

VERA LÚCIA
MARINZECK
DE CARVALHO

dictated by the Spirit PATRÍCIA

*Violets
on the
Window*



petit®

Violets on the Window

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*Violetas
na Janela*

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Books of the psychic medium and author

VERA LÚCIA MARINZECK DE CARVALHO

Of the medium herself: • Conforto Espiritual • Conforto Espiritual 2 Psychograph

Dedication

A work we have the blessing, and the opportunity of doing can become our own life's fulfillment. To dedicate it to somebody else is a demonstration – and a recognition – that they also helped in some form. To my parents, José Carlos Braghini and Anézia Alba Marinzeck Braghini, whom I love and owe so much.

Patrícia



Violets did not only decorate the window sill in my room, but also the new world ahead of me. Love prevailed, beyond time and space.

An explanation to my dearest friends:

People have often asked me to keep on writing. All that love touches me but, unfortunately, I have to quit and ask you to forgive me for doing so. I was given a task of writing four books* to describe everything I have seen, felt and gone through in the spiritual world. As I finished them, I decided to keep on with my dreams. When I was on earth, I used to study and teach. Now I would like to keep on doing that.

I am now living in a study colony and rarely visit the earth, only to see my relatives from time to time. My regular work does not include visiting spiritual centers, dictating messages or even books.

I love all those who appreciate my books and I am sure they will understand me.

Yours (always),

Patrícia



* Patrícia has written four books: Violetas na Janela (Violets on the Window), Vivendo no Mundo dos Espíritos (Living in the Spirit World), A Casa do Escritor (The Author's House) and O Vôo da Gaiivota (The Seagull Flight).

Some words from the Medium Author

P

atrícia is my niece, my sister's daughter. We felt a great affinity with each other and we were good friends. During her adolescence I could easily pick up almost all of her thoughts when I was around her. We even played with telepathy. Once we experimented at her parents' ranch, each of us in a separate room. She would hold an object and transmit her thoughts and I would guess what it was. It worked every time. We also experimented with words and the result was also exact. She could only transmit and I only receive. Since chance doesn't exist at all, I am certain that our spirits knew about the work we would be doing later on.

Patrícia died at the age of nineteen, leaving me with a void in my heart as I missed her physical presence. However, I was certain we were not apart.

Life goes on and it is from this special circumstance, from this continuation of Life, that she lovingly comes back to tell us about her experience and to impart new knowledge to us.

I, for one, am profoundly grateful to our Father for granting me the joy of her company while we worked together.

Vera

São Sebastião do Paraíso, MG , 1992.

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Foreword

I

met Patrícia when she was a little girl, while she was still incarnated. From childhood she transformed herself into a beautiful young lady. Tall, slim, blonde with long hair in curls, blue eyes that looked like pieces of the sky. She charmed everyone with her forthrightness and cheerful smile. But it was not this perishable physical beauty that called my attention. She was pure and delicate, having cultivated the true qualities which remained with her after passing over. She found the reason for her life in the Spiritist Doctrine, becoming a true Spiritist. Intelligent and studious, she was interested in learning eternal truths. She listened to her father's guidance with profound devotion and applied sharp reasoning to everything she learned. When I met her, I knew she was going to leave the physical body still young. And so it was, like a cut flower that adorned Earth, she came to charm us in the spiritual plane.

Due to my fondness for literature, I encouraged her to dictate to incarnate people, asking her to recount her experiences to our brothers and sisters in the flesh. It is so wonderful when the death of the body surprises us with a peaceful conscience, without errors and vices, and with a proper knowledge of the spiritual life.

To my delight, Patrícia accepted my encouragement and studied in preparation for this event. This work was not a sacrifice to her, since she loves to learn.

I am deeply moved by the opportunity of introducing this delicate soul, who will perfume our spiritist literature with her simplicity.

Antônio Carlos

capítulo 1

Waking up

I

woke up several times and promptly fell back asleep. One of the times I was awake I examined the surroundings. I was on a bed, white and comfortable, high like a hospital bed. The room was painted in light colors and the windows were closed. The light had been dimmed and I felt extremely well. I heard my father's voice – or better yet – I sensed his words:

“Patrícia, my beloved daughter, sleep in peace. Friends watch over you. May Peace be with you.”

Although these words were expressed with tenderness, they were unmistakable commands which made me feel protected and safe.

I would barely wake up, and would fall asleep again. Finally I really woke up, sat up and turned my head around, slowly checking the room. I felt quite comfortable among the white and lightly perfumed sheets. I touched myself and noticed that I was wearing my knit blue pajamas. I tried to fix my hair with my hands. ‘Where could I be?’ I thought. That was when I noticed a gentleman by my bed, sitting on a recliner. When I looked at him, he smiled pleasantly.

I did not know the place nor the gentleman, who continued to smile calmly. I

was not afraid, and neither did I panic. I remained silent for a few minutes, trying to understand. We stayed like that until the smiling gentleman spoke to me.

“Hi, Patrícia! How do you feel?”

“Fine...”

I thought of my father, sensed his presence, and interrogated him mentally: ‘Dad, what do I do now?’

‘Easy. When facing the unknown stay calm. Try to get information. When difficulties arise, look for solutions. Think of Jesus. The Divine Master is the Light in our path.’

It felt as though I was thinking with my father’s voice. His answer sounded as if it was coming from inside my head. I felt a sudden surge of courage and energy. Certainly it must have been the energy that he was sending. I trusted my father, so I turned my head around and looked at the gentleman attentively. I asked him: “How do you know my name?”

“Patrícia is a beautiful name. Besides, I’ve known you for a long time.”

“Where am I?”

“Among friends.”

That statement sounded so right. I was calm, even though I had awakened in a strange place with a stranger by my side. Remarkably, it seemed perfectly natural to me. I asked him another question.

“What is your name?”

“Maurício.¹ I’m a friend of your father’s.”

“Are you a doctor? Do you work at our Spiritist Center?”²

He did not answer, but the calmness in his eyes

imparted serenity. I examined him carefully. A redhead man with a freckled face, green eyes, big mouth, and a pleasant smile. He allowed me to look at him for a while. Silent minutes went by until I dared to ask:

“Am I dreaming or did I pass away?”



1 – Note from the spiritual author. Maurício, this exceptional friend, is one of the characters in the book Rectifying Errors, by Antônio Carlos.

2 – Translator's note. Spiritist Centers are public institutions dedicated to the dissemination of Spiritism, instruction of incarnate and discarnate beings, and assistance to troubled souls. More details about the services they provide appear in chapters 20 and 21.

chapter 2

Questions

I

felt that the stranger watching over me was a friend, as he continued to smile. He looked into my eyes and – suddenly – I remembered.

It had been a wintry Sunday at the end of school winter vacation and I was about to get out of bed. I had sat up to change from my warm pajamas into my day clothes when I felt dizzy. My bed was up against a wall and I leaned my head on it. That was when I felt as if something had exploded inside my head, the sensation lasting but a few seconds. At times I heard and saw people moving around, yet I did not

recognize anyone.

“Easy, Patrícia, take it easy!” Someone said tenderly.

I felt my hands being held and I also felt hands on my head.

“Sleep, sleep ...”

I fell asleep and the memories went away, as if by magic. Later, when I woke up,

I found myself in a room I knew was not mine, facing Maurício. I looked around scrutinizing everything. Mysteriously, Maurício was helping me remember. I understood, he did not have to answer me: I had passed on. I thought it was strange that I was so calm. I sighed, thinking it would be better to accept it. Well, did I not know I was going to pass on someday? I interrogated Maurício again, as if it was a trivial subject.

“What happened? How did I pass away?”

“A vein ruptured in your head. There has to be a reason for a body to die, once the time for the incarnate spirit expires. It was a cerebral aneurysm.”

“Where am I?”

“At San Sebastian Colony. In a hospital, at its rehabilitation wing.”

“Rehabilitating from what?”

“From nothing, you’re fine. You’re here to get acclimated, that’s all. Patrícia, do you remember your grandmother Amaziles? She’s here and wants to see you.”

I always loved my grandmother so much and

memories of her came to me. She had been very sick, then suffered a relapse and had to be taken to a hospital. When she passed away all of us, her grandchildren, had been praying for her recovery. When we found out she had actually died, we started crying.

“How come?” My sister asked. “We’ve been praying for her to get well.”

My mother answered: “Your prayers were answered. When Jesus saw that she couldn’t be healed in the body, He took her away to be healed in the spiritual plane.”

We all took her passing on very hard. Now, she was here and wanted to see me. I corrected my thinking:

“I loved her?! No! I love her very much still!”

“Please Maurício, let her come in,” I said emotionally.

My grandmother came in quietly. She looked

different, prettier, without her thick glasses. She kissed my forehead and we hugged each other for a long time. I was feeling very confused. I was happy to see her, yet that meant certainty that I had indeed passed away.

I felt empty and a little afraid. My grandmother noticed my feelings, so she let go of me and sat on the bed, by my side. She was smiling cheerfully.

“Patrícia, it’s beautiful here! Soon I’ll be able to show you wonderful places. You’re so well, so pretty! Do you need anything? Do you want me to do

anything for you? You ... ”

“Grandma,” I interrupted her. “How’s my mother?

My father? Juninho? Carla and the baby?”

“They’re fine, they’re Spiritists.⁴ Spiritism provides people with an understanding about the death of the body. They understood what happened and they know that the death of your body will bring you happiness. Juninho is fine and so is Carla. She’ll have a beautiful baby. Your father is strong like a rock, and his wisdom is the rudder on the boat that is your house.”

“Grandma, didn’t they suffer with my passing?”

“Yes, they did. Of course, everyone suffers with your absence, yet they support one another with

understanding. They’re doing everything possible to send you their love and affection. Someday you’ll meet them again, the same way we’re united now. You’ll see that you were never really separated. Love unites!”

“Grandma, please take care of them. You too, Maurício. Help them! My mother must be very sad. Do you think she cries for me? She might not want to eat.”

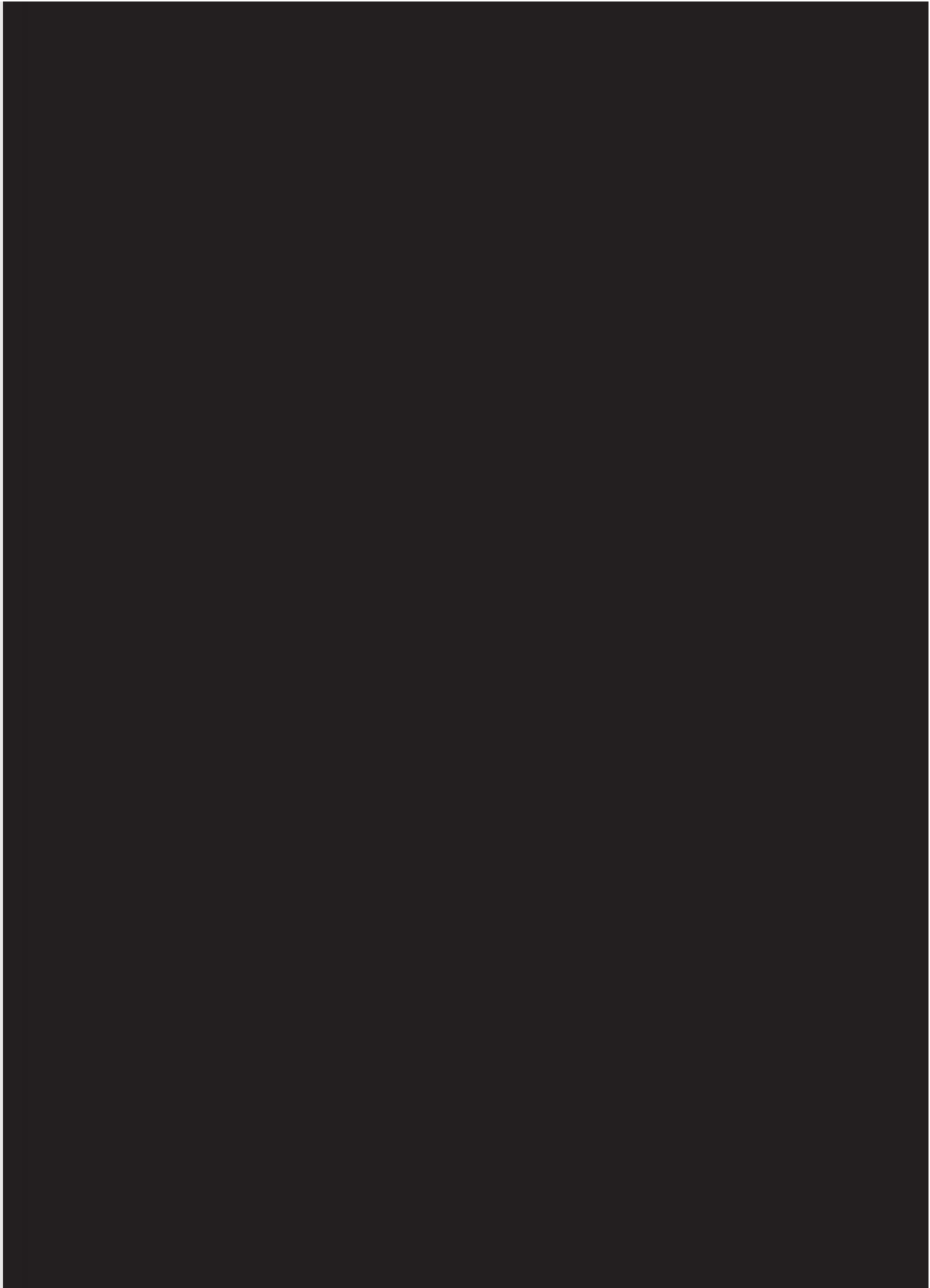
Since my grandmother’s entrance into the room, Maurício had been sitting on the recliner in silence. When I directed myself to him asking for help, he answered:

“Patrícia, in your terrestrial home they only ask us to take care of you, and you, little girl, ask us to take care of them. The sincere love uniting all of you is a strong tie. We will take care of you and of them as well. I’ll always be with you. You’ll have me as a companion until you complete your adjustment. Watching over you is my charge.”

“Thank you,” I answered trying to smile, but I think I made a face instead. I was feeling sleepy again,

feeling an irresistible desire to go to sleep. I laid down and Grandma helped me to get comfortable, my eyes were almost closed. The two of them smiled at me. Grandma kissed my forehead and held my hand.

“I think I’ll go to sleep now...”



3 – Note from the spiritual author. Juninho and Carla are my brother and sister. Carla was expecting her first child when I passed away.

4 – Translator's note. Spiritists are believers in Spiritism, also known as the Spiritist Doctrine. Codified in France by Allan Kardec in 1857, after world-wide investigations, originated nine years earlier with the American phenomenon of spirit manifestation through the Fox Sisters. (1848).

chapter 3

First findings

I

woke up in a good mood, and as my memory started coming back, I noticed I was alone. ‘Well,’ I concluded, ‘if I passed away I need to adjust quickly and learn how to live as a discarnate being.’

I love reading and had read many spiritist books⁵. I remembered the book *Nosso Lar - A Spiritual Home*, by André Luiz, in which the author describes how it is to live in a Spiritual Colony.⁶ If I was in one of them, I could only be grateful. I had passed on and was not wandering nor suffering, and neither did I go to the Umbral.⁷ Actually, I was being rescued and was feeling just fine.

I surveyed my room with curiosity. It was rather plain, yet extremely clean, with a closet, a small table, two chairs, a settee, a mirror on the wall, two doors, and one window.

“Should I get up?” I said softly to myself. There was a soft knocking at the door and Maurício came in, smiling. I felt like asking him why he smiled so much, but I did not, preferring to smile as well.

“Good morning, Patrícia. How are you?”

“Good morning.”

“You have a beautiful smile too. I like to smile. When I do it I look less ugly and don’t scare people so much. Besides, I’m so happy...”

I felt my face burning; I must have turned beet red. He seemed not to notice and continued talking,

cheerfully.

“You woke up full of pep, and you look very well.

Get up, if you want, and make yourself at home.”

“I feel so sleepy. I wake up and then want to sleep some more. Have I been sleeping for a long time? How many days?”

“You passed over sixteen days ago. You’re sleeping so much because we’re granting your father’s request

of making you sleep during these days.”

“Why?”

“We thought it would be better for you. This is a difficult time for the incarnates

who suffer the loss of a loved one.

If you're sleeping, you don't feel their pain."

"Are they suffering a lot?"

"It's natural that they grieve. Your passing over was sudden. You were fine, so they didn't expect it.

You shouldn't worry. Time heals all pain."

"I think I'm going to fall asleep again."

I quieted down, made myself comfortable and dozed off into a pleasant and peaceful sleep. When I woke up,

I was alone again. I prayed sincerely, thanking our Father in Heaven for all I was receiving and I implored Jesus to sustain my family. I asked that they be comforted. I loved them and I felt loved. They wanted me to be well and happy and I wished them happiness too.

I had a feeling my mother was sad, so while I prayed I thought of them, one at a time. When I thought of my father, I had a feeling that he was in front of me, saying in his usual grave voice:

"Patrícia, my child. Don't feel sorry for yourself, don't let self-pity discourage you. Be strong. I want you to be happy. Smile! Life is beautiful and it doesn't matter if it's here or there; our only need is to be with God. Friends watch over you, so accept their kindness. Grow strong and don't be afraid. You're fine, so

strive to be happy. We will always be together. You shouldn't mind losing your carnal body. You must understand that you should be thankful for life. Pray! Feel our love and smile.”

Those words had the power of making me feel

better. I got up, opened one of the doors and found a clean, pretty bathroom. I opened the faucet and tepid, clear water poured out of it. I washed my hands and face, then looked at myself in the mirror and realized my appearance was excellent. I fixed my hair, returned to the room, opened the closet door and found some of my clothes. I picked out a pair of jeans and a yellow blouse and changed; I had always disliked staying in my night clothes. I had passed away during the winter when temperatures were cold, but surprisingly, it was not cold in the room. I felt quite comfortable.

I heard a knock at the door and Maurício entered. He held a tray, which he placed on the table. This time I was the one who was smiling.

“It is so nice to see that you are well!”

“Maurício, isn't this winter? How come it's not cold in here?”

“Neither hot, nor cold. Temperatures in the Colonies are constantly nice and pleasant. They vary in the Umbral the same way they vary to incarnates in the physical world.”

He uncovered the tray; it had food on it.

“Patrícia, come and eat.”

“I thought I wasn’t going to need food anymore.”

“The impressions of being in the physical form don’t go away overnight.”

“Do you eat?”

“No,” he smiled, “not this way. May I remind you that the perispirit⁸ that surrounds you is still matter. You’ll stop feeding yourself, slowly. In order to do that, you need to learn how to make use of other sources of energy. If you want to take a bath, go ahead, feel free. The bathroom is over there. You had good hygienic habits on Earth. It’s normal that you keep on doing things as you did before until you learn how to clean yourself by using your willpower.”

“What about these clothes? They’re mine! How did they end up here?”

“They’re not the same ones, of course. When you were incarnated, you wore material clothes. They’re different here, being suitable for discarnate spirits. These are copies of those you had on Earth. I materialized⁹ them to please you. Change them freely.”

“Thank you. Does this happen to everyone who disincarnate?”

“No. You, Patrícia, came to this Colony because of your merit and affinity. When you were on Earth you made many friends here and you’re dear to many. Friends are meant to help. That’s why we try to please you. Unfortunately, we cannot do this for everybody. The majority wears clothes, like mine, made out of mental energy, manufactured right here in the Colony. We’re your father’s co-workers. He requested our help, entrusting you to us and we hope to take good care of you, little girl.”

“I didn’t go to an infirmary?!”

“If you had, you wouldn’t have minded. Maybe we can do all this for you exactly because you don’t want preferential treatment. Individual rooms are for the very special. Now eat!”

There were fruits, sweets and bread on the tray.

I tried a pear. It was delicious, and I ate everything in an instant. The fruits were delicious, and the bread, soft

and savory.

Maurício observed me the whole time, always smiling. I finished eating and looked at him. I wanted to take a bath, but was ashamed to tell him. It was so weird! I had passed away, yet had just eaten and felt like bathing.

