

Vyshelevsky



TALES WRITTEN BY THE DYING IN AWE

Vysheslav Filevsky

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«Издательские решения»

Filevsky V.

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This book is by a Russian-speaking Brazilian author and contains short stories and fairy tales for adults. They are about the grace of love and awe of the Great Inconceivable and its creation. They are also about the way that consciously fostering these two ideas could create a universal world religion of consensual reconciliation. But who on earth earnestly wants that?

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Preface

This book is by a Russian-speaking Brazilian author and contains short stories and fairy tales for adults. They are about the grace of love and awe of the great Inconceivable and its creation. They are also about the way that consciously fostering these two ideas could create a universal world religion of consensual reconciliation. But who on earth earnestly wants *that*?

Foreword

The author asked me, his friend, to write the foreword to his book.

Feeling myself highly flattered, first of all, I praise his commitment to start and his ability to finish this work, which is a philosophical and psychological one that reveals his sensitivity and knowledge of life.

The author is an idealist.

The well-selected artwork is expressive.

The author is a true friend of the Russian nation and a native speaker of the charming Russian tongue, a language as rich and motley as the people who created it.

– Pedro Sergio Lozar

Belo Horizonte, Brazil, June 2015

Legend: Introduction

*My spiritual experience is only mine.
But perhaps its representation
Will amuse a bored reader.*

In the spiritual space surrounding earth, I would say there exists a bodiless, omnipresent spider. He encounters every soul with a cobweb of words, notions, and ideas. In this way, he objectivizes heaven's will for humankind and the earth. This is why people comply fully with their predestined fates, leading their histories to their completions. They keep performing them involuntarily. These people are inhabitants.

Following its divine fancy, heaven loves some souls more than it loves others. To them it grants the right to thin the spider's cobweb and communicate with it – with heaven – directly. There are very few such souls. On earth, they are despicable derelicts.

The souls that make the cobweb thin are busy with loving worship of inconceivable heaven. And they obey destiny – that which is written about them in the Book of Life. Such souls, as well as the souls of common inhabitants, make no impact on the march of history. Nothing can prevent the wreckage of civilization, the destruction of the planet. After all, everything born must inevitably die. This is the way it is determined by inconceivable heaven.

These parables, which were told by an old hermit and recorded by me, are stories about souls worshipping heaven with love.



Author's note: the pictures accompanying the text are available free on the Internet.

The Sky of Heaven

Someone said to the Elder, “They say that above the sky there is another sky, the sky of heaven. What is that?”

“This is what creates worlds. This, among other things, is what created our earth with its gas wrapping that earthlings call the sky. This is what also generated the earth’s *spiritual* cover, which the planet’s inhabitants call the noosphere, their God or heaven of a higher order.” Such was the Elder’s reply.

“How do you imagine the sky of heaven?”

“For a living creature, it is impossible to imagine it,” the Elder continued. “All discussions of this topic are fantastic ideas, wandering thoughts.”

Someone still asked for an answer. “Still, what would *you* call it?”

“If you are so insistent...” The Elder pondered and lowered his head. Then slowly he lifted it and started speaking to no one in particular, looking nowhere.

“The sky of heaven is what is universal, what builds things up and destroys them. Sometimes it appears to me in my dreams in the form of a swirling blackness as huge as my whole consciousness. Then it tightens, and over time, all of creation’s products disappear there without a trace. Into it we are also going to disappear.

“In a mysterious way, suddenly, the black swirl transforms into a softly shining silver-edged beige cloud. Several times, it came to me in my waking state. It goes on, this cloud, and seems to take a living being for the soul, bringing it nearer to itself and transforming it from a servant of the earth to a servant of heaven. In such instances, a living creature involuntarily swears an oath of loyalty to it. I also swore such an oath.

“But in my opinion, the images that I described to you are false. The sky of heaven provided me with them because of the feebleness of my spiritual essence. Meanwhile, in fact, there is neither a swirl nor a cloud.”

“Well, what is there then?”

“Some mysterious and great inconceivable force. In order to describe it somehow, living creatures came up with a lot of names. I call it heaven, the Most High, the Everlasting... Nevertheless, all of these are my mental fabrications and come within an inch of blasphemy. I pray to the sky of heaven for forgiveness for the sake of my hearty love for it and my tremulous awe of it.”



What Is Life Like?

There were two men. One traveled around the world just for pleasure. Meanwhile, the second never left his village and felt no need to see other countries. Both of them died on the same day. Together, they went to heaven. There, an angel who had never visited earth met them.

“What are your impressions of life while possessing a body?” the angel asked the two souls.

“Life on the earth is varied,” the first one replied.

“Life is deep,” the second one said.

The angel said nothing to them but smiled instead, because he knew that one could give hundreds of definitions of mortal life.

You might wonder, “So why did he ask, if he already knew everything?”

In reply, I would say to you, “Can we know *why* spirits act one way or another?”

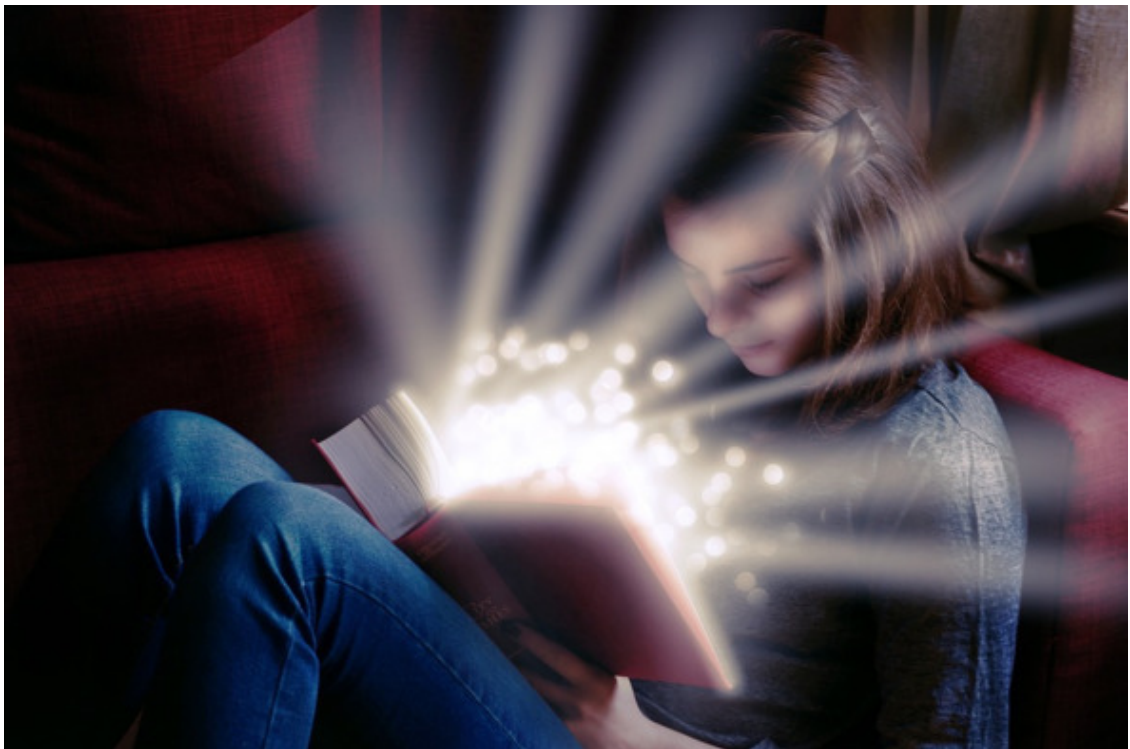
Mode of Existence

Once upon a time, there was a man who wrote poetry. But when people took his books into their hands and opened them, they saw only empty pages.

