation of beauty; then there is the impoverished desolation. They are really the same thing.

To feel that loss in all things, to work to reclaim it in our hearts, and then help to reclaim it in the world is what following our dreams in this way can do. To find soul and live soul. It is not to just eat, pray and love. It is to find the Divine. Pathos is the pain of loss, the yearning for what was lost and the memory of love itself from the deepest, most vulnerable root of our souls.

The Cycles of Healing in Alchemical Work



When we enter alchemical Second Stage work, the cycles of healing in our process may become more easily recognizable. It may be helpful to realize this and become more conscious that healing occurs in cycles, or waves, with a discernible beginning, middle and end.

Once we have risked entering into the alchemical tunnel, which can be seen as a series of waves or cycles, and summoned our right use of will and warrior courage to stay the course and come through to a new state of consciousness, we may be more ready when the next wave of transformation is offered to us.

The first time is the ultimate risk. When we have moved through a cycle and found, lo and behold, we now possess more of ourselves and our innate radiance than we did before, then we may be more willing and even excited to step towards the next round.

This work is practice, the practice of learning to stay with different states of being long enough to have real change happen.

When we dip in our toe and pull it out, sadly, we abort the process of birthing a new or regained aspect of our real selves. It takes faith to keep going, to trust the dream – supported by

our dreamwork therapist – and go towards uncomfortable or painful states of feelings. But once we do, we can experience the reward of all the hard work of facing our destructive “lower” self, the self that has been identified with the pathology.

All the work of identifying and confronting our pathology leads to the magic moment of descent. The more willing we are to face into the feelings and allow them to work in us, the easier the passage through.

“The fates lead the willing, drag the unwilling” (Heraclitus). Avoidance of the opening to deeper levels of consciousness ironically can cause more suffering than facing into the terror and loss which are the alchemical agents of change.

The Last Supper



In the story of the Last Supper, we are told that Jesus reacted because he knew that Peter would deny him three times before the night was over. Why did Peter deny Christ? Because Peter did not want to be nailed to the cross. The story also goes that Jesus reacted because Judas was turning him over to the authorities – as if the authorities did not know exactly where he was, as if he were not already doomed. This is the version of the story we have been told. The truth is that Christ was not hiding out. He was publicly in Jerusalem.

This version of the story really illustrates the issue of betrayal and entitlement, for the heart of the story is that Judas and Peter both betrayed Christ. It is easy for us to believe this version of the story because we all feel betrayed. But betrayal is not pain; it is the arrogance of entitlement, where we say to another, “How dare you hurt me!”

Christ did not care that he was betrayed or hurt. He sat at the Last Supper grieving with his beloved Mary, whom he would never see again. He sat at the Last Supper, knowing that the life they had had under God was gone.

Any of us who have had the experience in previous lives of living what we believe, with a deep connection with God and

a family based in love, and then were persecuted for what we believed – losing our lives, being burned at the stake – have suffered this kind of loss. Christ and Mary are iconic in the sense that many people followed in their footsteps for the sake of love and for the sake of what they believed.

The pathos is the pain of loss, which has nothing to do with entitlement. There was no pain that Peter did not want to be nailed to the cross with Christ. Christ probably said, “Yes! Head for the hills! Take Mary with you!” Christ was not a cult leader. A cult leader would say, “You betrayed me,” because anyone who disagrees with the leader of a cult is seen as bad.

Christ was not a cult leader. On the cross, he initially reacted, crying to God, “Why have you forsaken me?” which was his own entitlement reaction. But then he said, “Forgive them, they know not what they do.”

The true story of the Last Supper is not about Christ reacting, but about the pain, the loss and the profound grief. Leonardo da Vinci’s *The Last Supper* captures this image of the grief of Christ and Mary in the middle of all of the disciples reacting.

Why is this important? This is the symbol of true pathos, not arrogance. It is about the pain, the yearning, the loss. The arrogance of entitlement wants to bend the story toward betrayal; “We are all so bad; we betrayed him.” This is a world in which people betray all the time. Christ’s story is not about betrayal.

Entitlement is the belief that we are not going to be betrayed. It is when we expect people to always say good things about us or always expect people to be in full accord with everything we do or do not do. This is why it is about arrogance and pride. This entitlement completely separates us from the need, the yearning, the hurt, the vulnerability. It is really part of the gyroscopy of pride.

Jesus did not care. In da Vinci’s painting, he is not

reacting to the reacting disciples because it is their reactions. Instead, he is simply feeling the pain of losing his wife, his life, his community. He was trying to build something, and it was not going to be manifested in his lifetime. Mary carried their work into France and did continue it, but she also carried her tremendous grief. Grief is the way through.

This is what da Vinci captured in his fresco: the pain between Christ and Mary. The lovers' pain. The lovers who have joined in conjunctio.

The way this story manifests in a woman's psyche is through a lover relationship with the Animus; in a way, a woman can become Mary with Jesus. A man becomes the wounded Fisher King, through the Father, finding not the mother, but his Beloved.

From Rage to Remembering We Are Loved



Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. — 23rd Psalm

The dark night of the soul is a necessary process.

There is a moment for all of us when we cry out to God, “Where are you?” Just as Jesus cried out on the cross, “Why have you forsaken me?” We can avoid this moment, jump away from it, but it is a moment that lives in all of us – the moment when something terrible happened.

Jesus resolved it, asking God, “Forgive them, they know not what they do.” This shows his capacity to transcend the one life, to understand the arc of eternal life. This is what the love teaches. This is what the child in each of us already knows.

In the moment that Jesus died, he knew it was not the end, and he also felt the loss. The loss of Mary, the loss of the life that he had lived, the pain of his horrible death.

When we know this, then we know we will leave our bodies and that we will be back. Then it is not as hard to say goodbye. But when we do not know that there is a return, when we think it is all over and we die a terrible death, we die with a sense of betrayal.

The idea of betrayal, of being tricked, is simply a way to be distracted so that we forget the love. If we can feel betrayed, then we do not have to remember the love or the pain. We cope in many ways with this kind of betrayal – we may act out in anger, we may play the game of reconciliation, we may come back and be a CEO – but they are all hollow. They are just reactions to, “How am I going to survive without God in my life?”

When we discover our traumas, often the first thing we feel is anger, just as Jesus felt anger on the cross. It is important to accept this, to accept that this is the moment when we turned away. The very moment we believe God turned away is really the very moment we turned away.

This is the place where the love is.

How do we go from this rage to the place of the love? We take ownership of the rage. We take ownership of the fact that the rage is the place of the wound and the pain, and we go deeper.

The anger does not have to be a problem. What do we do with it? The dreams will cycle us through the anger as long as we do not project it. When we project the anger, then we are stuck in purgatory, yet again. We will never break that purgatory, which is what pathology wants.

But Jesus moved through his anger. He moved through the purgatory of betrayal to suddenly realizing that he was loved and that there was something bigger happening than the end of his life. We do not know how it happened; it is the mystery.

Leaving France



Christa

We drove down the hill this morning away from the village of St Ferriol. Marc noticed a skunk running across the road. We drove past the jagged mountain range of the Corbières, cirrus clouds softened the deep, late September sky. The top was down of our silver Megane convertible. We were off on the next leg of our adventure. I was wearing the new taupe cardigan I bought for 30 euros in the local market.

We came to France because I wanted to know more about the legend of Mary Magdalene in Provence and the presence of the Cathars in this mysterious landscape called the Languedoc, between the France of Provence and the Spain of Catalonia.

We immersed ourselves in our own felt experience of the land, the paintings, the churches, the symbols as well as the history of the time, through books and visits to mountaintop castles and medieval walled cities. Much of the time, I did not know what was happening for me. I rolled through archeological layers of feelings without stories, listening to stories not connected to feelings, sifting through the pieces of history. Which pieces fell into my well of knowing? What lined up in my own inner storehouse?

Some things can only be known in retrospective. We spent the morning driving through the last ranges of the Pyrénées Orientales, dipping down into the wine country of the Roussillon region, watching groups of grape-pickers with large baskets strapped to their backs. We stopped before the French-Spanish border at a Disneyland-like rest stop called A Catalan Village where we used the toilettes and sat under pine trees, next to a children's playground, eating bread and prosciutto and cookies, splitting a Heineken and slathering our bread with pungent mustard. I felt Marc's love for me in this simple but delicious picnic he had prepared. On to Barcelona, we drove, now with the top up on the autopista, stopping only to down a fantastic cafe crème at a road stop. We plugged in Our Lady of the GPS, who would successfully guide us into the wild hills of northern Barcelona to this most wonderful hotel, which is like a Le Corbusier monastery in the middle of a walled garden, far from the noises of the city.

From the moment a woman answered the intercom and came to drive our car into their underground parking garage, I felt waves of love.

Inside the room, Marc immediately plugged in his laptop and began a session with a client.

I found my way down to the subterranean level, in my bathing suit, wrapped in my terry cloth hotel robe and slippers. Behind a door lay the spa, luminous light and sound, warm water in rectangular pools, Hamman steam bath and swelling, soothing music. I lay in the warm water, without my glasses, seeing the pink lights dissolve and reform. The tears began to break inside me. Rough sobs began to rise up in my chest. I think of my friend who does not have a serious illness, who might have, and I open more. Pain breaks in me like lightning. I think of Mary and how she lost her love and how she had to go on without him, by herself. Pain washes over me in shuddering sobs.

Softly, I move towards quiet, sitting in the warm water.
Softly, towards a state of love. Very, very soft and tender love.

I find my way back upstairs to find Marc, finishing with his last client of the afternoon. I am grumpy, not able to say what just happened. I do not want to eat dinner out but I am hungry. I do not know what I want. I hurt Marc's feelings.

Finally I settle, say I do not want to go out. I need to be close. Please come and be close. I do not know what is happening.

Something is happening in me. I curl up on his chest. Again, the tears start to flow. The sounds come out. Mary's sorrow. I feel like I am in the bottom of her well. I see the rose in the water, the pink lights on the water, the pink rose in my painting at the bottom of the well. I feel the pain of rupture and I feel the love. Mary did not give up the rose of love because of loss. She was steadfast, felt her pain and stayed open to the love.

I break into both pain and love.

Up on the Barcelona hills above the Mediterranean, in a post modern monastery, I feel the tower of the Magdala, the tower of the strength of the holy human woman called Mary, who did not close her heart and refuse to know love despite trauma and loss.

Staying with the Cycle of Love, as Mary and Jesus Did



Mary's pain is actually sweet. Her loss and his loss bring out the love they have.

If we do not close down around the pain but go deep into it, drink of it, then we can reach the place where it is sweet. Our mistake is that we do something to close down to this pain. What creates trauma is the jumping away from the pain.

Mary does not jump away; Jesus does not jump away. They do not get angry. Da Vinci's painting *The Last Supper* captures the moment when Jesus tells the disciples that he is about to be betrayed. In the painting, all of the disciples are jumping away from the moment except Mary and Jesus. They are simply in their pain.

The disciples are all in full-blown reaction, as if they are saying, "It is not going to be me! What are you saying? It can't be! It is not possible. This is NOT going to happen. This IS going to happen. Oh my God, should we escape now and head back to Galilee?"

We can bring the moment of *The Last Supper* down to every moment, even to a moment of driving around and around a rotunda in a foreign country, not knowing how or where to get off.

What would it be like to live with the possibility of, “Am I dying now?” At any moment. At this moment. If we live in that exquisite moment, maybe we would have no anxiety. Maybe there is just expanding eternity.

Maybe the moment with Jesus and Mary is the moment of eternity. Maybe this is the center of the cut, the deepest cut – to just stand in the pain and the love. Instead of jumping out of that vessel, we can stand in the blessing of the love that brings pain. If life is eternal, then what could ever really be lost? When we jump away from that moment, we are left with the yearning of the separation.

If we can accept the ongoing cycle of loss and love, then one gives way to the next. It is not eternal suffering, not damnation; it is fluid and keeps moving. We are afraid, so we clamp down on this moment so we do not have to feel pain in the next moment. But what if we kept staying open?

What if we stay open and the pain arises? We would find that it cycles to joy to love to pain to joy to love.

Fear is part of the cycle. If we do not stay with our fear, we jump away or want to tighten up. In fact, if we tighten up, the cycle becomes scarier and we can move into entropy. If we stay in the cycle, in the moment, then it becomes pure passion. Maybe in heaven, it is always love. We do not know. But we do know that here, we have to accept everything to have anything.

Why We Want to Believe Mary Is John in The Last Supper



The enemy of relationship, of being present, is trauma that has not been dealt with. We cannot be present unless we are feeling. In trauma or when we are in a victim place, there is no way to really feel. When we numb to our trauma, we numb to our feelings.

Since our feelings are the core or the self of the soul, when we are numb to our trauma, we cannot live our soul. We live outside and in reaction to the people around us. When we do not drop down into our feelings because they are so excruciatingly hard or painful from some moment in our existence, we end up perpetuating our own cycle of suffering. It gives a big advantage to pathology.

In da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, Mary Magdalene is labeled as John. Because we deny our pain, we deny her even in the painting. To acknowledge her and her connection with Jesus is so painful.

In the painting, it is the vessel that they make by the angle of their bodies in relationship. They make a V, creating a space, as if someone is not there.

It is clear to see the anguish on Christ's face and in the way he is in relationship to Mary, as if saying. "I am now going

to have to leave the woman I love and all of you, whom I love.” The Last Supper is his last moment with his family and his wife. This is what makes it even more painful.

We make it less painful by making Mary into John so that Jesus is leaving this group of men, almost complaining about one of them who will turn him in. Betrayal is so common; we all betray each other. It is not as painful as Jesus losing his wife and Mary losing her husband.

These two enlightened people are communicating about the pain and the necessity of it.

There are many other paintings of Jesus on the cross where Mary is at the base of it, weeping and holding on. All the pain is the same. The separation from God is separation from our beloved is being torn apart for the love we have for God.

Section III

Who is this, rising from the wilderness, the desert
Like pillars of smoke...

From Song of Songs 3:6

The heresy that kept alive the other version of the life of Jesus (that he was married) was ruthlessly hunted down, tried, and sentenced to extinction. But the story of the Sacred Bridegroom/King of Israel proved too virulent even for the Inquisition. It kept cropping up again and again, like a sturdy vine that spreads underground and then surfaces. It appeared in places the Inquisition and the establishment could not root it out – in the folk tales of Europe, its art, and its literature – always hidden, often coded in symbol, but ubiquitous.

From *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar* by Margaret Starbird, p. XXI



Jesus said, “Look to the living one as long as you live, or you might die and then try to see the living one, and you will be unable to see.

From *The Gospel of Thomas*

Descending into Hell: Persephone's Descent



In the stories of Greek Mythology, only Persephone violates the lie and goes down into the underworld, down into the unknown. What is the lie? It is the lie that we should not descend into trauma. It is the lie of the dark mother that demonizes the father and demonizes men, just as Rhea demonized Zeus' father, claiming that Chronos devoured all of the children. Just as Demeter demonized men for Persephone, keeping her on an island, captive, to keep her "safe."

The moment that we must confront is the moment of greatest horror. This is incredibly difficult for many, many people. We believe we are abandoned by God in that moment. Because we believe this, it is easy to demonize the very thing that we need to do.

But Persephone does descend. She does go with Hades to the land of the dead, to the underworld to be his bride. The descent to the underworld is nothing less than the descent to trauma.

As Hades' bride in the underworld, Persephone has the chair of forgetting, the chair that makes us forget who we are when we sit in it. This is the place of Alchemy, the place where we can transcend the trauma because we forget the lie, we forget who we have become in the false self. It is simply the place of profound healing.

But we must face our trauma, we must go where we are told not to go. If we face into our trauma, then we will face into dying to self, into sitting in that chair of forgetting. When we die to self, we die to the self that knows God's love, the self that does not live in PTSD.

When we face into the trauma in a dream, we often have to face into something scary like going into a volcano or falling from a great height into a never ending descent. We may have to face an alligator or be shot.

Why all these scary things? Why examples of violence? It is to confront the violence that has already happened that is part of the trauma.

Dying to self is not just about killing the ego, it is cutting into the trauma itself. It is also facing into the question of – Can we return from what seems incurable? When we believe we cannot return, then pathology can take possession of us from that moment evermore.