“Little Patrícia,” my friend said, “make yourself comfortable. Take a bath, brush your teeth, use the toilet. I’ll take the tray away and I’ll come back in one hour. If you need help ring the bell.”

I went into the bathroom and took a wonderful shower. I have always enjoyed a shower with abundant hot water, and the water was just right. The shower is a little different here. It is regulated by a button that rotates.¹⁰ I washed myself from head to toe, and put on the same clothes I had been wearing. I combed my hair, which was long and in curls, like my mother's. This had always been a problem for us. 'What am I going to do now?' I thought to myself. But to my surprise, my hair remained just the way I wanted it. Soon, Maurício came back, as promised.

"Hi, Patrícia!"

"Maurício," I said enthusiastically, "my hair remained just the way I like it. It seems to obey my will."

"That's how it'll be. You will wish for something and it will be done. You'll always have your hair as you like it, without any effort."

I still had physiological needs, because I ate and drank, and therefore I had to use the toilet, but I no longer had menstruation. That is a characteristic of the carnal body. Later, I found out that some women still had it as a reflex of their physical body.¹¹

In the beginning, I used to wake up hungry

and thirsty, but, little by little, I slept and ate less. My nourishment consisted of fruits, breads and broth or vegetable soup. I enjoyed the food; everything tasted very good and had an energizing effect. My grandmother advised me to think that I was being nourished every time I drank water. Limpid water is the best

source of energy, she said.

I enjoyed great showers every day and changed my clothes often. While incarnated, my changes of clothes were later washed and ironed. Now, my grandmother would take my clothes and would bring them back, cleaned, placing them in my closet. Much later she explained to me that she used her mental power to clean them. When I learned to take care of my personal

hygiene in the same manner, I also learned how to clean my clothes.

I was feeling clean and in peace. Anyway, with all that attention and love, who would not?



5 – Translator’s note. Brazil has thousands of titles published about spiritual matters from a Spiritist point of view.

6 – Translator’s note. Colony, Spiritual Colony, or Astral City: city in the spiritual plane. They are just like cities in the physical world and are usually located in the spiritual space immediately above them.

7 – Translator’s note. Umbral, also known as Lower Zones in Spiritualist literature, or Limbo, Portal, and Purgatory in more traditional Christian literature. Places where souls go after the death of the physical body, according to their own mental affinity. Usually a redeeming temporary situation.

8 – Translator’s note. Perispirit: the semi-material body which unites the spirit to the physical body, also known as astral or bioplastic body. It is the spirit’s spiritual body (see St. Paul in 1 Cor. 15:44), after the death of the carnal body, and it is made out of cosmic energy.

9 – Translator’s note. Materialization: the spirit’s capacity to manifest whatever they think, out of cosmic energy and ectoplasm, through sheer willpower.

10 – Note from the spiritual author. The fixtures mentioned here are not standard. Each Colony has whatever they find more convenient and useful.

11 – Note from the spiritual author. Women wandering in the Umbral feel the reflexes of their carnal body. Many are confused and think they are still incarnated and so they live on, feeling all corporeal needs.

chapter 4

Visitors

I

opened my window and what a pleasant surprise! I had a view to a plaza surrounded by flowers and trees. Colorful birds sang happily on tree branches and some butterflies of rare beauty were flying around randomly. It was daytime and the sky looked beautiful. The sky in the afternoon was wonderfully blue in a way I had never seen before. I was in such an awe of the scenery that I spent a long time contemplating everything, ecstatic at the sight so much beauty.

“Patrícia,” Maurício called me softly.

“Hi, Maurício!”

“I spoke softly because I was afraid to frighten you.”

“Maurício, I’m charmed by such beauty. I’ve never seen the sky so beautiful.”

“It’s the same sky seen by incarnated people. You think it’s more beautiful because your visual perception has improved. You see it differently now.”

“Is San Sebastian Colony the same size as Nosso Lar?”¹²

“No, our Colony is small. There are small and medium sized colonies, as well as large ones like Nosso Lar. There are many of them spread around Brazil and the world. They’re like the cities in the physical plane. They differ in their governing bodies, still, they try to have all the cabinets or departments to better administrate. So you see, they’re like the governmental offices in the cities of the incarnates. They’re all well organized. All of them offer wonderful attractions to anyone who is able to perceive and see them.”

As soon as I got authorization to leave my room, my grandmother took me for a walk around the area, or hospital wing, where my room was located. I walked around checking every detail, from the corridors to the other rooms. It was a pleasure to also visit the plaza. There, we sat on a bench while I kept on scrutinizing the surroundings. The trees looked healthy, of a beautiful lush green, and their leaves were in harmony with the ensemble. There were innumerable flowering vines of several varieties, as well. Birds were not afraid of people, coming to them when called.

“Grandma, look at this one, how exquisite! It’s blue! Everything here is more beautiful, including the sun, the moon, the stars...”

“The condition of our spirit helps us to see things more beautifully,” she said. “Here the animals are loved and protected. They’re our friends. In the Colonies we have domestic pets and many others who help the rescue squads. Other animals delight the children at the Learning Centers. There are several species of animals in the woods; all tame and friendly.”

During this time I had many visitors. They were friends, relatives, and discarnate workers from the Spiritist Center I had frequented. These were quick and

pleasant visits, everyone trying to please me. They would bring me gifts: fruits, books, flowers, and bonus-hours. The latter meant I would be able to go to the theater, attend seminars and other entertainment places, as soon as I was allowed. It was a pleasure to have met Antônio, Alexandre, Arthur and so many other discarnate companions who volunteered at our Spiritist Center.¹³

Arthur brought me a map of the Colony. There are booklets in almost every Colony showing how they are laid out and where its buildings are located. I did not see maps in the Rescue Stations,¹⁴ but that did not seem to be necessary because they are so small. I started a list of places I wanted to visit and things I would like to do. As I talked to friends, who commented on the beauty of these places, I would record it on my little notebook and so the list got bigger and bigger. I was particularly interested in visiting the teaching establishments.

“Grandma,” I asked, “how come I haven’t seen my other grandparents?”

“They are incarnated now. That’s the Law of Life: sometimes here, sometimes over there.”

Being discarnate was really enjoyable. One afternoon, when I was alone, I had another visitor.

“Good afternoon!” he said. He was a new friend, dressed in white. He put out his hand and introduced himself, smiling, as he walked into my room, offering me a gift. “I’m Antônio Carlos!”

“What a pleasure! How is my aunt Vera?¹⁵”

“Everybody is fine, and how about you?”

Our pleasant conversation lasted a few minutes, then he said good-bye and left, promising to return later.

I opened the package. Inside a hard, transparent, plastic-like box there was ‘something.’ I had no clue as to what it was. I had never seen anything like it and kept wondering: ‘Would it be candy? Bonbons?’ They were shaped like small blue buttons, darker in the center, lighter around the edges and had small stems. I opened the box and examined them: the smell was pleasant. I tasted one and I liked it, so I ate them all. Soon afterwards, Maurício showed up for his usual visit.

“Well, Patrícia, did you like the flowers that Antônio Carlos gave you?”

“Flowers?!” I said, making a face. “Were they flowers?”

“Yes, a species of rare beauty, magnetized, so they wouldn’t dry out. What have you done with them?”

“I ate them...”

“You ate them?!” Maurício said, and bursted out laughing. When he noticed how embarrassed I was, he stopped. I thought: ‘What now? Will it do me any harm?’

“No,” answered my friend, reading my thoughts. “The flowers won’t make you sick. Just think though, Antônio Carlos spent so much time wondering what he would bring you before he picked those flowers in the superior plane and magnetized them. But tell me, did they taste good?”

“Yes, they did! I had never seen blue flowers like those, so I thought they were fancy candy!”

I started laughing and then we both laughed wholeheartedly. I have always been somewhat absent-minded and thought of my sister Carla, since she was always pointing this out to me. If she had been here, she certainly would have said: ‘That’s Patrícia...’

“Maurício, I feel fine and I want to be useful. I think I need to continue my education, so I can avoid these blunders.”

“Easy, little girl. You’ve just passed over, all in good time. The newborn of today will be the adult of tomorrow. You’ll leave this room and live with your grandmother for a while. She’s on leave from work, so you can stay with her. She’ll show you around the Colony, its gardens and flowers. Later you’ll learn and will be of service as you wish.”

Right after Maurício’s visit Grandma arrived, cheerful as always.

“Patrícia, tomorrow morning I’ll come for you and you’ll stay with me for a while. I live in a pretty house in the residential section of the Colony with five friends. They’re all very nice. The house is big and everyone has a private room.

The rooms are nothing more than a place to keep our belongings, like a personal corner. You'll have yours. It's very much like this one, a room with a bath. We'll take your clothes with us. I'll be able to keep you company and we can go out on outings."

"Grandma, do you like it here?"

"Very much so!"

"Will you leave your work to stay with me?"

"Not entirely. I'll work while you sleep. It'll be fewer hours, but only for a short time."

"What is it that you do, Grandma?"

"I work at the hospital, but in a different section, where those who are severely sick stay."

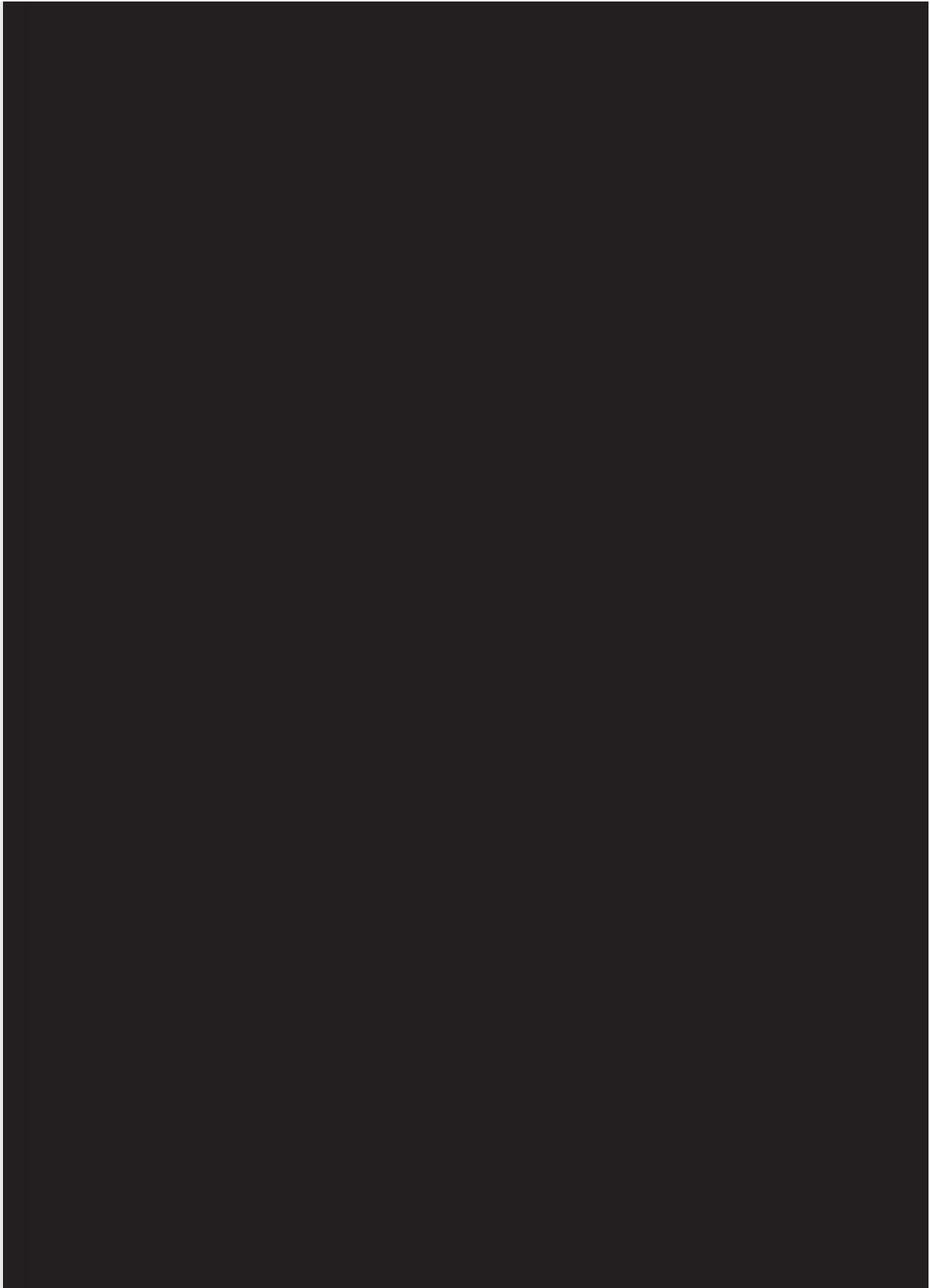
"Grandma, thank you! Everyone has been so kind to me."

Grandma smiled and said good-bye. When I was alone I thought of my father: 'My child, don't you worry about anything. Don't be afraid of the unknown. God is everywhere, so be aware of Him. Accept with joy what is being offered to you. Time goes by fast and soon the spiritual plane will be your home, your true

home.'

I picked up a book to read, a gift from Maurício. I remembered that at the time of my passing over I also had been reading a spiritist novel. This one I had almost finished.

So far, it seemed as if my life had not changed at all. I wondered whether it would change, though.



12 – Note from the spiritual author. “Nosso Lar” is the Spiritual Colony described so wonderfully by the spiritual author André Luiz in the book *Nosso Lar – A Spiritual Home*, psychographed by the Brazilian medium Francisco Cândido Xavier.

13– Note from the spiritual author. My family and I love the Spiritist Center which I attended and which they still do now. It is with much love that we call the place ‘ours.’

14– Note from the spiritual author. Rescue Station, in most cases, are small locales dedicated to spiritual first aid. They are located in the Umbral and in the atmosphere (Crust) of the Earth. Spiritual Colonies are bigger, more like real spiritual cities.

15– Translator’s note. Vera Lúcia Marinzeck de Carvalho is the medium who psychographed this book, plus many others, written by several spiritual authors, including Patrícia, under the guidance of the spirit Antônio Carlos.

chapter 5

Moving

G

Grandma came to pick me up very early the following morning and she ended up helping me pack. We put my belongings in a canvas bag and we were ready.

“Now let’s go, Patrícia. We’ll go slowly, so you’ll have a chance to get acquainted with the Colony.”

“Shouldn’t I be saying good-bye to people and saying thanks?”

“The friends who took care of you will continue to see you. Maurício will continue to help you, so you don’t need to say good-bye nor thanks right now. My friends are waiting at home to welcome you. You’ll like them. They all work and come home for only a few hours a day. Our house will be your house too, and I want you to feel at home there. You’ll stay with us temporarily, just until you start studying. This course you will be taking will teach you what it is to be discarnate and how to live accordingly.”

Grandma took me by the hand and encouraged me. I looked around the room one last time, then we left. My father’s words echoed strongly inside my head: ‘Cheer up! Don’t be sad. Accept with gladness what is being offered to you.’

We went through a corridor to the reception desk, that is, the place for exit and entrance where there is always a person to greet visitors and give information. I was fascinated by a beautiful oil painting that

decorated one of the walls. The artist had portrayed Jesus teaching and tried to depict the beautiful 'Sermon on the Mount.' Grandma waited a few minutes, patiently, while I contemplated the picture. As we left the building I noticed that the hospital had several entrances and was surrounded by a well-kept garden with thick trees and charming flowers.

We got to the street level. The streets were wide, lined with trees and very clean. I looked at the sky, which was beautiful, displaying a shade of blue I cannot find appropriate words to describe. I let out a long sigh,

feeling light and thinking to myself: 'I'd fly if I could. This feeling of freedom is so overwhelming.'

"Grandma, can't I fly to our home? It feels as if I could just take off."

"You'll be able to fly once you learn to volitate.¹⁶ When you were incarnated, you used to free yourself from your body, when it slept, and to volitate. You know how to do it and you'll remember it again later on. I'll teach it to you some other day."

I took a few deep breaths. It is wonderful to breathe clean, light and perfumed air.

"Grandma, isn't it strange to be breathing? As you said, soon I'll be volitating

and flying. And as I breath,

I feel my heart beating.”

“It’s not so strange. I believe, Patrícia, that you know much more than I do. When I was incarnated, I didn’t finish my studies. I knew very little about the spiritual world. Now, over here, I have been studying and learning with pleasure. You know that we, the discarnate ones, are surrounded by the perispirit. Our spirit or ‘self’ still wears this raiment. The perispirit is a copy of the carnal body made out of mental energy, and sometimes it is actually mistaken for the physical body. Breathing is one of the last physical needs we master here. The impression left by the physical body is strong and can only be erased by knowledge. Once this impression is gone we can live with an unencumbered perispirit. Our bodies become light and we are able to move rapidly, by willpower alone.”

“I want to learn everything I can.”

During our walk we met several people who greeted us cheerfully. I understood that most of them were on their way to work. We stopped several times so that I could contemplate the birds or the flowers. There were many fruit-bearing trees of varied species along the streets and gardens. Some I already knew, others just by name. They were trees from the North and Northeast regions of Brazil and some also from other countries. Every guest or visitor of the Colony learns how to respect nature — nobody damages anything. Trees are well cared for and their fruits, which are meant to be consumed, are picked ripe, at the right time. Even today I enjoy examining these trees. I have seen all the species that grow in this Colony and tasted their fruits. They are delicious.

We stopped at a round-shaped plaza where soft music was playing. It had beautiful and colorful garden beds and comfortable benches. We sat and I spent a long time admiring a water fountain in the shape of a rose and surrounded by

pretty fishes with water flowing out of their mouths. The rose and the fishes seemed to be made out of hard fluorescent plastic. Everything was very colorful and all colors matched harmoniously throughout the plaza. Noticing that I was observing some of the stones in the water fountain, Grandma said:

“Watching you look at these stones reminds me of a seminar I attended yesterday.”

“Tell me about it, Grandma. Did you hear anything particularly interesting?”

“What this wise orator contributed was like a gift to us. I’ll try to explain in my own words what I thought was his most important point. He said that Jesus, in His celebrated parables, tells us about several situations and circumstances in which human beings live during their evolutionary period, the time they spend in the terrestrial orb. This talk about stones brought one of His teachings to my mind; the one that says that wise is the individual who builds a house on a rock. Monsoons, the storms of the mind and the senses act on human beings indiscriminately, be they good or bad. These circumstances affect all humanity.

Jesus always used physical symbols and gave them spiritual significance. The rock is the symbol of strength and immutability for we can break it, fragment it, but it still is, and will always be, a rock. So are the human beings who are aware of the fact that they are not just a transitory feature, but that they will survive the life of the mortal body. These individuals know that they can withstand, or better yet, that they can take advantage of the windstorm of temporary interests as well as of the storms to satisfy material worldly desires to further solidify their union with God. The spirit needs a body and this body is, as Jesus said, its house. It’s the spirit’s purpose to change this body until it is spiritualized. Once this condition is attained the body is not a burden anymore, nor a source of conflicts, it’s objective becoming to love and serve God.”

“How beautiful! I’ll enjoy these seminars.”

“Let’s go, Patrícia,” invited Grandma. So I got up and followed her, certain that I would return to that place and feeling that I could spend all day contemplating it, so beautiful and pleasant it was. I was so captivated by everything I saw that it felt as though the Colony was a dear and familiar place to me and that I had really

returned to my eternal home, the true one.

“Patrícia, there’s the theater. Soon, I’ll take you there and you’ll get to know it better. It’s the Conference Hall.”

“Is it the Conference Hall or the theater?”

“You’ll soon learn that over here we use different names for the same things. The terminology varies from one Colony to the next, just like from one region to another on Earth. Departments and Ministries can be used interchangeably, for example. There are many terms, one just needs to pay attention.” Grandma continued talking, telling me about the house, her friend’s names, etc.

We reached a tree-lined avenue with houses on both sides, each having a garden with many flowers.

“Grandma, it’s not the season for all these flowers. Are there flowers here all year long?”

“We have flowers for decoration and to cheer us up during every season of the year. We take good care of our plants. Each person takes care of those of his or her house. Flowers last longer here because they’re fed by the minds of those who planted them.”