At first, the man was astonished and outraged. Then he said, “Oh, here, look – here are the poems!” And with his finger, he pointed to this or that tiny image.

And indeed, some people succeeded in perceiving signs or even words in his books. But those signs and words did not settle into familiar concepts. And this is why people did not understand them. Then the man recited his opuses aloud. People heard only sound vibrations that meant nothing to them.

Finally, the man realized that his poetry was not for people. “For whom, then?” he mused. “For the Great Inconceivable? For the angels of heaven?” And the man started to listen for sensations that emanated from angels. And indeed, nothing settled into words or concepts! Nothing from the inexpressibly beautiful what angels do could not be displayed using musical notation. And the man realized that angels sing (or speak?) not for *someone* but instead for no reason. Angels sing or speak not as an act of creativity but as a mode of existence. And after that, he started to act the same way.



Do You Need It?

Prayer had no living creature who would share his views. Meanwhile, he knew (or so it seemed to him) everything. Besides, he could answer any question. The life of his planet and the existence of the aerospace appeared to him clearly – notwithstanding that nobody came to this creature and asked him anything. Why was it this way?

Prayer thought a great deal about it. And he realized that he, with his spiritual wisdom, did not need anyone except himself and inconceivable heaven. He realized that his knowledge and truth were the knowledge and the truth *only for himself*, notwithstanding that he believed that he possessed a high knowledge inaccessible to the ordinary person.

“Living creatures know everything themselves.” To this conclusion Prayer came. “They just wear a mask, suggesting that things are not clear to them. Everyone believes he possesses a supreme truth. And everyone believes this to such an extent that he is ready to preach to the world and to destroy everyone who thinks another way. Anyhow, everyone believes that otherwise-minded people are inferior.”

Every one of us is a world; everyone is a cosmic space; everyone is infinity; everyone is right.

But if so, where is the reliance? Well, after all, a head whirls with all of these opposite truths. Prayer knew the answer to this question too. But I will not reveal it. And you hardly need it, do you?

Along the Sky, Dogs Run

On a border of a village lived Yes-Man, while on the opposite border lived Truth Seeker did. When someone said that dogs run on the sky and birds fly under earth, Yes-Man nodded his head in agreement, while Truth Seeker entered into a desperate dispute. This is why Truth Seeker was considered a quarrelsome man, while Yes-Man was a delight for everyone. Yes-Man was welcome in the village; people did not refuse him anything. Meanwhile, Truth Seeker moved along his life as if poking through a primeval forest.

Yes-Man had pity for Truth Seeker, and when they met one day, he told him, “The heart clenches at the sight of your martyrdom. For you, what is the truth for? If your superiors want dogs running on the sky and birds flying under the earth, just concede. Is it not all the same for you? About a hundred times, silently repeat, “Dogs run on the sky,” and finally, like all others, you will give credit to it. If you believe, you will obtain society’s respect and your superiors’ benevolence. It would be easy and pleasant to live. Consider that life is given to everyone only once. And as for your life, it is as if you found it among the garbage – you transformed it into martyrdom. Agree that birds fly under the earth, and if you must, cross your fingers inside your pocket. Just think, this is the way all *sane* people behave.”

Truth Seeker boiled over. “Hey, am I sick or what?”

“Well, how can one say that you are sane?” Yes-Man said with pity. “Look at you. Look at what a rage you are in. A person who is always angry is never sane.”

But it was impossible to stop Truth Seeker. A flood of anger swept through him. Up hills and down dales, he denounced cunning rulers and mean, deceitful, and immoral inhabitants.

Yes-Man lived out his life in prosperity and happiness. Meanwhile, Truth Seeker spent the last of his life in a hospital. I don’t remember now what kind it was – it was either a neurological ward or a psychiatric one.



White Crow

Man performed his physical exercises in a park. But nobody else did exercises in such a place. So other living creatures looked at Man as if he were a white crow.

Man knew that he was a white crow. This is why he took the attitude of the surrounding creatures for granted. He even tried to speak to real black crows in (as it seemed to him) their own language, though the black crows did not understand him. They became either frightened or outraged. They had no desire to have anything in common with Man.

Perhaps the speech of the white crow did make some sense to the black crows. But evidently, it was unpleasant for them and maybe insulting. Then the white crow realized that he did not need any conversation with the black crows. Instead, how nice it was to admire them from afar, to watch their lives, and inwardly to declare his love for them!

When the white crow behaved like this, he felt a deep harmony with life, with the world of living and inanimate creatures created by an inconceivable heaven. He forgot about his inferiority; he was a small particle of existing matter. And he realized that this was exactly what is called happiness.



Patient Chart

When the sky of heaven created me, the planet earth (as you call me) and my physical sky, I looked like the sun. I was a sphere boiling with fire. This fiery existence was unpleasant for me because there was no peace in it. My ideal is to live in great peace. But everything in its time.

I cooled down. Soon my body pleased me well, and so I gave many thanks to the merciful Inconceivable. However, sometimes, as if against my will, earthquakes and hurricanes happened. But they only emphasized my quietness. They just strengthened the sensation of my benign nature. So with pleasure, I perceived myself as a planet.

I especially liked it when moisture evaporated from my surface and turned into rain-bearing clouds. Sometimes I even felt a need to transform into an aqueous whirlwind and distribute my power in a huge storm cloud, because I knew that my skin, my surface, needed the moisture. It needed it everywhere. With my mind, I formed clouds. Then I spilled water on those parts of my skin that were thirsty. From this I felt a great satisfaction.

Over time, the sky of heaven created a spiritual sky of earth. Those skies and earth gave birth to many living creatures. One of these creatures, people, developed the need for spirits. The merciful spiritual sky of earth generated them too.

It became harder for me. People considered the spiritual sky of earth to be the prime cause of everything. Those concepts proliferated and eclipsed the sky of heaven, blocking my view of it as if with thick, dark clouds. Because of this, I suffered. But people did not stop at this point. They began to worship their own kind. This was their choice.

The spiritual dark clouds became impermeable. It got very hard to breathe. No longer could I form a rain-bearing cloud and spill my moisture where it was needed. My skin dried up here and overheated or supercooled there. People treated me more and more barbarically, more and more cruelly. My diseases became severe, constant, and incurable. I felt impending death. And then I cried out to the benign sky of heaven, which had been cut off from me.

The Great Inconceivable heard my pleading and returned my hearty love and tremulous veneration. It taught me how to dissipate the clouds of customs, beliefs, and bustle. It even endowed me with the grace of love for the living beings that led me to destruction. Step by step, I became happy again. And the forthcoming death did not scare me any longer, because I stopped being a material thing. I learned how to thin the dark spiritual cloud of human customs and faiths and see the sky of heaven.