If we realize we can be healed by going down into our trauma, if we realize we can return to our souls, then the kingdom of heaven can reign on earth.

Everything in the Greek Pantheon is against the Animus and against going into the trauma. It is a complicate mirage of infidelity and psychological confusion which mirrors our own condition. The core belief of this mirror, which is also in us, is that we must not go down. There are monsters down there.

This is why the Animus is Hades in the Pantheon. Hades is the place where we experienced hell, the place where something terrible happened. Why would we go to hell? Why would we go to meet the devil?

We go to find out that it is not what we think it is. That the underworld is the place, ultimately, where there is love.

How does it work that in the place of the greatest horror, we can find the greatest love? Persephone shows us by example, by descending into the depths. Just as Jung speaks

about descending into the depths in *The Red Book*.

Facing into the lie of the ego, we face into what we already know. We know of the trauma already, but we use our egos to block the true, visceral, feeling experience of the soul that knows the truth of God's love. That has the capacity to allow suffering as part of the evolutionary process.

Listening to Fear



To learn to face into fear is the secret of life. It is that simple. If we do not face into fear, then we are scared by even the idea of fear. Everything that has to do with what we really want to do gets tainted by the idea of fear.

Fear itself does not even exist. Fear is often anticipation that makes us think we are scared. In fact, fear is typically necessary when we are asked to look at an old memory, something bad that happened or the release of something potentially wonderful. In all cases, it is healing.

The word fear contains the word ear, meaning to listen. To have *fear* is simply to listen, to have an *ear*, to ourselves. Ironically, the more we avoid the thing we are afraid of, the more we become fearful – but not of what we avoid. We become contaminated by the idea of what we think is going to happen, which creates fear and can only be broken by moving through it.

Again, fear does not exist in itself; it is just a passageway, a doorway, a place to expand our divine self. It is part of the evolutionary aspect of Alchemy. We say it is alchemical, but what is really alchemical is becoming bigger than we are. Receiving the love is alchemical; fear is really part of that process or is just the way we learn to change and allow new things to occur.

Fear is almost something that is self-created by our

unwillingness to take the risk. The more we refuse to take the risk, the more there is this thing called fear. It is really a layering of our refusal, an aspect of our no, our control. We get attached to control so that the perpetuation of control becomes more important than being who we really are. When we are afraid of fear, we are really afraid of not having control.

The word *control* begins with *con* – we con ourselves instead of really listening. It is also true that the more bad things happen to us, the more we do this because we can justify the evolutionary fear based upon the idea that something bad did happen and therefore it will happen again.

But children stand up, fall, stand up, fall until they learn to walk. If every time that child fell and they had the memory of something bad that happened, that child would never learn to stand up.

This is the link to past lives where we remember something that happened and then we think it will happen again. Why do we assume it is going to happen again? Maybe because we did not really feel the pain and loss, so we do not even know that what we are really feeling is not the fear of loss but the loss itself, the pain itself.

This is the risk; we will feel more pain. It is a ridiculous price to pay for not living, for we know that pain and love work together. There cannot be love without pain. When we realize we can live in our pain, then we become fearless because ultimately we are afraid of the hurt. There is nothing else to be scared of than hurt and loss.

After France



Christa

Dream:

I am in a speedboat that is moving fast. I am holding a newborn, beautiful. A man comes and holds me while I hold this baby. I feel so loved and supported.

I wake in the night. Cannot breathe again.

I do not want to go into trauma again. I want it to be over. Breathe in again. Short breaths. Panic.

It will not go away. What is there? Constriction in my chest, so tight.

How can I get to it? I am so scared. I try my homework, to hold the baby while Animus holds me.

I cannot feel it. Too far from feeling anything but panic. No room to feel, no love.

Something begins to move, deep in my chest cavity. An inkling of loss.

The loss came up the other night in a meeting. Bill, colleague and dear friend, was quiet in our meeting, doing his own trauma work. I felt Bill's absence. I started to remember his absence long ago. He had been there, a source of comfort and protection, an ally, and then he was gone.

“Where’s Bill?” I ask wildly, in the night, “I can’t find Bill.”

Panic. No Bill, no Marc. I am alone in the dark. I turn on the light. I need to see. I cannot see.

“Where’s Bill?” This grief is deep, so far down, repressed. It sits in my chest, turns heavy and thick like lead, like a manhole cover.

I curl up with Marc. The panic is over. I sleep.

I wake again. The weight on my chest is less, but still there. I know now it is grief, long buried, hard to access. I have this knowledge: grief. Now, I can turn to the homework. The man loves me. He is holding me. I feel his love. I am held in love. I am held in his love. I can feel his love, through the pain of my human losses. I am held in love. The weight in my chest softens.

Trauma through violence has its own path. To return from violence and horror has its unique way. The soul is so violated. The protective layers are so armored. Human violence and cruelty seeks to destroy the soul through torture and slow, terrifying murder.

It is not enough to annihilate the body; evil wants to eliminate the soul.

My soul was not destroyed, but it was lost to me. When I remember that I needed Bill and I could not find him, I break back into my soul knowing. I was human, frail, terrified. I lost my protective ally, my last hope.

The tears come slowly, the weight releases gradually. We lost everything. I could not hold on to the love.

Through remembering, I come to the pain.

Through remembering, I then come to the love.

Who Can Stay Open to the Knowledge of Love?



Christa

I am sitting in the red chair of the living room, sun streaming through the corner window, the seven plants, who find their home there, happily soaking up the afternoon rays. I have just read two articles from The New York Times online.

It is strangely quiet with dogs absent, still at the dog sitters. We have just returned from an overnight visit to the Upper Connecticut Valley, including a visit to Putney, Vermont, to celebrate a long time friend's sixty-fifth birthday.

Twenty-eight years ago today, I was in the birthing room of the Greenfield, Massachusetts, hospital, close to delivering my first child, a son called Rory. This morning when we were still in Putney, while Marc spoke with a client, I strolled down to the banks of the great Connecticut River that runs with some ferocity below The Putney Inn. I texted my son a birthday message and remembered launching a canoe from the same river access the week before he was born.

I tried to put it all together. How I came to Putney, Vermont, in 1982, from New York City, with my first husband and had a baby two months later. How we left and traveled for three years before settling down in Providence, Rhode Island. How only three years later, in the spring of 1988 after moving

to Vermont in my twenty-ninth year, I met Marc and discovered the way of the dreams.

And here I was, nearly three decades later, standing on the same banks of this mighty river, returned to the area, so changed, so far from the lost young woman that I was, in love with Marc and joined in our life partnership of love and work. I was in awe of the plan that brought us to this point, this moment in Putney, Vermont.

Under everyone's veneer are archeological layers of experience, memory held in the soul of all that we have known and experienced, the sorrows and the joys. Layered on top of the opening to this source of wisdom and information is a lid. The lid holds all the misconceptions we hold about ourselves, the lies and conclusions made in response to hurts and traumas.

When we begin to listen to our dreams, cracks form in the lid of lies. Each crack opens to the feelings of truth. If we work our way deeply enough, down through the history of present life hurts and fears, we may come to a core trauma so brutal or painful that its unfelt horror reverberates through lifetimes, showing up in relationships, family dramas and life disappointments. If we travel through the work of our soul, we may find ourselves, as I did in France, facing into the original trauma and choosing to step towards, into and through it.

Walking back up from the river, I thought of all this and how I had entered the tunnel of trauma three months ago. Here I was now, at the place where my adult life really began, the beginning of my saga of leaving home, marrying and having a baby. Here I now was, at mid-life, my career exploding, our organization, North of Eden, blasting forth into the world, and our personal lives bound together with our shared devotion to the path of consciousness, revealed through the process of Archetypal Dreamwork.

Two days later. I do not know what is happening.

My conscious ego is at attention and knows I am entering a state of regression in order to heal. I do not know where I am going though I am willing.

Outside it is raining. Inside the dogs are sleeping. The room is ordinary.

The pale pink cashmere blanket is warm against the damp day. Inside me, the grip tightens and I cannot draw a full breath. I am in the tunnel and it feels like labor when I was in transition and I knew that no one could do it for me and I knew I had to keep going, even though it felt like the birth would never come. I venture into the study to find Marc glued to a movie. I do not want to bother him; he has worked all day. But I need him.

“Will you come and be with me? I don’t know what’s happening.” Marc comes, we lie down.

He tells me about his day in court, seeing his former wife, lunch with his daughter. I breathe through the vise around my heart, cinching. I tell him I want to describe what I am experiencing in my body. He listens. I wait.

“I think there’s more,” he says.

“What else could there be?” she asks.

The grip tightens under her left arm, inflaming the muscles around her heart. Her breathing quickens. She gasps for air. She leans forward holding her sides. They pause. He hesitates. She notices his silence.

He says, “I don’t want to say what I need to say.”

She insists, “Please speak what you know. I need to hear what it is.” She can hardly say the words, so tight is the grip around her heart, like a rope inside her chest pulled taut around a winch.

He touches her arm lightly, just enough of a gesture to keep her landed in this present moment. He is here and she is barreling back in time. The touch encourages her to stay with the discomfort of remembering.

He starts to speak, circling. I can tell he is reluctant to tell me what he is seeing. I want to know.

He starts tentatively, then more surely, gaining momentum. “We’ve always thought the trauma is from being left, by my dying and facing the devastation of loss and living a life cut off from feeling and love.

But so much is happening for you in your body, it seems more like the agony of a violent death...

...perhaps you were not a spectator of the burning but actually one of those who burned?”

The speaking of truth relaxes the holding in the body.

The body itself is relieved from the responsibility of holding the trauma. He speaks the truth of dying by burning and the release begins to happen.

She passes through the ordeal of re-enactment. The vise is loosened, her breathing returns to normal. The natural unwinding of release replaces the twisted muscles held in tension. Breath in, breath out. Instead, comes calm and peace. Calm after the storm.

The challenge is to find the pain and love of the heart in the horror. Trauma describes the place where we close down to the pain and by extension, to the love.

Who can hold on to the knowledge of light and love under siege?

Who is the one to hold onto the truth?

Against all odds, in the blitz, in the foxhole, in the heart
of darkness, at the end of the road, in the killing fields, in the
camps, in the misery of Haiti?

Who can stay open to the knowledge of love?

My heart is thawing gradually.

Has been, now, for the last seven months, the fear
drawing me down, into the horror.

Now comes the breaking back into the heart that can
remember the love that came before. The heart remembers what
was known before. My heart that knows and remembers.

This is the healing: to re-member the love.

Finding the Love in the Horror



In the expanded realm of consciousness, the worst things that have happened to us are nothing more than stories. Terrible things have happened, but we can be healed because love is so much more powerful. The eternal soul is much larger than all of it.

If we could not come back from trauma, there would be no hope for humanity. Everyone has been traumatized through the course of lifetimes, however many there may have been. The history of humankind has been terrible. How could we ever be healed?

But we can be healed.

When we reclaim ourselves, when we reclaim the love, the terrible things become just stories. Until we reclaim the love, the stories are not just stories. They are places of great loss and great suffering that continue from lifetime to lifetime. The world then becomes the dominion of pathology.

Why do we, at some level that we are not aware of, get sicker and sicker as human beings over the course of the ages? Perhaps it is because we accumulate memories of trauma and do not resolve them.

The healing work of the dream is nothing short of the complete resolution and reclamation of the soul's capacity to evolve.

To do this, we must pass through the eye of the needle. The eye of the needle is to take the worst moment and find the love in it. This is the moment when everything can get turned around. All reaction ultimately comes from that moment of devastation. Like the force of an explosion, it is not just the immediate damage of the shrapnel, but also the shock wave that radiates from the center. We live in that shock wave – life after life – whether or not we experience any other trauma.

That shock wave creates a gravity, an energy or a force field by which the energy of the word No is very commonly used for resisting. The explosive energy of the trauma itself empowers the pathology to resist. We can feel the force of it inside as we get close to our wound, to the shrapnel, to the exploding shards of glass, to the flesh and bone of that terrible moment.

Nothing wants us to go back through that. Except God and our own soul, which is not damaged, which waits on the other side.

Maybe this is the inner message from Jesus when he came back from the dead. He was coming back from the trauma. We like to put things in the physical realm, so the story goes that he rose again. But we all need to rise again from our traumas. We all need to be awakened. It is an emergence that is beyond the emergence of Lazarus. It is a psychological reemergence of the soul. This is the hope for the world: to reclaim ourselves.

The deepest level is to enter directly into the trauma, to the moment where we are traumatized, where we have been violated, and, there, feel the presence of God.

After

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Christa

I dream I am in Bermuda.
I see two whirlpools in the ocean.
First a man emerges from one, then a woman from the other.
Two portals opening to the deepest part of the ocean.

Feeling myself unlocked from trauma.
New consciousness.
Heightened.
Free.

After months of gripping terror, it is a huge relief to feel
simple sorrow in my heart cavity.
Beyond the shock and horror is the feeling of the life lost.
Now the grief of separation and return can be felt.
Now I feel peace and calm.

Who Wants to Be The One?



When we get the wellspring of love, we can be better mothers and fathers, better wives and husbands, better lovers. With this wellspring of love, we can perhaps have a calling as well, to serve the Divine, to lead others into the direction of the evolution of our species. Everyone is capable of this with the alchemical power of love.

But it is difficult to find the person, man or woman, who will say yes enough times from the most vulnerable place in his or her being. It is the divine yes that brings us to the most vulnerable pain inside. If we keep saying yes, the healing and the love are also there.

But we like strife, the ego dynamic of struggle, competition, depression – all that we suffer from because we do not have the love. It is difficult to understand this. It sounds so easy, and it is easy in a way, but very few people can just say yes. Even people in the advanced stages of this work. The yes hits a place where the ego feels too vulnerable, too wounded, too scared because of what has happened in the past or in past lives that we do not even remember.

Perhaps we are scared of being too powerful, too close to God, and then being punished for it. The Cathars were tortured and killed, their eyes were poked out and their lips torn from

their mouths. How many others have been tortured and killed in how many other times?

Many of us who have been persecuted in the place of being very spiritually devout lost our souls to the trauma of that persecution. Here is where the trauma or the suffering sits for many people.

Who wants to return there? Who wants to be the one? If we do not want to be the one, what do we end up with?

This is so linked to the past and to why people kill each other for religious reasons. It is not the dying that is difficult, in some way; it is how we died. For the memories of how we died become part of the trauma that follows us from lifetime to lifetime.

This is how the war is fought for our souls. For many who are in advanced stages of this work, the path is to undo that trauma, to get back into the position of spiritual faith, spiritual connection, where they knew the love but suffered greatly for it. When we feel that love with the trauma, we may not want to stand in it again as a calling.

Instead, we have an academic reality that refuses to acknowledge that there is even a spiritual path in dreams.

The spiritual path of dreams is traced back to when we were tribal people, having vision quests to find God inside. Who will be the one to take that journey?

To Christa



Marc

When you realized that the breath of the smoke was the shimmering of your own body's disintegration, and the essence of your soul's separation; how you also stood back and watched in horror the suffering of others, you then finally understood your own suffering.

In this moment of realization, you cried out to me, "Are you proud of me?"

It was the beginning of an idea that touched my own inner joy that I never understood because of my own suffering. Unlike you, I knew I was dying with such horror and fear that I reached out and pounded God's face so that it obliterated my own memory of his love. I woke in this life to anger and fear, spending a good part of my life coming to terms with the subtle reconciliation of making peace with God's love.

I never really took it beyond that because there was nothing heroic or joyful about losing my woman and my life that I so cherished. The pain of that loss has never left me and the shame of my own undoing in the rage of my loss, the memory of the sin of which ebbs only slowly from my bones.

And then you said, "Are you proud of me?"

You gave up your life for Him. Of course, I am proud of you.

In that moment, I responded by crooning in admiration and blatant support. I could almost not believe my own mouth as it uttered its enthusiasm, for that would mean the celebration of your death for Him was also mine. Seeing the shadow of my own sacrifice from the place of yours, I could appreciate the shame I had felt for losing everything.

How could there be anything good in any of it? But now I see it through the joy of your own demise: you are a hero, you died for Him. I could feel my joy rise.