Grandma cheered me up with one of her charming smiles. We stopped in front of a beautiful house. It was encircled by a small garden, with many flowers dancing by a soft breeze. I smiled, falling in love instantly with the house.

“Let’s go inside,” Grandma said, taking me by the hand. We crossed the garden and a small covered porch. Grandma opened a glass door. Her lady friends, residents of the house, were in the living room waiting to welcome me. They introduced themselves smiling.

“Hi, Patrícia, make yourself at home.”

“Welcome, little girl. May God grant us our wish that you stay with us for a long time.”

Grandma had not exaggerated. Her friends were pleasant and friendly. I checked the living room. It was spacious and furnished in excellent taste, without excesses. The furniture was similar to those used by the middle-class on Earth. There were pictures on the walls and the usual sofas, love seats, chairs, tables and flower pots. Grandma Amaziles noticed that I was a little vexed and came to my aid.

“Patrícia, you need to repose. Come and see the rest of the house and your

room.”

The large hall connected to a room with a table and some chairs. In the adjoining room there was a door to another area and a door to a corridor, where the bedrooms were. The light fixtures were different from the ones I had seen before; they seemed practical and very beautiful.

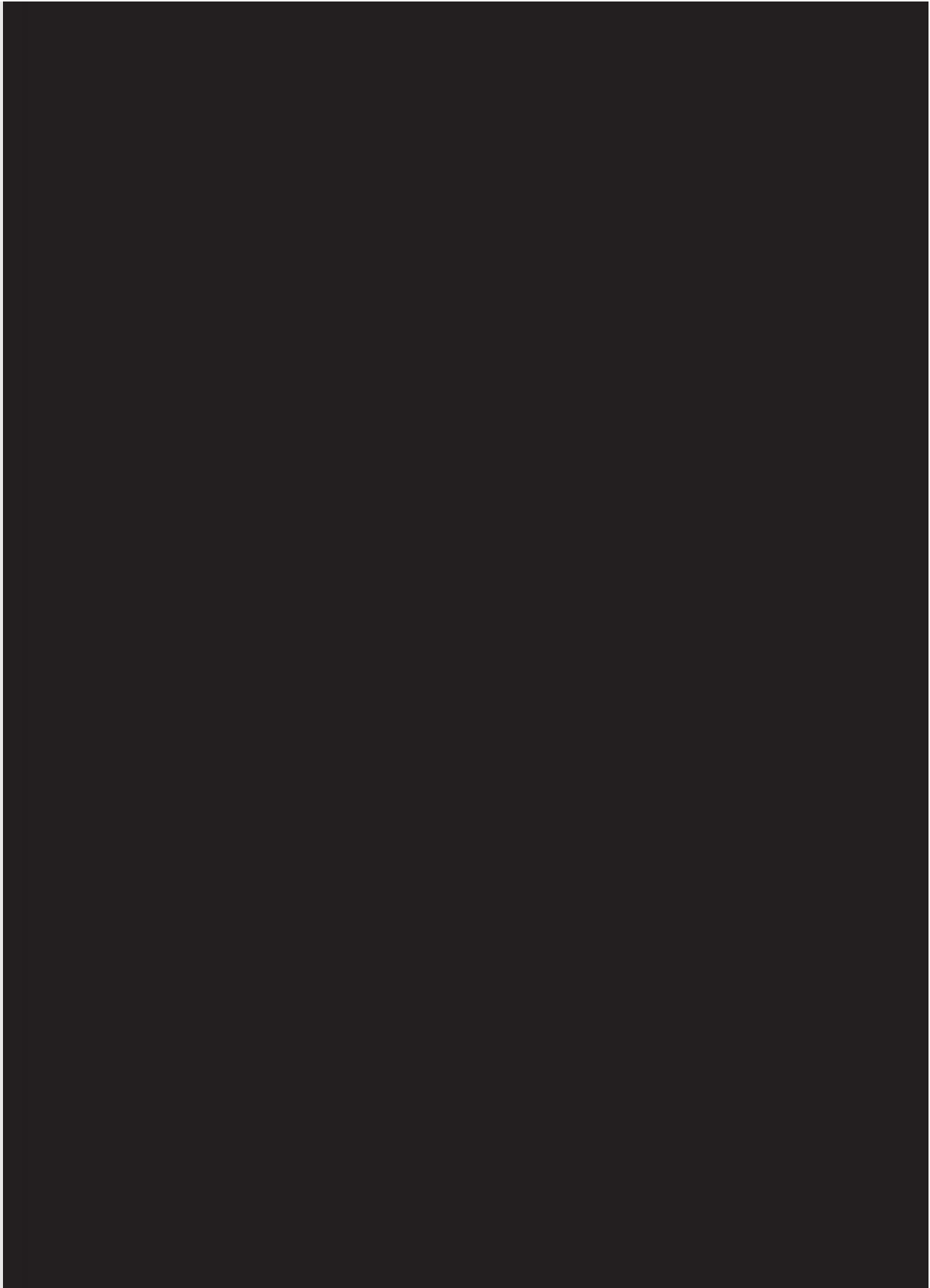
It should also be noted that Colonies and Rescue Stations follow the same timetable as Earth. When it is daytime on Earth, it is daytime here too. The Colony is illuminated by artificial light at night. The energy used is solar and of another kind, which incarnate people in the physical plane cannot even imagine yet. Streets,

avenues and squares are all well lit although lampposts are not used here. It is as if the Colony is one big room with only one light source illuminating it. Brightness can be kept at strong, medium or dim settings and there are no dark corners. People control it according to their needs. Nights at the Colony are of a rare beauty; one can see the stars, the moon and the darkness as well. The first time I saw the Colony lit, I spent hours contemplating it. Its trees, flowers – everything seemed to quiet down and fall asleep.

“Here is your room!” Grandma exclaimed. She had opened the third door in the corridor and there was my room, my own space. I thought it was beautiful, well aired and big, having a beautiful and delicate chandelier in the shape of a rosebud. It also had a bed, a closet, a writing desk, two sofas and a bathroom. The decoration was

in very light pink. Suddenly, my eyes were transfixed by what I saw by the window. I was thrilled by such a

wonderful surprise.



16 – Translator’s note. Volitation: A spirit’s capacity to move in any direction by willpower alone. It’s the normal mode of locomotion for advanced spirits.

chapter 6

Violets on the window

T

he window was opened, showing a beautiful view of the right side of the garden. It had a delicate looking sill made of light-colored wood on top of which were several vases of violets. They were flowerpots filled with colorful and beautiful violets.

Home memories rushed through my mind. I remembered my mother's violet flowerpots, the ones that always adorned the window sill in our kitchen. They seemed to be the same ones.

“They are!” Grandma exclaimed. “They’re the violets Anézia materialized with so much love for you out of cosmic and mental energy. They’re replicas of those that decorate the kitchen in your terrestrial home.”

“Grandma, how is it possible?” I asked in amazement.

“Your mother, who loves and misses you very much, feels a yearning that stems from unsatisfied love, normally caused by the absence of a loved one. She

misses you and continuously irradiates her love. She hasn't wished, nor did she expect you to return. Trying hard not to harm you, she channeled her love and made a gift of these flowers for you. It's one way she found to demonstrate her love: through a living gift. With a little help from us, your friends here, enough cosmic energy was and continues to be condensed and there you have it: glorious violets."

"Grandma, why do you say my terrestrial home?"

"We may have several homes. Each heart that loves us is like a home to comfort us. And you are loved. You could say 'your ex-home,' yet – to those who love you – it will always be your home. Not just the terrestrial house you used as a physical being, but a home full of love where you're remembered with joy and where you're a daughter, a sister, an aunt, a friend and not just the one who has departed."

I came closer to the violets. Their perfume made me feel stronger. There was a note attached: 'Patrícia,

I want you to be happy! We love you. I love you! Don't be discouraged and live happily. May these violets adorn the place where you live and where you will be most of the time.'

Those small, delicate, colorful flowers seemed to be greeting me. My mother likes flowers so much, caring for them with so much tenderness. I could not have received a better gift. Grandma left me alone for a few minutes as I recollected events of my past, the stories behind each vase, my mother planting and watering the flowers.

I recalled her cheerful laugh, her special care for everyone.

My mother is strong and her sincere love was with me, protecting me as usual, giving me courage and

happiness. I felt my strength renewed and smiled joyfully. A mother's love is like a beacon, illuminating the way for her loved ones and perfuming their lives.

These violets captivated me. They were not only decorating the window sill in my room, but also the window to the new world that faced me ahead. These violets on the window...

chapter 7

Theater

M

My new home was very pleasant and I liked it very much. There I was treated as a granddaughter and as a daughter by my grandmother and her friends. They pampered me, gave me treats, and entertained me with stimulating conversation. I occupied myself by reading and taking long walks throughout the Colony. The only place I had not visited yet was the other wing of the hospital where the needier patients were. Based on the books I had read while incarnated, I imagined that Spiritual Colonies were wonderful places; still, to see them 'live' was a very moving experience. There were times that

I was ecstatic with so much beauty.

I compare San Sebastian Colony to a terrestrial city of medium size, without the extremes of luxury and poverty. The houses follow the same standards, varying only in size, all with gardens and many flowers. Its administrators have the good of the whole in mind at all times, so everything is well organized.

My visitors kept coming. They were relatives and people who had been helped by my father in our spiritist group. I was receiving many prayers, which would reach me as messages. I also received prayers from people

I had never met. With prayers of my own, I was happy to respond to each one, thanking them all for the love that encircled me as a result of their caring.

Arthur, a discarnate companion of my father's, came to visit me frequently. He was a cheerful person and when I thanked him he said:

“Glory be to the Father, Who permits us to do good for others in repayment for all that we receive.”

He gave me a kind of television, which he installed in my room. This appliance has a technical name, but since we know television and it looks like one, we call it television here too. This particular device, however, was lighter and better equipped. He plugged it in and tuned it to my house on the Earth plane. I could see all my relatives and everyone was well, although I thought that my mother's face looked drawn and sad. I had permission to watch my family for a few minutes each day.

“Can everybody here watch their families?” I asked Arthur.

“Unfortunately not, and for several reasons. Not everyone has the appropriate equilibrium to watch their families on television. Not everyone deserves this gift.”

My heart was thankful for my being able to see them; it diminished my longing.

There is an appliance like this one in every house, but they are not necessarily tuned to incarnates. At my grandmother's house it is in the living room. They broadcast news from around the Colony, the Rescue Stations, the Umbral, Brazil, the world, as well as other Colonies. News from the spiritual plane and the most important ones from the physical plane were also aired, but without sensationalism and lies. Often, the broadcasts featured beautiful prayers from

guests of the higher spheres, theatrical plays, seminars and choir performances. At Grandma's house everyone enjoyed the programming that the Colony offered.

Grandma introduced me to someone named Frederico, saying he was a friend. He came to visit us and gave me a beautiful bouquet of colorful roses.

"Hi, Patrícia," Frederico said politely. "I've known you for a long time. Hope you feel better and better among us."

I thought he was handsome – young, blonde, blue-greenish eyes. I felt I knew him – that 'I know you, but I don't know from where' feeling. Right away I felt at ease with him and we talked for hours. Later, he invited me to go to the theater. Noticing my hesitation, he advised:

"Patrícia, why don't you ask your grandmother whether you can go?"

Grandma applauded the idea and we agreed on a time for him to come and pick me up. I still did not know how to go by myself to a few places in the Colony. When he left Grandma told me:

"Patrícia, the people who live here must feel an affinity with this place. You don't have to be afraid of or to mistrust anyone here as you prudently did while incarnated. That's the reason why it is so peaceful and safe here in the Colony."

"Wow! This is so good, not having to mistrust or be afraid of another human being!"

I waited anxiously for the time to go to the theater. Frederico would pay for my ticket. It was exciting to get to know everything.

The theater here exists for cultural purposes only – and as everything else in the Colony – it serves to enhance everyone’s well being. The building was big and well planned, with big columns in front and the roof in ‘V’ shape. There were three, very artistically carved, big wooden front doors. The building was white with plants and very beautiful flowers surrounding it. There was a vestibule of approximately four meters in size between the columns and the front door, with five steps to get to the vestibule. The interior was even more beautiful. The main room was enormous with comfortable chairs, light painted walls and beautiful pictures. The stage was similar to the ones in the physical world. I loved it! Later, when I visited other Colonies, I saw other theaters with rooms markedly different. It is interesting to find out how Colonies are different from each other. That night we saw Emmanuel’s Renouncement. It was an adaptation of a spiritist novel psychographed by the medium Francisco C. Xavier.¹⁷

“Patrícia, many incarnated people have permission to attend the theater here during sleep. They come to see plays produced by discarnate groups. Consequently, incarnate artists in the physical world are already producing plays with spiritist themes. This play we just saw – or one very much like it – will soon be entertaining people on Earth. Many others such as this one will soon appear on the earthly plane to educate and entertain people. They’ll be very successful.”¹⁸

I returned to the theater several times. At first, friends took me and offered their bonus-hours to pay for my ticket. Later, when I started working, I was proud to be able to pay my own way. I always enjoy attending the theater when groups of young people present their own theatrical productions. It seems that children also enjoy this pastime, working very well at it. The theater is only free of charge in certain occasions or for some seminars. Otherwise, we need to have bonus-hours to enjoy this treat. The theater presents many musical concerts, choirs and

individual productions. Some of the music is known to incarnates on Earth, the pretty ones with pleasant and fine subjects; others are known only to residents of the Colony.

The theater – or as Grandma said they call it over here – ‘showroom’ or ‘conference hall’ is also used for seminars on themes of interest only to small groups. When the seminar is of interest to the public at large, it takes place in parks. There is a bulletin board in front of the theater building used to inform of the theater’s scheduled activities. It shows the program for the current and the coming weeks and months. One can find these bulletin boards throughout the Colony. The theater is very popular and everyone cares for it as if it were their own home.

I liked the Colony so much that I could not understand why some people did not like it. I commented about this with Frederico.

“Frederico, how can there be people who don’t like it here?”

“Taste and affinities are very different in everyone, incarnate or not. People don’t change tastes just because they left the physical world. You can see that some

incarnates enjoy bars and brothels, while others like churches and schools. Some like danger, noisy places, others like peace and nature. Many people remain indifferent in front of a work of art, delicate music, or a flowery garden, while others love simple things that are good for the soul. Many think that their demise will be wonderful because, in their opinion, they did not practice evil deeds, forgetting that – on the other hand – they did not practice any good either. They do not relate to, or connect with the things the Colony has to offer. I know of good people who pass over and come to the Colony, do some sightseeing, find it beautiful but don’t want to stay, preferring to be incarnated. I heard of a gentleman, amazed with the Colony, who felt as if he had taken a trip to the most wonderful place. He enjoyed it, yet wanted to go back. In his opinion, this was

not a place to live.”

“Then, what?”

“He had to resign to the fact that he had passed over and couldn’t go back. When advised to ‘get used to it’, he became very sad, but eventually adapted. Others don’t like it at all because over here they can’t smoke, drink alcohol, or eat meat. They’re here to learn and be of service, yet they only want to be served. Not everyone thinks this place is divine, like you and me. Many of its residents don’t have the same taste. Some love its architecture, others its schools, others the plants, etc.”

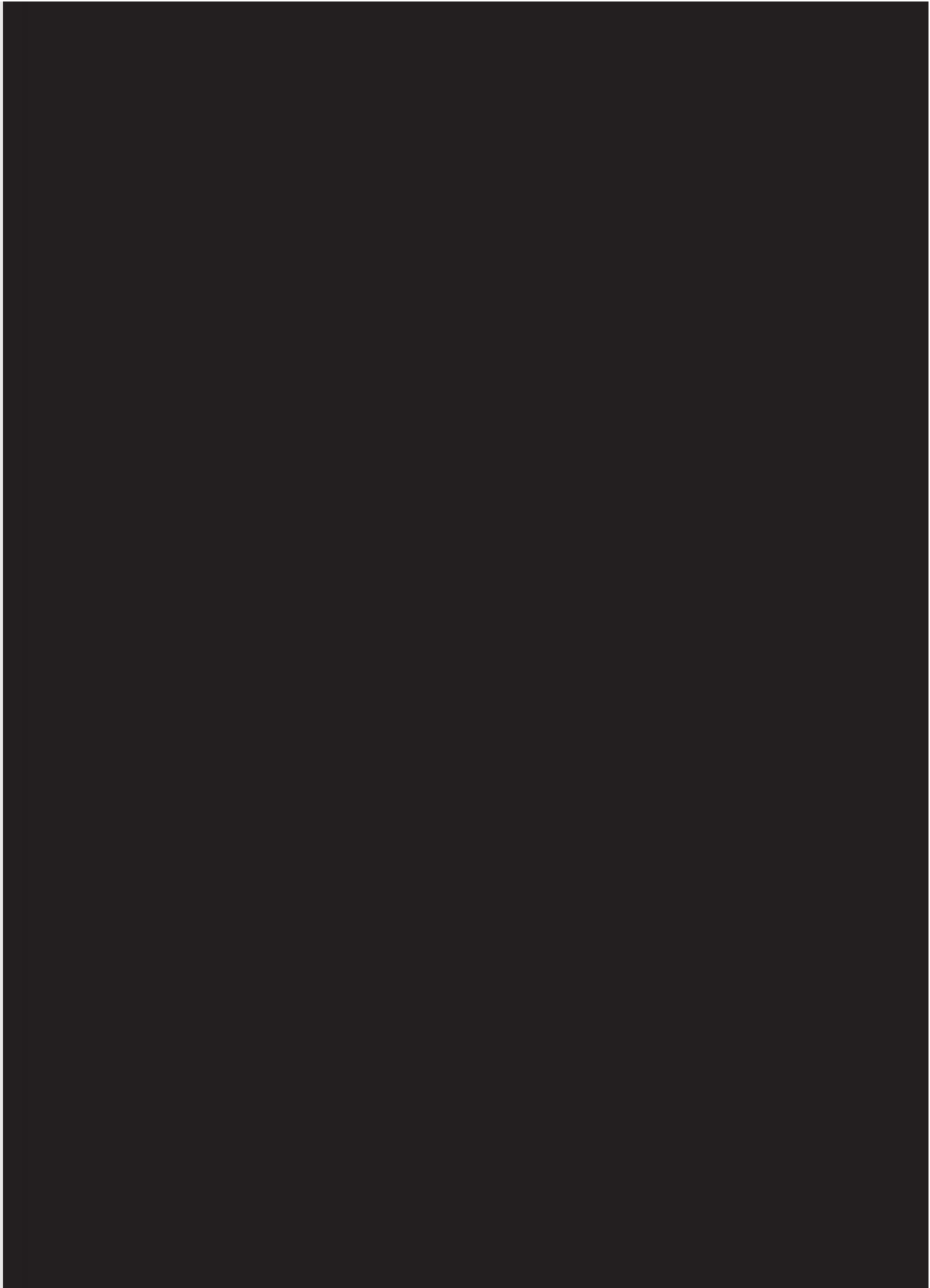
“And you, my friend, what do you like best in this place?”

“In every Colony I have visited, hospitals attract me the most. I was a doctor in my last incarnation, so I’ve grown to love the medical profession. I’m always working in this field.”

“I still don’t know what I like best. I think everything is so beautiful! I feel like working, but I still don’t know in what.”

”You know, Patrícia, while the spirit has not achieved cosmic consciousness,¹⁹ its personality has to fill its emotional void with activities. The good ones keep themselves busy by building, relieving sorrow, growing, and evolving. But those opposed to the spirit’s integration fill that void by getting involved in negative pleasures and sensations, destroying and wasting what belongs to nature.”

“What a shame to see brothers and sisters deceived by the illusion of matter, blind to the spiritual truths and so far from deserving to live as a discarnate in a place as wonderful as this one!” I said.



17– Translator’s note. Francisco Cândido Xavier is the distinguished Brazilian medium and prolific author of spiritist books, using psychography, with over 400 works published, many of which have been translated into several languages and published in many countries.

18 – Note from the spiritual author. Indeed, these theatrical plays are also successful among people on Earth.