Heaven's Benevolence

Sometimes righteous men think, “How good it is to be a saint! How good to sit endlessly in a mountain cave and devote oneself to the meditation of heaven. To settle in a nest among the thick branches of a tree and meet the eastern sun with prayer.” However, everyone realizes that prior to happily separating oneself from the world, one needs to develop the skill of finding nourishment, like an animal or a bird does, or to acquire the ability to generate the nutrients necessary for life inside of one’s own body.

Such practices exist. This is how one can become a saint and hermit. But it is good to be aware that acquiring such skills can take half a lifetime of hard-praying labor. Only afterward will the delight of a cave or a nest be felt.

But where is the guarantee that all of this tough work will be crowned with success, that the would-be saint will not find himself back at the bottom of the ladder and realize that his life was spent in vain, and that instead of a nest, he has made a loop for himself? Besides, society would actively assist him with that!

But does not the same happen in the life of a man devoted to earth? For example, look at a bawdry-minded person: he discovered something, composed his theses, and was glorified by the world. And then it turned out that the work of his entire life was a mistake. It would be best if the bawdry-minded man had died *before* this revelation. Then he would have suffered mockery, humiliation, and death from alcohol abuse or heart failure.

It is all a matter of the concept that moves a person, is it not? Well, anyhow, this too turns out to be not so important. The main thing is whether a person has the favor of the Most High or not. This is the essence. Is it possible to attain this favor? Who knows? Nobody is aware of what is written about him in the Book of Life. Meanwhile, everyone can see himself in any role on earth.

Way

One thinks that a way is a movement. But this is modification. One can be changed while staying immovable. This is the way of chosen ones. On the other hand, one can move a great deal while staying unchanged. This is the way of ordinary people.

Common people are changed only in their appearance. Meanwhile, the chosen ones are changed not only externally but also internally. Neither ordinary people nor the chosen ones are innocent in change or in the absence of change. All that matters is the will of the Everlasting.

To be a chosen one and to go through spiritual changes is not an enviable destiny. Most probably, this is the fate of a derelict, because the common inhabitants are the backbone of the world.

Why then does heaven need more chosen ones? Who knows? If the Inconceivable asked me, “What do you want to be?” I would reply, “A common inhabitant.”

The Most High’s chosen ones recklessly pray for the grace of change. (Changes seem to be a grace for them.) Spiritual changes are granted. Chosen ones believe that their destinies change. From the outside, it can seem so. But upon a closer look at something important or maybe even fundamental, a living creature stays immovable. Heaven laughs at the illusions of a spiritual movement maker!

Way: Is it not just a semblance? A living creature’s thoughts about its chosenness are just a temptation, are they not?



To Think Nice Things for People

An old man from the planet S sat under an earthly tree and mused, “My mentor taught me that when I communicate with an earth inhabitant, I should say only nice things. But by doing so, I myself become an accomplice to some degree in their affairs, which are against my conscience. This is why it is probably correct to be silent and only think things that are nice for people, so that these living creatures will not think that I share their pattern of thought, which would mean that I am ready to be an accomplice.

“What can be more pleasant to a living creature than hearing a declaration of love? I feel nice doing so, but in silence, because I do not share people’s thoughts and customs. Even earthlings’ culture is unacceptable to me. This is why I am considered an enemy. Can a declaration of love from an enemy be pleasant for anyone?”

Then the old man said to heaven, “To be an enemy is unpleasant and not beneficial. How can I be in a loving relationship with the world if I do not share its path?”

“By being silent,” heaven replied. “By being silent. By staying as far away as possible and constantly declaring your love to the world. The earthlings will unwittingly feel your love and subconsciously feel sympathy toward you. If they attack you with conversation, speak about trifles that have no significance to you. Look like a stupid or mentally flawed person; let them consider you unworthy of serious affairs. This way, you will escape a partnership.”

“But what if they force me to communicate?”

“If escape is impossible, well, communicate without communicating. Be present while being absent. Constantly keep in mind that in fact, you are in the sky. It is true, is it not? Feel the celestial angels around you; listen to their soundless songs; say pleasant trifles. And above all, remember, never argue about the things that occupy your mind, about the concerns you live with, about love and veneration.”

The old man said his thanks to inconceivable heaven for the correction and lost himself in declarations of love to the world of earthlings that was so foreign to him.



Unanimity with Folk

A herd of rams ran. They were happy because they ran on a unanimous impulse. In their path, a precipice yawned. Most of the rams noticed it only in their last instant, when it was already impossible to stop. They fell and perished.

But two rams felt wrong beforehand, and they wanted to be saved. One of them resisted the flow of the herd, but he was trampled to death under hoof.

Another ram ran closer to the edge of the herd. He broke out of the flux just meters from the precipice. In horror, he looked at the steep drop and then at his compatriots, and he bleated desperately, “Stop, everyone! There is the death beyond!” But as they passed by, the others looked at him as at a betrayer, a renegade, an idiot.

So in this way, the herd perished. The surviving ram stayed alone and fell into contemplation. Which is better, a lonely life or a death in happy unanimity with mad compatriots? The survivor loved his folk very deeply. Over time, his torment of conscience that he did not share his herd’s fate became more and more cruel. One day, he could longer stand the loneliness. So the survivor ran and jumped from the same precipice below which his compatriots had died. He cried with happiness as he flew down; he was with his herd again.

Of course, everyone knows that there was another surviving ram. Escaping from the doomed herd, he enjoyed life. But this does not fit into the story of unity with the other rams.



On My Experience of Collecting Stars

When I lived on earth, I flew to an impossible height at night; walked on clouds, singing psalms; and collected stars in my pannier, and with happy laughter, I scattered them as if sowing seeds in forests and fields. Then, when the time to descend came, I saw that close to the earth's surface, the stars transformed into fireflies. This is why I never could understand the difference between stars and fireflies. But I knew that I was able to collect the entire universe.

The most important thing was to fetch a big enough pannier. As for its weight, it weighed nothing, because the real universe is spiritual. Regardless of what telescopes people invent, they will not see the real universe. Regardless of what cosmic spaceships people build, they will not manage to get there.

In order to soar above clouds, there is no need for wings. In order to cry with happiness, there is no need for eyes. In order to kiss heaven, there is no need for lips. In order to hug a creation, there is no need for arms. In order to sing about your love to the highest being in existence, there is no need for a voice. In order to understand the Everlasting, there is no need for a brain. In order to live forever, there is no need for a body.

A man does not need anything. What he needs is only to receive the grace of reverence before the creator and before all that he sees and hears. Even if the creations of a human brain seem ugly, a vision of ugliness is nothing more than a distortion of an earthly perception. Everywhere there is the Great Inconceivable; everywhere there is its Holy Spirit. If by chance you do not see it, close your eyes and praise the creator; declare your love to it and to what seems to you to be different from what you would desire.

A time will come – though you see nothing of it – that you will not need spiritual wings, as you will acquire a celestial immobility. You will have no need for spiritual eyes in order to cry, because you yourself will become a happy cry. You will have no need for spiritual lips, because you will transform into a kiss. You will have no chance to hug, because you will be a hug itself. You will find yourself being an existing, soundless hymn of love that mysteriously echoes across the entire universe. You will be celestial love itself, and this is why it will turn out that you do not need a mind. Furthermore, there will be no trouble with taking care of your body or catering to it.