For days, I had felt my joy rising in anticipation of your revelation. Somehow my soul wanted to tell me that we who died for Him are heroes, to be celebrated, rose petals, peach blossoms (is there confetti in heaven?) showered over all of those who died for Him, for they also lived with Him. And even though I forgot in the moment of my loss, I now see that I triumphed over death by putting Him first, above my own fears of a shortened life.

I always thought a martyr suffered as Jesus must have, as others must have, like Martin Luther King, Jr. But it does not feel like suffering now. I can see the bigger knowing that allows me to face my death in this life without trembling. What I knew before and forgot, I now know again. What is heroic in this is not the pride's portion but rather the freedom from the world, even as I travel through it.

I cannot believe the words I am writing because I always thought the end of things was a loss and always, certainly, felt that way. But now I see it was only a setback in the soul's journey on a devoted path of lifetimes of commitment to the love and path that is offered.

With this knowing, the trauma shrinks, like an acorn in the past, an old memory lost in a sea of leaves, branches and the trees trembling in the winds of devotion.

So, bring it on! We are back. I celebrate the future with the victories of the past. I excuse and forgive the losses that peppered the endless journey. I celebrate the love that

transcends all suffering and trauma and I stand in awe of the love that heals us all and forgets the traumas. So that I only remember sitting with my beloved, feeling the face of the wind.

Circle of Protection



Christa

I am practicing the art of acknowledging the constriction of trauma fear when it is triggered, and turning towards the love in the fire.

I knew I needed to draw an image of this, of being in the fire.

Painting by Christa Lancaster



Earlier, Marc and I went to work out. As I worked on the Nautilus for my abs, the panic-stricken feeling rose up. I remembered that He is in the fire with me, holding me. The tension dissipated.

Small cycles of working through the trauma in a day. It is taking the time that it takes. I am learning to be patient and have trust that His hand is in all of this, the pace, the timing, the plan.

After I draw and then write, I go into the bath and breathe into the ache in my heart.

I cannot speak. In bed Marc puts his hand on my heart and tears come.

With tears, I fall into sleep.

Dream:

I am in a gang of teenagers, both white and black. There is another group of all black teenagers. I am intimidated by them. Someone in our group knows their dialect and speaks to them.

One answers back. A connection is made. My group starts to sing to me. I feel soothed and comforted.

The next day, the terror strikes again and I feel its grip on my heart.

I invoke the singing teenagers and the vise on my heart relaxes.

I am bringing the protective love of the Archetypes to my moment, witnessing the house of fire. Amidst the horror and violence and cruelty, I stand in a circle of protection. I do not have to leave. I can stay, feeling the fire and knowing the love and protection, at the same time.

Love and Pain Are Not in Opposition



In the world, love and pain are considered opposites. We believe that once we are in the love, then we should be in complete joy and should never feel pain or hurt, never have trauma or bad things happen.

But at the archetypal level, the soul lives in a sea of feeling. We move back and forth between the polarities of love to pain, pain to exhilaration.

Pain is the wellspring for compassion for others, particularly because most of our suffering is buried under our illusion that we can have happiness without pain.

Illusion creates enemies, for the one wants what the other has. The Third World wants what the First World has but the First World only has stuff without the spirit. Can we have stuff and spirit? We could, but for the most part, we do not. We do not have to be paupers to be with God. We often believe we do, as so many mystics were and are paupers.

It is the same split we carry around love and all its abundance versus the passion with all of its pain. We believe they cannot be together.

This is the misunderstanding of what pain is – pain is not hopeless; nihilism is hopeless pain or sadness. True hurt comes from being loved.

When we really feel love, the hurt we have can actually be a level of compassion for others. But when the hurt we have is not reconciled and we are suffering from the absence of our own passion, then hurt becomes manifested as nihilism, jealousy, anger or other emotions that have nothing to do with archetypal experiences.

Archetypal feelings, such as anger or pain, are different from the emotions that are projected from the position of not having the love in the first place. When we feel hurt and we feel loved, then those two things can be together.

Oftentimes, we do not feel compassion for ourselves because we do not feel our own suffering. We may feel compassion for others, so that the dream process can bring that compassion back to the pain for ourselves, unraveling the mystery that the compassion we have for others is really the same compassion God has for us.

To receive this love and compassion that God has for us, unfortunately means that we must feel into our own woundedness. If we do not want to feel into our own woundedness, then whatever compassion we have will never be for ourselves. It will always be for others. But in order to love others we need to feel the love that God has for us.

This is tricky because there are many teachers who are healing others without being healed themselves. These kinds of healers suffer more than those they are helping. Of course, there are many examples of this. There is one example of a man who gave me this dream:

I am living at one of the poles, overlooking the world. I feel great compassion for the world and the suffering I see.

In this dream, this man was feeling a great deal of compassion for the world, but he was living all alone on a pole, receiving no love for himself, even though he had a sense of the love. He

admitted that he had lived his whole life at that pole and that the only satisfaction he had was trying to help and love others.

This man is one of the most intelligent healers I have ever met. He has been able to reach some of my clients that I could not reach. But this dream shows that at the same time he has been healing others, he has also lived isolated from the glory of his own soul.

If we are willing to hold the pain and the joy together, not as opposites but as a way to open the crack deeper, to find the source of our pain, then we can find that source and receive the love directly from this pain.

On the way down, we go down a kind of tunnel, like Persephone going down the crack in the earth. We get both the love and the pain. As we go deeper, we can follow the pain to a core wound, a core trauma, and then we get the love. We get the love that we did not believe was there when we first lived that trauma.

For most of us, when we suffered an event where we were betrayed or violated, where we were deeply wounded, we felt alone. This is nihilism, being alone.

True pain does not want to be alone. True pain is the soul being nurtured in the place of pain. Quite often, when we have the pain, we become angry, pushing people and even God away. It is a natural reaction, but it is the worst thing we can do. The place of pain is the place where we also need to be open to being supported.

This is not what we do. We want to support others, but the others often do not want the support either. Or, we want to support others not to be with their pain but to be in their projected pain.

Healing Talisman



Christa

My drawing is my healing talisman.

I take it with me from room to room, setting it before me while I work with clients, propping it up on the stack of vitamins in the kitchen as I cook.

My drawing takes me into the heart of love which is inextinguishable.

In the center of the dancing flames is a magenta circle within which is a woman's torso, my torso. In the center of her torso is a space, filled in with gold.

I do not yet know if the gold is the light or the gold is the wound or if the light is in the wound.

All day, my drawing draws me towards the love in the pain.

I have felt no panic today, nor constriction. Today, I am feeling a deep peace where there was tightness and angst.

Today, the love is stronger than the fear.

The Past Awaits as a Portal to the Future



The goal of ego consciousness is to keep ourselves from the past. The psyche wants to focus on what we are having for dinner, what we can do to make things better, what things can be achieved to move forward in our lives,

This all happens without the soul. Many people teach this by even implying that the soul's purpose has something to do with these goals, or, put another way, that these goals are somehow linked to God's purpose for us.

The soul cannot be free until we enter the belly of the past. We are lost in the belly of the past. The soul is free and not accessible to us while we stay in our prison of past memories and, more importantly, past trauma.

We all live on the outside of a big balloon, far away from the center that is our souls. We live in terror that this balloon will be popped and fall to the ground. The greater the trauma, the greater the threat to our self-satisfied sense of order and our maintenance of survival, which we project as worry and concern, almost from the moment we wake up till the moment we sleep.

The pin that would pop our bubble appears in REM sleep; anytime the pin gets too close we feel it as a nightmare. Some of us handle this tension well and maintain a life of loving

simplicity without a deep connection to the soul within while still others are ravaged by these unseen forces and live volatile lives of emotional instability.

It may seem that those who live the happier version are more closely aligned with their souls. While those people may possess deeper feelings from the soul, it is doubtful that their dreams would also not lead them on an arduous journey to find their core. We aspire to be good more than seek our own souls. We think if we are good, we are our own souls. For our souls are of the goodness.

But our souls are also filled with all the mystery of all that ever happened to us. They carry all the great knowledge we once knew and would seek to remember again. Most importantly it is the soul itself, the child within, that has the capacity to feel the higher vibration that is God's love. The ego self, with its partner the mind, can feel very little of these realms for it thinks more than it feels.

But we have to journey back through all the terrors that comprise our history of loss and betrayal and violation to reclaim these treasures and the soul itself; this is what we mean by entering the belly of the beast, like Jonah in the whale. Ironically, we are already swallowed but we do not know it.

To go into the belly is to accept the reality of our own loss of self. Do we want to leave the quietude of our comfortable belief that we are fine the way we are? Pride is a word that defines the way in which the psyche makes do with what remains of its self after the ravages of time, meaning multiple lifetimes, have taken place. The petulant desire to avoid the past creates the numbing down of all that was ever known. There may have even been grand accomplishment of personal and spiritual growth.

To accept the damage which the dreams shows us and to come to terms with what we have lost is truly the first step of spiritual growth. The past waits and only then can we go into the future, for the future is on the other side of the trauma.

When we pass through this deepest of hurts, or horror, to the extent we have been exposed to it, we reclaim our souls and can evolve into the present reality and begin to become the evolving future that is the soul's tour de force.

In the movie, *Apocalypse Now*, the journey reflected is to the heart of darkness. In the movie, it is seen as a dead end; just as the river winds to its end source as if horror is the only other choice of existence. The movie reflects that such a journey would lead us to a horror that cannot be reconciled, that is, that horror is all that there is.

This is part of the Big Lie of pathology. Redemption could actually occur at this moment through the miracle of the dream process. Instead, the horror of the memory is lost, over and over again

In the movie, when the character Kurtz asks us to accept the willingness of the Vietcong to cut off the arms of their own inoculated children because the Americans had administered the shots, he touches on the power that is behind that kind of action, an action misdirected and terrible. It is a kind of power that is unknown to the world, a power that may even have love in it. Perhaps he is bumping into this notion that this love and horror can co-exist. However, in actuality, that reference is the closest Kurtz comes to this issue. For Kurtz, the horror is the only endpoint.

The true transcendent love that the psyche can access would not require any of us to take a sword up in the name of any external cause. For the Valkyrie's sword is the sword that slays the evil in all of us – it would never be turned against the child. The war we must wage is the war inside against the self – the self that would perpetuate the illusion that we must do something in the outer world to fight or change someone else, when, in fact, we must ourselves be changed.

The horror reflects the portal to the greatest love. The movie reveals the belief that there is no love in the horror, that avoidance of the past is the only way out.

To accept the journey of the dream, we must learn to think differently about ourselves and the nature of transformation and change. Colonel Kurtz is emblematic of the suffering we all have that unconsciously waits to be reclaimed, that once reclaimed can lead to the light and the healing that is inherent in the dream process. The suffering that can unfold at this deepest layer of the work.

Opening to the Pain God Carries



Marc

It never occurred to me when Christa's charred baby came convulsing out of Ajax's mouth all those years ago that it was the baby that I loved, the child I had known as my own soul connection. At the time, I thought it was just a symbol of a long-lost wound whose horror was now coming to light.

Now I know that it was Christa's soul, the part that was burned alive, acutely aware of God's love. It is only in our conscious connection to the Divine and our own soul that a soul could be so damaged. If the soul is suppressed, as is usually the case, the ego's trauma, no matter how horrific, would not touch into the soul.

But I knew all of this at the time. What I now know is that this baby, this charred, ruined baby is connected somehow to the love of my life, the woman who was so dear to me that when I left, I became lost from God and lost to her. This was the remnants of this person I had loved so dearly. I had died before her so I could not have known what happened to her.

Six years ago when this dream came to her, Christa was just the front self for the brilliance of the soul that had been decimated by the trauma of being burned alive. What I now know is that the brilliant child is my love and as she heals and

evolves back to her former knowing, I am struck by my profound hurt at now knowing how in love I was with this particular soul and what had happened to her. I feel the shock and horror of this new realization even though she and I had worked together for a long time.

Somewhere between the intellectual knowing of shadow and metaphor lies the deeper knowing wound that cannot behold the horror without an involuntary grief that accompanies this knowing

As a therapist, I deal with trauma daily, and losses as egregious as what happened to Christa are, unfortunately, common. The whole world as well as the once known brilliance of the self has been devastated and corrupted by trauma. This work charts the path back to such a possibility of reclaiming that brilliant self in each of us.

Of course, I know this. But what I did not know or feel is how my pain from my dear Christa's child, is His pain, for all of us who have been lost and ground up in the violence of the tyranny which is part of the human condition. The more we are destroyed inside the more we destroy each other. Perhaps not in tyrannical ways as visited by evil incarnate in humans but in the subtle ways that we hurt each other by virtue of our own reactions to the hurt we have suffered.

We hurt. We repress the hurt. Someone pays.

As a therapist, I rarely feel the pain God must feel for all of us. But as I feel it for my beloved Christa, something cracks deep inside and I feel His pain for the world, for all of us. In feeling His pain, I am slowly becoming aware of the depth and corruption that has taken place in each of us.

I can only wonder at this work and the potential capability for humanity to rediscover itself, without religion and rules and structured rituals. I can only wonder at the possibility of the release of libido and the sensual pleasure of God's love

surging through our bodies, as it does in children who dance and play in freedom and unabashed joy and hopeful celebration of God's eternal presence. In His undying love that has created us all in the first place.

Why Do the Archetypes Love Us?



Marc

When we are so removed from the archetypal reality, we do not understand that we did not come from nothing. We do not know that we came from Him, from It, from the universal something. It is why we are here.

We are an extension of some effort of consciousness to grow into something on this plane that has some benefit for God, for the Divine incarnate reality. I feel strongly from Him that I count because I am breathing; we all count because we live and we have souls.

Maybe our job is to clean it up. The dreams help us to wake up to who we really are, to why we are really here and what it means to be alive. We will never know what it means to be alive until we wake up. We just plod along, waking up.

I know I have faults; but should I question why the Archetypes tolerate me when I cannot know what they know? The Archetypes know more than me. They tolerate me because they love me or ... well, I do not know. I could ask the question: Why am I part of an organization that is a juggernaut of new consciousness in this world? How did I get to be in this position? The answer is that I did the dreamwork, but beyond that, I do not know. I do not know anything.

I just know that I am here, breathing, doing my work. I do not know why He loves me, why I am here, what it all means anymore than anyone else can. But I am one step ahead of most people because I do not ask those kinds of questions. When I ask the question of why He loves me, I am asking from a place of feeling like I may owe Him for that love. Maybe my brain and heart are not developed enough to understand why They love me, but I am learning.

I am learning why I love others and I feel the power of that love for others, for their growth, from this incredibly unselfish place that does not have anything to do with me. My needs are all met because this love supports me. I know the way I feel about the people around me. I feel my support for them, and I know that this love comes from Them, to the extent that I am able to manifest it.

If I feel this way about the Archetypes, They must feel this way about me. This is how I am growing. But it is almost by accident. I am mindlessly just going on. I want Them because They are beautiful and wonderful and They accept me even though I can be a jerk sometimes. I do not need to ask any other questions.

Turning from Horror to Love



Christa

Cutting in deeper with each round I go through.

In the costume shop the panic mounts, the grip around my heart tightens.

We go home through the rain.

Panic subsiding. I am in the burning house again.

I breathe.

Later, I talk through the memory. Marc reminds me it is just a memory. I am not trapped in the past. I say what it is like to be in the closed space with many other people crammed in, the unbearable tension of mounting hysteria. The suspense and the waiting for the fire. Humans hyperventilating in panic, drawing all the limited oxygen in. I am gasping for air. Not enough oxygen. No space to find peace or dignity. Humans herded like animals treated like subhumans. The runaway fear of mass panic. Mass murder.

I understand my compulsion to read the lurid details of Zoe Oldenburg's description of the massacre at Montségur and my fascination with the passage in Arthur Guirdham's book that chronicles a woman's experience of burning. I remember reading the passage to Marc at lunch after we drove away from Montségur. I felt compelled to draw the image of the palisade of

fire with the faces of those burnt left blank in expression. There is no way to convey the faces of panic and horror.

I cannot breathe. Where do I take the terror that overtakes me? Marc helps me see it is time to take this moment to the man on the boat, holding the baby boy.

I do.

Panic gives way to easy breathing, then to calm. Where there was no love, no protection, no God, there is now care and protective love in the speeding boat with the man. He holds me as I hold the baby.