19 – Note from the spiritual author. The self-realization of an individual in God or in the Cosmos.

chapter 8

Getting to know the Colony

F

rederico took me for a ride on an ‘aerobus.’ This is the mass transit vehicle used in the spiritual world. There are three sizes of aerobuses and they are used in almost all the Colonies. There is the big one, used for a large number of passengers, the medium and the small one. I cannot think of anything comparable to this spectacular method of transportation on Earth. It is like a bus but has airplane features; completely silent, it doesn’t pollute, besides being comfortable and clean. It slides softly, close to the ground or a few meters above it. In longer trips, like the ones to Earth, it glides through the air. The passengers sit in comfortable chairs. It doesn’t have wings, however. Many of these vehicles circulate only inside the Colony; others connect one Colony to another as well as the Colonies to Earth. There are predetermined stops for passengers to board and disembark them.

‘Aerobuses’ do not go near the Umbral. In rare cases they go to the Rescue Stations located in the Umbral. The ones that run around the Colony do not have conductors; at their designated stops there are selection boxes with buttons indicating the places where they stop. You press the button to signal the stop you want to go to. The first ‘aerobus’ that passes by and is going your way will stop. ‘Aerobuses’ that run outside the Colony have conductors who, besides conducting, help with the work to be done.

Seen from a height, the Colony is very beautiful. It is also well planned, its streets and avenues forming perfect lines. The buildings are in harmony with the environment and fully occupied, serving the community well. I enjoyed that trip

very much. San Sebastian Colony is in the spiritual space above the city where I lived when incarnated. I thought it was strange that the Colony had been named after a saint, so I asked Frederico:

“Why was the Colony named San Sebastian?”

“Patrícia, there are numerous Colonies around Brazil and throughout the world. They’re like cities and must be named to facilitate references to them. Names are not important, being just designations. When this Colony was planned, a long time ago, its patrons decided to call it San Sebastian temporarily, to avoid the word Paradise,²⁰ which could be confused with its other meaning, namely Heaven. Once it was finished, its name remained San Sebastian. You know that San is the title given to the brave warrior Sebastian. So, it is the hope of the city patrons that all the Colony’s residents become brave warriors, emerging victorious over their imperfections and faults.”

I had received some bonus-hours as gifts, and all the entertainment and leisure I had enjoyed had been paid by my friends. That seemed strange to me, like receiving payment for being useful, a paid activity. One day, coming back from the theater with Maurício and Antônio, I asked them:

“What are bonus-hours, really?”

“Patrícia,” Maurício explained, “most people work because of incentives, so they can enjoy a pleasure or a sensation. The majority of them cannot conceive of humanity as one family. When the physical body is lost during its demise, it’s necessary for them to continue receiving an incentive for their labors so that they won’t lose the will to work. Labors which, later on, they’ll do for a greater reason, for love. The Superior Spirits see these Colonies as transitional places and

bonus-hours as evolutionary stages. That is the reason why the residents of the Colonies receive their salaries in bonus-hours.”

“And those who work very hard and for a longtime, like the governors and instructors of the Colony, do they earn bonus-hours too?”

Maurício continued to explain:

“The instructors don’t need premiums for being good. They stay in the Colony, among the novices, for love of the human family. So as not to humiliate them, to avoid prominence or being confused as conceited, they use their bonus-hours to stay on a par with the

residents, who still live within the reward and punishment system. Everyone uses bonus-hours, thus avoiding the emergence of privileged and of forsaken groups. Those who work very hard – and could receive a lot more – ask only for the bare necessities.”

I realized that my companions didn’t serve or work for bonus-hours, instead they used them only when necessary. Love was the reason they both worked very hard. Still

curious, I asked them again, but this time it was Antônio who answered me, cheerfully.

“Are there people in the Colony who don’t work and – consequently – have no rights to bonuses or leisure?”

“Yes, but the length of stay for these spirits is not long, nor could it be, because lazy spirits aren’t attuned to the Colony. Unfortunately, they reincarnate at the first opportunity among lazy spirits like themselves, and only then they miss the comfort they had but failed to appreciate.”

Libraries are places I really enjoy and, therefore, visit frequently. They differ in size, depending on the Colony. They are bigger and more comprehensive in the Educational Colonies. There are libraries in the

Rescue Stations as well, except they are smaller.

The library at the San Sebastian Colony is very

beautiful, with books separated orderly in bookshelves. I was surprised by the fact that I couldn’t find worn-out books. They were always new, restored by the energy from the minds of those who molded them. Maurício told me that books never wear out because – like all the other materials in the astral or spiritual plane – they are made of psychic energy. Some of them were written just for discarnate spirits, and so are only found in the spiritual plane. There are all sorts of books, reference and research material, as well as religious tomes, mostly spiritist. The great majority of them are also available to incarnates, specially to Spiritists. As I could not find the book I was looking for, the librarian kindly asked:

“Patrícia, they have this book in the Higher Education Colony. Do you want me to order it for you?”

“Yes, when should I come back for it?”

“Well, wait for a few minutes and it’ll be here.”

The order was placed using a device that looked like the modern fax machine. Ten minutes later I received the book via the same machine.

“Cool!” I exclaimed, surprised.

“Isn’t it wonderful?”, the librarian asked enthusiastically. “We have all kinds of resources here. We received this book by way of disintegration and reintegration. I don’t doubt that in a few years incarnates will be enjoying this advantage.”

“Cool” are the books we can watch on television. The written text appears on the screen and – thanks to a small gadget adapted to it – we can read a page at a time. I cannot compare it to videocassette recorders because it is different. It is so nice to read on the television. Near the library there are video-rooms, also called ‘Computer Study Rooms’ or ‘TV Rooms’, and they can also be known by other names.²¹ They are big halls which are divided into reading rooms, according to the subject to be aired. These places are comfortable and very pleasant. Each room is equipped with several state-of-the-art computers, which can be turned on by remote control. There are ten beautiful and comfortable chairs in front of each machine. Screen sizes vary. If we want to watch or study a subject individually, we adjust the screen to the smaller size, similar to a 20-inch TV. If it is for a group, we adjust it to the medium size. If it is for many people, we adjust it to the largest size, which varies from two to five meters (6.56 to 16.4 feet). The ceilings of these rooms are not that high, usually three and half meters (11.48 feet) high. So, if a larger projection is needed, this equipment can be moved out. Each reading room has a sign on the door showing the subject covered, with topics such as: Colonies, Perispirit, Chemistry, Physics, Earth, Planets, etc. The room for Religion and the Bible is an extremely interesting one.

Before you go into one of these reading rooms, you should choose a topic for

research, for example: the human eye. You can also choose program levels such as: beginner, intermediate, or advanced. Basic explanations about the eye appear on the screen when one chooses the beginner's level. The eye is drawn from all possible angles, with narration and text included. If it is a private research, headphones can be used so as not to disturb other

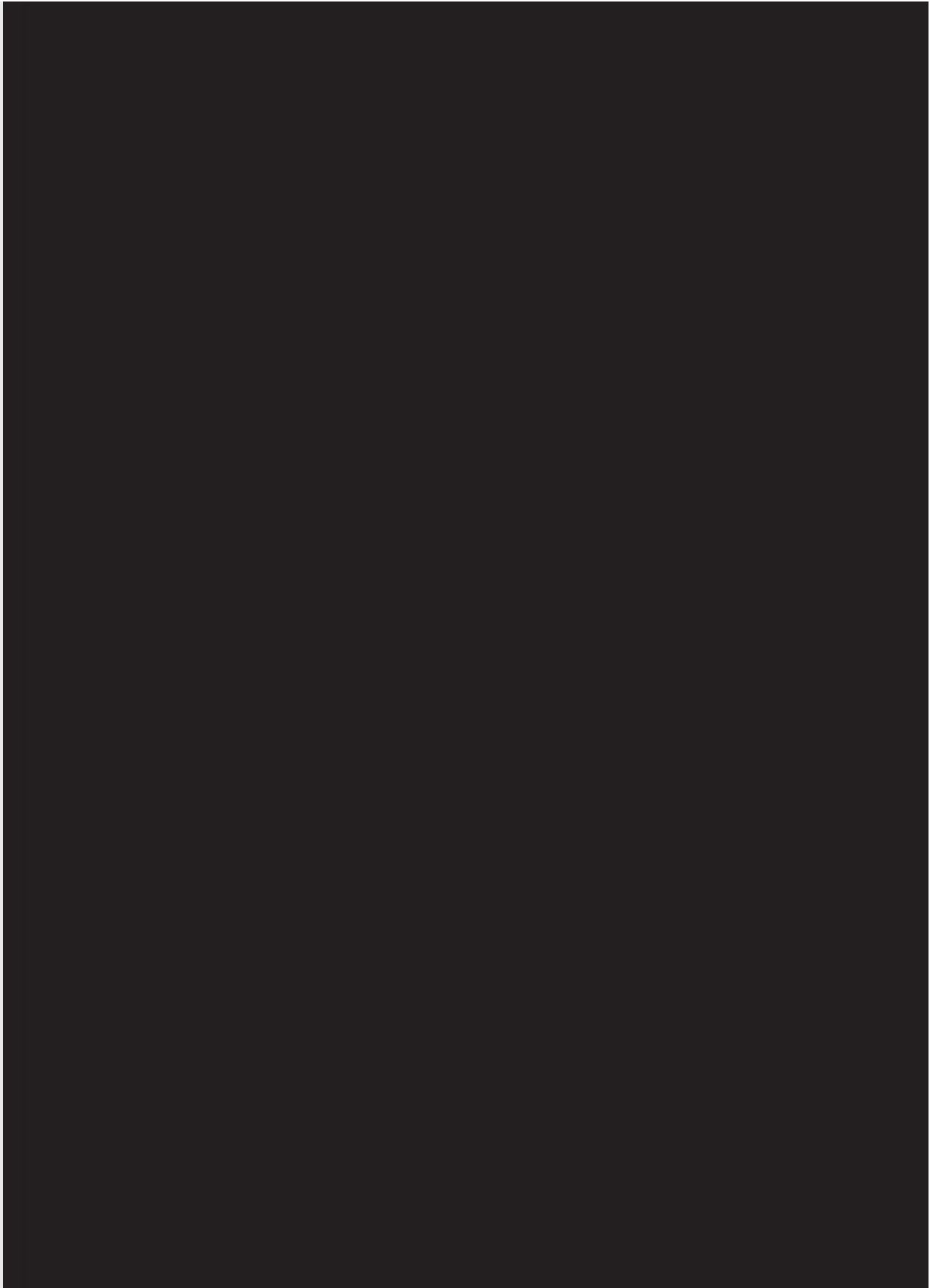
researchers. If you choose the intermediate level, you get a lot more details. The third level – the most thorough – is the advanced one, for professionals.

Everything is very educational. Yet, if the material is not understood for any reason, there are teachers and other students in the room who enjoy teaching and helping others. There are entertainment rooms that show cartoons and good movies, some made by incarnates, others by discarnates. These are beautiful stories that educate and entertain. There are also electronic game-rooms to be used during leisure hours. Counselors try to monitor the attendance of game-rooms, since these games are for educational and entertainment purposes only, and not to be taken to excesses. There is resistance to all bad habits. In summary, we can say that these rooms are a mixture of movies, TV, and state-of-the-art computers. The only time we do not use bonus-hours when going to the game rooms is when we use them for research or surveys. Almost all Colonies have these facilities, but I didn't see them in the Rescue Stations.

In Educational Colonies, game-rooms are very popular with the students. They are enormous and the subjects are innumerable. I enjoyed – and still do – going to these Research Centers. I think I love this technology because I was familiar with movies, television, and computers while incarnated. What pleased me the most was using this process to learn about the works of Allan Kardec.²² One can see images of him and his staff – both the incarnate and the discarnate ones – working on each of his books. And also see Allan Kardec studying, researching, and being helped by the mentors who assisted him. What a captivating spirit Allan Kardec was! It was truly fascinating to see Saint Louis, Saint Augustine, and so many others.²³ I went to these study-halls several times to learn everything I could about them and their admirable work. That's one of the more-sought-after subjects, particularly by those who were fortunate enough to be Spiritists when incarnated – or who got acquainted with Spiritism's magnificent

literature.

I was delighted with all of that. After all, who wouldn't like to use these facilities?



20 Translator's note. São Sebastião do Paraíso is the name of the city in Minas Gerais, Brazil, above which this Spiritual Colony is located. Thus the reference to the word Paradise, which the Colony's spiritual founders wanted to avoid using in its original name.

21 Note from the spiritual author. It is not easy to describe these rooms to incarnates. I use comparisons in my narration.

22 Translator's note. Allan Kardec, 1804 - 1869, the pen name of Hypollite Leon Denizard Rivail, a French educator, scholar and philosopher who researched and codified the tenets of the Spiritist Doctrine according to the teachings of Superior Spirits.

23 Translator's note. Allan Kardec was helped in his work of codifying the Spiritist Doctrine by luminary spirits, such as: John, the Evangelist, Saint Augustine, St. Vincent de Paul, Saint Louis, Socrates, Plato, Fenélon, Benjamin Franklin, Swedenborg, and the Spirit of Truth.

chapter 9

Volitating

I

always heard from home, from my family. I had continued to receive their prayers, encouragement, wishes for my happiness, and for an early adjustment to spiritual life. Spiritual friends would write through psychography, using my aunt Vera as a

medium, giving news about me to my family. I was so happy when Maurício said:

“Little Patrícia, write a note to your mother and I’ll transmit it through your aunt.”

Touched, I wrote a note thanking them for their love, telling them I was well, and sending them hugs and kisses. Since then I continued to write them messages, which my friends transmitted through my aunt. I was in peace. Passing over had not made such a difference to me and I never felt separated from my loved ones. I was aware that I had not lost my individuality. I remained the same person and my love for my family was the same. We cannot separate our lives. It’s one whole process, incarnate or discarnate being only phases. I had received so much, but I was also aware that we are heirs to our deeds. Reaction is a function of action.

“Patrícia,” Grandma called me. “Come to the living room. I’m going to give you your first volitating lesson.”

I went quickly. The house’s three residents were present, encouraging me.

“It’s easy!” they said. “You know how to do it. You used to leave your body while sleeping when you were incarnated. All you need to do is to focus your thoughts and willpower.”

“Volitating,” said Grandma – as if she had memorized it – “is like fluctuating, moving through air by the force of your will.”

Grandma took me by one arm and Amélia by the other, trying to give me the necessary impulse to be airborne. We tried several times until I managed to take off and lift myself one meter above the ground. It was easier to move upwards and then turn horizontally. I got stuck in that position and again the two ladies helped me by giving me a gentle push, encouraging me cheerfully. Indeed, it was not so difficult. Soon, I was in the middle of the room volitating slowly from one side to the other.

“Until you learn it well, do not be absentminded,” Grandma advised. “Volitating is like learning to walk, or riding a bicycle, or swimming, while incarnate. Once you learn it well, it becomes second nature to you.”

I knew about volitating, having read about it in several spiritist books. The feeling of volitating is really very pleasant and nice. I also knew that discarnates

walk through walls, doors, etc. I gave myself a push, going straight to a wall, when I heard Grandma yelling:

“Don’t, Patrícia, don’t!”

Bam... I hit my head on the wall and fell on my

behind on the floor. I sat there as my friends ran and stood all around me, nobody laughing. I looked at them and started laughing myself. It was a good tumble. I got up and asked curiously:

“Hey, Grandma, why didn’t I go through the wall?”

“Patrícia, you can only do it after you learn how to volitate. You’ve read that spirits go through walls and doors, but these were of material construction – in other words – houses of incarnates. Even so, that feat is for those who know how to do it, those who are aware of their discarnate state and who also have learned it well.”

“Only the good ones know how?”

“No, the bad ones also know and they use it

frequently. Everyone can learn it, since it depends on our willpower, our free will. The good ones know more because they have those who teach them, besides being themselves more interested in learning. The Colony is not constructed like the world of the incarnates. It’s a mental projection. To explain it better – so you understand – think of it being made of the same subtle material

as our perispirit, this body we have right now. Certainly, there are those who know how to go through this subtle

matter, Superior Spirits as well as inferior ones. Our superior brothers and sisters (I refer to them this way so that you can better understand it), the more in harmony they are with the Cosmos the more mental powers they have. In order to go through a mental barrier it's necessary not to doubt that one can do it. I've seen an instructor show it. He projected a passageway and went through it. But this is used only in an emergency.

Didn't you hear, while you were incarnated, that in Spiritist Centers discarnate brothers and sisters stay confined in one place, waiting for orientation? In many Spiritist Centers mental energies are projected by its founders in conjunction with the material construction. In this manner, incarnates – as well as discarnates – can only enter and leave through the front door. These projections are also made in certain places and for a predetermined time to avoid attacks from the dark side. Only those who know how are able to go through. Maybe – if you're willing – you can learn how to do it in the future.”

That was true. I had not seen anyone enter our house or any other place in the Colony volitating. Everyone entered and exited calmly through the front door by opening it and closing it. I thought my fall was so funny that I still laugh about it. Years later, I was teaching my cousin how to volitate and I remembered that fall. So, I decided to play a trick on him.

“Let's go, little Rodolfo, come on! That's the way! Go!”

I turned him toward the wall and pushed, holding my laughter. I thought that he was going to hit his head like I did. But little Rodolfo did not know then that spirits go through walls, having come to the spiritual plane – unlike me – without that knowledge. He came close to the wall, touched it with his hands, turned his head around and asked:

“Patrícia, what do I do now?”

“Turn around and come back,” I said, a little disappointed.

I mastered volitating in a few lessons by practicing around the house and around the garden. I would think about volitating, would concentrate, then raise up a few meters above the ground and volitate to wherever I wanted.

Grandma took me to the field – or school yard – where instructors teach volitation. I followed her happily. The school was very big, with many fields and buildings. It was surrounded by trees and many benches and flower patches, which create a very pleasant atmosphere. The school yard was big: one part had grass, the other, beautiful light-gray tiles. At San Sebastian Colony, this field is divided in two areas. In one area the neophytes learn how to volitate and, in another, they learn nourishment through respiration. Throughout the place, soft and pleasant music is always being played. In the yards the sound is louder, but not less pleasant. Soft music relaxes and stimulates people to work and learn. Everything fascinated me and I enjoyed everything with curiosity.

There were five volitating instructors busy at work. Each one had a small group of students. In the first class, the one closest to us, there were some discarnate spirits who would not give themselves a push. The instructor gently tried to help them with encouraging words, but it seemed they were afraid. I asked my grandmother:

“Why don’t they push themselves up? Don’t they like to fly?”

“Maybe they doubt they can do it. Not everyone, Patrícia, learns easily or likes to learn. I know of many discarnates here in the Colony who don’t even know why they don’t want do learn.”

“Do you think they will learn?”

“The mere fact of being here shows that they want to. Many had no idea of this possibility when they were on Earth. When they passed away, they found all this very strange – and worst yet – doubted that they could do it. Still, those who want to, can learn.”

Grandma registered me for the course, dates and times were set. Everything was so well organized. I was introduced to the first instructor, who interviewed me:

“Patrícia, do you know anything about volitating?”

“Yes, I do!”

“Excellent!”

He took me by the hands and gave me a push. I went out volitating calmly.