This is why you must let yourself be a person with peculiarities and shortfalls. Be yourself. And remember that at night, it is possible to walk on clouds and collect stars in a pannier.



Truth of Life

A clever townsperson starved in a village, while a stupid peasant lived in abundance. The townsperson had neither the skills nor the dexterity to grow food.

A one-legged man ran ahead of a three-legged man, because he pushed off harder.

A living creature without genitals reproduced itself more successfully than a living creature with huge genitals did, because it did so in another, easier way.

A blind person turned out to have more foresight than a five-eyed person, because he possessed a spiritual vision.

A person with no ears heard better than a four-eared person did, because his hearing organ was more perfect.

A headless person was cleverer than a two-headed one was, because he just thought with his heart.

On the other hand, a living creature with ten fingers could play the piano, while an armless one was not able to.



Happy and Unhappy Kings

Unhappy is the king who rules according to his moods or to speculative ideas. For a while, he is able to obtain respect or even love. But that time will pass away, and his people will curse both his fantasies or ideas and he himself; after all, any ideas on earth are false.

Happy is the king who feels himself a tiny particle of his human body – the king in whom his people's blood circulates and who is full of his people's spirit. Such a ruler does not point out the way to his subjects. He does not instruct them but exists with them in perfect unity. He is the precise incarnation of his people's conscious desires and is happy to be so. But even more magnificent is the monarch who embodies the hopes that live only in his people's subconsciousness.

Such a king is deified by his subjects, and they are not mistaken. It is happiness to be under the wing of such a ruler! His subjects realize clearly that this monarch is a messenger of heaven or maybe the son of God himself, a great prophet, the motherland's savior. Such a ruler will remain a bright star in the people's memory forever. And if this benefactor's terrible crimes are discovered after his death, the people will not accept the denouncement. Any crimes committed by this favored person of God were crimes of the people themselves. Who is honest enough to blame himself for what has happened? And finally, who will commit the blasphemy of infringing on the holy will of the Everlasting and humiliate his messenger?

Discourses about Love

Once I tempted the hermit with the question of what love is.

"It is hardly possible to explain," he replied.

But I didn't give up. And this is what I heard: "Love is probably the most unusual thing in the world," the hermit started reluctantly, "if, of course, one does not mean the passionate attraction between living creatures, or lust, which is even worse than that. It is fine to deify love. But in worshiping it, be careful, for love is created by the sky of heaven. It is the cause of love, and the cause of love is something that has no signs, something that is impossible to describe."

"But people describe everything by assigning human qualities to the surrounding world, especially invisible phenomena," I argued.

"This burden is on their conscience; it is up to them," the hermit said. "As for me, I am a human. This is why I too venture to describe love. In my opinion, love is a medium, like shining spiritual bubbles similar to those that appear upon the opening of a soda bottle. These bubbles move slowly from the bottom of the bottle to the top and then down again. They seize our consciousness, penetrate our soul, fill it, and bring to it a state of unexplainable happiness. This is similar to staying inside of a spring. Forgive me, the marvelous one."

"So love has a source as a spring does?"

"I think it has. A great source. This is why love is only a secondary cause creating something according to the will of the sky of heaven. Perhaps it is identical to the spiritual sky. Perhaps it is the third great thing created by the sky of heaven, along with the earth and sky."

"To put it more precisely, with material and nonsubstantial matter?" I asked.

"You understand correctly."

"Love is dispassionate. In this respect, it resembles its parent. And like this essence, this sexless parent, love has no signs."

"That image that I described for you with regard to love is, of course, just a fantasy," he said. "In the first place, this is because love is immobile. But it can enter and leave both the soul and the consciousness of a living creature. In Christianity, there exists a notion called the Holy Spirit, and in Taoism, there is *te*. This is what love is."

"But if love enters and leaves, this talk is about motion, is it not? And in the Bible, it is written that the Spirit of God 'was hovering over.'"

"I was imprecise. Love does not move, but rather it appears and grows thin. In order for it to be born, it is necessary to pray to the sky of heaven. But this is not enough. After it appears, love needs to be fostered. Otherwise it disappears. And then a living creature finds himself adrift in the waves of the sea of common life."

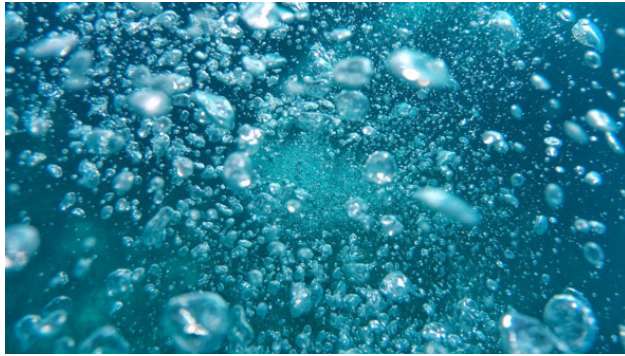
"So love is mortal?" I asked.

"Can love die? Maybe, since it is birthed by the sky of heaven. But it seems to us that love is indestructible. Because after getting thin and disappearing, love appears again."

"Is it correct that love moves to its antithesis – hatred – and then from that it transforms into the state that we call love?"

"Alas, you are in the grip of your customary notions. This pair of opposites, love and hatred, belongs to the area of passionate, dark affections. It has no relation to a spiritual love."

I realized that all I had heard was too sophisticated and distant from earthly matters. However, it was my own fault; it is not worth asking something that cannot be answered. It is even worse to ask someone who does not think in an earthly way.



Consciousness, “Pure” and “Overshadowed”

Human brains, consciousness, how much they consist of! How many acts can be performed by a human being with the aid of the consciousness and brain! There are people who think that consciousness is almighty, that one's fate depends entirely on it, both while living in one's body and even after death. Nevertheless, my spiritual experience says that there exists an area of unconscious matters. For example, it is possible to go to a temple and renounce sins and, in defiance of one's brain, to make one's fate more favorable. The almighty consciousness turns out to be disgraced.

The brain of a common earthly living creature is overshadowed by passions and ideas: scientific ones, religious ones, artistic ones, sensual- pleasure ones, and so on. It seems to me that such brains (or such consciousnesses) stick to the action field of religions, of the great law of retribution – the law of cause-and-effect relations. People with such consciousnesses are prisoners of the ideas of right and wrong, truth and lie, light and darkness, and so on. Throughout their lives, such people struggle against the cobweb of their earthly notions and buzz plaintively. It does not matter how eagerly they try to overcome what is written about them in the Book of Life – here they are! It would seem that they have already broken the manacles of predestination! But destiny laughs at them. And here you are, brought to shame and struggling as those flies do, helpless, captivated by the worldwide spider.

Meanwhile, the brains of other people are awful, blasphemous apparatuses. Only just for a look it may seem overshadowed by a religion or a philosophy. But in fact, these brains glow with a monstrous purity and virginity. Unlike the ones described above, such brains are unaware of right and wrong. They feel no remorse. People with such brains are indefinitely impudent. And in this impudence they are inaccessible, above the world, and they rule it – or so it seems to them.

