

A letter from A. B. - 25-8-1945-

Dear Sringa -- It must have been a long time since we wrote you. In the meantime so much happened to us! We went into hospital for an operation on the stomach. Three days after the operation we were already taking our first steps out of bed and eating heartily, when the fever came. It appeared later to be an infection by a rare, and it seems very vicious bacille. The fever mounted quickly and in a couple of days it went so high that we came into shock condition. Our lungs collapsed and stopped functioning for $2\frac{1}{2}$ weeks, even our heart failed at one moment and had to be massaged, we went into coma and spent the $2\frac{1}{2}$ weeks in an artificial lung. The first week we were hardly ever conscious. Doctors told us that we came back through the eye of a needle. Relatives discussed the arrangements for our burial around our "death bed". But miraculously we came back from the dead --

Fortunately we were hardly aware of what passed on around us and with us the first critical week. We lived completely in a psychic visionary world, the journey into the Bardo, the underworld, the realm of the dead, the other side of life -- Archaic, archetypal visions, Biblical worlds, middle ages, worlds of the Classical Greek gods, patriarchal and matriarchal symbols, primordial nature, we plodded through monstrous mountain landscapes, suffered immense colds, crossing seas (the Styx, underworld river) which one has to cross in a small wooden fishing boat during tremendous gales. Everything was of cosmic dimensions, shattering, terrifying was the way in person was disintegrated. All visions were in black and white suitable to the world of Hades.

The beautiful thing was that we were never one moment afraid (of death or whatever happened) but full of trust and surrender. Even in the fishing vessel in a gale on the ocean we went trustfully to sleep with a heap of rope as a pillow on the floor. This was because we were not identified with our person, but with the Self, (how poor are words here -) neither life nor death could touch us and we faced the cosmic calamities - going with the same patience, perseverance and detachment, glowing inner love through the journey into death as on the journey through life. What is the Difference?

After three days of the traveling in the Barba on the fourth day there appeared huge chunks of matter racing through the cosmos, and we intuitively grasped that these chunks were parts of us, re-integrated, made whole again. More and more of these "parts" of us appeared (we knew then that the critical moment had passed and that we were on the way back again, the journey back from slaves), until after another three days, suddenly we were completely whole, re-integrated again, born a second time as a baby, but with an adult consciousness. This time.

Once during this week the Self took on the symbolic image of Christ. God became Man and Man became God. It was immensely comforting. A bridge was erected between the Self and our ego-personality. All was well. There was no difference between integration and disintegration. There ~~was~~ never was one moment of fear. ---

Some 10 days ago we were discharged from the hospital, about 25 pounds lighter in weight and extremely weak! We still are weak, but improving and recuperating. Our daily walks do not extend more than a hundred or two hundred yards yet and we are to take rest and recuperate at least for another two months, so that it will be highly unlikely for us to travel to you this year. Now with a deep gratitude for life and its beauty and grace, we send you our greetings and will soon write you again. Albert.