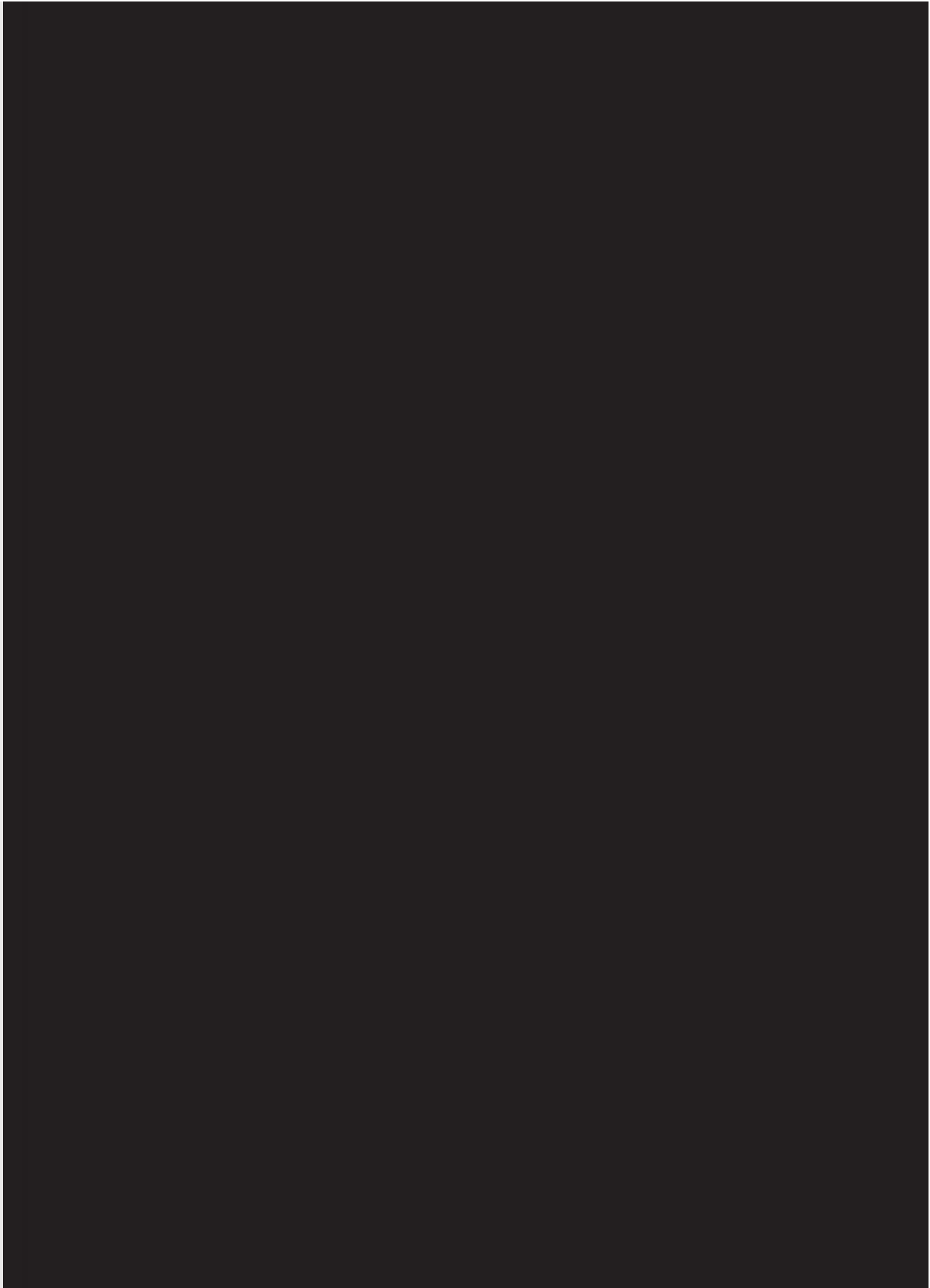
“Oh! You should go on to class three.”

The course had five levels, each one with its own instructor. I already knew the basics so I went to group three. I received a set of texts about volitation. It was well organized and I learned fast. I finished the course in a few lessons and was ready to volitate at will. Volitation can be done in several ways: slow, fast, very fast, vertically, and horizontally. Slow is like walking, except that it is done above the ground. Volitation is seldom done around the Colony, since people walk everywhere through the streets, avenues, and squares. Usually, we volitate slowly. We use the fast mode when we are in a hurry. In the very fast mode, which was the last one we learned, we dematerialize in one place and materialize in another. We use this method for traveling long distances. For example: we go from one end of the Earth to the other in a matter of seconds. Volitating vertically is used for fast locomotion and horizontally when we want to enjoy the scenery.

Children and young people learn how to volitate on the yards of the learning centers.

The more the personality is mixed up with the physical body, the denser the perispiritual body is. Upon disconnecting the personality from the physical appearance, one goes wherever one wants because one has achieved Cosmic Consciousness.

Volitating is a privilege for discarnates²⁴. Ah! What a grand and wonderful privilege!



24 – Note from the spiritual author. Certainly, incarnates volitate when their physical bodies are asleep and their spirits are wandering. But only discarnates experience the most pleasant thrill of volitating.

chapter 10

Learning about nourishment

I

It was time for my grandmother to go back to work. She enjoyed her work very much, so she was happy to return. She would still be able to spend time away with me when she had some time off. I continued going out quite often, now by myself. I went several times to the Round Plaza and – since I like to talk – I made several friends there. One of them was Ana. She had gone out for a walk and as we started talking, we realized that we had many things in common, so a sincere friendship began.

“What did you disincarnate of? Or how did you disincarnate?”

This is a common question around here. Conversations start and soon the departure question pops up. Everybody wants to know how the carnal body died. Maurício explained that this question comes more often from novices, who are still preoccupied with their own departures and want to know about everyone else's.

I told Ana about mine and she told me about hers.

“It has been a long time, decades actually, since I passed over. My body withered with Tuberculosis.”

Ana had passed away young, at seventeen. She was intelligent, very well educated and loved to learn. We spent many hours in long conversations. She invited me to visit her at work and at home. She lives and also works at the Learning Center.

One day, my friend Frederico and I went to visit her. Whenever possible, he would accompany me in my outings around the Colony, always enlightening me about the places and their functions.

“Patrícia,” he said, “in order to work at the Learning Center one has to be exceedingly learned and dedicated. Generally, these instructors have been discarnate for a long time and have extensive knowledge about the

human soul. To be useful wisely, one also has to possess knowledge.”

Ana came to meet us, cheerful as always. She had her little corner, her room, or her space, as some of the youngsters are in the habit of saying when referring to the place where they live. Her dorm – as she used to say – was in the residential section, reserved for the Learning Center staff. The place was very beautiful.

The staff could live in houses or in boarding houses. I am referring now to this Colony’s Learning Center because, later, I saw different types of homes in other Colonies. The houses looked like my grandmother’s, where up to ten instructors and students could live together. Boarding places were many and very popular. They were long hangars with several doors, each opening to a room. Really beautiful!

Ana lived in a boarding house. Her home was a single room decorated in very

good taste and with no bed because she did not need to sleep any more. It was a place of her own where she could receive her friends, read, or be alone. There she kept some of her belongings, like beautiful paintings, flower pots, a photograph of her family, and a piano. A light blue color was predominant in the decoration of her room. We talked animatedly and, later, Ana sang some beautiful songs for us at the piano.

After, she took us to see the place where she worked. Ana cared for seven children, ages three to four years old. At the time, the children were in the playground. When they saw her, they ran over to hug her. They loved Ana very much and she loved them right back.

Ana must have been ugly when she was incarnated, I mean, she hadn't had a beautiful body. Still – in the spiritual plane – it is the inner beauty that prevails. Her smile was sweet, with tenderness in her eyes. For the little ones, there was no greater beauty. To me, Ana was wonderful!

Later, Frederico explained to me that we are what we aspire to be. External beauty can also be molded by spirits who value physical beauty. How nice it is to make and to have friends.

The Learning Center was a cheerful place, with music playing all the time. Cheerfulness was recommended to all visitors. There were many pets to play with the children, sweet little critters like birds, cats, dogs, squirrels, etc. There were also playgrounds, toys for children, game areas for the youngsters, and many flowers all around. Ana was our guide and she showed us the entire

Learning Center, especially the wing for the toddlers. It was a beautiful place, well planned, seeking the welfare of discarnate children and youngsters, and offering them fun and learning. There was no sadness over there – and the children usually adjusted themselves easily. It was a wonderful trip. I was impressed by Ana's work and dedication. Taking just a few leisure hours to

herself, she works all the time, caring for every child as a son or a beloved brother.

“Ana,” I asked. “Don’t the little ones miss their terrestrial homes and families?”

“Yes, of course, some more than others, depending on the age. The very young ones don’t feel so much; those who have a better understanding feel more. That’s why, Patrícia, the emphasis here is on cheerfulness. All of us who work here do whatever we can to help our little residents. When the terrestrial family understands and accepts their passing, things become easier. But when they give in to despair, they call the children, who then miss them and start crying. That’s when they need more love and attention from us.”

“Do they want here the things they had when incarnated? Like candy and ice cream?”

“Of course, they don’t change tastes just because they’re discarnate. The Center is pleasant, but order is imperative. Everyone at the Colony is encouraged to educate themselves. Discipline, with love, educates. We try to please them within reason. Many want a favorite toy. That’s easy. The instructor materializes them, makes them appear, and they get the toy they want. Candy and ice cream are distributed in controlled amounts, so that they learn we must nourish ourselves with healthy food. Everything here is well balanced.”

“And the youngsters? Many used to like sodas. Can they have them here?”

“Patrícia, do you crave for one? When you came here, did you want sodas.”

“No.”

“That’s how it is with most of them. The will is in the wish, and we must educate our will. If a youngster wants a soda, he or she can have it –never alcoholic drinks, though. We try to make them feel comfortable, especially the new arrivals. In any event, the Center has rules for the good of all. Most of the kids find it wonderful here. They’re content with whatever is offered to them.”

“Do children and youngsters learn how to nourish themselves through the atmosphere?”

“Usually the children are here on a temporary basis. They learn according to their ability. Many among us only obtain sustenance that way. Mostly, the youngsters, not the smaller ones, are willing to learn this method of nourishing.” After a small pause Ana continued. “Nourishment for adults is more of an exercise in pleasure than sustenance itself. All our bad habits are moderate needs of the body which we potentiate so we can feel more sensations and pleasures. The child looks for food only when he’s hungry. His needs have not been distorted yet and – since there’s no loss of energy in the astral plane – there’s no need to seek food.”

It was a beautiful tour and I learned a major lesson visiting the Learning Center.

It was so nice to continue watching my family on television. I wanted and wished them to be well. I didn’t receive any feeling of despair from them, just encouragement. If sometimes I felt the slightest sadness, I would fight it. I did not want to be depressed. In those rare moments, I would go near my violets – which were always beautiful and flowering. Then I would feel renewed. It was

as if my mother's love – together with the strength of my father's tenderness – sustained me.

I continued having visitors, yet I enjoyed talking to youngsters or those who, like me, had passed away while young. It was somehow more interesting, maybe because we found more affinity in our conversations. I made several friends among the young crowd. We went out together and joined to listen to music. I noticed that Maurício did not even drink water, and so I asked him:

“Maurício, how do you nourish yourself?”

“I take the energy I need from the sun, air, and nature.”

“Do you think that someday I'll be like you?”

“If you want to, and work for it, you'll do it. I don't need to feed myself or drink water, not even during excursions or when I'm working with the needy. Pay

attention, Patrícia. Note that the residents of the Colony are not all equal. There are those in need, those who want to be served, and those who, although redeemed, only work out of obligation. There are those who serve willingly but get comfortable, feeling fine the way they are. To many, this is already the paradise of their dreams. Then there are those who take advantage of the opportunities to learn in order to better serve. You can use your freewill to stagnate, staying the way you are, or to evolve, being like many self-sufficient spirits who do not need to sleep or eat and have ample awareness of their spiritual existence.

It doesn't matter if we're incarnated or not. We have to grow, progress, practice what we learn. We need to just be, now, in the present. Many incarnates say they don't believe in reincarnation²⁵ because Jesus didn't mention it more clearly, and more often. What our Great Master taught very clearly was that we have to be better, to become good in the present. How can reincarnation be important to a spirit if it is always leaving for the future what must be done in the present?"

"I'll be like you!"

Soon after I finished learning how to volitate, I started learning nourishing myself by absorbing the vital principles in the atmosphere. I registered for the course and started going to class every day at the same time for one hour. In this course, the instructors try to make their students conscious of fact that they are

really living in a subtle body and that they are discarnate. We started with exercises to learn how to breathe. Some looked like Yoga. I say looked like it because over here nobody mentions this breathing science by name. I make this notation because – while incarnated – I was acquainted with these exercises. One starts with exercises, then it becomes second nature, so one does it by will power alone. Our instructor told us we would start learning with the exercises, but it would be necessary for us to understand our cosmic affinity: our Father sustains us all. We can absorb energy from the air, sun, or simply the Cosmos. As we learn, we go on to more advanced classes until we finish the course, becoming conscious that – for those who want to learn – everything gets to be easier.

Classes are held in a yard, in a very pleasant setting, in the open air, surrounded by plants. We exchange ideas and experiences during the course. The instructors are proficient and experienced spirits always ready to help. There are classes several times a day, but the yard is always open to anyone who wants to go there to practice. Lots of people go there, many seeking to practice and many others seeking to refresh their knowledge. This course was very good for me. Slowly I was beginning to live like all discarnates should – but very slowly. It took me a long time to finish this course.

I no longer worried about my appearance. My hair looked the way I wanted it to look. I no longer changed clothes as I did in the beginning, and I was losing my urge to take baths, to brush my teeth and even to eat. Nevertheless, I still ate once a day, mostly fruits, sweets, breads, and herbal broth; everything based on vegetables, because animals are not killed to be eaten. I used to enjoy drinking water. The water is

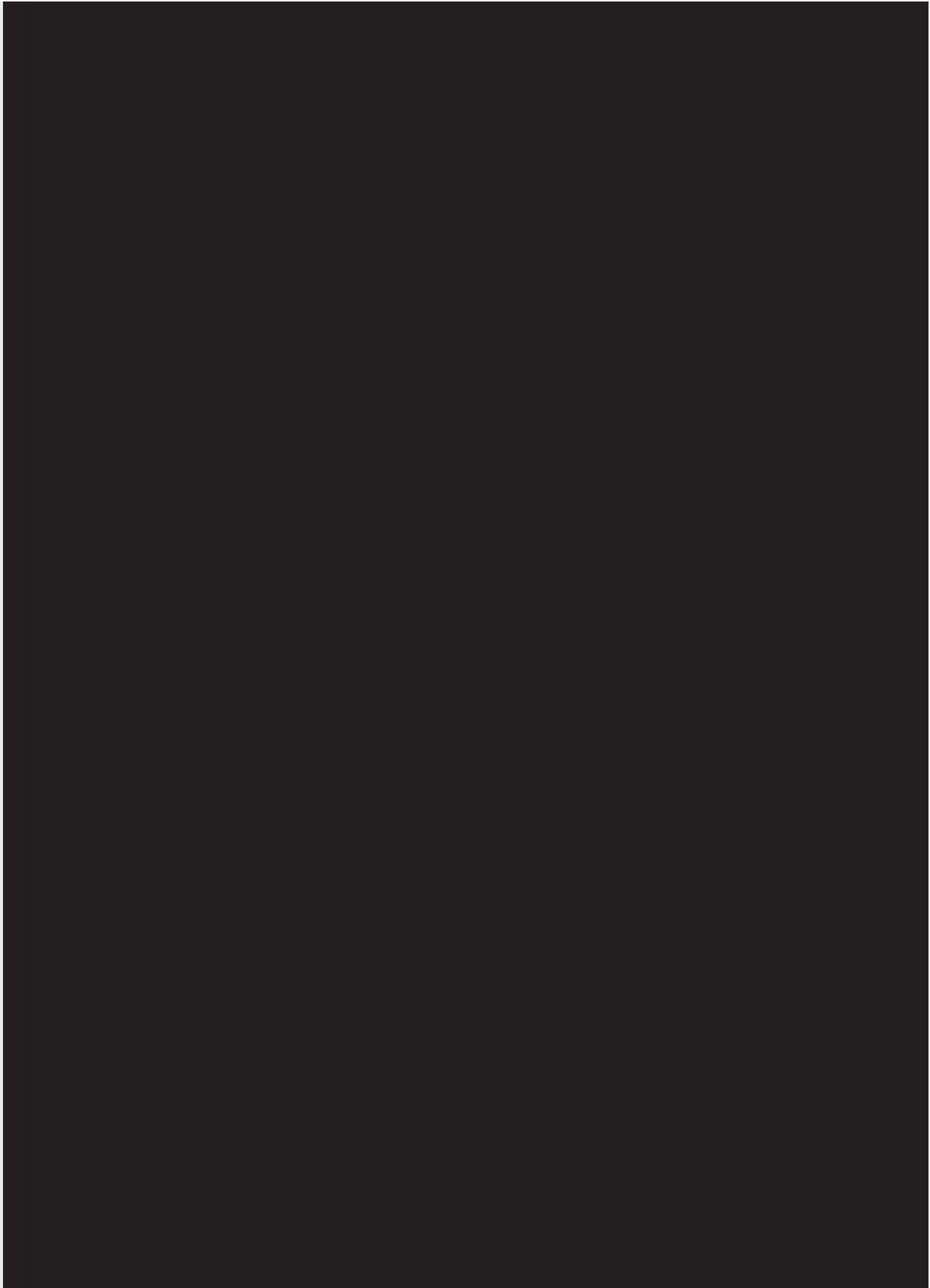
different here: pristine, fluidic and energetic. Generally, the Colonies' residents drink water.

At my grandmother's she and her friends ate very little. They ate only after some hard work that burned a lot of energy, like when they returned from the Earth Crust or from the Umbral or from the infirmaries, where the more needy stay. Eating less also meant going less to the bathroom. They also would rarely take baths, maybe just taking them to have the pleasure of water running down their bodies.

While I was learning the science of breathing, and as I had started to get nourishment by absorbing the vital principle of the atmosphere, I was also learning how to control my willpower and to use it for my well-being. I never felt any pain, no malaise, and no more colds. Maurício explained that I should learn to examine my own inner self, because when we act selfishly, we cause illnesses in ourselves. I was sleeping less and less since I didn't feel the need, like before, to sleep or to eat either. I liked it very much, because with that type of nutrition I almost did not have to go to the bathroom. Anyway, not eating makes the bathroom unnecessary.

Not everyone learns how to volitate and how to nourish in courses. There are other ways to learn like reading, watching videos, or learning from someone else. Usually, taking the courses is an easier alternative: one learns the exact material in less time.

It's wonderful to become aware of the spiritual reality and to live as a discarnate.



25 – Translator’s note. Reincarnation: Universal law that impels human souls (spirits) to evolve by living many successive lives in corporeal flesh. Its purpose for the soul is: purification, redressing previous mistakes, and to effect human progress. Its foundation is God’s justice.

chapter 11

The stories of three friends

I

It was customary to visit friends and relatives during leisure hours, and to socialize. We enjoyed getting together, exchanging ideas, and helping each other. During these festive gatherings the favorite subject among relatives was their families. We talked about our discarnate loved ones who were not well and the incarnate relatives still in the physical world. There were always many visitors at my grandmother's house, and because I was always around – if invited – I would seat with them. I listened to and participated in their conversations, learning a lot.

Amélia, one of the ladies who lived with us, was being visited by her granddaughter Marina and her friend Isa. They both lived in another Colony. The conversation flowed lively for a long time. As usual, it eventually turned to end of bodily life. Amélia was the first to talk about hers.

“The death of my body was very painful. Cancer was destroying it. I rebelled against everyone and everything, turning into a bitter, sick person, and feeling very debilitated when my body died, not seeing or feeling anything for a long time. Much later I noticed I was still suffering after my departure. I had stayed around my old home, wandering aimlessly. The suffering was overwhelming. When I was rescued – many years later – I understood I had deserved everything I endured. I had not valued what I had, drinking alcoholic beverages, smoking, poisoning my body with selfishness, envy and jealousy. I hadn't harmed anyone but hadn't done any good either. The little I did was to distribute a few alms, leftovers from my superfluous excesses, having never really thought of helping

anybody. While incarnated, I cultivated materialism like an imprudent fool, ignoring the true spiritual life. The pain, the illness, everything was a trial I had chosen before reincarnation to wake me up, but instead I became revolted, not bearing my suffering with resignation. Those who don't accept their afflictions profit little use from it. Moreover, instead of recognizing my mistakes I rebelled, thinking it was unfair. From my point of view I had done nothing wrong like killing, stealing or betraying, etc. I forgot I could have done good, but chose not to; not even wanting to learn. 'Why bother?', I used to say, 'I will learn after I my death! That is, if there is a continuation of life.' Well, there was, and I did continue to live after my body died. So I went on suffering for the same reasons I had suffered before until, tired, I began noticing my faults. Humbler now, I clamored for help. Friends and relatives took me to a Rescue Station, where I was healed. Later I was taken to the Colony. Now I'm grateful for the opportunity to educate myself, do useful work, and learn about good morals."