The virgin brain conceives or twists matters according to its own need for an unharmed, prosperous, sound, and even happy existence. It is higher than the mind of the world. This is why heaven's punishment does not reach this brain. This brain reigns supreme not only in the community of earthly living creatures but maybe even in the entire universe.

Holders of such “pure” brains take possession of the world more and more often. Their spiritual commonality is widened and multiplied. It becomes overwhelming and gains features of the one creating existence itself. And we involuntarily bow down before this essence. It wins. As for those who oppose it, they are just destroyed. Such is the will of the Most High with regard to us. Let us thank it.



Say Only Nice Things to Me

Say only nice things to me. I want to know that there is a harmony in your soul. If this is truth, then let your lips be full of sonorities, and may a contradicting note never besmirch them. Act so when my consciousness stays on the sky. How easily will it be for me to pray then!

The honey of your speeches forces my psalms to shine especially bright yet invisible light. When love is the cause of your words, there is no need to speak about love. No, do not speak to me about it, because a word cannot express love.

It is enough that you love, and this is why I ask you to say only nice things to me. Those trifles that I hear from you resemble plants, fed with the underground moisture of your love. On earth, a drought is possible. But those plants fed by love are always juicy. They bloom and spread unearthly fragrance. I soak it up. Meanwhile, my body grows thinner. My soul is becoming free, and, having once been free already, it does not need words for communication at all. It hears only pleasant things. It penetrates and is penetrable. It is an expression of sonority itself. And this is what it is happy with. Its spiritual ringing arises everywhere across the universe. Meanwhile on earth, only you hear its sweet singing. And I do not need more than that, because I radiate my psalms for heaven, for its angels, and for you.

But if in an unkind minute my consciousness finds itself on earth, say nothing to me. Be silent; go away; be patient, because earth is not the place where I will stay for a long time.



Benefits of a Lie and Impudence

“Teacher,” I said, “I see that people commit moral crimes, and yet heaven does not punish them.”

“First of all, what is a moral crime?” the teacher asked.

“They say that objective values exist. Violation of these values is the crime. It is as if a man must pay for such transgressions with his fate, his health, the health of his children, and so on. Although often that does not happen.”

“Not everything is so simple,” the teacher said. “In society there coexist various groups of people with very different values. What is a moral crime to one group is not a crime to another group. The crime can even be a virtue.

“A problem arises if a person’s action is considered a crime in the group of people among which he is forced to exist. Then, in order to help him, his conscience proposes a lie and impudence.”

“I know that a lie is almighty. But impudence – ”

“In this case, impudence is very important,” the teacher said. “But certainly, a criminal needs to possess a quirky consciousness. Some of them are provided by heaven with such. So they prosper though they behave impudently.”

“But why does heaven do that?” I asked.

“Let us not fornicate by thoughts. First of all, a criminal with a quirky consciousness creates a myth for himself, according to which he did not commit any crime, but on the contrary, the crime was committed by his victim. The man memorizes his story. He repeatedly circulates it through his conscience, and he starts to believe it. Then, without reddened cheeks of shame, he tells the story to surrounding people. He even tells it in the temple and obtains “absolution of sins”!

“Besides, with the aid of his impudence, a criminal protects his consciousness from any remorse. As for the people in this criminal’s community, it is of no use for them to appeal to his conscience. When the man is fully accustomed to the myth he has created, believing himself absolutely right and noble and cruelly cheated by the person against whom he committed the moral crime, he creates a powerful psychological protection for himself. This protection enables him to live well, sometimes even leading an existence of full value.

“Think what would happen without lies and impudence. A criminal would perish, consumed by remorse. Things used to take place exactly this way. But now people say that the thing of highest value in the world is a human life.”

“Well, then, what changed?” I asked.

“Now there is no single morality; there are no approximately similar ethical attitudes, even inside of one country. Generally, a person can do almost everything. So under these conditions, a deceitful and impudent one survives and wins.”

“Well, what about you?”

“My fate is sad,” the teacher said. “I am overfed with communication from deceitful and impudent ones. But no one can say what echo lies and impudence would make on the fate of the confessor’s soul after the body’s death. After all, a man burrows into his myth so deeply that he is even confident of his well-being in the afterlife too. Meanwhile, what would the supreme being’s judgment be? How will it treat the lie and the impudence? We would not learn about it.”

“But how to live, then? Where is the anchorage? What can be a support?”

“Love heaven selflessly, and give awe and reverence to the Most High and its creations. Then you will be protected against lies and impudence, these new virtues, and you will always act in the correct way. However, forgive me; I said nothing to you.”



Embrace

Coming closer to Earth, I felt sympathy for it. Of course, there was something attractive in the color combinations of continents, oceans, and gases surrounding the planet. But most importantly, the noosphere seemed close to my soul. In a mysterious way, it attracted me. I took a deep breath, snapped my eyes shut, and hugged Earth.

Earth did not notice my embrace. This disappointed me. But I was not going to give up. Slowly and tenderly, I started kiss the planet with all my essence. Caressing the noosphere softly and fondly, I sensed Earth. I started uniting my breathing with its.

This turned out to be unpleasant and in fact more and more troublesome. With my spiritual vision, I looked into the planet's conscience and found that it was significantly obscured. Compassion overtook me. My embrace became stronger and more tender and affectionate. Breathing became deeper. Straining in my desire to help, I tried to inhale the impurities of Earth in order return cleanness to it with my exhalations. I breathed this way and cried. Tears of my love spilled on the terrain. Especially on – nobody knows why – that part of it that is called by earthlings “América do Sul.” The name turned out to be too long for me. I breathed, wept, moistened Earth with love, and sang soundlessly, “Do Su-ul! Do Su-ul!”

Earth did not reply. Its heart did not let the spiritual lips of my heart come closer. It was not so because it was cold. The planet's heart just did not accept my love!

When I realized this, I surrendered myself to despair. For a while, my affectionate embrace and purificatory breathing continued. Then, seeing the vanity of my efforts, I stepped back. As they say on Earth, love cannot be forced.

Of course, there is nothing peculiar about a one-way love as mine was for this planet. Clearly, there was no heavenly blessing on it. I thanked the Most High for the correction, for the love experience. Slowly, softly, I stepped back and started withdrawing. “Farewell forever, Earth, and forgive me! América do Sul, I love you!”



Earthly Games

For the one who seeks heaven, anything earthly is a fraud. Being on his way into other dimensions, he starts to find this fraud with every step. Finally, he realizes that all of the earth's prophets and cult heroes are liars. Then he forgives them upon realizing the truth: they are prophets and cult heroes precisely for the earthly life. As for him, he, the one aiming for heaven, moves to the opposite side. A reasonable one aspiring for heaven does not enter into disputes with the earth. He pretends that he participates in its games, but he always keeps his fingers crossed in his pocket.

For one enjoying earthly things, heaven is foolishness or an earthly game. Nevertheless, there exist many believers in the earthly sky. For its sake they are inclined to violations, including assassination. A reasonable one aspiring for heaven would agree with the sincere believers in the earthly sky but take no part in their affairs. He understands the squalid nature of the earthly games. The most important thing is to be silent and to serve the sky of heaven in the invisible temple of his heart. This temple cannot be defiled. It is impossible to punish anyone for serving this invisible church.