It is time to turn from horror to love; it is time to step towards healing. There is God in the nightmare. There is love and protection amidst the terror.

Emerging Girl through Relationship



Christa

The girl in me, the deepest part of my soul being, came out in relationship with Marc. In me, deeply buried was the girl, the essence of feminine consciousness. The girl could only emerge through relationship with a man who could respect and love this girl, a man who knew his own girl.

The story I have not wanted to write about is the history of my relationship with Marc. My fear is that it will be misinterpreted. I have fears about being eclipsed by judgments, of his being viewed as some kind of Svengali and our years in the therapist/client relationship of being seen as Pygmalion-like.

I hold a residual shame in this place. In order to write about this, I need to find my way to a clear place, the innocent girl voice in me.

I go back to the dream in which I am the wild, free girl who has the spontaneous orgasm. Annie walks by with a thirteen-year-old girl, arm in arm. They are naked. I am naked. She is the same girl who came out of the basement in the dream I had at The Pitcher Inn. The same girl who ran free with the dogs through the meadow in another dream. She is creative, wild and free of shame. She is who she is.

New Dream:

I am a girl, young, teenaged or early twenties. I am living in a Latin culture, Mexico or South America. My love, a young man, lives in an exotic, slightly rundown, rambling house. I ride my bike around inside as he gives me the tour! We end up in his bedroom, a really cool yellow and green room with a curtained bed in the middle. It is fun and innocent and young. We are just getting to know each other. We end up in the kitchen with his family having a wonderful meal.

The dream reminds me of the time we stayed with my stepson Daniel's Costa Rican host family in a tiny village in the high coffee growing area of the country. There was so much love and intimacy in the family of five where we lived for several days in their little house. In the dream, it was a similar feeling. I felt loved and known and accepted. Before I went to the family in Costa Rica, I had never known this level of love. I feel it now as I write. I am writing from the girl in the dream, getting to know her love, feeling loved.

My story with Marc. I know that I was drawn to Vermont in 1987 when I needed a haven to begin again after the end of my first marriage. I know I ended up living only five miles away from Marc and finding my way to his door thirteen months after landing in Vermont, in the spring after my thirtieth birthday. I know I found in him a man I could trust, with whom I could develop and grow.

What I did not know, for many, many years later, was how he felt a flash of recognition that first time I walked into his office. Once we had come together he was able to tell me what he had held in himself; that he knew I was someone he had known and that we had work to do together.

He respected the boundaries of the circumscribed

relationship that we both needed. We each had work to do, to grow through our personal issues. The structure of the therapy work gave me the structure in which to evolve. It also gave us a crucible to know each other, with very clear guidelines.

I have had the room to work through my issues around men and power. Instinctively, I trusted Marc and from the beginning had a great sense of loyalty to him, as a person, as a teacher, and to the work itself. I understood that he was breaking new ground and that every time he taught, the work was being spoken for the first time. I knew I was a part of what was evolving even though, having a bucket-load of fear, I could not dare to look too far ahead into the future, nor was I yet aware of the past. I felt a part of the excitement of bringing this work out into the world.

My story with Marc is intertwined with my journey of healing. What I know is true is that we came together, years ago, to heal a very old shared history of trauma, by working together, first in a therapist/client relationship, then as colleagues in this work, followed by becoming business partners and founding directors of North of Eden. Finally, only recently, we have come together as full partners in life and love.

Return of Innate Joy



Christa

Since coming through the cycle of trauma my dreams have changed. Instead of being about loss and what happened with Marc in our previous lives, they are about the Animus coming and opening to new possibilities. It feels amazing to me that I might really be through this dark and painful passage.

Dream:

I am at a celebration where everyone is dancing. A man finds me and takes my hand, leading me out onto the dance floor. I feel a blissful feeling of love wash over me. Later, we meet at a restaurant. An ex-lover shows up and wants to show me his little monk-like cell. I really do not want to see it so I return to the man, whom I am very attracted to.

Dream:

I am in the back seat of a convertible with a baby girl who is standing up exhilarated by the speed and the air rushing by. I am a little worried that she is not in her car seat.

Shift.

I am in a house on a hillside overlooking the sea, or ocean. It is a simple house which needs some help. I need to open up the front room so I can sit at a desk overlooking the water and look out. It reminds me of where we stayed in Nice, up high on a cliff, above the sweep of the Baie des Anges. The architect, a man, arrives, and I get really excited about changing the windows and taking off the porch so I can have more of a view. There is another structure, below on the cliff, which is falling apart.

In the last few months, I have not felt much joy or excitement. I could not look ahead to the future. I could only tuck under and head into each day, taking one day at a time. I did not know how I would meet my clients under such a siege of trauma, or show up for the many events we had. I had to hold onto my faith that I had come through many times before and, surely, I would again.

It was difficult to endure the grip of terror without knowing its trajectory in time and space. At times I would waver and yet I knew there was nowhere to go but forward. I felt truly in the last stages of a great dying and birth, like being the pupa in the chrysalis. I knew something good and wonderful was happening and that I would emerge with more of me, with more of God within me.

I have, apparently, emerged and I am finding out what life is now. I am leaving behind the part of me that worries, the goat (the one worried about the girl in the car). The old structure falling away.

I am noticing the return of my innate joy, more laughter, more strength in a crisis, more panoramic vision, more enjoyment of life and love, more with the source of love, the lover, my beloved.

I am experiencing myself differently, without the bumpiness of trauma-related fear pushing up. I feel life as a flow, moving through changes and shifts with a new ease and grace.

Dream:

A baby is swimming in the waves, bobbing up and down, in and under the water. I realize I want to go in too.

I am swimming with the baby.

I feel I am learning more about being that girl, who is very much herself, open and light and joyful. I feel I have been restored to my essential state of joy. In this state of ease and joy, life is more about enjoyment – of clients, children, cooking, my honey, writing checks, teaching.

This is different from the false high joy that tainted the essential joy. This joy comes from being deep within, not needing others to affirm me, not needing to be the social nexus.

She, this girl in me, has a quiet joy, inner, deep and light at the same time. Here I am, on the other side of this trauma work.

Who is to say that I am done with trauma? For now, I am enjoying my relationship with the young man who, among other things, is showing me his house of many rooms.

In the Moment of Trauma



Marc

In the moment of trauma, we all want to know why we were not protected, why this horrible thing happened, why we were in the wrong place at the wrong time, why we were persecuted through no fault of our own. Terrible things such as persecution and slavery happen all the time and have been around forever.

To understand that in the place of the greatest persecution, the greatest trauma, He is still there with us, even though He cannot change what is happening in the moment, is to understand that our lives are bigger than one life or one terrible moment. We die, and our souls continue to live. We all turn away, and we have to turn back from the horror to find that He was always there in the first place.

It is much easier to ask, “Why was He not there when I needed Him?” It is a complicated question. If we lived in a better world, then we would all be better to each other, but He cannot change free will, He cannot change the circumstances that we find ourselves in. Sometimes those circumstances are of our own making and sometimes they are not. But we need to learn to trust that He is here, now. That is the bottom line.

We can learn to have the courage to face into terrible feelings from traumas, trusting that facing into them will

evolve us to be closer to ourselves and to God in a way that really matters. Even though we may not understand why. Even though we may not understand why we need to stop protecting ourselves. Even though we may not understand that we need to come out from under the place where we hide or manage for the sake of forgotten fears and forgotten pains.

Why is there evil in the world? I do not know, but I do know that we are not evolved to the point where we can have the connection with God and all stand in this Divine love. In fact, we are far away from that. We have the idea of the love, but we are not in the love.

We started out primitive and evolved civilizations from a place of great brutality. Maybe it is simply a question of growing, of transforming and evolving, but we are not such a wonderful species. Maybe we can be.

Great suffering happens. We all cause the great suffering and we all experience it. It may be easier to see how people mistreat us than how we mistreat other people, but we all do, on some level, when we stand away from His love. Even if we do not want to stand away from His love, avoiding trauma separates us from Him. This is why we need to go deeper into the trauma work.

The dream will evolve all of us. It can be the secret to growth and it is the one thing that no one seems to do; we do not give much attention to the evolutionary process. Religion and spirituality are everywhere; there are many paths. But I believe that the dreamwork is much deeper in evolving a soul because it takes us to confront the evil within each of us.

So, in the moment that I am tormented and then hate God because of it, I step away from the love. In that moment, pathology, the evil, can consume me.

It did for me. I was born into this life terrified and angry, and I hurt people from that place. I did not mean to hurt people anymore than anyone does, but we all do. The more brutality

we exhibit, and the more we behave in a way that is guarded, the less the love can shine through us. In the place of less love is the place of evil.

Fear: Latent Libido



Fear is basically latent libido. When we feel our fear and go through it, that latent libido energy, trauma and love are all released. All of the juice which has been locked in the amber of fear.

When we mine this ore in the psyche, we are really mining fear as one of the ingredients of the alchemical process. Fear, once placed in the alchemical hopper, really transmutes into its fundamental core of libido, kundalini.

When something disrupts the love at some point in our consciousness, it becomes fear. We become fearful of what happened when we were evolved or potent and alive. The fear then becomes covered over by shame or anger or codependence or being nice or false good feelings or a million variations of managing. When the fear tries to break in, we then believe it is the enemy.

But we want to invite the fear through this dreamwork because the dream is the one thing that helps us to plumb the depths and treasures of the fear. It is difficult to fully understand fear, to fully unravel it and transmute the fear into libido without the dream, no matter how intelligent we are. No matter how well we understand the therapeutic process.

Fear holds the key to trauma, to the soul and to healing. Every time we do a bit of work and more fear arises, driving us deeper, it usually means we are doing good work. But if we do work where we are not going deep enough, then the fear will always be the same fear. By doing the deep vertical work of going in and through the alchemical process offered, the feeling of the fear changes.

It can get stronger, more conscious, more passionate, more real. This fear changes as we move through it. It needs to alchemize, feeling different as we go. Otherwise, we can get stuck in that amber of fear. The dreams invite us to move through it.

The Potion to Kill the Goat



Christa

The muscles clench around my heart again. They feel like pressure, gripping me, like the tail-end of the goat pathology that holds me in a vise.

Goat does not want me to get free. Goat holds on. Goat grips.

Dream:

My friend Jane and I have decided to take a potion that will kill us.

I choke at the last moment. I do not want to die after all. But it is too late, the potion is in my system. It has gone in. I am dying. Strange moment, realizing I have no choice. I cannot come back.

Then the scene shifts. The walls are filled with water. The hotel I am in may collapse. I run upstairs to the attic to find a man with his daughter and a baby boy who looks a bit glum.

My work is to let go and die, let the old structure fall and to take the baby boy with me, away from the man in the hotel room and go back to the man on the fast boat.

Leave the old goat world and enter His world, moving very fast, holding the boy, seeing the hurricane approach.

My life is moving faster than ever before. I do not know how to do this, to maintain this pace of events, workshops, interviews, clients, kids, travel.

The muscles around my heart, under my arm clench.

Marc reminds me about writing. I cannot not write through my experience. I have not been writing. When I do not write, I get clogged up. I forget the point of everything.

The man in the dream is an example of a man I still cede my power to. Goat loves that, for me to give up the baby boy to this man. This happened recently in an outer world financial situation. I took charge of a financial process, then reacted when a man who was also involved did not like what I was doing. It has been hard for me when others react.

I take the baby in my arms and the energy shifts. I feel my energy open.

When I give power away, when I give the baby boy to the man in the hotel, I stop the action I need to take and muscles tighten. Goat grip.

Baby boy needs to come with me.

I am changing so fast, I do not recognize myself.

I take the potion that will kill the goat.

I am moving at light speed on the Animus' boat. A hurricane is approaching. I take the baby boy and lean on the shoulder of the man in charge.

Without Story



Christa

Dream:

I am in a darkened auditorium with many people in the audience. I am sitting with Karla. Marc is working with the video in front. I go up to him to show him a piece of paper with four significant planets to do with me. I say there is one I do not know. I go back to Karla and start crying and crying from the depths of my being. There is no story with my tears.

Shift.

I am in a beautiful old house. The wind is blowing through in an exciting way. I am naked. I go outside with Flora, my black Labrador, who is rolling with delight in the earth. Annie walks by, also naked, with her niece who is a young teenager, also naked. They are intent in their relationship, smiling at me and walking on, contained in their experience.

Daniel, my stepson, is outside packing his suitcase, by

throwing all of his dirty clothes into the bag with great energy.

I go back inside. I have a spontaneous orgasm.

This is my new energy returning to me.

Coming through the burning trauma to new life, eros, pure, uncomplicated, innocent, alive, sensual, young.

New, new, new.

Primordial Horse



Christa

I have come through a long cycle, healing the trauma of being burned in the palisades.

It has been months of unrelenting terror and constriction clamped like a vise around my heart.

I went on a wild ride of feelings and reactions, beyond my control. I could not prevent the deeply buried trauma from rising up into consciousness.

Now that I am through, I am feeling a great deal of peace.

Dream:

I go to the racetrack. When I show my ticket at the gate, a man takes me by the hand and tells me I get to meet the horse before it runs the race. I follow him to the ring. In comes an enormous horselike creature; he is primordial with two heads, massive haunches, long hair. He nuzzles me and I recoil at first in fear. Then I reach out and touch his mane and it is very, very soft like baby's hair. His eyes are soft and gentle.

My work, of course, is to ride the Animus horse.

What will happen next?

For now, on his back, I feel his great strength.

I need his strength to ride out into new territory.

I bury my face in his mane.

I feel the heat of his vitality and potency.

And, the horse is me, my vitality, my particular kind of
ferocity, strength and passion.

I am beginning to recognize all of that in me.



Painting by Christa Lancaster

Sensuality: The Ecstatic Child's Enthusiasm



When we feel energy and connection in a dream and it feels excruciating because of the depth at which we feel it, we call this sensuality. When it is this deep, it creates a feeling of vulnerability and intimacy, but the feeling of sensuality is the experience of a feeling that takes over the entire body. It is everywhere – a bodily, emotional feeling.

This is seen in tribal dances or in churches or temples when people sing or chant – any of these produce a vibration in the body that is felt. These things intone a sensual experience.

But when we experience it in a dream, it is even more aggressive because it is like a child's enthusiasm. It is like we want to jump out of our skin it is so great.

We cannot make this happen. But as we live with the Animus in a deeper way, then we can feel it more and more. Then, when we do not feel it, we miss it.

But when we have lived an emotionally sterile life, this feeling can be overwhelming.

The goal is to feel it, and then keep feeling it. To keep moving into and in it. Being obedient to it. We cannot always stay with living in the true gut of the self, the expression of the child, even though it is so great. But when we do what we are asked to do in our dreams, there is more room for this ecstasy.

The more we serve Him, then the more we do things that actually can create this feeling of ecstasy.

Serving Him is not a “Yes sir, I will, sir!” kind of service, where we wear a hair shirt. It is the primacy of relationship with the Divine where serving Him in the world opens our own ecstasy and our own sensuality.

Refusing Heaven



Marc

For more than a year after the dream of the slab where Christa and I descend together into our past life traumas, I watched, witnessed and supported Christa as she descended into her deepest work.

Christa's rapid descent into her suffering led her all the way down until she was at the flesh of the bone, the place where she experienced the greatest horror that anyone could know and in that horror, found God's love.

For my part, I believed I was finished in my descent, but yet another round awaited me, waited while Christa finished this part of her journey inside the maw of the devil's grip.

She was now free to become the child that came through in this life. I was ecstatic.

But now I had a dream which would give me the final piece of the place where I too had been lost in the devil's grip we all find ourselves in through unacknowledged trauma.

Dream:

It is present time. I am diagnosed with cancer and quickly die. I have fleeting feelings of fear and pain but then I am sailing through infinite space, the galaxies stacked up one after another, like a staircase to heaven. I am ecstatic at the view the universe holds in front of

me. I feel like an eagle soaring in this ascension.

Then I remember my darling Christa and I am engulfed in a pain I have rarely felt in this life. I feel I have to go back. The moment I feel this, I am back. Only now, it was a time before this last time. The architecture is that of the Dark Ages or of the time of Christ.