"I passed away young, twenty-one years old," said Marina. "Like my grandmother, I ignored the continuation of life completely, having no idea about what happened to those who died. Was there an end to everything, was there a Heaven or Hell? Those were theories I didn't understand nor wanted to understand. I didn't belong to any religion, but I used to say I had one, just as a label. In my mind, the death of the body was for others only. I passed over in a car accident. Rescue workers from the Light tried to help me, but I dismissed them forthwith. They sounded crazy, saying silly things such as that my body had died. It was a difficult time. My home on Earth was in turmoil, with my parents' fights intensifying, blaming each other for my death, and they ended up separating. I thought I was going mad because I couldn't understand what was happening to me and wasn't able to accept my passing. Now, with a broken home, I wandered through the streets, very scared. Finally tired of suffering, I decided to ask God for help. I went into a Temple to pray, felt better, and decided to stay there. At that point I understood that religion is necessary. When you're a religious person you feel protected. When you're sincere and devoted to a religion, suffering is better understood and death is not so terrifying. I realized I had passed away, but I didn't know what to do to make things better. So, I stayed in that Temple, praying with other discarnates and incarnates who went there. Slowly, the prayers inspired me to meditate and repent of my errors. I had erred so much during the twenty-one years I had spent incarnated. I had been selfish, materialistic, and had a lot to learn. I didn't dare to leave the Temple anymore,

being afraid of the discarnates from the dark side. They couldn't come inside, but I could see them and was very frightened. I was afraid they would capture me.

I stayed in the Temple for years, then gradually I became tired. So I decided to be honest with myself and ask for help. In tears, I begged God to help me. Once more, workers from the Light came to my aid. It took me a long time to recuperate at a Rescue Station. Today I'm fine, I'm grateful, since I'm learning how to live here. I'm determined to improve morally and to practice what I've learned."

Marina sighed, but she was not sad. Remembering everything she went through gave her strength to improve herself more each day. After a pause, it was Isa's turn to talk.

"I passed over due to a malignant tumor in the brain, after a few months of illness. I was sixteen years old and followed a Religion that taught me – erroneously – that after death I'd go to sleep and would wake up on the judgment day at the end of time. When my body died I went into a stupor, a kind of sleep where I saw and heard what was going on around me, although not very clearly. I stayed with my family during my body's wake; they were in great despair. They were screaming, crying, and suffering horribly. In spite of feeling very disturbed, I also felt protected because I heard someone inviting me to leave. My relatives were holding me back and I didn't try to leave. I didn't want to leave them in such a torment. After the burial – when my family went away – I called out with all my heart: 'Dear Lord, help me!' Rescuers came and took me to a Rescue Station, where I received first aid. I was afraid, so very afraid to fall asleep and not to wake up. The illness, or its reflexes, was still strong but – with kindness – the workers of the Rescue Station tried to explain things to me and to cure me. When I discovered my body had died I didn't feel terrified, just disappointed, since it wasn't what I expected, what I had believed it was going to be. Finally, I understood the explanations my benefactors had so nicely given me and, after some reasoning, I realized they were fair and logical. I wasn't afraid

anymore and began to sleep peacefully. But the lamentations and desperation from my family were driving me crazy. Their thinking that I was so miserable for having died led me to start pitying myself, and self-pity doesn't help anyone; it only further hurts you. So I became despondent. Whenever they would start crying and I would become disconsolate and cry also. When they called me I felt like going to them and I did. What agony! They'd cry and grieve, as if I was finished for good. I couldn't understand it. I was confused again, so I suffered much. They would say I was sleeping and I that couldn't hear or feel, and I'd scream that it wasn't so, again terrified, again afraid to fall asleep. I hated staying at my former home and I wanted to return to the Rescue Station, but I didn't know how. I thought of Jovina, a charitable nurse who had taken care of me before and I called her. Showing much tenderness, Jovina came up to help me and I was so relieved to see her. 'Jovina, help me!' I implored in tears. 'Take me away from here, take me to a place I cannot leave and come back.' She brought me here, where I checked into the Learning Center's hospital, in the youngsters' wing. I underwent special therapy to be able to overcome and understand my parents' desperation, to learn not to listen to their calling and not to empathize so much.

The counselors at the Center tried to obtain some guidance for my parents to help me recuperate faster. Since suffering drives people to seek help, my family accepted the suggestion to talk with a neighbor who was a Spiritist. She kindly explained to them that they should accept God's will, and, given that I had been good, I probably was in a good place and so they should not keep calling me. It was an excellent advice, which they understood somewhat vaguely.

To my relief they got better. They stopped calling me and they didn't give in to desperation, suffering less as a consequence. As a bonus, I was able to feel calmer and to concentrate on my healing, because when they thought of me as a sick person, in pain, they would transmit those feelings to me – making it very difficult to eliminate the reflexes of the illness. Eventually, I healed and felt better. I became interested in getting to know the Learning Center, the Colony, and making friends. Then another problem showed up: my family started thinking I was a saint, an angel, and started bombarding me with requests. They'd ask me for everything, from doing well in a test in school to having

health, to making rain, or stopping it, curing headaches, finding lost objects, etc. Worse yet, they encouraged the rest of the relatives, friends and neighbors, to do the same. I would receive the requests and feel anguished and helpless. I wanted to help them, but how could I do it? The instructors at the Learning Center tried to help them again, so I could feel better. Once again, the spiritist neighbor was the messenger, talking to them and counseling them not to ask me anything. She told them to direct their requests to God, Jesus, or the angels. She told them I was probably in a good place because I had been good, but maybe it wasn't possible for me to help them, and I certainly would feel bad for it.

This time they resented the kind neighbor. Generous instructors at the Learning Center tried to counsel them, disconnecting them from their bodies at night and talking to them. Slowly, they stopped, but I still get some requests now and then. I love my relatives, I wish them the best, I pray for them, but I don't even like to visit them. I suffered a lot due to their lack of understanding. Death is so natural. I don't know why people make such a fuss over it.

I had to stay in the hospital for a long time and, subsequently, had to have follow-up examinations until I felt secure. Now, I love my life as a discarnate. I feel great living at the Center. But it wasn't always easy!"

The conversation continued pleasantly for a long time, then our company said good-bye and left. But it got me thinking...

chapter 12

Clarifications

M

aurício caught me sitting in the veranda, deep in thought.

“What is little Patrícia thinking so hard about?”

I told him the personal stories I had heard from the three friends and asked him, afterward:

“Maurício, why didn’t I go to the Learning Center?”

“It’s good that you’re thinking and meditating. That’s how you learn. You’re very mature for your nineteen years. You’re more responsible than many older people here are, so we thought it would be better for you to come here directly. You have a lot of knowledge already, so the Center would be like preschool for you.”

“Does one suffer when passing over without knowing about life in the spiritual plane?”

“Not everyone suffers for not knowing about Spiritism or the spiritual plane. Knowledge only makes the adjustment easier. Lack of knowledge about the continuation of life after the death of the body is the cause of much disturbance and suffering. And it’s no different for the incarnates who have lost a loved one.”

“What can you tell me about the suffering of these three friends?”

“Selfishness is a heavy burden and those who cultivate materialism become its prisoners. Amélia suffered but she wasn’t bad. She just neglected to do good deeds. She neglected to be good to herself, to educate herself, to be able to understand life as a whole. There were faults in her personality she didn’t try to correct, so passing over was a nightmarish experience – an agony. What happened to her happens to many people. They’re the ones who forget about the spiritual world completely. Marina suffered for the same reason. It’s a mistake to think that youngsters are rescued just because they’re young. She wasn’t ready to face the change that came with passing over, so she rejected it. Her errors weighed in her conscience. Unfortunately, there are so many delinquent youngsters. Being a child or a young person in the flesh is only a phase, for we know the child’s spirit may very well be millenary. Rescuing crews dedicate most of their attention to children and young ones, but unfortunately not all can be helped. Many need to learn by suffering in order to appreciate the assistance they receive.”

Maurício paused, sighed, and continued:

“Isa was a good person. She could have been helped and could have felt better passing over, but she believed she was going to stay in her carnal body. In fact, that was the way she wanted to, and our freewill is always respected. Her story is very common. Suffering in despair will torment anyone. There are many young people who go through the same thing. Whenever incarnates feel pity and think of discarnates as sick and suffering, these spirits feel the same way and have more difficulty freeing themselves from the reflexes of their illnesses and of the

suffering which caused their passing. Incarnate people should think of discarnate ones as healthy and happy, wishing them well. Whenever incarnates don't cooperate, the discarnates require a lot of assistance to overcome this difficult phase. They hear people calling them as if their families' voices were coming from inside them. They want to answer, they want to be near them. If they cry over there, the discarnate cries over here. Often, that is the only reason they have for being committed to a hospital. Some times they accept their passing well and everything is fine, yet they plunge into a crisis whenever the incarnates call them in desperation. Later, they start asking for favors. Nobody should ask favors of discarnate relatives. One can't know if they are able to answer it. In Isa's case, she became unhappy because she couldn't help them. But even if a spirit can, we can't expect our discarnate relatives to do our homework or take our places during exams. Isa couldn't even help herself, and even if she could do everything that was asked of her, even if she had the knowledge and the ability, she would not be able to answer all the requests. It is not a good idea to take care of other people's business. The intervention from the Learning Center, in Isa's case, was very appropriate. They tried to bring her relatives down to reality in order to help her. The counselors in the spiritual plane offer this kind of help quite often to their students. Note, Patrícia, that even though Isa was good she still suffered because of her lack of proper understanding of the processes of dying, something very common to most people."

"It was so different with me!"

"You're not privileged. You're here on affinity and because you're pure of heart, not because you used to be a Spiritist.²⁶ If you hadn't been good, without major flaws, your passing wouldn't have been as it was. If you, Patrícia, hadn't lived an exemplary life, then, even if you had been a director of a Spiritist Center, you wouldn't have come here the way you came. You're here because you deserve it. You didn't feel what Isa felt because the spiritual environment in your home was one of understanding. Everyone there strives for self-improvement, an attitude that helps them to avoid disturbing you, and consequently helps you in the process. Look at your mother: instead of calling you to be near her, she offers you flowers. She doesn't pick them and take them to the cemetery, instead she 'visualizes' them and sends them to you. Your father, accepting the reality of

your passing, understood what Jesus said: ‘How long shall I suffer you?’ Although he misses you, he didn’t exactly suffer your loss, suffering instead for those who stayed behind and now miss you, unreasonably. He gave you encouragement and moral support.”

Maurício kept quiet. Yes, it was true, my father was sustaining me. I received his prayers and messages every day: ‘Patrícia, cheer up, life is beautiful, be happy! We’re fine. Don’t worry about us. Follow the guidance of our friends.’ I have always obeyed my parents. I used to think – and still do – that my father was really the best, always prudent and wise. Now, I was following his orientation.

“Maurício, I want to work.”

“And you will. You’ll work as soon as you start the course about the spiritual plane. This material is offered in two levels, a beginners course for those who have no knowledge and a shorter, advanced one for those who already know something. You will take the advanced course. You’ll enjoy it, I’m sure, but while you wait, would you like to be busy? Well, let’s see. What would you like to do? When you passed over, you were in College, studying science and mathematics. You were also teaching kindergarten. Would you like to teach?”

“Teach, over here!?”

“Do you think that due to the simple fact of passing over one knows everything? If a person was illiterate in the physical world, he or she will continue being illiterate here.”

“If in past incarnations one knew, can’t one just remember when discarnate?”

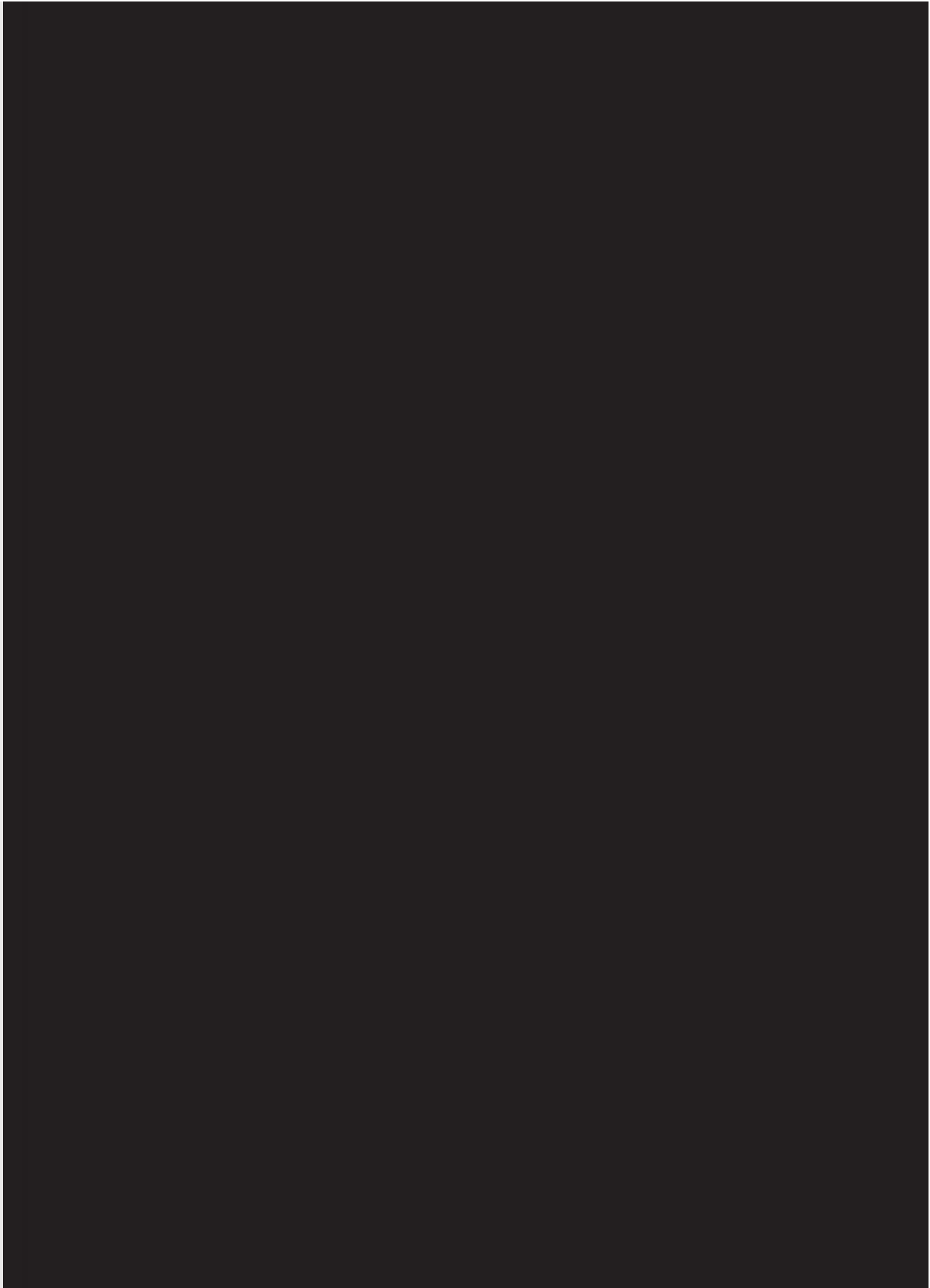
“Not always. If in previous lives a person was educated, but illiterate in the last one, he or she may remember. However, this remembering may come back with other remembrances that may be undesirable for the person at the present time. Anyway, to bring remembrances back a person has to be prepared for it. Those who are, almost always remember by themselves. Discarnate spirits remember the past only to get a better understanding, to learn, or to do a task. Those who need to remember go to appropriate departments where the staff is qualified to analyze each individual situation. If remembering really is for the person’s own good, they help them remember. Here in the Colony there are many opportunities and facilities for our illiterate brothers and sisters to learn. In the Learning Center there’s a class for adults who passed over without having learned how to read and write. You can teach this class and help them become literate while you wait for your course to start. You’ll teach adults only, because the instructors for children and youngsters are assigned to the center, and they need to be better prepared. These teachers must serve as role models to be able to solve all their students’ problems. For the adults, the course is divided into subjects and you can easily teach them how to read and write. Do you want to do that?”

“Yes, I do.”

Maurício said good-bye and I went back to thinking, remembering what Dad used to say about knowledge: ‘Knowledge, which the majority of men and spirits have as an end in itself, should be a means for one to evolve until achieving harmony with the Cosmos. We don’t need to know how to read to live in the material world, but it helps a lot. On the other hand, knowledge alone doesn’t fulfill men – spiritually – yet, it provides the conditions for true understanding and discovering bliss.’

Yes, I wanted to study, learn how to be useful wisely and I was very happy to be able to share the little knowledge I had with other brothers and sisters.

I waited anxiously for Maurício's next visit. He was going to escort me to the school for adults.



26 – Note from the spiritual author. Spiritists normally are among those to whom much was given and of whom much is asked. Those who value what they received will have abundance.

chapter 13

The school

T

Two days later, Maurício took me to the school.

This school was situated in a vast area. When incarnated, I learned with Spiritism about schools in the spiritual plane, with references to the learning discarnates get. But I knew little about what this learning could be.

Those who love to learn usually get interested in these schools. There are schools in all Colonies and they are always big and welcoming. The one I am describing – at the St. Sebastian Colony – is beautiful and is in an area with several buildings, divided into wings designated by letters. Its objective is very clear and should be the same always, in all the planes: to instruct. It has courses on general knowledge, but the main teaching is about the Gospel, the Christian Morality. There are many courses designed to teach us how to live as a discarnate, like the ones I took about volitating and nourishment. These have specific duration.

Only a few teachers and counselors live in the school. In the St. Sebastian Colony the dwellings at the school are reserved mostly for boarders. Many students live there while taking courses. There are yards and gardens between the buildings. The entire school is surrounded by many trees and delightful flowery courts with benches where students may review subject matters, study, exchange ideas, and hold stimulating conversations.

Maurício and I went to area 'D'. While we walked, he kept clarifying things for me:

“All the classrooms for this Colony are in this area. The courses go up to a certain level and, once completed, the students may continue their studies by transferring to bigger Colonies or to Higher Education Colonies.”

“Are there many who want to study?”

“Unfortunately not, although everything is made easier here. One cannot use the same excuses used by incarnates for not studying. Still, only a few of the residents study and only a small percentage of the students goes on to higher education. One studies for the sake of acquiring knowledge.”

“How are the schools in the Higher Education Colonies?”

“We call them Higher Education Colonies even though each one has its own name. They're comparable to Colleges and Universities for incarnate people, encompassing higher knowledge in various sciences. These Colonies are just school campuses – or rather – they are only places for study and research, besides having dwellings for the professors and the students.”

“Maurício, if a student asks me something I don't know, what do I do?”

“You simply say you don't know and that you'll get the answer later. Don't

worry! You'll be teaching only Portuguese and Mathematics. They ask more in the Gospel Initiation and Christian Morality classes, given by experienced teachers, who also serve as counselors and solve any problem a student may have. Now I'm going to introduce you to Mrs. Dirce, the coordinator for the 'D' annex."

The 'D' wing faces a yard and, as in the other schools, everything was very clean and painted in light colors. Maurício knocked at a door on which there was a sign saying: Guidance Office. Mrs. Dirce opened the door and greeted us cheerfully.

"Hi, Patrícia, how nice it is to have you with us. Maurício, you can go if you want to. See you later! You, Patrícia, will stay with me and I'll show you the method we use in the Adult Literacy Program."

We went into the well-appointed – yet simple – Guidance Office. Mrs. Dirce was very enthusiastic about the program, as she explained it to me. I was delighted with their simple and practical teaching method. The class outline was well planned and ready for the teacher. I observed Mrs. Dirce attentively while she talked with so much excitement about the school and the students. She was aware of my thoughts, yet I was not surprised since the majority here can read minds. Delicately, she said to me:

"I love to teach, Patrícia. I love what I do and I love the school! Come, I'll show you the rest of the wing."

All the classrooms faced the patio. There were classrooms of several sizes in the school, but in this wing all were small, for a maximum of 15 pupils in each, thus making the learning easier. Mrs. Dirce knocked at the door of one of the classrooms and said:

“This is be the classroom you’re going to work.”

The door opened and a teacher greeted us, smiling. Mrs. Dirce introduced me to him and to the students.

“This is Patrícia! She’s replacing Mr. Clóvis, who is now going on a leave of absence.”