Mutual Understanding?

An angel and a devil decided to make peace and start a friendly life together. They thought hard about how to understand each other. To this end, the angel started copulating promiscuously and drinking alcohol, while the devil devoted himself to prayer and pious meditations. However, the angel felt disgust and nausea, while the devil fell into a ghastly state of boredom.

“What a horrible life the devil leads!” the angel thought.

“What an idiot the angel is!” the devil thought.

To both of them, to the angel and the devil, their own lives seemed the only possible and right ones. They tried to convince each other with the aid of their fists. But they soon saw that this was useless. In spite of their wounds, each maintained his own position. Then they realized that for the angel, it was not worth trying to live in hell, nor was it worth the devil in trying to live in paradise. They concluded that it was impossible to understand things that are impossible to understand, that peace and mutual understanding between them were as impossible as between fire and water. And then, sadly, they drifted apart to their kingdoms, one to paradise and the other to hell.

God looked at them and smiled. He did not grant the mercy of nondistinction between good and evil to them. Why? The ways of God are inexplicable.



A Person and a House

Person looked at a photograph of his home. The house was far away. Person went into it in the mornings and lived there. He cleaned up, ate, slept in bed, and went out to his small garden and worked there. At night, everything was different. Person became larger and the house smaller.

They – Person and his house – flew together to a town that Person liked. There Person played with the house and treated it as a toy. He put it various places, sometimes even in the town square or in the middle of a street, and feasted his eyes on it. When a rare passerby or car came along, it passed and drove through the house, and Person never noticed them.

“How wonderful is it!” Person thought. “This is exactly how one needs to live in the material world: so that no one has a clue about your existence.”



Getting Rid of Condemnation

Once, Spiritually Cultivating One asked One Who Prays, “Honorable sir, how, in your opinion, is it possible to get rid of a condemnation?”

“This is not so hard,” One Who Prays replied. “After all, all human imperfections concentrate in our souls, whether in mine or in yours.”

“You are mistaken, honorable sir,” Spiritually Cultivating Person ardently objected. “I neither kill nor steal, nor copulate promiscuously, nor drink alcohol.”

One Who Prays smiled slightly. “I speak not only about *evident* imperfections. Look deeper inside of your soul. Can you say that you have never wished death to a living creature that seemed to you unacceptably reprobate? Honestly, why play hanky-panky with yourself?”

Spiritually Cultivating Person drew breath and said nothing.

“Can you say that you have never wished to possess something that you did not produce or to gain possession of something belonging to someone else?” asked the One Who Prays.

Spiritually Cultivating Person bit his lip.

“Can you say that in your thoughts you have never wished to copulate with a beautiful girl you have met?”

Spiritually Cultivating Person blushed.

“So this is the answer to your question,” One Who Prays concluded. “As soon as a condemnation besets your heart, look honestly into your own soul. There for sure you will find the same thing you dared to condemn in the other one – or if not exactly that thing, then an allusion to it.”

Spiritually Cultivating Person cried in despair, “So what is going on? We are bastards, all of us; is this why one may indulge in lust without any hope of purifying one’s soul?”

“That is hardly true,” One Who Prays said. “I would advise you to overcome the imperfections that are natural for living creatures by practicing a hearty love of the Most High. Practice tremulous awe of the creator. Practice love, awe, compassion, deification, and spiritualizing of the one being in existence. In this there is hope, health, and a particular heavenly happiness.

“Few are fascinated with this, though, because this kind of practice leads to transmigration to heaven as a still-living body. Who needs that? After all, living creatures want purification while staying passionate about and tied to earthly shadows. This is why I think that it would be better for you to seek the advice of an acknowledged earthly authority.”

“One Who Prays speaks the truth,” Spiritually Cultivating Person thought, and he bent his steps toward such.



Fly

How can one live for one who is loved by nobody or almost nobody? You are correct: this is awful. This is why I love flies. I feel a great pity for them.

Look at with what hatred people chase them out of their rooms with towels! Just imagine that this were *you* and not a fly some huge creature is trying to hit with a flyswatter – no, a human swatter? Imagine that it is *your* path along which flypaper is placed, and you become stuck to it and scream in despair, anticipating your inevitable end. Imagine that it is *you*, who – nobody knows why – is being poisoned by gases.

Birds similar to the roc try to peck you with their beaks. Hidden frogs the size of cottages throw out their long sticky tongues and try to swallow you. Would this not seem too cruel and unfair to you? Would it? Only two or three times in your life would a loving being nestle up with you ass to ass, and finally you would taste felicity. However, this *can* serve a consolation for all the misery...

Well, you know, as a matter of fact, sometimes flies like you. They wish to communicate with you. They flock about you, sit on you, make contact with you in the way that is available to them. But what do you do in response? Do you return the tender affection? No! Maliciously, you chase the loving creature away or even strive to beat it to death.

Well, flies' fates are unenviable. What is it, divine punishment? Maybe. Ponder this the next time negative emotions arise toward a fly. Think that perhaps it loves you, that for your rage against a living creature, there is a high probability that you could be punished – for example, in the form of your next incarnation in the body of a fly. Then other people would hate you and chase you away – although for this it is not necessary to be a fly at all. Sometimes this happens to people who are out of favor with heaven and are being punished.

Nevertheless, you know, flies have something enviable. With cold weather's arrival, not all flies die between your window frames. Some of them find secluded places and go beddy-bye for the winter. Flies' lifetimes are short by human reckoning. Imagine if you slept through thirty or fifty years! How great it would be to wake up and see an absolutely different life! To feel delight for the accomplishments of scientists and engineers, accomplishments beyond your dreams! To see, finally, how human society transformed, to what extent it became more spiritual and kind! Oh, how marvelous it would be. But unfortunately, I am not a fly.



Words of Soul

Look at me and smile. But please be silent. Then I shall easily be able to hear the voice of your soul. If you start speaking with earthly words, you will spoil everything. After all, a word is false if it is spoken. As for words of the soul, it is impossible to utter them or inscribe them. But it is possible to hear them with the heart. For this, lips must be joined while thoughts are stopped.

The way souls speak is very similar to the way that one soul is similar to another. People differ in their experiences, views, and customs. For me, this is not interesting. I enjoy the angelic sameness of souls, their paradisiac clarity, and their sweet songs, which are impossible for earthly beings to sing. This is why I say, “Look at me, be silent, and smile.” I shall do the same. The happiness will have no end, because it had no beginning.



Opinion Poll

A student decided to write an article describing the notion of paradise as it is understood by common people. He read about paradise in the Bible, the Koran, and Buddhist writings. And then he went out to the streets to ask people what they thought. This is what his compatriots said:

“Paradise is a place where all girls attend my desires,” a young man said.

“Paradise is a garden where narcotic drugs hang on every twig, where one need not go to school and can play computer games all day long,” a teenager said.

“Paradise is unlimited sex without the danger of getting sick or pregnant. It is many free pleasures – clubs, restaurants, dresses, beauty salons, and so on. You understand,” said a girl, letting her dreams fly.