I stand in front of one of the doors of brown, clay buildings. It is night. Light pours out of a large doorway to a great chamber. I cannot actually move but I can think myself into a room with my wife. I know now that I am dead and that I cannot move but only think my way to where my hurt directs me.

Although I have no voice I hear myself say: “Hi Christa. It’s me, Marc. I’m here.” She, of course, cannot hear me. She is surrounded by eight or so people and is in absolute pain. I briefly remember the crisis of the loss of everything we had built and the pain cuts deeply into me.

When I awoke from the dream, I woke Christa up. I told her of my pain and finally knew what she had always meant to me. In that moment, I was hers for I remembered who we were together and the depth of our commitment.

Then I became angry. It came over me like a dark cloud. I could feel the pain becoming blame at God. In the middle of this storm, I remembered the dream of purgatory, where I am sitting at a table alone, forever, with one candle.

This was the first time I had ever seen a dream that related to a secondary trauma; that is, a trauma that happened in the bardo state. This is a state where one has left the body and is traumatized anew. In my case, I was traumatized through my poor decision that brought me back to the world as a ghost. This is post- death-trauma or PDT. This also occurs in Christa’s work after she enters the bardo state, after having been burned alive.

Who would have thought that there could be trauma even in death? But, in a way, it is not surprising that trauma continues into the afterlife. Therefore, the healing of the soul occurs both in conscious trauma when we are alive as well as in the deeper, bardo trauma which occurs after we leave our bodies. In due time, the dreams reveal all of the trauma.

I now understood this dream. It was my hundreds and hundreds of years living in purgatory, living frozen in pain and anger. We call this desolation and hopelessness: nihilism. I was to soar no more. I could not find the love in the pain. Unlike Christa whose suffering was linked to needing others' support rather than needing Him, mine was simply desolation and isolation from Him.

I went back to sleep and had another dream.

Dream:

This time, I make it to Heaven. A glorious castle awaits me. Inside are six father figures who welcome me home.

Seeing the purgatorial suffering that I had endured through my own folly, and having experienced the depth of it, I now had a dream that freed me from the chains of my dark will that had haunted me for the first part of my life.

Even though I had shaken the will and surrendered to Him, even though I had felt the sweetness of His love for over a quarter century of living, I had not healed enough to salvage my soul.

The experience of receiving the heavenly Father as the fulfillment of a lifetime of journeying, allowed me to now feel the love in the trauma. I am now able to die with great love in my heart and great pain and ascend. For I now am open to Divine will, no matter how great my disappointment may be, no matter how great the hurt of separation from those that I will always love in all eternity.

I feel joy realizing the miracle of being reunited with Christa in the middle of my life. Only He could have done this for me. I can feel the love in the pain and I am no longer desolate.

The True Desire of the Boy



The natural desire of the boy, the YES for anything, eventually leads back to the Father.

We have an idea that the boy will want toys, then cars, then more women – that the desire is greed or lust. This is not the boy. The true boy always grows to the Father, unless there is something wrong. When the boy grows to the Father, when he returns home, he is the Prodigal Son.

When the power of libido is abruptly, as Freud understood, a neurosis or super ego is created, introducing the ideas of guilt and shame, just as guilt and shame were introduced in the Garden of Eden.

What is terrifying about accepting the boy's YES is that if we keep accepting it, we are going to end up in some incredibly different reality. This sounds like when we say YES, we will get everything, but the real YES is to the things that are not of this world, which are terrifying. Yes, the boy wants, but from a place of relationship with the Father, not from a place of being frustrated or angry or entitled. When we want from an angry place, it is not holy anymore. If he is not receiving from the Father, the boy becomes sour, angry and rebellious. He is not the boy anymore.

There is also an invective in the idea that if we say YES, then we will get punished. This is actually true for there is persecution in the world for those who say YES. This is not just the idea of the Jews being persecuted, but the idea of any human being who says YES. When we say YES too many times, we enter the zone where pathology wants to kill us. So, when we say no, when we become falsely humble, saying something like, "I have too much already," we break from our passion and we will never know the desire in our heart to be with God.

Then, we will always come from a place of judgment or expectation or responsibility or arrogance in some form where we will want to save the world. We will never come from the vulnerability, the humility and the innocence of the boy.

Into the Wave



Christa

Dream:

I dive into the center of an incredible wave. It takes me down into a deep cavern. Down into the mysterious chambers of life and love and loss.

Dream:

My grandmother, Grace, radiant in her white linen pantsuit, waves me into St. Mary's Church in Warwick, Bermuda, opposite the little post office, next to Spittal Pond. My Uncle Keith, my godfather who died of cancer, quickly, only twenty months ago with minimum fuss, as was his manner, beams up at us.

What am I to learn of this? There is no need to fear death, my relatives seem to say. Here we are, loving you, taking you under our wing. Under this wing of love, there is no death, but opening.

The engulfing wave. The baby boy. I take my fear into the wave, down, down, down inside the wave is the horse, kneeling beside me, offering me his warm, strong back. Down in. Down past the fall line.

Fury Rising



Christa

I have a fury rising in my back.
Along the ley lines of my body.
Around the heart, the space around the heart,
pericardium, rising up the channels to my neck, below my ears.
I feel fury.
Mad. Hot. Standing here. Standing in the heat of my
heart.
Bursting with energy.
My uncle radiant. Beaming at me.
Full wattage.
I have not felt this before, this boy energy. Not like this.
Only in flashes. What to do with this?
Opening to full throttle.
Watched a movie about a violent, angry man controlling
his wife. Hated it.
Want change.
Break-out fury.
Did I say that I hated the movie?
I am going into the wave, down in. So the boy can come
out.

I have a fury in me that wants to blow. Inside the tunnel of fury

are hot tears, the tears that break the goat-guilt that grabs at me. It says, "You should do it this way!" Blah, blah, blah.

Hot tears open to I want! The I want breaks the crust of goat-guilt.

I want to let this run through me.

I want to ride the wild horse of my dream, as it bends its great neck down for me to climb up on his sober, strong back. His back, my back back bone of new strength.

Not brittle old carapace stiff, goat strength shored up by duty and obligation, the burden of the empire on my crinolined legacy.

Stiff guilt, noblesse oblige; no more noblesse to oblige fundamental of foundational corsetry gone amok

What hot desire leapt up from all those bound breasts and hidden vulvas, lips closed in rage and colonial guilt

Passage to India, The Piano stories of white women in white linen in wild country. libido freed up and nowhere to go.

Think Austen and Bronte heroines, think Gauguin in the MFA in Boston, think red sports car, think wave.

Fuck the inertia, the crinoline, the harness, the good girl, the bad girl, think the sultry summer nights off Mangrove Bay, skinny dipping in the summer water so bathwater warm...

Dream:

I blow past a woman who wants to "play" with me. I go into the warm night, plunge into the warm water. Nowhere else I would rather be.

Sexy, silky sea water.

Vulva washed by saltwater, brought to life.

"No!" I tell her, "No! I don't want to play with you!

No!"

I am in the water, warm and silky and also
. a flash of fear fish, night feeding?

I think of Grannie Grace standing tall (she was little, with big breasts and slim legs) in her white linen suit. Standing taller than tall next to all the white-washed limestone graves in the graveyard of St. Mary's Church. Like a lily, like the strong, creative woman that lived inside her. She never dreamed she could run so free.

Not careful, not right, not taking care to get something back, not caring so damn much in the wrong way.

Caring the way of the flesh, of the word, the love, the man at the end of the tunnel, holding me on the speeding boat.

The word made into flesh no word without flesh
. no flesh without bone bone to blood.

Energy rising up my back wants out.

Wants out of me.

There is a flash flood raging, a forest fire breaking out,
in me.

Goat wants to contain.

"No!" I tell the bitch, "I won't play with you!"

I break past her, all desire to enter the warm water.

I have always broken past the injunction.

Fuck it.

Goat/Bitch stands at the door of desire.

She says, "This much only." She says, "No, you can't
have all of what you want."

The controller wants to put the lid back on.

Too late, I am blowing past her into the water.

I get that this is so much bigger than I know.

So much bigger than any of us can know.

Libido linked to love and fire.

Dimensional layers all at once.

Standing with the imperfection.

Of the world plane.

Fire cutting open the lines of love and power.

Mystery in me.

Breaking past, to get through.

Boy Splits Goat

✪✪

Christa

The boy in the hole in the wave.
Splits the goat in half.
Girl weeps in the water.
Girl meets boy.
In my torso.

Herky jerky.
Real change is that way.
Not smooth, not fluid.
Jarring.

I went into the wave, down into a dark funnel. It took me through into another world, new to me. This wave folded me into a new realm of consciousness. It was the wave beyond trauma. I did not know what would come of the wave. Each time I felt afraid, I would let myself tumble into the hole in the wave.

Then, this dream:

Marc and I are swimming in the dark and a tall man arrives. He is like a wizard. We follow the wizard into

a house in the jungle. We are naked in the tropical heat. A radiant man and a group of boys of all ages appear, naked as well, glowing from the heat of a natural sauna in the rocks. The man tells me: "You have no idea what other treasures you have yet to find on this property."

For a few weeks, I feel all churned up, surges of rage. I feel hurt and betrayal and rejection. I feel soft like the girl, and stormy like the boy. I do not know what is happening.

I have been churning.

Something new is happening for me related to the boy. I do not fully understand it yet. It is emerging. Without the boy, I have let myself be hurt or violated, without speaking up and saying, "Hey, what is going on here? What is up with you?"

Recently, I was tested in my work with clients and I now see how much I need to strengthen this connection to the boy who knows who he is, sees others for who they are in their reactivity and simply moves on, without collapsing into self-doubt. When I let something like this slip, it gets stuck in my body, most notably in my upper back, behind my heart.

I have taken a lot of guff in my past; from men especially but most centrally, when my mother was alive, from her critical tongue. I thought I had cleared this from my life but apparently there is more to learn. Especially in regards to clients. I am learning how to stand when a client reacts and attacks me.

My Achilles' heel is when someone I love and care for turns on me. Then, I can be blindsided and take on their reaction of criticism. There is a crack into which self-doubt can appear and undermine my confidence and faith in myself.

This morning the demon of condemnation that has been dogging my every move is quiet. Under the shame, I begin to feel soft pain.

It begins to move in me, up and out. I cry with Marc and soften more.

The anger of the boy allowed me to break the shame and feel my hurt. Through the trauma, there are new layers of feeling to explore. There is the assertion of the boy and the receptivity of the girl: both are active principles.

I am learning to embrace both boy and girl.

I still have more to know.

Window to Sky



Christa

Dream:

I am setting off with the young boy in a post-apocalyptic landscape. We see the infrastructure of the highways collapsing and I know we must travel through the brush and woods.

Dream:

I see a window in the ceiling from our bed. I am scared.

When I wake up and realize that the opening is to the heavens, to the spirit realm, I feel a release, a kind of exhilaration. The crust of shame has broken away like dust in the wind.

Shame causes blindness to my true self. The boy sees and knows and moves. He sees and speaks and is who he is.

The boy has clarity and boundaries. He says, "No, this is not mine. This is yours."

The boy sees the devastation and moves ahead without collapsing.

The boy knows the pole of consciousness linking heaven

and earth. Panoramic awareness is the domain of the boy.
Libido opening up through the boy.
Alchemy of fear speeding up.
Plunging through goat to get to libido.
Window opens up to the sky.
Need and pain and sky.

Hidden Shame



Marc

Dream:

I am with a man who looks like an aging politician, one who had devoted his life to the political party. He is now being condemned, exiled and excommunicated for crimes against the state during his tenure.

His whole life was dedicated to this and then the political winds changed and he was ousted, almost as if he had been framed.

This dream shows the outer reflection of how my pathology condemned me in my subconscious. The man in the dream is me, of course, in a similar situation where everyone turned against me and I secretly believed that I was no longer to be trusted as the teacher and leader I had been. My teachings would continue, but I would be ousted, laughed at and ignored by the very people I had supported, loved and trained.

The dual nature of this dream allowed me to feel my own sense of rejection as well as to see the absurdity of that reflected in someone else who was succumbing to a similar fate. I was indeed living my life as if I were him.

Since I did not feel this in my life, I wondered where this was in me so that I could understand what had happened to trigger this.

Christa had just seen a film that depicted a rageful male. The experience triggered her fear of raging men and reminded her of her first husband. I experienced her pulling back from me as a part of the projection. I felt that she saw me as one of the world's raging men.

Of course, she was working through her work, but it tapped into a nerve below my subconscious, taking me vertically back to the terrible horror of being dragged away and killed.

I understood the rage and horror of the moment in a new way. The dream showing me that somewhere I felt responsible for the demise of the world we once knew. I realized I had lived out the tyranny of that time through the projection with my second wife, Dianne, who became a fundamentalist Christian early in our marriage.

Somehow, I felt I had to do penance or be responsible for her, all while she shamed me behind my back and hated my Gnostic heartfelt expression of the dreamwork I was developing. I allowed myself to live with this for fifteen years. It was like I was living in a Dark Ages prison.

Why would I not have gagged at the stench of the hate directed at my calling? Why did I not simply just leave? Why, after I did leave, did it take almost two years for me to act on my divorce? Why have I continued to cower to false and vile accusations, accepting the tyranny of isolation and exile from my grandchildren?

The answer is in the hidden shame from this dream.

It is a reflection of the dream where I left heaven. Why did I leave heaven and come back to try and find Christa? Why did I hang on the transparent wall between life and death, as if God himself had sentenced me to the purgatorial ghostland of trapped souls?

Of course, I loved and missed Christa, my community and my life, but I still did not fully understand the moment, when ascending to the heavens, one galaxy at a time, I turned back.

Perhaps it was not just pain and love for Christa, but regret that I had done something that I needed to correct. As if I were the perpetrator of the hordes that would descend on Mary's world. A world, which I am sure I was sworn to uphold to whatever end. Rather than having pride and the eternal love of God for my commitment to the end, I forswore the eternal heavens for a thousand years of suffering painful solitude and loss.

Somewhere in my teens, I read the classic book by Albert Camus called *The Plague*. The plague of the title turned out to be the interminable hell of existential meaninglessness. The book shocked me. I could not believe anyone could believe and live in the nothings of God's apparent creation. What a grandiose violation to live one's life apart from God's abundance and glory. It turns out that I am also this man in a way I have never felt before.

It has exacted its price through my willingness to live so long outside of the people I loved the most. I did not even go to the first North of Eden event in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where we took the work into the world because I did not want to offend Dianne.

Several years ago, before my marriage to Dianne fell apart, my stepson, Jeremy, who is also a minister in Dianne's church, nailed letters to trees and to the buildings at the Retreat Center, inviting and imploring the people coming for a dreamwork retreat to leave the work because, as he saw it, they were sinning by following the work and believing the dream. Dianne finally admitted to writing the letter, for she believed that I was delusional and needed to seek her fundamentalist, born-again path to redeem my lost soul. It was this letter that

proved the end of the marriage.

Soon after this happened, I had a dream/waking experience:

The Animus says, “Do you want to know who your wife and Jeremy really are from your past?”

I, always willing, answer, “Yes, please tell me.”

He, “This will be shocking.”

I, “Go ahead.”

He, “They were part of those responsible for putting you to death.”

I did not believe it at first, but it sat like a hot ember inside of me. What was the pain I was feeling? Was it my hurt of hurting her after thirty-three years of marriage or was it my pain having succumbed yet again to the tyranny of the enemy? How could it be that my father, my second wife and my stepson could align themselves against the very thing that gave my life meaning?

My hidden sense of responsibility is the culprit.

The dream came to show me this. To show me that when Christa had her reaction to the raging male in the movie, I projected my hidden responsibility, thereby making her momentary doubt to be yet another executioner for me.

The dream corrected me, helping me to take back my projection and to just feel into the pain.

Descending under Distrust to Depend Fully on the Divine



All distrust is hurt. If we protect ourselves from hurt, we become distrustful, controlling and often arrogant and entitled. We say, “I do not want anything from you – you should just give it to me.” What we really mean is, “I do not want to be vulnerable in the wanting. I do not have to need you. If I need you and you love me back, then I am even more vulnerable.”