I liked them all right away and felt they also liked me. As soon as I met everyone, we left. Mrs. Dirce continued informing me:

“Mr. Clóvis asked for a leave of absence for family reasons, which is why you’ll replace him.”

I thought that “asked for a leave of absence” sounded rather strange. Mrs. Dirce explained:

“Patrícia, every service is a learning experience, not a sacrifice. We try to serve with love. Obviously, when we assume responsibilities, we can’t leave without asking our superiors for permission. And when we do it, it’s always for a good reason. You’ll substitute Mr. Clóvis, who has been with us for three years. He asked to leave so he can try to help his son and his incarnated family. His son has passed away and is wandering around, suffering. Such a request is common over here. Your grandmother asked for a leave of absence from her work so she could be with you.”

“Everything is so well organized!” I could not help exclaiming.

I took the curriculum home to familiarize myself with it, since I would start teaching the next day. After reading it carefully, I planned how best to cover the material.

I was at the school early the next day, well before starting time. I met the other teachers from the ‘D’ wing. Everyone was very nice and friendly and I was very happy to be there. Lenita, one of the teachers, offered to guide me in anything I might need. I liked her instantly and we became good friends.

There was a total of 12 students in my class. They were simple people, men and women, who were somewhat quiet and timid. We did not use titles, such as Mr. or Mrs. Formal politeness was only used to address Mrs. Dirce. The students did not call me Miss, they used just “you.”

I started the class, and soon we were well acquainted with each other. Usually, I would have to repeat the explanations and correct their notebooks, each at a time. I had to be very patient, but it was a genuine pleasure to teach them. They were never discouraged and really wanted to learn.

Lenita lived near my grandmother’s house, but we could only come back together, since she taught two different periods and, therefore, we had to go to school at different times. We used to talk a lot. Like me, she passed away young, at only twenty. She was intelligent, a poetess, and we had the same goals and interests. She was light skinned and wore her hair in a long braid, thrown aside down to her waistline and looking very attractive.

Talking about beauty, most of the residents of the Colony were beautiful people. I think there are two reasons for this: first, we start seeing them as loved brothers and sisters; second, because they are peaceful at heart, maintaining good balance and trying to harmonize themselves. Being fine within, these people are pleasant and beautiful outside.

“Patrícia, I took the course you’re going to take. It’s wonderful, you’ll like it,” she said.

She was always encouraging and complimenting everybody. But she didn’t like to talk about herself and I had to insist for her to tell me her story.

“I passed away many years ago. I was murdered. It was very sad and cruel and I suffered a lot. I had been engaged at the time. I was in love and was loved in return. Coming home from work one late afternoon, a man grabbed me, tied me, covered my mouth, and took me to a secluded place. He then raped me, wounded me with a knife and left me in a ditch. I passed away in a lot of pain and agony. Rescuers released me from my carnal body and took me to a Rescue Station. I thought I was still alive, incarnated, and didn’t believe them, not even wanting to consider that I had passed away. I fooled myself so well that I even forgot what had happened to me. I just wanted to get better and return to my family. The rescuers didn’t force me to go with them, so I ran away to my terrestrial home.

I was very disappointed and hurt when I arrived there. Nothing was like before, my fiancée didn’t even miss me and was already dating someone else. I felt I was going mad. I was sad, wandering aimlessly, and my wounds came back. Only then I understood that I had actually passed away. I asked God, with all my heart, to help me and again I was rescued. This time I had no illusions, but was sad and hurt, and so I had to undergo a long treatment to recover fully. I was

rebellious, thinking about the harm done to me and the thought of the evil, barbaric act, would send me into crises of despair. It was necessary for them to make me remember part of my past, another existence, where I saw clearly what provoked that reaction. In the past I had been a merchant of young and beautiful female slaves and I'd sell them to men of bad instincts. After I was cured and well balanced, I came to the Colony to study and to work. Today, I'm happy. My sad story doesn't bother me anymore."

"Did you find out who murdered you?"

"Yes, I did. Even when I was in a state of absolute loathing I didn't want revenge. I was more hurt by the cruelty of the act than by him specifically. I was able to forgive him promptly. This brother, who took my physical life, suffered a lot. He wasn't arrested, but the consequence of his errors came back to him soon. He suffered much while incarnated as he suffers now, as a discarnate."

"Didn't you think of helping him?"

"Yes, a short time ago I asked for permission to try to help him in the Umbral. I went there, but he wouldn't even listen to me. When he saw me, he screamed that it was my fault he was suffering so much, that obviously I had gone to God to complain, and God threw him in Hell. My counselors advised me to leave him alone. One day he'll understand, will repent sincerely and will be rescued. I pray a lot for him."

What a wonderful lesson Lenita's story teaches us!

The work in the school continued to fascinate me. I dedicated myself so

completely to teaching that excellent results were soon evident. Mrs. Dirce was happy with me and Maurício was very proud of me when she made flattering remarks about me to him. In any event, I was working, earning bonus-hours. I would no longer need to depend on my grandmother and friends to go to the theater, computer rooms or the places I liked to go. It was such a thrill to receive my first bonus-hours. I was as happy as the day I received my first paycheck, when I was incarnated. The feeling of self-sufficiency, of not being a burden, of being useful, being able to cooperate, is terrific. Naturally, I was not teaching for bonus-hours alone, since work is a blessing in itself. Still, I felt pretty important with 'my' bonus-hours, those I had earned with my labor.

The things I am relating may sound like fiction to many. But what is death if not a new stage in life?

chapter 14

Visiting home

M

My grandmother had told me that I would be able to visit my family sometime in the near future. I was feeling well, happy, and so I waited gladly for that day. The recommendations were many, with Grandma and her friends talking to me for hours at home.

“Patrícia, in your house you must be cheerful all the time.”

“Remember all the love that existed in your home. The tenderness among all of you is not gone. That earthly home continues to be yours, but remember you don’t live there anymore.”

“Even if you feel like staying, you can’t. You’re only visiting, your place is here. We love you and we want you back here.”

Things we wait for eventually come to us. So, the day so much expected to visit my loved ones finally came. Accompanying me were: Arthur, Maurício, Frederico, and Grandma. I could not help thinking it was too many people for a simple visit. Maurício, as usual, was reading my mind, and so he clarified:

“Your grandmother is going because she wants the pleasure of being with you on your first visit home. I’m going because I’m responsible for you. Arthur and Frederico are going because they want to be with you, sharing your happiness.”

“Let’s go, Patrícia,” said Arthur, cheerful as always.

“Aren’t you going to give me any last minute recommendation?” I asked.

“No,” he laughed. “Don’t you think you’ve heard enough? Anyway, with all these people accompanying you, I don’t doubt you’ll be the one to guide us.”

We laughed, but I was nervous as we walked toward one of the Colony’s gates.

“Arthur,” I asked, “are all the residents and guests able to visit their families?”

“No, few are able to enjoy this pleasure. And all because of lack of preparation and understanding from incarnates and discarnates alike. The discarnates residing at the Colony are those who work, who are useful. Guests are those going through an adjustment phase. These – in order to visit Earth – need to be conscious of their own passing over and of the nature of their family problems. They must have a total understanding of the fact that they are only visiting them. The family being visited must be resigned to their loss, meaning that there is no risk of them trying ‘to hold onto’ the visiting discarnates. They cannot enjoy these visits if they have the slightest emotional perturbation. Many want these visits, but only a few are able to have them.”

St. Sebastian Colony has three entry gates. They are impressive, light golden in color, with beautiful carved drawings, mostly of flowers. They are also huge, with three openings for ‘aerobuses’ to pass through them. Either the entire gate opens or just a medium size opening plus a door, controlled by equipment that is still unknown in the material world. This equipment measures the vibrations of those who want to pass through. There are also guards posted at the gates. Although Colonies are not identical in design, they follow the same basic idea, since their objective is similar: to serve as temporary residence to discarnates.

The door opened and we crossed. I was then able to see the wall from the outside. The entire Colony was fenced in – or walled – the terminology used does not alter its effect. It is surrounded by an energy field, a magnetic force, and one can only leave or enter through the gates. This wall surrounding is made of the same material as the Colony. That being the case, only a few discarnates are allowed to cross it. Those who are not allowed, usually souls rooted in evil and with harmful intentions, are prevented from entering by the magnetic energy field. The wall was beautiful. So I came close to it, touched it, looked up, and couldn’t see where it ended. The visible part only reached a certain height, after which was the invisible magnetic field encircling the entire Colony. To be able to see it, one needs to vibrate in the same frequency level. Many evil and ignorant discarnate souls cannot find it because they cannot see it. My four companions observed me as I examined everything with curiosity.

“Arthur,” I asked, “I’ve always wondered about what happens when a plane flies through here.”

“The Colony is far from the air space airplanes use. It’s a lot higher. But some Rescue Stations are in the same space where airplanes pass. They go right through them and nothing happens. Colonies and Rescue Stations are not made of solid matter, but of subtle matter.”

“How about missiles? And spaceships?”

“They don’t bother us either. Colonies are not immovable. If necessary, they can be moved by the mental strength of those who sustain them.”

“Let’s go now!” Frederico said, smiling.

We held hands. I knew how to volitate, but it was the first time I would go very fast and for a long distance. They held my hand to help me, since when groups leave they don’t hold hands unless there’s a novice among them, like me. We traveled so fast – a matter of a few minutes – that I did not see anything. We landed in the backyard of my house.

“Let’s enter,” Arthur invited.

“The door is opened, but if you want, Patrícia, you can go through the wall,” Grandma explained.

“Next time,” I said.

My mother was in the living room, crocheting. She looked thinner. I stood in front of her and looked at her for a long time, realizing how much I love her. Then Grandma urged me, tenderly:

“Go on, hug and kiss her.”

I came closer very softly and kissed her hand and face. Once conscious of being discarnate, one notices several differences when approaching an incarnated person. I tried to hold her hand and mine went right through hers. I kissed her slowly, very emotionally. I always appreciated everything we had, but not with exaggeration. I had always been grateful for everything I owned and was careful to value each object. Seeing the house again – my home as it used to be – I gave thanks to the Lord. I always thought I had more than I deserved. I felt like crying right there in front of my mother – however – I made an effort not to do it. I got up and sought refuge in my Grandma’s arms.

“Now,” Arthur said, encouraging me, “Let’s go see Carla, then we’ll go to the ranch to see your father and your brother.”

“You’ll volitate by our side. We’ll go slowly,” Maurício said.

Vibrations on Earth are a lot heavier than in the Colony. They are higher at the Colonies because there is no evilness there. On Earth, there are good and bad minds vibrating. Many discarnates from the Colonies and Rescue Stations feel suffocated, dizzy, with a light malaise, when they come back to Earth for the first time. I did not feel anything, since I was supported by my friends.

We volitated. I stayed in the middle, but alone. It is very pleasant to see the city from up high when you are volitating. We arrived at Carla’s house and I hugged them all: my sister, who would soon give birth to my much expected nephew, and my brother-in-law, Luis Carlos. Afterward, we went to the ranch. How wonderful it is to volitate over the fields, seeing the trees, the crops, and the animals. I saw Juninho working and I went and gave him a big hug. I went to my father, kissed his hands and thanked him. My dad was thinking of me, transmitting his usual encouragements. I kissed and hugged him, then looked at our ranch house.

“May I go through the wall now?”

At the affirmative answer, I went toward the house, but I stopped right in front of the wall.

“How do I do it?”

“It’s simple. Think you’re going to do it, and you will do it.”

In fact, it was that simple. So I went through the walls and doors several times.

“Patrícia, let’s go to your aunt Vera’s house? Maybe, if everything goes right, you’ll be able to dictate a message to your mother,” Arthur told me.

“Transmit a message? By psychography? But I don’t know how.”

“You’ll learn, then!” Maurício answered, calmly.

‘How would it be to dictate a message?’ I thought, curiously. I held their hands and we left, volitating fast.

chapter 15

Psychography

27

W

e entered Aunt Vera's house and found her busy, psychographing. Antônio Carlos was dictating and she was writing, distracted and happy.

“Watch how it's done,” Maurício said. “Do it as Antônio Carlos does. It's very simple.”

We observed them for several minutes. My aunt was sitting at a desk and Antônio Carlos was sitting beside her, reading from one of his notebooks. His thoughts were fixed on her mind as he read the material. Suddenly, he stopped and told my aunt:

“Surprise! Patrícia is here and will dictate a message for her parents.”

Aunt Vera was really surprised and I could see her concentrating, in an effort to feel my presence. To ‘feel’ means to see by mental perception alone. She thought of me, I smiled happily and came closer. In a few seconds, she became aware of me standing by her side.

“How beautiful you look, Patrícia! Make yourself at home. Let’s write?”

I came closer and hugged her. I dictated slowly. It was a quick note, which my aunt wrote down. I sent my parents hugs and I thanked them for everything, sending them news about myself. I asked them not to deprive themselves of anything on my account.

The process was simpler than I thought. But the explanation of what is a medium is rather complicated, especially if we start from a scientific perspective. What is it? An organic dysfunction? An extra gift? One less? The important thing is to make this sensibility useful by working with it for the good of all. Trusting the power of Goodness and striving to do the right thing. Honest mediums make this interchange a benefit for many.

When we finished writing, I thanked my aunt and walked away. Believing I had already left, she started crying, feeling nostalgic. I took advantage of the opportunity to see my cousins and to hug them all.

“Maurício,” I asked, “Aunt Vera receives so many messages. Do discarnates like to write?”

“Almost all. Didn’t you enjoy it? Isn’t it pleasure to send news to one’s relatives?”

“I don’t know anyone at the Colony who writes to relatives, except for Grandma.”

“Psychography is not such a normal occurrence. There are many mediums who could do it, but only a few do. This reluctance decreases the channels of interchange. In any event, just a few incarnates wish to receive messages, with most not believing it’s possible. Messages should be requested, not given. It’s the same as with all other blessings.”

“Now we’ll go again to your house so you can say a good-bye to your mother, then we’ll return to the Colony,” said Arthur, taking me by the hand.

I kissed my mother again and was asking her to be happy when the telephone rang. It was my aunt telling her the good news.

“Did you see her?” My mother asked emotionally. “Does she look pretty? Well? Bless the Lord!”

She hung the phone up, looked at the painting of Jesus that decorated one of the walls of our living room and prayed sincerely, thanking Him with tears in her eyes, and pleading:

“Oh, Jesus! Thank you very much! Always look after her for me, please!”

“Ah, Jesus! Also take care of them, please!” I added with equal fervor.

We volitated back to the Colony’s gate, it opened and we entered. I remained silent, but felt good, my homesickness subsiding a little. I knew they were

suffering, and yet they were doing their best so that I would have the peace of mind I needed during this adjustment. My mother was the one suffering the most.

“Things pass, little Patrícia. Time heals all wounds,” said Maurício, tenderly.

“But it leaves scars,” I answered.

“Scars don’t hurt. You’ll always be remembered by your loved ones, since they love you. Time will alleviate even this yearning,” Maurício finished.

“I thank all of you for everything,” I said, touched.

“Let’s go to the theater?” Frederico invited us.

We all agreed to go. The feature attraction was a choir from another Colony, which sang beautiful songs. I had fun. Ah, friends! What would be of us without them? From time to time, one of them would accompany me to visit my family. It had to be that way until I could go by myself. It is an indescribable joy to visit one’s family. Frederico once explained to me:

“Patrícia, you can go on these visits because you don’t get disturbed by them. The majority of those who disincarnate wait a long time for this opportunity. They need to have understood and to have accepted their passing, plus their family must be resigned to their loss. The discarnates may want to stay, and sometimes they do – particularly if they find too many problems in their

household or if relatives call them asking for help. The counselors in the Colony have to evaluate all these problems before granting permission for a visit to loved ones because, in many cases, these visits can be harmful to the visitor.”

I always wrote many letters and messages to my family, telling them about things I saw and felt, so they could follow my progress. This way, I felt less homesick. When I could not go and dictate, one of my friends would do it for me. Antônio Carlos, who had always encouraged me to send messages, explained:

“Patrícia, the ability to communicate messages isn’t a privilege either. It only happens due to two factors: your parents deserve it and it’s the beginning of your training.”

“Training?”

“Why are you so surprised? Your aunt has always been able to read your thoughts. The interchange is easy between you two. Yes, training. Surely, later on, you’ll want to relate everything you’re learning here to our incarnate brothers and sisters.”

“Write books?!” I said, laughing heartily. Antônio Carlos also laughed.

“Why not?”

“Because I’m not a writer.”

“You’ll learn how to be one.”

I did not give it another thought, but continued sending my messages home to my relatives. They were my treats of comfort to their hearts. I continued watching my family on the “television” device, only for a few minutes each day, being careful not to overdo it. We have to control ourselves, otherwise we would be watching them all the time. We are the ones who determine when is the best time to watch our families. I had decided that afternoons or nights were better for me. I would pray beforehand, would watch them, then I would turn the device off and pray again, striving always to be tranquil. It was rare for someone to own such a device. Arthur had given it to me. And that was only possible because Arthur, an unpretentious spirit with many years of productive work, had received the unit as a reward. There are rooms in some buildings of the Colony where these televisions can be found, such as schools and hospitals, where discarnates may ask for permission to use them. They are especially helpful at the hospital, where convalescing patients worry so much about their families and wish to know how they are doing.

Before such a request can be granted it must be carefully analyzed. Only if the instructors believe it will be useful can a spirit take advantage of this gratifying resource. This whole process is necessary because most discarnates, upon seeing their loved ones, even if it’s only on the “television,” cry in desperation, causing their condition to worsen. Each case is a case. If the spirit is feeling better, knows about this possibility and wants to use it, it makes a request and the counselors will analyze whether it will or not be able to utilize this marvelous apparatus. After permission is granted, they report to the designated room accompanied by their counselors. Even then, there is the possibility that it might not work. This is a blessing for so many, the joy to find out how their families are faring, and to see them again. For others it might not be, because it is very uncomfortable to see one’s relatives suffering and with problems. Most of the residents here like to avail themselves of this resource, and those who work pay for the service. I think this is fair, because it’s a way to motivate people and to reward workers.

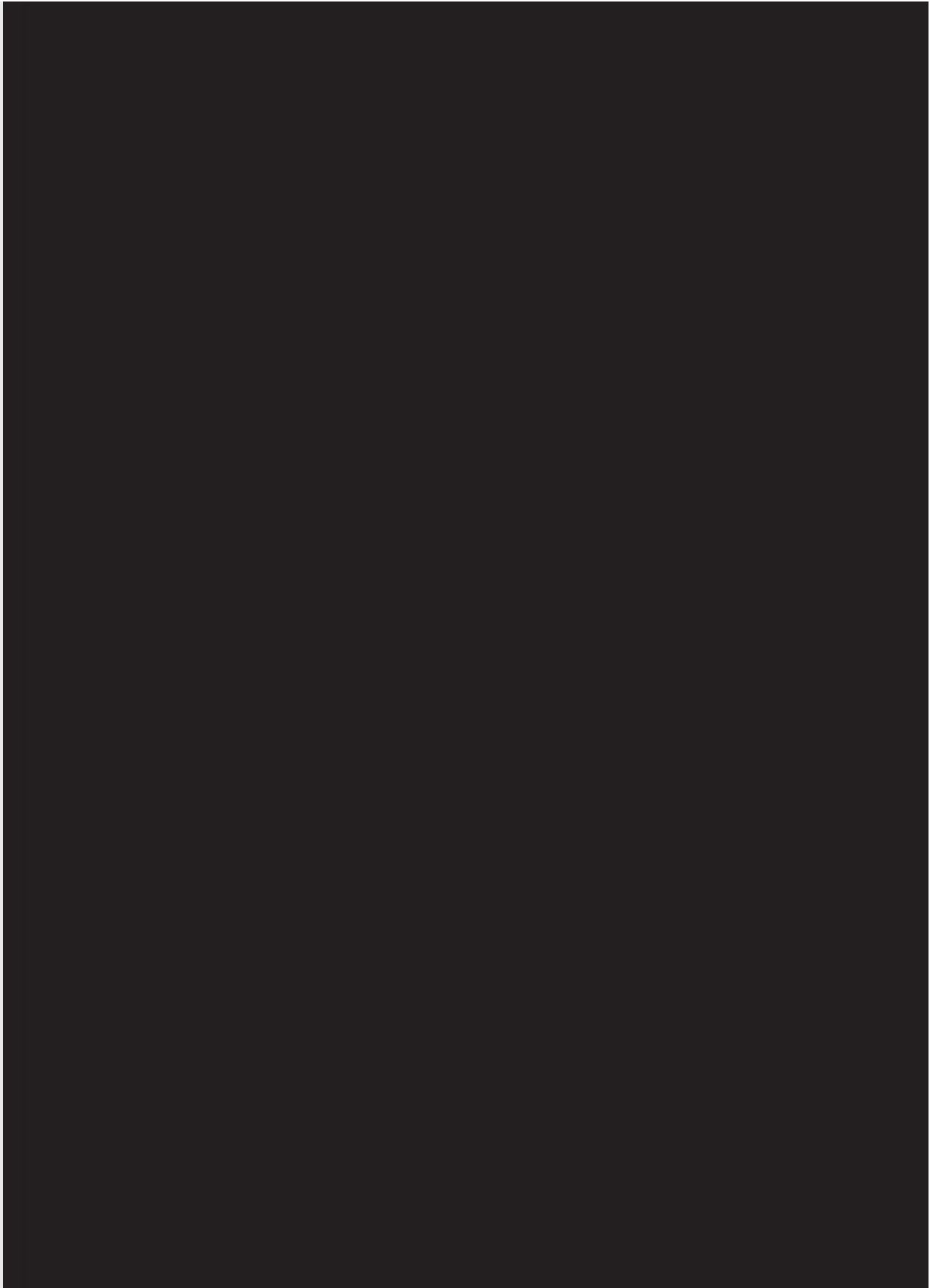
“Arthur,” I asked, “I received many gifts, even of bonus-hours. Why is this possible?”