“In paradise, there is a lot of free alcohol, and one can drink it without getting drunk,” a middle-aged man told the student.

“In paradise, people work one day and rest for six, and wages are three times higher than ours,” a worker said.

“Paradise is unlimited power over people,” a politician said.

“Paradise is a country where it is possible to cash in on and seize someone else’s assets without fear of retaliation and the necessity of tax payments,” said an entrepreneur.

“Paradise is a life of ease in the West,” a woman said, sharing her innermost dream.

“Paradise is a triumph of liberty, equality, and brotherhood,” a member of the Masonic lodge proclaimed.

“In paradise I will be the one who is right, while all the rest of the people will be fools,” a truth seeker replied. “And I will be able to force them to accept my truth, because my truth is noble and promotes higher justice and social prosperity.”

“Paradise on earth is a triumph of Christian faith,” a monk told the student.

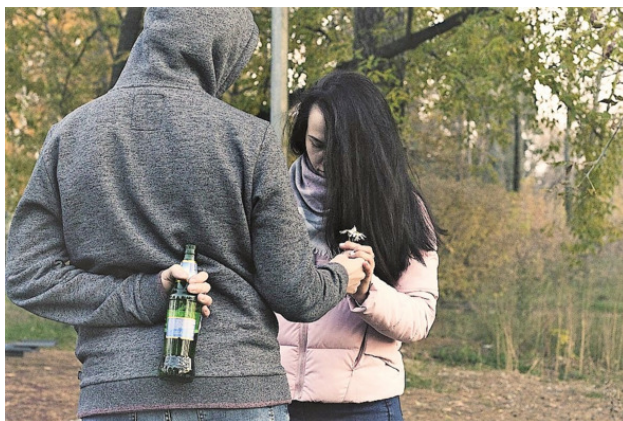
“Paradise is a state of infinite happiness after death – if a person kept God’s commandments during his lifetime,” a churchgoer said.

“Paradise is a nondrinking husband and healthy children,” a homemaker said confidently.

“Paradise is a life with two legs,” a legless cripple avowed.

“Paradise is a place of peace and health, where one need not pay off his apartment or buy drugs and food,” a retiree grumbled.

The student wrote these responses in his notebook. It turned out that according to people’s representation, paradise was a country of debauchery, health, richness, idleness, narcomania, alcoholism, permissiveness, and broken families, although some people wanted to impose on others a personal power, a private truth, or a moral or religious commandment. But that would hardly be allowed, the student concluded, because those who wished debauchery were the overwhelming majority. And with great relish, he waded into his article.



Space Full of Light

Everyone is convinced that space is black. But this is true only for the physical vision.

Once I slept peacefully in a nebula. I was like an embryo in a womb, and the great mother lulled me with her love and a soundless angelic song.

I was immobile. But it seemed to me that I was swaying in a paradisiac cradle – what happiness! – and I understood that I was an ancient baby, not yet born but knowing everything.

My eyelids were closed. But with my spiritual eyes, I saw the infinity surrounding me. It was blue-black and illuminated by myriads of stars.

It seemed that it would always be this way. But suddenly, instantaneously, the space became glaringly yellow-white. The space flared up with truly divine enjoyment and exaltation. And what was surprising was that the stars contrived to glow in this impossible shining! They became even whiter and more piercing! Everything sang and sounded in a spiritual way, and at the same time, it impressed with the silence of eternity.

“Almighty God, let it be always,” I whispered with my spiritual lips.

And heaven smiled at me in reply.



There's Happiness, and Then There's Happiness

A man worked unremittingly. In front of him, he saw only earth. He always did everything well. And there was no need to look at heaven. He was happy.

Another man dreamed more than he worked. His purposes were elevated. But ill luck pursued him in all his endeavors. The man did not realize that he acted wrongly. So he blamed an imperfection of earth for his failures. Then this man appealed to heaven in the way widely accepted on earth. The ill luck continued pursuing him. And the man gave himself completely to heaven. This is where he found his happiness.

Both the man devoted to earth and the man devoted to heaven wrote books with instructions on how to be happy. The first man's book was printed all over the world and earned him a huge profit. As for the second man's book, people made brutal fun of it, although both books were about paths to happiness. This is because there's happiness, and then there's another happiness.

How Planet U Perished

The Most High populated planet U with intellectual trees and unthinking, anthropomorphic beings. The trees considered the anthropomorphic beings to be their little brothers and took care of them as best as they could.

In their turn, the anthropomorphic ones uglified the surface of planet U. With a vengeance, they struggled to clog it; in short, they behaved like earth's babies. Among other things, the anthropomorphic ones made the planet's air unbreathable. And moreover, they even destroyed the trees! When it came to respect for trees, the anthropomorphic ones had nothing of the kind. The anthropomorphic ones spit at the base of trees; in the same places, they threw their cigarette stubs. They broke branches, tore off leaves, and carved their names into the trees' bark. It was terrible!

Honestly speaking, if I were in a tree's skin, I would not have taken care of the anthropomorphic ones. Too cruel were they. And perhaps I would have died because of humiliation and grief.

Nevertheless, the trees kept growing! Spiritually, they were higher and nobler than I am. They were genuine angels! As for the anthropomorphic ones' barbarity, the trees perceived it as the naughtiness of little children. And like parents who love too deeply, they kept giving their shadows to the anthropomorphic ones for shade and their flesh for the construction of their houses. Moreover, the trees absorbed the harmful egesta of the anthropomorphic ones, while they themselves exhaled vivifying gases to the atmosphere! There were no limits to the trees' disregard of self!

However, the anthropomorphic ones kept going on the rampage. Resignedly and with a prayer, the trees perished from their actions, one after another. The trees asked the Great Inconceivable to forgive the anthropomorphic ones, not to destroy them. The Inconceivable said nothing and only smiled in sadness. It knew that the anthropomorphic ones would destroy themselves. So with love, it kept accepting the killed trees into its Garden of Eden.

And finally, on the planet U, only one tree was left. It was several thousand years old. Its branches died away one after another. Now, the anthropomorphic ones did not goof on the last tree. They cared for it. They tried to cure it. But it was already too late. A time came when no leaf sprouted from the only living branch. The tree died. Being scant of breath, the anthropomorphic ones perished too. Life on planet U stopped.

Do you think that I have blamed the anthropomorphic ones and sermonized here? Not at all. In this tragedy, there was the holy will of the Great Inconceivable, either for the trees or for anthropomorphic ones or for planet U itself. Why? Well, certainly, we – you and I – are no judges in this matter.



Fog

Once, when I was yet in my earthly life, I transformed into a fog: I became gray, damp, cool, and formless. I remember my anxious feeling. Being a cloud is strange.

I do not know why and where I was born, but I found myself on a hill. I was not successful in maintaining the level of the hill, so I flowed into a lower place.

To live without a body is wonderful! But I felt a marked annoyance because my consciousness was unclear; something shadowed it. What was it, and why? I could not understand.

Scrubs, thorny weeds, and trees did not scratch me. On the contrary, with tenderness, I embraced them. And it seemed to me that the plants did the same to me. I dragged along the earth, and it did not scratch me. Both on the earth and on the plants, I left particles of my essence. I granted them moisture. They drank me! This is probably what a nursing mother senses. But a mother does not disappear. She takes nourishment and restores her forces. My forces were not being restored. I cannot say that it aggrieved me, but a feeling of weakness grew, of lassitude, drowsiness, and a special blithe quietness.