We may even turn to another level of entitlement, saying, “I am willing to be vulnerable as long as you reject me.” When we do this, we reinforce our beliefs that we cannot trust by creating a situation in the world that is familiar and onto which to project our deeper pain.

When we distrust, either in the world or in relationship with the Divine, we are really saying, “I am not going to be hurt again. I am going to cover up my hurt and be suspicious and separate instead.” Underneath this distrust is the anxiety of being hurt and then the deeper feeling of hurt.

The way to reclaim our souls that have been damaged by the world – through the pain received in the world or the pain of being in the world – is to reclaim this deeper place of pain.

The deeper place is of nonentitlement with the Divine: “I am really vulnerable, I need you. You are feeding me and

I am receiving you in my vulnerability. Oh, my God.” This is the deepest vulnerability because we become linked back to primordial time where we are locked in love in a Divine, incarnate way. It is almost like being in the womb and feeding off the mother. There is no resistance

Instead, we are just fully dependent and depend fully on God, fully on the Beloved. Not in the needy, entitled, controlling, angry way, but in a way in which we are completely surrendered. We must descend to find the surrender, to be surrendered, to go through the initiation. The ego has to die at each level of descent to the self. Breaking through distrust opens us to fear, pain, trauma, but then we go through it all and we can become our original soul selves again.

Girl and Boy, Intertwined



Christa

Dream:

A woman I know of great warmth and heart has died suddenly of breast cancer. I feel deep sorrow and shock.

This week, Marc came down hard with a case of pneumonia. For the first few days while we co-taught at a couple's retreat at our NOE Retreat Center, I felt held in a state of extraordinary grace and love. I felt like a baby must feel, in a cradle, loved and protected.

On Sunday night after the retreat, Marc went to the ER to get a diagnosis. The doctor identified an early stage case of pneumonia and gave him a dose of penicillin and sent him home.

That night, I dreamed:

I give birth to a tiny translucent baby. As soon as I start nursing her, she begins to grow. Soon, she is eating solid food. She grows strong and sturdy and amazing. I feel more love, more sweetness and softness.

The next morning, I looked after Marc, made food, bought

drugs, looked after dogs and helped Gabriel with his homework. Marc improved. The next day, he was up and about.

As soon as he was okay, I began to fall into a vortex; a mixture of desolation, grief, fury and helplessness.

I went to a healing session with my friend Isabelle, who is a body worker. In the session, I came to understand my lack of trust amidst death, probably Marc's death in our previous life together. Last night, I woke up with rage shooting up my back and into the sides of my neck.

Dream:

My son Gabriel shows me a little girl who is fantastic. At first she is a little dog, wearing a little pink coat. And then, she turns into the little girl in the pink coat. She is like a little pumpkin. Definitely very cute.

Wrapped in the cloak of this loss and desolation and fury, I cannot feel the pumpkin girl or the baby girl. I feel helpless. I am not a helpless person ordinarily. I can run a household, work and cook and help Gabriel with homework. I have been raising children for almost thirty years. This helplessness is related to shock and loss and the feeling that there is no help in the aftershock of loss.

As I sit and meditate on all these pieces, the image of my Grannie Grace in her white linen suit outside St. Mary's Church pops up. I believe she and my uncle were teaching me about the nature of death. In the dream, they were both incandescent with joy and peace.

I have come to need Marc in a way I have never needed anyone. To need at this level is to risk loss. I believe I have avoided needing anyone like this so that I would never have to backtrack and tap into this huge hurt of losing someone I knew and loved and needed without censure.

In the last few days, as Marc has been unable to do as much around the house and for me, anger in me has spiked up. I needed him and now he is gone! The real story underlying my anger is that I needed him in the past and then he died. We were intertwined. We needed each other, relied on each other. I loved him and he went away, suddenly, without warning, like my friend dying in my dream.

Sudden death equals shock and sadness, betrayal and rage mixed with helplessness. This is what I am working with right now. Opening to need and love in the present takes me back to losing my dear love in the past. No wonder I had years to learn and grow and deepen before we came together in love this way. I needed to be strong to undergo this passage, to contain and feel these eruptions of feeling running through my heart and body.

I remember my big wave dream, with the dark cavern. Sitting here, I feel the shooting energy in my upper back and neck. I feel the rawness of my heart, my sore lungs and I dive down into the wave.

This morning, Marc and I had some time to catch up with each other. He talked about his dream in which he leaves the cosmic plane of existence, hurtling through galaxies to come back to earth to try and help me in my anguish. He cannot reach me and I cannot hear him. He spoke about how he forsook heaven for the purgatory of desolation.

He lived out the fairy tale of being the beast in Beauty and the Beast, without life or love. In isolation, he grew back into becoming the prince who can reunite with the rose girl, the Mary within him. In just this one lifetime, it takes nearly forty years to grow back a capacity to be with the feminine again, to unite with his true love and know himself as worthy of life and love again.

When I am lost to the girl, in my desolation, it triggers the scenario from his dream. He is loving me but I cannot hear

him. This week, in the siege state of illness, our past realities collide. We both feel the ancient desolation and loss. We know the present moments of hurts and collision come from the deeper wellspring of loss. We do not indict each other for the feelings we trigger in each other. We understand the past is rising up for one reason alone; we are strong enough to withstand the intensity of these buried states of being.

Flash, flash, flash; the anger rises in me. The boy knows what he knows. He feels the outrage of evil in the world. He sees where the vein of evil lies and takes a stand when it lashes out. He holds the line and knows that when evil is directed at him it is not about him, but about the evil doer. He can say: "Your words and actions hurt. What's going on with you?" His way is the way of clarity and immediacy. His anger in me is a signal: evil is afoot. Take a stand, take a stand.

Dream:

An Asian girl is quiet, wise and thoughtful amongst other more exuberant girls rehearsing a dance piece. Later, I am in Burlington interviewing a female documentary maker about the dance project. She tells me that before the film had been completed, the Asian girl was killed.

The pumpkin girl, the translucent baby girl, the Asian girl.

The girl is the one who carries memory of cruelty and injustice in the world across time and space.

She is the record keeper of the feelings of love and loss, rage and desecration.

She knows and bears witness to atrocity and horror.

The killing fields of Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, the

Inquisition, Nazi Germany, the ovens, the fires, the palisades.

She holds the lineage of sorrow.

She remembers all.

She carries all feeling ever known.

The depth of her sorrow is boundless.

She is Mary who cries blood tears.

She is the one who cries for the world upside-down.

She knows the lie of the physical world.

She weeps for humankind lost to their soul nature.

This girl lives in me. She was born into another level of consciousness the Sunday night after the couple's retreat. I spiraled into the horror and sorrow she knows. The weekend of joy and grace prepared me for entering the vortex of hurt and rage this week. It was a rough week, post birth, post partum.

Illness prepares the ground for new relationship to the soul.

He, the boy, she the girl, are angry at the lies, the killing, the rape of children and women.

They, in me, feel the heat of rage at the misuse of power, the corruption of religion, the usurping of innocence.

I, boy-in-me, feels rip shit at the misuse of power, the oppression of the innocent. The-boy-in-me could kill those who are violent and rape.

I know that killing rage in me. I hate the self-satisfied judgment of fundamentalist thinking. I hate the imposition of tyranny.

Flash, flash, flash; the anger flies up my neck and now, out through my voice that sees and feels and knows and expresses. This anger.....or passion.....wants out, needs out. I need it to come out. The old goat wants me to "be nice, a good girl."

Not good, not nice. The girl feels what's real, the boy in the wave ignites. Together, they grow in me, intertwined, strong. Boy and girl in me make a strong medicine woman in

the village, angry at the dark force that wants to wreak havoc on ordinary lives, destroy love and break down the soul.

In the dream of the island Marc and I are with the tribe of naked men and boys, the leader says: "You have no idea how much more there is to discover on this property." This week I did not know what was unfolding. I could only follow the dream and the wild currents running through me in all their intensity.

Now, I have some peace because I have more of the pieces. I have the Asian girl who is serene and wise and knows what she knows. She carries all the sense memories in her body. She is the vessel, carrying the loss, while knowing she is loved beyond words.

I am learning to accept the girl in me who carries the sorrow while held in love,

I am in a boat, speeding across the harbor in Bermuda, leaning against a man, holding a baby as we move towards the approaching hurricane.

I am with my grandmother Grace in her white linen suit outside St Mary's Church.

I am the pumpkin girl in her pink jacket.

I am the translucent baby girl.

I am the young Asian woman who has seen unspeakable cruelty.

When I forget who I am, I go back to the wave and jump in.

Marc and I were both lost in time, lost to our souls, angry at God. My anger now surfaces and becomes conscious. I now know it as an anger at a world that has turned its back on God. The shooting energy is now flowing up and out.

I feel. I am. I rage. I allow. I express. I am who I am. I am boy and girl. I am fierce.

I am the medicine woman in the village who knows sorrow and evil and love. I take a stand. I fall down. I rise up. I learn. I love. I allow. I do not allow. I see and speak what I

know. I do not back away. I need. I receive. I give. I speak her/
his wisdom.

I fall again and again into the wave.

In the falling, I become more of who I have always been,
but forgot. I am committed to remembering it all, especially the
love that knows no bounds in time and space, even amidst death
and devastation. This is my learning, this love, this need, this
heartbreak, this anger, this wise girl, this fierce boy. All one.

The Soul Child in Everyone



Christa

Dream:

I am out and about walking. I notice a tiny baby face down in the grass. I hesitate. What is a baby doing alone on the grass? What will I do with this baby if I pick it up?

I take the baby. I realize I can take the baby wherever I go. I show the baby to Bill and Sue, talking about travels to Europe.

I wake and tell Marc my dream, and as I speak, I begin to cry. Who is the baby I pick up? She is different from babies I have known, different from the babies who clearly were aspects of me.

This baby is the baby in the world.

The soul child in everyone.

The universal soul.

I feel the truth in being a part of holding the universal soul.

I feel the pain of the world, separated from this baby, this soul.

Section IV

Who is she, that looks forth as the dawn,
fair as the moon,
clear as the blazing sun,
terrible as an army with banners?

From Song of Songs 6:10

The alternative church also taught enlightenment and personal transformation through the action of the Holy Spirit. The heretics did not simply believe a creed; they lived a life of personal encounter with God.

From *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar* by Margaret Starbird, p.117



This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

George Bernard Shaw

Amsterdam: The Girl in Anne Frank



Christa

When we went to Milan a year ago, we made a pilgrimage to Mary in Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*.

In Amsterdam, we did not know what we were here for. Yes, we came to talk at the Dutch International Dream Conference. But there is always more.

We arrived in Amsterdam and I began to feel a sadness rise up in me. I did not know why.

I am feeling Mary in Amsterdam.

I have been in the chrysalis, incubating the Mary in me.

I have not been ready to break out. Until now.

Dream:

I am with my black Labrador Ajax, in the ocean in Bermuda. We are at Coral Beach. Marc, Bob, Bill and Sue are on the beach throwing balls to Ajax. He goes to them and back to me over and over again, the way he did when he was alive. Suddenly, I realize it is dusk, the time the sharks come up to feed. I am scared they will attack me.

When we speak in public, I fear the attacks that come.

I want to learn to hold steady in the heart of love when the dart of fear and hatred comes at me.

Mary held fast, went to France, was not defeated by the attacks of hatred and violence.

She kept going in the Occitan. The heart of the feminine continued.

Not the man-hating feminine-ist. Not the feminine masking male power.

The feminine who loved the man, who was in partnership with the man, who knew her own, equally strong purpose and connection. The deep aquifer of the feminine face of God. The liquid state of the love beyond all love. The feminine that holds the world, humanity, in her arms. She holds the love in the face of evil.

The three women, including Mary, hold the love amidst the horror when Christ is nailed to a wooden cross. Mary holds the love at the tomb.

I am learning from Mary how to hold on to the love under attack. The sharks come up, will come up, as they always do. The world cannot tolerate the high beams of great love. It reacts with aggression, the way a shark rips flesh.

I cannot defend against attack. I am learning to stand in the heart of Mary.

Fragile, strong. Valkyrie. Val-kyrie. Kyrie eleison. Kyrie.
I need you Mary, in Amsterdam.

When we arrive in Amsterdam, at 5:30 in the morning, we go straight by cab in the pouring rain to the Memphis Hotel and fall into bed by 7 a.m. We sleep in our quiet courtyard-facing, sensibly appointed room.

I dream:

I am with my friend from Bermuda on tour for her new music CD. She and I are staying in the hotel and shopping at a wonderful lingerie store. She is delighted to have found a lacy bra and camisole that I find incredibly beautiful and very feminine.

I look for bras in my size. No such luck. The saleswoman says she has some for me. She knows where to look. I feel cared for.

Mary knew she was cared for. In the dream, the Mary Anima is tending to me. I do not expect to be cared for. My hurt is not being cared for. My flesh feels slashed when I am not cared for, when I am attacked, not seen for my intentions of love and giving care. I need the healing of my slashed flesh so I do not retreat into myself when the sharks attack. I need to find Ajax when the sharks come. Ajax is the protective face of God.

He stays with me riding the waves. He goes for the ball and then he returns. Loyal love, strong and protective, like a father, like God.

Mary knew such protection, such strength amidst sharks. She did not retreat into trauma. She held the love in the moments of hell and violence and hatred. If the dreams are a path to realization, my dreams are helping me realize the Mary in myself. Mary of Magdala, the tower of strength in love.

I felt how daunting it is to stand and speak from my heart in public. How the memory of attack lives in me.

We come home after an Italian meal. I write about Mary while Marc works with two clients.

Accidentally, Marc erases what I wrote about the consciousness of Mary. I feel so disappointed. He feels so terrible.

We go to sleep and both have dreams, he about living under tyranny, me about living in a devastated landscape, looking for Marc but not able to connect with him. We spend a hellish morning — Marc pulled into a dark vortex of paranoia, me reacting to the darkness overtaking him.

Finally, I start talking about Anne Frank and the museum of the canal house she and her family were hidden in during the Nazi occupation. I tell Marc I feel the paranoia he is experiencing is related to the dark history of the Jews in Amsterdam.

As soon as we identify the source of the malaise, our energy shifts. We recognize the voice of the girl in the darkest of times. As soon as my meeting with my client is complete, we hail a cab and head to the Nine Canals district, where behind the large church on the canal, we join a long line to enter the Anne Frank Huis, wedged between an Italian mother and her daughter, and a young English family.

Anne feels and speaks the longing of the girl. She writes that she wants to dance, run free in the wind, write stories. She wants to feel love, desire, hurt, joy, need, devotion. Through the heart of the girl, she is who she is.

Through dreams we are taken, ultimately, to the heart of the girl. The problem is that no one wants to live the heart of the girl, to feel all that she feels. The girl, like Anne, sees and feels it all. We do not want to feel that much. Too vulnerable, too dangerous.

Marc

We know that it is dangerous because we have lived in danger — as most of history reports a malaise of tyranny in most cultures throughout the world.

Now, we live in a time of increasing democracies. The girl has a chance to emerge in each of us if we can solve the mystery of our traumas, recall the mystery of the past and how we lost our innocence through the debasing power of others. If we remember how the girl receded from our consciousness and how we were left, life after life, attempting to be, and trying to control trauma reality so that it would never happen again.

Our dreams rail against this notion and the ego that developed, for the girl does not need our protection, despite the tragedy. She is always innocent and eternal, the spirit of her that we project onto Anne Frank, who is the girl in us all who waits in innocence, feeling the Divine love.

From there she carries this consciousness in herself which is in all of us, waiting to be felt again. In dreams, when we control by making it okay, rescuing or taking care of a child, we are still not the child. Caring for the child is not being the child. Caring for is having power to protect the child whilst being the child one must trust and feel in the Divine protection. When we claim this peace, we descend into the trauma of the past and find there was love in the midst of devastation.

Christa

On the walls of the Anne Frank Huis, the girl who is Anne has a voice. All who enter the shrine are touched. Anne opens our hearts, for a moment, to see evil through the girl's eyes. Through her feelings, we feel. Before one of many black and white video clips, a young man slumps with his head in his hands. His father places his hand on his bent neck for support.

When we enter the museum, I am crying. I am feeling the heart of the girl in me. I feel the Anne Frank in me, the Anne Frank in each of us that is deep down under the layers of the ego, largely defended by the tyranny of the pathology.

We cannot live the heart of the girl in us until we are freed from the tyranny of the ego. To be freed we need to feel,

feeling opens up, eventually, to the heart of the girl. No one trusts the girl's heart because it means feeling sorrow. How do you trust sorrow will take you through to the girl's heart? Instead, we choose to live in the "safety" of our separation from the love that runs through her veins, the blood of the holy grail of self.

We wend our way up and down narrow stairs, from the front of the warehouse into the secret annex where the Frank family hid with another family and a single man. We look upstairs to the attic through glass where a well-placed mirror shows the skylight through which Anne and Peter, the boy in the other family, can look at the sky, see seagulls and pigeons, watch the chestnut tree move in the wind. All the while, she recorded her inner life, trapped in the prison of their hiding place in the dark of her father's warehouse.

Anne is an analogy for our own hidden girl hearts imprisoned. When we leave, we stop in the bookshop and buy two postcards, one of four black and white portraits of Anne, the other a shot of her red and white plaid diary. We walk out into the evening, feeling the molten magma of the pain, searing, changing us back into a state of love. We wander along the canal looking for a place to eat. My new shoes pinch. We are spent. Finding a taxi, we head south to our hotel neighborhood, back to the Sardegna, the Italian restaurant we fell into last night, drunk with jet lag. They greet us like long-lost friends. We sit and talk.

Marc

We say we want to be loved, but to receive love, we have to be the girl. Only she is vulnerable enough to understand the power of her nakedness, her raw, jaggedy longing and passionate desire for life.

In our dreams, when He comes to love us, we often say, "Not for me." We refuse the love because it is too terrifying.

It forces us to face our wound, but even beyond that, it allows us to be the girl. Our ego tyranny refuses to let us be her and we allow this because we believe that vulnerability will mean devastation. Therein lies the conundrum.

Real potency comes from the girl feeling His love. But false power protects us from bad things. Being her, however, we cannot control our fate. There are times when the world will cave in on our souls and we will be crushed, but the girl, knowing always the love, stands outside that moment of the crushing blow. She is always there in every wound, filling us with the hope of the love that never left us. And she wants back in, back in us, back in the world that suffers the loss of her.

In *The Red Book*, Carl Jung talks about meeting the girl; she comes to him crying because he will not listen to her. He is having a waking dream but does not want to believe it is real. He accuses her of being an illusion or part of some sick melodrama.

How could such a divine entity come in a form as fragile and full of feeling as she? She tells him that she is a prisoner of her father, who keeps her in a castle. She is a prisoner because he loves her, she says. She reminds him of his mother and wants to see no harm done to her. In this moment, Carl is to understand that he is the old man, perhaps in the archetypal illusion of the “Wise Old Man” who knows everything and wants to protect what is innocent.

But he is innocent. That is, his innocence is in the form of the girl in front of him who pleads to be listened to. In the end of the first meeting, she is satisfied that he finally does acknowledge her as real and says, “At last, a human voice.” She has confronted him in his castle and he heard. Armed to the teeth with intellectual knowledge, he finally does allow for something his mind cannot accept.

The girl speaks against all reason. Her whole existence smacks of a heresy in the bowels of the pathology that it has killed all of the followers of the feminine. Mary Magdalene’s

army, driven by the consciousness of the girl. She wants to be heard.

Earlier in *The Red Book*, Carl confuses joy with the devil, does not understand the deeper joy that the girl possesses. The skipping joy of a consciousness that knows God's presence, joy and love. The mind sees this as childish, banal, frivolous, does not understand the grandest maturity that is possessed by this small creature that is all of us. She says, "I will tell Salome that I met you."

From *The Gospel of Thomas*, 61-62:

Jesus said, "Two will recline on a couch; one will die, one will live."

Salome said, "Who are you, sir? You have climbed onto my couch and eaten from my table as if you are from someone."

Jesus said to her, "I am the one who comes from what is whole. I was granted from the things of my Father."

Salome responds, "I am your disciple."

"For this reason I say, if one is whole, one will be filled with light, but if one is divided, one will be filled with darkness."

Of course, Jesus is referring to Carl's dilemma, the dilemma Salome knew well – that Carl must die to become the girl. Carl's intelligent knowing separates him from the girl, deprives him of the girl's knowing of the Divine love that would lift him from the joyless state and darkness he lives in.

Carl's plight is our plight. We are all Carl lost in our intelligence. It is the mind that claims to be enlightened through claiming a role as the wise old man. But this is the illusion. The

wise old man is the hero that must die. We are not to become the hero – we are to become the child, the child soul self.

When we are children in our dreams, we may sit at the feet of the master. Salome in *The Red Book* is the Anima, the mother to the girl who waits.

Ironically, we can only understand dreams through her intelligence. Carl talks about scholarly knowledge being irrelevant to the understanding of dreams. Only one who can claim the consciousness of the girl can understand what dreams are for others. She has the heart of the knowledge of the human condition. She is the one who can see through the blind spot of the mind, the false heroics, through our ideas of being in control and finding safety in the world.

The father has a hand on her shoulder and she knows that all support, all safety comes from him. She knows that all human efforts to protect oneself or others are folly and absurd. She knows what Salome knows, what all the enlightened ones knew, and she comes to us now through our dreams. If we would only be as naked and vulnerable as she is, we would become conscious. She would awaken and come through her eyes and we would feel and see ourselves as her.

Christa

Today at ROC, the art and design school which housed the dream conference, the girl was the theme of our presentation. This morning, Marc woke with a dream in which he and I were naked, making love in a group of people. Before the hour came to open the group, we stopped at the Concert Hall down the street to grab a bite to eat at the cafe.

When Marc told me the dream, I knew we must be that naked and vulnerable. Our experience with Anne Frank took us to another level of understanding the voice of the girl in the darkness of the world.

We came to the group open and receptive. Our colleague

Annie brought her dreams about the girl, including a dream in which she experienced the visitation of the girl, Anne Frank. Each of us brought our own version of the heart of the girl's knowledge.

One woman spoke of the incredible warmth and love she felt in the room all afternoon. As so often happens, those who were ready for this embodied light and love stayed and basked in its raw pain and beauty.

Those who were not, left and did not return after the short break. Others drew closer, quietly at first, and then opened up, revealing tender feelings and observations; still others grimaced and withdrew.

The girl was in the room for those who were ready and willing to know her and the loveliness of her heart of knowledge.

Chartres: The Secret of the Pomegranate



Christa

We are in Paris. It has been a year since we went to France to visit the land of the Cathars, the Languedoc, the trip that prompted this book.

Although we have not planned it, we know we need to find our way to Chartres.

A cab along the Boulevard Montparnasse deposits us at the train station, where we find our way to the Grand Ligne train track bound through the cornfields of the Beauce to the medieval city of Chartres.

I do not want to go.

I do not know why we have to go exactly. Many have spoken and written about the High Gothic cathedral, built in twenty-five years at the end of the twelfth century into the thirteenth. I read that morning on the Internet of the allusions to the esoteric knowledge encoded in the architecture. I studied the style in my history of architecture studies thirty-five years ago at Wycombe Abbey in the classic Pevsner text. I know the cathedral was built on a site of spiritual power dating back to the time of the Druids. My friend Laura wrote to me that an arc of blue light apparently falls on this site.

Still, I was reluctant to leave our cozy hotel room in Paris.

On the train, Marc sleeps while I watch the suburbs give way to small towns and cows grazing in fields bordered by small, contained forests. Arriving in the town, we walk up the hill to the cathedral where the famous facade with rose window is shrouded in restoration scaffolding.

Here we are. We enter, wander through. Tourists are walking the labyrinth. The altar is temporarily displaced to the apse for the restoration work. We visit the reliquary of the Virgin's shawl. A photograph of a wily-looking pope dominates the adjacent chapel alcove. A carved pearwood, dark Madonna and child sits atop a pillar—hence the name, *Madonna des Piliers*. I feel flat, unmoved by the stained glass windows of saints and the life of Christ.

Whatever we are looking for, it is not here.

I have read and heard about the Crypt. This is where the pilgrims came before the construction of this edifice, long, long before. Down below is what calls to us. How do we find the Crypt? Interestingly enough, the way itself is cryptic, hidden, not obvious. In the bookstore the cashier tells me we must circle around to the side of the cathedral to the Crypt Bookstore. We buy our tickets to a guided tour, the only way access is permitted.

After a quick lunch we meet up with an older, bespectacled French man with toupee-like hair. Here we go, down into the bowels of the church. The Crypt is an archeological site, revealing the layers of history below the Gothic stone structure above. We walk through the first tunnel, past small chapels lit by odd, obscure postmodern stained glass windows. A nineteenth-century triptych of windows shows Christ on the cross and Mary Magdalene at his feet. The arches of the passage are Carolingian, strong and sturdy after the lofty arches of the church nave. We curve around, straining to hear our guide, hoping for some revelation, or at least a clue, about

the mystery of the depths. Monsieur shows us a small archway to the left, inviting us to descend down into the lowest chamber of the Crypt.

Mysteriously, there is a glassed-in area to our right, revealing a narrow set of wooden stairs ascending into darkness. Into the dark we plunge. With very little light, we see the oldest pillar of an earlier church.

Marc

I feel irritated and bored. Christa occasionally translates the French from the guide, who says very little, almost as if making light of what was once so powerful.

Then, in this darkest of places, everyone turns to leave and I see a wisp of bronze or gold in the deeper darkness. I go toward the wisp of color. I am alone. There seems to be some kind of hearth or entrance to a deeper tunnel, in front of which is an altar.

It is pitch black. I do not think anyone is meant to see this. But I have been looking for something and so I see it in the blackness. I am excited. I pull out my iPhone to take a picture. In the flash of the first picture, I see a crucifix on top of a glassed-in box with gold trim (a reliquary). Nothing extraordinary.



Photo by Marc Bregman

I take closer pictures; this time the flash reveals a figure inside the box. It is a girl, a woman. I take a closer picture of the woman. I am frozen. I feel pain, the pain of great loss. The girl/woman seems alive, a captive, shrunk into this tiny box, perhaps holding the body of Jesus, after the crucifixion.

What is she doing here in the darkness?

Photo by Marc Bregman



My pain mixes with desperation. I want to rescue her.

I rush to show the pictures to Christa. I found the girl, Mary Magdalene, grieving the loss of her lover, underneath the great covering of the Roman Catholic Church. A monumental church built over this very ancient spot to distract the followers of Mary, to have them seek the Virgin Mary instead.

To forget Mary Magdalene's presence.

My pain deepens. I become outraged, driven by her suffering.

They covered her up with this lie to distract people from what was underneath.

In the Gnostic Gospels discovered at Nag Hammadi, gospels that were hidden for centuries in a cave in Egypt, the

true story of Mary is revealed. From *Secrets of Mary Magdalene* by Dan Burstein and Arne de Keijzer.

What is important for this story is that Mary Magdalene is a central figure in the Gnostic Gospels and, compared with her European legend, an utterly new character. Not only is she not a prostitute; she is an evangelical hero and Christ's favorite disciple. (pp. 50-51)

The key text is the Gospel of Mary.

This text exemplifies the principle for which Gnosticism was named. In Greek, gnosis means "knowledge." To the Gnostic communities, it meant a kind of spiritual understanding – the goal of all believers – that was achieved only through intense self-examination, typically accompanied by visions. The Gospel of Mary shows the Magdalene as an expert in this practice. It also presents her as a leader, full of confidence and zeal.

There is a labyrinth in the main part of the church, famous at Chartres, which seems to represent, to me, nothing more than a trap for the mind. Earlier, at the store, I had seen a woman frantically grabbing postcards of carvings of astrological symbols and icons as if this would lead her to some undisclosed discovery, some transmission of higher knowledge, through arcane gods who wanted to lead us to a revelation.

Whilst all the time, Mary lay underneath this edifice of mental debauchery. Just as she waits in every psyche to be discovered.

I want to sneak back in and rescue the girl from the glass box, the gilded cage.

I know that the rescue is one person at a time, perhaps through the dreamwork for some. To go beneath our own edifices and the treachery of self-consciousness to the underworld which Carl Jung, in *The Red Book*, called the Spirit of the Depths. It is only there, within each one of us, that the true girl can find freedom in this world.

Her heart is full of pain for her lover. It is exactly this pain, as she holds his broken head in her arms, which is the secret mystery of Chartres itself. It is in this pain that is the alchemy that will allow us to discover her inside.

For we all grieve like her, and when we do, we are her. Until then, she is locked away in all of us, carrying the true consciousness that would free us all from the false celebration of life to arrive at the glory of the love that shines up from the depths, to us all.

The story of the gargoyles on the exterior of the church, of all churches like this one, is that they are there to keep demons away. It occurs to me, suddenly, that a demon would not be scared of an icon of a demon.

I look up at the cathedral and on one spire there are eighteen of these figures jutting out. I see it differently. It is now that the church is a fortress where these demons live. They are there to keep us from finding Mary Magdalene, symbolic of the girl. The church is a fortress of the demons.

We are all possessed by these things, just like in our dreams. I feel the horror of the perennial nightmare, discovering that almost everything we take for granted as beauty and truth

is only a reflection of the lie, the biggest lie of them all. The truth is that we have been taken over, and lost from our true nature.

I have known this, but to see it on the edifice of the church plunges me into a psychotic state. It is all a lie. I plummet into the bowels of my own depths. I feel myself as Mary, imprisoned and no one knows. I feel like the Count of Monte Cristo. All of us suspended in eternity, in never-ending darkness while our alter egos prance around the world as if we know ourselves.

I am not that person anymore. I have broken from my self at last. I am the girl in the underworld.

Knowing this and standing in this truth, is the culmination of my personal work. It grieves me to stand here in the writing of this. I know that it makes very little sense. It may convince some that I am a raving lunatic. Perhaps I am. I would rather say nothing, but the girl is in me now.

Dream:

In the Pink House, Christa tells me a girl is staying with us. The girl is hanging out with Peter, one of my clients. I feel irked that I did not know she was there and concerned that she will have a teenage meltdown.

After meeting her, though, she seems very cool. Clearly there is nothing wrong with her. She has a round, innocent-looking face and is delightfully steady.

I felt my distrust of her and myself at first. This is familiar. I felt this when I saw the girl in Christa's eyes, nearly two years ago. But when the dog came in my dream with the same eyes, I knew it was true. That internal knowing has never left me. And although I was likely killed for this knowing in a past life, I stand here yet again.

I allow myself to feel her in me. The feeling of her coming into me makes me feel open and vulnerable and at peace.

Paris: The State of Bardo



Christa

Dream:

I am back down on the Quai in Paris, walking along the cobblestones, close to the edge of the river below. I stand and look at the black water. I am terrified.

Shift.

I am on a large ferryboat in the pitch black. The boat comes to a huge opening in the ocean, like the void created when a wave is pulling back. Again, I am terrified. I feel extreme danger.

I see a little boat tumbling into the void. I do not understand what is happening. It all moves very fast. The little boat capsizes. I am seized with fear that my son Gabriel was in the boat and is now lost in the vast, midnight ocean swells.

Then I see my Uncle Keith swimming strongly towards the ferry I am standing on. I wave and yell to him to find Gabriel. I am frantic yet relieved that my uncle is there, and I know he will help me find Gabriel.

But it is not Gabriel he is coming for. Of course, I am projecting my terror of loss onto Gabriel. Of course, in this moment of terror I need help for myself, from my Uncle Keith, who was in fact my godfather, and who died exactly two years ago, quite suddenly from heart failure related to cancer.

This is the same Uncle Keith from the dream of my ancestors in St Mary's Church in Bermuda, rushing into the church radiant and vital. Here he is again as the Animus.

I am feeling fear as I write.

My work – to jump off the safe ferry. I did not want to jump off the safe ferry into the dark waters. But he cannot come to me on the boat. I have to jump.

The first jump I make is in a little restaurant in St. Paul in the Marais, in Paris. The water is too deep, too inky black. I jump in and the shift is immediate. I feel his love and strength. Dark opens to light and a feeling of love. Moving through this passage but not yet out of it.

Two days ago, we went to Chartres. Back in Paris, we find our way to dinner at La Coupole on the Boulevard Montparnasse, a huge, famous brasserie with oysters and fleets of Frenchmen with long, white aprons attending to our every need.