Spreading wider and wider, I got thinner. No, I did not disappear. But my flesh was becoming more transparent, rarefied, and warm. My consciousness was becoming clearer. The sun was transforming from a white spot into something light yellow and white-hot. I felt that it dissolved me as if I were the snow maiden. At first I tried to hide from it, and I flowed down into a ravine to a brook. I played hide-and-seek with the sun. But it found me through hazel branches, and, being content, it started smiling. I returned the smile to the sun and stretched myself to him. The game was over. Slumber got the upper hand.

I fell asleep, or more precisely, I somehow changed my form. And life continued to enjoy its existence without me – without the fog.



Three Sages

On all planets, in all countries, there are sages.

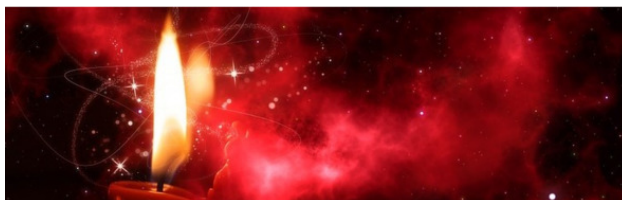
A king was told that a sage lived within the borders of his country. “I want my people to be familiar with the sage’s wisdom,” the king said. “A candle must be lifted onto a candlestick. It is not good for it to become soot in a cellar.”

The sage was brought to the capital, lodged in a penthouse, and provided with royal supplies. Blessed by the king, he started sermonizing. Nevertheless, the sage was surrounded by a cloud of a public hatred. Under the moisture of this cloud, the sage’s candle soon died away. His gravestone was violated.

The king of a second country was also informed that a sage lived in his kingdom. He instructed his court philosopher to verify the report. The philosopher found an inconsistency between the sage’s doctrine and the country’s national ideals. The informant was deprived of his position, and the philosopher was rewarded. As for the sage, he was kept under surveillance.

The sage was not old, and he wished to have followers. A young man became inflamed with the sage’s doctrine and tried to sermonize. The young man was apprehended and beaten half to death by the police. The sage’s shed caught fire, incidentally. The sage left the second country for a third one. There, in peace, blessings, and oblivion, he lived to extremely old age. Nobody knows exactly where he was buried.

In a fourth country, nobody reported the existence of a sage to the king. Because people judged the sage so absurdly, the idea of determining whether the sage was really a sage could gain no traction. At first, the sage was offended by his compatriots’ opinion. But then he realized the great happiness of not being understood. His candle burned without harming the skin. She was shining solemnly and blindingly invisibly. However, why did I say it *was* alight? It is still alight now!



Angelic Music

“People say a soul has strings that make sound,” I said to Hermit.

“It has,” he replied.

“But who hears its music? Who touches those strings?”

Hermit was thoughtful for a while and then replied, “If the whole heart of a living creature is tuned to Heaven, then the Most High himself touches the strings of the soul, and it – this happy soul – distributes the angelic music all around.”

“But who hears it, then?”

“Only such a person who also left the earth and who, though seeming to live on the material planet, actually dwells in paradisiac pastures. The spiritual ears of such a living creature enjoy the angelic music. As for the rest, it does not exist for them.”

“So the beauty of the angelic music cannot act upon the world?”

“When I was young, I thought that it could,” the Hermit replied sadly. “But my spiritual experience did not confirm this. As living creatures devoted to earth, soul strings are touched only by passions, according to the will of the Everlasting.”

“Can it be that such is the Everlasting’s desire?”

“It is not a desire of the Everlasting, exactly. The Everlasting attends the sincere desires of living creatures. With all of us, what we subconsciously want to happen does happen. I want to enjoy the angelic music, and I bathe in it, hindering nobody. The one who wants to change his consciousness with drumming also gets his desire – and it is good if he does it via headphones. Alas, in the world, sound violation is accepted. Only few consider it violence.

“Besides, do not forget that it is necessary for the Most High to ruin the earth. Is angelic music fit for this purpose? Of course not. This is why, in the minds of the overwhelming majority of living creatures, heaven plants the eagerness for deafening, passionate music.

“However, it seems to me that a soul has no strings at all. A soul sounds like a *wind* instrument. The Great Spirit or passions touch it, and the passionate music fills in the world.”

“Unfortunately, all the music we hear is passionate,” I said with a sigh.

“Yes. Because reproducing the angelic music to make it accessible to physical hearing is impossible.”

“But this is similar to an invisible dress – the person wearing it is in fact naked!”

“One could say so, yes. Because the spiritual and the material do not conform, actually. What is innermost is a profanation for an earthly mind. Worldly wisdom is senseless for an inhabitant of heaven.”



Betrayal

“Teacher,” the student said, “three men robbed a plant. One went to the police and repented. The two others concluded that he was a traitor and killed him. Neighbors approved of the killers’ action.”

Teacher was surprised. “Well, so what?”

“This is not the end of the story. One nation adhered to high ideals and was unhappy. Then it refused to consider any high matters and started to serve the low ones. And here it acquired its happiness. One living creature did not agree with his nation and continued to serve high matters. He considered his nation to be a traitor. The people understood this and despised the living creature as a traitor too. The life of the living creature transformed into suffering itself. But his conscience was clean, and in this thought, he found a happiness of the same intensity as that experienced by the nation that he betrayed. So is it right or wrong to be a traitor?”

“You see,” Teacher explained, “betrayal is unfaithfulness to a community. To say is it right or wrong is funny in itself. But whether betrayal is good or not good is another question.

“When a whole nation is unfaithful to something, this is undoubtedly the will of the Most High. But the execution of heaven’s will is not always useful for a soul or a body.

“You told how repentance led to death. But for the entire nation and the man who was cast off, what matters is *for whose sake* the betrayal was made. If it was for the sake of serving heaven, such unfaithfulness – even to one’s own people – is the soul’s greatest good. And let the affair be finished with the body’s inglorious death! On the other hand, if an entire nation smeared high ideals with shit, refused them, and even found great happiness in low aspirations, I think that such a betrayal would lead to the degeneration of this nation – but that is heaven’s will for it. So it is not worth aching for this community. Instead, one has to praise the creator, the ways of whom are inexplicable.”

Not to Embarrass

A righteous man once lived on earth. All his days were spent in prayer, singing psalms, and heavenly reflection. Once he got sick, and for the restoration of his health and strength, our merciful Lord sent him into a deep sleep.

The soul of the righteous man was glad of the freedom; it left the body for a while and flew, wandering. It found itself on the spiritual planet W. The soul flew around it, praising the Most High and enjoying its own righteousness. It never occurred to the soul that it was doing something obscene.

Meanwhile, spiritual dark clouds had condensed around the soul, and immaterial lightning started to glow. Any minute now, the soul would be struck dead! It was surrounded by angels of the planet W, and they threatened it with a cruel death.

“Have mercy, dear ones,” the soul said to the spirits. “I am such a righteous soul, such a prayer reader, such a psalm singer!”

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