We celebrate the girl in the bottom of Chartres Cathedral. Marc is deep in the new regions of the girl in him; I am still plunging with fear from the safe boat to the dangerous dark ocean.

We are not through, but somewhere in between, not knowing where we are each going, how far down or in. La

Couple provides a respite of solace and sensual pleasure. I eat briny oysters from the beach at Normandy and Chateaubriand with heavenly Béarnaise sauce. Marc has fish and at least two bloody Marys. The ache of fear and loss has not gone away, but for a couple of hours we take a vacation from the intensity of our afternoon investigations.

Marc

This is the bardo state, the term *bardo* coming from the Tibetan tradition as described in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The moment after we die, all the feelings we were left with swirl in this place.

In my bardo state, I was climbing the galaxies to heaven when my wound ripped me back, to the place of my death, hanging on the opaque wall that kept me from the living and the Inquisitional devastation they were experiencing.

My bardo was that I could not get off the wall. I hung there frozen, in the purgatory of nihilism.

Christa's bardo state, or post-death trauma, is that after the traumatizing wound of being burned alive in the palisades, instead of having a peaceful, loving connection, she was interrupted by the watery fear that was the memory of being burned alive.

Water should cool and soothe that wound, but Christa was too afraid, too much in terror and trauma, to step into the healing water of the Animus, Uncle Keith, again.

As long as Christa stayed on the ferry, she would be hostage to the purgatory, as I had been on the wall.

The maelstrom of healing required yet another turn of the wheel of fear. Clearly, it was not enough to remember the trauma of life; now she is remembering the trauma in death.

The dream invited her to jump, I encouraged her. She did jump, and the fear morphed to love. I could feel the girl rising in her as the love dissolved the fear. A turn into fear and

pain always brings the girl back further into consciousness.

It will never be deep enough until the girl is completely free in us. Until then, we keep allowing the dreams to bring us deeper into the maelstrom, wherein the inner life can be resplendent in the outer world as the girl awakens fully within us. Then we see through her eyes and we speak through her wisdom.

Paris to Oxford



Christa

We have finished our celebration meal of the girl. After the last bite of profiteroles, we walk north to St. Germain des Pre where an American film about aging, with Isabella Rossellini and William Hurt, is playing. But instead of north we wander southwards, in a circle, towards the cemetery of Montparnasse. The knot of anxiety in my chest starts to tighten. Where are we? Which way is north? Why is nothing familiar?

A street map sets us straight. Off we go down the Boulevard Denfert-Rochereau, heading towards the Jardins du Luxembourg. I feel dizzy, thirsty, tired and cranky. What is happening now? Whose idea was it to go to the movies anyway?

“Where are the cabs?” I whine.

Then, I look up and see an old sign which says L’Hôpital Saint-Vincent de Paul, Maternité et Accouchement.

I cannot quite catch my breath. I can barely speak.

“What’s wrong?” Marc asks, with concern.

I flash to the spring of 1980. Alone in this hospital, dingy even then. I do not want to write this down, do not want to speak about it, do not want to feel anything about it. How can I have arrived here again, without knowing?

I was pregnant with a strange man called Laurens who

lived in the apartment where Proust once wrote. I met him at a dance club called Les Bains-Douches. He was going through a divorce. I was lonely in Paris. My brother had left town. My friend Sarah was in New York. I was so estranged from myself I did not know how to pick up a phone and ask someone for help to get home. I did not know how to leave.

Now I can see how in my extreme isolation I was in a state of trauma. In this state I let myself enter this man's world. I did not know who he was. He did not know who I was. I let him enter me. I got pregnant. I told him I would look after it by myself. I found a gynecologist called Dr. Duthion, who set me up for the abortion.

On the day of the abortion, I took a cab to the hospital, with an empty stomach for the anesthesia. I met a young Arab couple who had several children; she too was aborting a child. When I woke up, I was weak and famished. The couple offered to give me a ride home and on the way we stopped at Macdonald's at the Place de La Bastille, where they bought me a big Mac. I still remember the sauce and the pickles and how grateful I was for the way they stepped through my desolation with simple kindness.

I did not tell a soul for many years. I buried the memory of the baby I lost and the agony of my isolation from myself. Eventually I went on a trip to Tuscany with Sarah and found Siena and the warm sun. Sarah and I shared a walkman and listened to the Police song, "Message in a Bottle." But even then, I did not tell her what had happened to me. I had built a fortress around my heart, and in the inner courtyard, down in the dungeon, lay my secret.

This is the shame that covered up the pain of the girl

Back in Paris, in the present with Marc, I do not want to feel this pain, so buried for thirty-one years. No, I will feel this. No, I will go back in time.

The next day, we travel by train to London, then by taxi to Paddington Station and on another train to Oxford. My back starts to unravel. The shame is lodged in my back, which happens when I do not feel the pain that needs to be felt. The back is where I hold the avoidance of pain.

I start to write it out to find my way through. I am struggling to get to the pain of the girl because I still carry the wound of shame. Until I get to the pain, I am held down by guilt. I cannot descend through guilt.

I project that if Marc knew this story, he would reject me, rather than accept his compassion. Even here and now I do not trust my love and his compassion. I look for judgment to avoid my hurt.

Now I want my hurt rather than the tentacles of shame that bind the girl deep in the bowels of the earth, far from me. I am becoming the Inquisitional church judging myself, judged as I was in the past.

From this place, I can go back to the Animus in the dark water.

Without the pain I am lost, as the girl is lost in judgment, condemnation, self-denial, which comes not from the Divine but only from the demons that trick me out of knowing my true self.

I have done nothing wrong, I am not bad, Marc loves me, the Divine cherishes me. I was killed for my sacred goodness. I was the girl. I am afraid to be the girl again.

I cling to my demons of shame to avoid the fear which I felt at the moment I had to jump into the spiraling water. I avoid my fear with shame.

If I can stand in my fear and renounce the judging voices, I can jump and move into the love and the pain that waits for me, that will redeem my soul and heal the trauma of burning to death with my brothers and sisters for no other reason than that God loved us.

This punishing turns our hearts against the love, and then we are tricked.

A very long time ago, I had a series of dreams of dark water. Often my son Rory, then a little boy of about five, would plunge into the impenetrable waters.

I would stand frozen on the bank, unable to rescue him.

I had a terror of losing a child in water which was not transparent, of searching for a lost child in murky depths and not being able to find him.

When I was a child in Bermuda, my Uncle Keith would take us water skiing in the harbor known as Granaway Deep. Unlike the clear turquoise water of the south shore beaches, the harbor was deep blue and therefore terrifying to me.

My uncle would patiently try to teach me how to ski.

So terrified by the dark water, I could not learn. I wanted only to stay safe on the boat with my uncle.

The next time I feel shame, I will jump in to the dark water.

The next time I feel fear, I will reach out to him in the dark water.

The next time I feel pain, I will be the baby who rests in his arms.

Oxford: Soft. Joined. Liminal.



Christa

I am in a hotel on the High Street of Oxford, visiting my older brother and his family, his wife and three boys.

Marc is out walking the ancient streets, with his Phillies cap and all. Last night, we strolled home from Tim's house along St. Giles, turning left onto Broad Street and through the Radcliffe Camera to our hotel.

In my teenage years, at boarding school, thirty miles from here, I would visit my brother at his college, Corpus Christi, just around the corner from the Old Bank Hotel. To return here with Marc is to time travel.

Last night, I was reeling from the reverberation of sense memory.

This morning, the *London Times* arrives with milk and honey for the tea. I am back in my own country; a small, engraved note card suggests calling for "fresh milk." Nowhere else assumes the essential need for milk for one's morning tea. I am back home.

Being a permanent expatriate, I forget the place where I feel most comfortable, most known. Letting in "home" opens my heart; in the homecoming, I feel also the loss.

When my family moved to London, I was fourteen

and the year was 1972. We left Bermuda for London. Island for metropolis of culture: Ravi Shankar at the Round House, Rothko at the Tate Gallery, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* on Oxford Street, the King's Road, IRA bombings and Laura Ashley. My world exploded with new possibilities beyond my small island.

I am in Oxford where both my brothers studied English literature, where my brother Tim is director of the medical school and my sister-in-law Sasha was just honored as a professor for her work in epidemiology. Two of their sons are in their twenties, still studying; the youngest is a cricket star, playing wicket keeper for the county at fourteen.

I am facing back into the dark water as I travel through my past, in Paris and Oxford.

Marc

A year ago or so, the girl came to me in a dream, as her separate self.

Dream:

We were inside a room with many mail slots belonging to many different people. There was also a bear running around the outside, poking his head in and out. I felt the bear's excitement. The girl was crying. She looked at me with sour eyes and said: "I send people messages in their dreams and they never answer."

I know this was the same girl that was the girl in the reliquary at Chartres. The night after I see the girl in Chartres, I dream:

I am in front of a store in a city; in fact it is the only store standing. It is the reliquary with the girl from Chartres. The entire city is devastated, in ruins, as if bombed, like

Dresden. Nothing is standing except this storefront. I stand in front of the window and feel a desire to go into the reliquary.

When I wake up, a waking vision floods my consciousness:

I have indeed entered the reliquary; there is nowhere else to go, nothing else to do. I become the man she was holding. I can feel the woundedness I woke up with from the dream. But it is not the pain of her suffering. It is my own. In her arms, I feel a profound healing and peace overcome me. I feel the girl in me through the woundedness that has kept me from knowing love in the fullest way.

In the same moment of this vision, I am embracing Christa and she is loving me. It seems as if we are together – the outer world and the vision become the same. Somehow, we are each being healed and each the healer of each other. She, the girl healing my wound and, as she was to report later, I am the man in the water loving her in the bardo passage.

This also is the day of our second anniversary, as lovers again requited.

Christa

Through writing about Paris and the abortion, I have cleared the shame that was plugging up the next opening, like a cork. Once it is written, I feel a lightness. I am free of a burden I have been carrying all these years.

I can feel the love of the man in the dark whirlpool.

I feel myself as the girl, in love with Marc, in the love of the midnight blue waters, with the kind uncle, meeting me with strong arms and sparkling blue eyes, the fisherman.

We go for a last dinner at The Red Lion with Tim, Sasha

and their boys. Our conversation is honest, and opening to more relationship. My heart expands. I am moving through this cycle of growing into fulfillment and reconnection to the greater love in the deepening spiral.

We are coming full circle back to our selves, with more of who we found on our travels, both inner and outer.

This morning, I awake with clarifying dreams.

Dream:

Two obese women are having sex, women hopelessly seeking their mothers in other women to affirm themselves, lost in total projection, needing love from the world. I am shocked by the old way of the false codependence between women.

Dream:

I am clearing my mother's room of the past, with people from North of Eden, rearranging her plants, making a new space from the old to do our work while she recedes into the shadows. I am in a state of potency and strength from within myself, not needing approval from others.

I stand in my own potency, in a new way, from inside, where the love of the Animus met me as the girl. With this love for me, I turn to Marc, feeling my tender love for him and move closer in, next to him.

We meet in the softest of shared territory, in the room of love, facing the pale yellow limestone walls, the sounds of the courtyard below us, the spire of St Mary's above us. Soft, joined, liminal love. Golden and blessed. The blessing of our two-year anniversary, sealed by our love. August first, two years later, another cycle of soul healing fulfilled together. We

are tired, travel weary, but open in the sweetness of our love for each other.

We drink cappuccino on the terrace, talk about children and nephews, and plans to live in Europe. Envisioning.

And then, a long, slow walk through the funny gate between Christ Church and Corpus Christi Colleges, into the Christ Church Meadows, left down Dead Man's Walk, past the former thirteenth-century Jewish cemetery, along the banks of the Cherwell River, under enormous, hundred-year-old trees to the War Memorial Gardens, lined with lavender all the way to the busy High Street.

Soft sunshine. Time to rest before we gather ourselves, catch the bus at dawn and head west for home.

Epilogue: Ninth Gate



Christa and Marc

Marc

The goat has had its day.

It made Christa feel like I was needing her to be something that she needed to be, for me to love her. Not accepting my profound, heartfelt commitment to her, regardless of the “weather.” It was as if the pathology, aka the goat, was saying there was no room for her to go through her trauma. Simply put, that as a way to avoid her inner work, all she needed to think was that everyone else was more important than she was. The goat is dead. Now it is about her.

The death trauma becomes the trauma we all experience at birth when we have not resolved the wounds from the past. Most of us do not realize the big *no* that protects us from the wound and the subsequent healing that would occur.

Christa is the most dedicated traveler of the work I have ever met in the forty years I have worked with others, but at the deepest nether regions, where bardo meets the endless suffering of an unrelenting trauma, that *no* still lived in her. This was not news to me. I knew the goat was a lie that covered up a deeper anger. I knew that as long as she wanted not to encounter her anger at having to come back and be born again to rediscover what had happened, being in the mistaken belief that she had

no resistance to grow, the goat could graze without resistance, along the fertile fields of her outer consciousness.

I, for one, love goat eyeballs in my soup! In fact, whilst a young man in Turkey, I was offered such a dinner, being celebrated as the only American this village had ever seen. Insulting as it was, I did not partake of this delicacy. Now I am glad to eat this delicacy and suck down the goat's eyeball with great gusto!

In the hollow depths of the goat's skull, now revealed, is the anger of Christa's decision, that she changed her mind and did not want to come back. But once she learned of this harrowing truth in herself, with very little help from me except patience and love, the master therapist inside of her woke her to her passion to confront her *no*, which may have begun at birth.

Confronting a *no* in ourselves should be the solution, as it was in Christa's case, and the beginning of real change, but if, in fact, your *no* is bigger than your desire for His love and your own healing, nothing more can happen in the work for you. This is the ultimate in free will. It is the last gate. It is the ninth gate, the gate into hell, and our final liberation from it.

Christa

When we return from Europe, I am in great pain. My sacroiliac joint is slipping and sliding, pressing on a nerve that creates a referred pain in the bottom of my heel. Both walking and sitting are excruciatingly painful. I down Advil for inflammation, seek chiropractic care to adjust the joint. I do exercises to strengthen the core muscles around the joint. To no avail. Nothing holds the joint in place.

For four weeks I am edgy and irritable. I know there is more to this pain. I am cranky beyond words. I feel irritated by every move Marc makes. I am short and terse and bleak. I feel extraordinary pressure to perform and aggravation that I cannot. I feel guilty that I am so limited. I try to do the

homework of jumping off the ship into the inky water to the Man, but I cannot. There too, I am stuck. No amount of trying makes it happen.

I receive the gift of a new dream:

I am at the edge of a dark opaque pool in which there is a huge dark grey grouper. My old lab Ajax keep leaping into the pool. I try to drag him out, afraid the fish will eat him. As soon as he is on land, he jumps in again.

What is the dream telling me? What does Ajax know, wise dog of the Underworld I know him to be? Of course I need to follow him. I trust Ajax, feel his love, know his wisdom. Okay, I will consider going. I will try.

Gradually, I understand that I am up against an almighty refusal within me. *I won't go. You can't make me.* This alternates with a devastating pain that for brief moments I can touch into before a wall comes down and seals it off. When I feel it, as I did on the massage therapist's table, I wail repeatedly, "Everyone's gone. No one is left." Finally, I break down in tears of stifled frustration. I turn to Marc and tell him how hopeless I feel. I ask him to listen, not speak, so that I can let it all out, hot tears of rage and pain. I go all the way through to the end, to relief. Something in my turning and his listening breaks the iron hold of the *no*.

With Isabelle I understand in her healing room that I am grappling with the refusal to come back fully into the body, to incarnate again. She works on all the levels to release the *no*. I leave with the resolution in myself: *It is safe to be in my body, to be here now, human, on this earth again.*

In response to my breaking through, I wake with a dream of sitting around a table with Marc and family and friends. A really amazing guy, a psychiatrist, shows up and sits down with us. The others disappear and I take a drive with the

psychiatrist, who radiates love and wisdom and power. I am so relieved and joy filled that he has found me, and I am excited to go where he is taking me.

I have no pain when I wake up. The struggle in my body has resolved. I feel a great peace come over me as the last bands of rain from Hurricane Irene overflow the riverbanks of Vermont.