“There is so much pleasure in giving! Certainly we have the freedom to offer our bonus-hours as gifts to others, but we’re careful not to encourage laziness or idleness in the person receiving them. We give to those who have arrived most recently, friends and relatives, to please and encourage them to be useful.”

“You gave me your TV. It was such a wonderful gift to my heart! All gifts I received were given with love and affection. Accordingly, I was very grateful to receive them.”

“I never used this device. It was delightful to have received the unit, so I kept it. Giving it to you – who will actually put it to good use – makes me very happy. It’s always so gratifying to give joy to a friend.”

All those who face reality with simplicity realize that passing over does not separate them from their loved ones and so they do not miss them too much.



27 – Translator’s note. Psychography: Phenomenon by which a medium receives, through writing, the thinking of a discarnate spirit. Also known as Channeling.

chapter 16

Some come, others go

I

was dedicating a lot more of myself to my work at school, which I loved very much. Everyone at home worked in different shifts – consequently – we were rarely together at the same time. Mrs. Dirce was charming and gentle, always ready to enlighten us and to clear up any doubt. She was extremely gracious and elegant, always wearing the same suit of light gray skirt and jacket. One day, as I watched her working, she kindly explained to me:

“When I was incarnated, I used to wear an outfit like this one. Over here, I never mind about this detail; clothes and fashion, I mean. I feel fine this way.”

“You look very good, very elegant. I never thought, when incarnated, about how discarnates would dress, so I still notice these things here. Please, forgive me if I stared.”

“There’s nothing to forgive. Soon these trivial matters will stop worrying you. Most incarnate people think that discarnates wear only white in the spiritual plane and in the Colonies. Maybe this idea came from the fact that we dress simply here. Those who work at hospitals and in medical staffs usually wear white or light colors. The youngsters wear colorful clothing and, nowadays, even jeans. We’re only advised to dress discreetly and not to abuse bright colors. Neutral and light colors are restful on the eyes.”

At first, I used to change frequently. I could not get used to wearing the same clothe all the time. As time went by, I changed clothes less and less. I preferred pants and T-shirts. Most of the Colony residents – usually the older ones like Mrs. Dirce – do not change their clothes. Nobody pays attention to these details, nobody would call her ‘the gray lady’, for instance – which probably would happen among incarnates.

My students were lovely. Everyone was well mannered and eager to learn. They also rarely changed clothes. Most of them worked in the morning and studied at night. The school had grouped them according to their individual learning abilities. There was a class for those who learned easily and another for those who had more difficulty — I taught the latter. They were aware of this grouping, but did not feel ashamed – rather they felt encouraged to learn. Usually, I had to explain each lesson several times, yet I was happy to do it.

I had more free time since I was sleeping less and less, so I decided to work the morning period, too. Frederico had invited me to assist him, and I accepted it gladly. At the Hospital he treated convalescent patients, the ones on their way to total recovery. He saw the patients who sought his professional services in a small office and tried to help them with their problems. I became his assistant, a kind of secretary, filing out forms and guiding patients into the office. Marcela, a nurse in charge of bringing them in, explained:

“Dr. Frederico is an excellent professional. He’s here temporarily. We’d like to have him on a permanent basis though. He has helped us immensely, and – as a scholar and human behavior expert – has satisfactorily solved numerous problems for us. We know that he is here to help a loved one during an adjustment period. Later, he’ll return to teach at one of the Higher Education Colonies.”

I was sure I was the loved one that Frederico came to help. I still felt I knew him from other times, and that we were united by a sincere and pure affection. I just could not remember from when. So, I did not worry about that. The time to remember would come, because there is a right time for everything. At the right moment, I would know.

Jaime, one of my students, invited me to a small party at his place. They were going to say farewell to one of his sons who would reincarnate soon.

“Please come, Patrícia,” he said. “We want to encourage him and wish him a productive reincarnation.”

I took Grandma with me. Jaime’s house was very pleasant, as every other house in the Colony. He lived with several relatives. The reason for the gathering was that his son, Leonel, would soon return to the flesh and – like everyone else over here – he was afraid and insecure, since he knew that the material world is full of illusion. His friends were trying to reassure him. Jaime read the text from The Gospel According to John, 3:1-12, in which Jesus explains to Nicodemus the need for rebirth. Afterwards, we prayed together. Leonel thanked everyone, quite touched. It was a nice meeting, and later Jaime’s grandson played a guitar and sang beautiful songs.

“It’s so strange to throw a party for a spirit about to reincarnate,” I commented to Grandma.

“Not really. Leonel’s friends were just saying their good-byes, while encouraging him. That’s Life! Unfortunately, not all who are about to reincarnate receive this attention.”

We said our sincere good-byes to Leonel and I wished him much success in his reincarnation, which would be a blessing toward his evolution.

Luíza, one of the residents at our house, was nervously waiting for her father's departure. When she was informed that his time was near, she was able to go and help him. She released him from matter and took him to a Rescue Station. She knew he did not have the knowledge nor the worthiness to be well and peaceful. Sadly, she commented:

"I'm thankful to the Lord for allowing me to remove him from his carnal body and take him to a Rescue Station. Now, it'll depend on whether he stays there or not. I'm praying for him constantly."

"Some go, others come! Yesterday, we went to a farewell party for Leonel, who is about to reincarnate. Today, it's your father who is passing away!" I exclaimed, deep in thought.

My nephew, Rafael, was about to be born and the expectations were great. At the anticipated time that beloved spirit, dear to all of us, was born in the matter. He belonged to our family unit and, before his birth, he knew about the difficulties this family would endure. He charmed all of us, particularly my mother. When he started crying, he would only quiet down in his grandmother's arms, reminding my mother of life's reality. Some go, others come.

Arthur gave me a poster of my nephew to hang on the wall in my room. To make photographs appear is easy for those who know how to do it, yet it is not that hard to learn. At the school, there are courses on how to use the mind's force to materialize on a piece of paper or wherever, a drawing, a photo, etc. At home, everybody has photographs. The walls in Grandma's room were covered with pictures of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Arthur

promised to bring me a picture of Rafael every month, so I could follow his growth.

I was able to visit Rafael with Maurício and Grandma fifteen days after he was born. I saw my father, my brother, and I was happy to see that my mother looked better. This time I volitated very calmly among the incarnate, and also went through doors and walls.

I was ecstatic when I saw my nephew. He was so cute! He was awake and very quiet in his crib. I came closer and hugged him. He felt my energy and smiled. I was so very happy! I wanted to be an aunt so much, and seeing him made me very proud. It is wonderful to be an aunt!

chapter 17

Needs

O

One day, Maurício and I went to the library. In one of the shelves, with a mirrored divider, I looked at myself and fixed my hair, which, for my great convenience, was always just the way I wanted. Maurício smiled and we started talking about needs in general.

“Patrícia, many incarnates don’t believe that life goes on, and without leaps. The needs of incarnate men follow them in the afterlife, much as the reflexes of their illnesses. There are few, extremely few souls who, after passing over, understand what happened and then free themselves immediately from those reflexes and needs. The majority do it very slowly,” my friend explained.

Oscar, an acquaintance I had recently met, who works at the library, was standing nearby and overheard Maurício. He stopped his work to listen to the precious lesson Maurício was teaching. There was a young man with him whom I had never seen before and both of them ended up taking part in our conversation.

“I must beg you pardon for this intrusion. This is Ramiro.” He introduced us to the young man. After our hellos, he continued: “I’m among the majority Maurício was talking about. You’re so right, Maurício. I need to evolve and I need to do it NOW. When we become complacent, feeling that ‘everything is quite all right the way it is,’ we stop growing. I’ve been worse, but that shouldn’t

prevent me from wanting to improve.”

“That’s right,” Maurício said, “we must be in the ‘here and now.’ What we do and how we do it, that is what we really are.”

“Oscar, what were your needs?” I asked with curiosity.

“They were quite different from yours, Patrícia. You came over to this side without vices. You didn’t even eat meat. Those who didn’t create bad habits have an easier time adjusting. You didn’t procrastinate developing good habits. You did it while incarnate whereas I postponed my transformation, even after I had arrived here. You did not just deal with external acts of faith, you really changed inside. Simplicity is always the best approach. Notice how children adapt quickly at the Learning Center. Pretty soon most of them learn how to take their nourishment from nature itself, quite normally. I knew nothing about the spiritual world when I was incarnated, since religion was an external act for me. I passed away and went to the Lower Zones, the Umbral. I wasn’t receptive to be rescued and, if I hadn’t suffered, I wouldn’t appreciate what the Spiritual Colony had to offer. I even venture to say that – if I had come here right away – I wouldn’t like it. I felt horrible pains, which were the reflexes of my disease. I was hungry, thirsty, I felt heat and cold. I ate whatever plants I found around, I drank water from dirty drainage. I evacuated and urinated in corners, on the ground. I craved desperately for cigarettes and drinks and suffered a lot. I remained in the Umbral for years, until one day a discarnate relative of mine, who wandered as I did but who knew how to go down to the incarnates, took me to my former earthly home. This relative of mine used to live among incarnates and in the Umbral. I felt better staying with my family. I inhaled the smoke from their cigarettes, I ate and drank.”

“How did you do that?!” I wanted to know.

“Exchange of energies. If you stand by a smoker, you breath the smoke. If you attach yourself to one, you also smoke. I ate with them at the table, and inhaled the energy from their food. I was literally sucking the energy off my family. I felt better but I was not well, feeling pains, cold, sadness, and very unhappy. I also noticed I was harming them and I felt bad for that. I didn’t want to go back to the Umbral and I didn’t know how to solve this problem. I became tired of the whole thing and started wishing for another way of life. I decided to pray, to ask Jesus to help me. One day, to my delight, a rescuer came to help me and I was taken to a Rescue Station. I was admitted for treatment and slowly I started making progress. I ate four times a day. I tried hard to give up tobacco, since there are no cigarettes at the Rescues Stations nor at the Colonies,²⁸ but there is treatment to help one quit the habit. In any event, each one has to fight his or her own battle. Thank God I succeeded. Soon I no longer felt the urge to smoke, but it took me a long time to recover. When I was incarnated, I took a bath every day; I used to be a clean person. It’s dirty in the Umbral and there’s no way to take a bath. I missed my hygienic habits, yet, hunger, thirst and pain were my primary needs. When I was rescued, I was dirty and looking ugly. At the Rescue Station, again I took my daily bath and used the toilet for my other physiological needs.”

Oscar paused and Maurício used the opportunity to further clarify the subject.

“Personal hygiene is not one of the habits of the ignorant souls who live in wickedness in the Umbral cities. However, we know that many of them do cleanse themselves in a rudimentary way. I met many of their inhabitants who were relatively clean. It is a personal matter. But as Oscar says, with so many more serious difficulties facing them, hygiene is relegated to second place. The suffering who wander in the Umbral aren’t able to cleanse themselves.”

“When I recuperated,” our friend continued, “I wanted to understand what had happened to me, so I came to the Colony to study and work. I knew nothing about discarnate living and I needed to learn. Today, many years later, I like reading, learning and working. I’m in peace. I eat very little and my

physiological needs are few. Here I'm handsome and healthy. My hair," he ran his hand over his nape, "doesn't worry me".

We laughed. Oscar is practically bald, having just a few strands of hair.

"It took me a long time to give up my eyeglasses," he continued. "I had the impression that without them I wouldn't be able to see. Incredibly, I always wore them when in the Umbral and while wandering as well."

"That's right!" I exclaimed. "You don't see people wearing glasses here. I remember that Grandma Amaziles used to wear them when incarnated, but now she sees very well without them."

Maurício clarified further:

"Although reflexes of sickness or defects are strong on the perispiritual body, they belong to the carnal body. Over here, all you need is understanding and learning to feel healthy. When I say over here, I'm referring to the Colonies and Rescue Stations. Those who wander or end up in the Umbral by affinities almost always keep sickness or deficiencies as companions. Many good discarnates can materialize glasses or even deficiencies when they want to establish an identity among incarnates. Freewill is always respected. I knew some good spirits – workers of the Light – who didn't want to lose their deficiencies, their eyeglasses or their canes. They felt fine that way, keeping them because they liked it. Oscar is bald because he wants to. He could have a beautiful head of hair, if he so desired."

We all laughed.

“So true,” Oscar said, “I identify myself with my baldness and I don’t view it as a deficiency. But what I really think is great is not to have to go to the dentist anymore!”

“You’re right!” I exclaimed. “I didn’t think of that before. Everybody I’ve seen here has perfect teeth!”

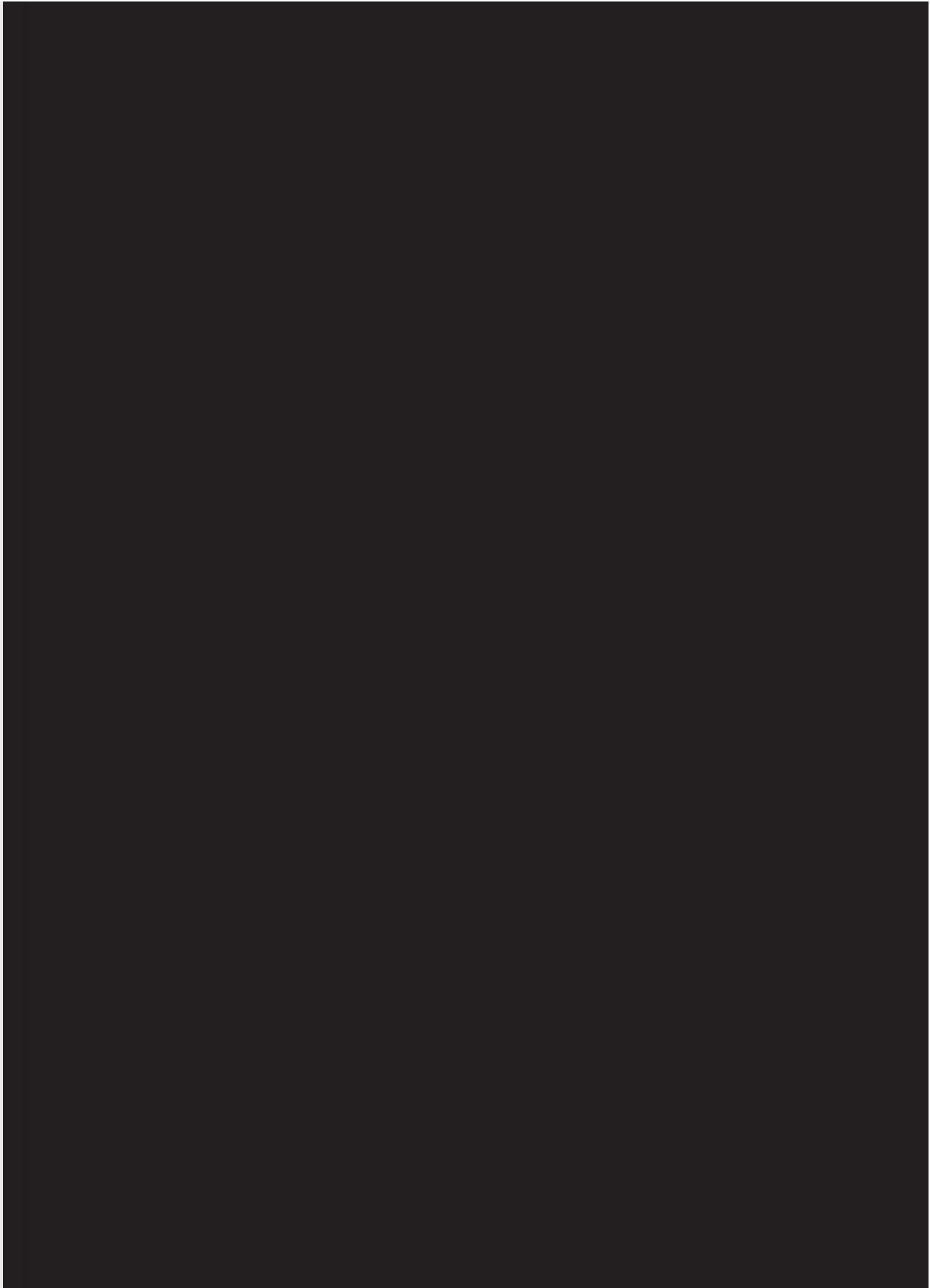
Maurício took advantage of the opportunity to enlighten us further.

“Patrícia, everybody at the Colony can have perfect teeth. When one recuperates from a sickness, their teeth also recuperate, and they don’t rot anymore – cavities disappear. Unfortunately, the souls who wander, who are not rescued, stay the way they were. If they didn’t have teeth, they remain toothless. I believe they stay the way they were at the moment of their passing.”

“Don’t we get sick anymore at the Colonies?” I couldn’t wait to find out.

“Once healthy, always healthy. A discarnate soul who is well adjusted here at the Colony or at a Rescue Station no longer gets sick. But if they haven’t recuperated completely and then leave without permission, returning to former homes, in other words, going back to wandering again, the reflexes of their sicknesses return almost immediately. That’s because they still haven’t learned how to maintain their health without the therapeutic energies of these places. Yet those who follow the rules continue to be well indefinitely. There’s no reason to be sick.”

“That’s wonderful!” I exclaimed.



28 – Note from the spiritual author. Rescue stations, in most cases, are small places for spiritual first aid. They are located on the Earth Crust and in the Lower Zones, also known as the Umbral. Colonies are bigger; they are like spiritual cities.

chapter 18

Ramiro's story

I

noticed that Ramiro was listening attentively, so I asked him:

“And you Ramiro, don't you want to talk a little about yourself? It's by listening to friends that you get information.”

“Until recently, I was ashamed of talking about my incarnate life or of my 'death.' Later, I found out that everyone has a story and that there is no criticism at the Colony, only help. You're right, Patrícia. We learn important lessons when we listen to our friends' stories. My departure was quite sad. Why is the passing over so sad for most people?”

There was silence for a few minutes. “Indeed,” I thought. “From almost everyone here I've heard: 'my passing was sad,' or 'I suffered a lot.'”

It was Maurício who answered:

“That's because most people don't think about their own passing. They don't prepare themselves for the continuation of life, living their incarnate lives as if

this was their major objective, loving matter more than spiritual truths. They don't love what is truthful, but rather the carnal illusions, and so become their prisoners. When they leave the perishable body, they get desperate, forgetting that this physical vehicle is temporary. Because they are afraid of the death of the body, they don't live according to the example set by Jesus. This always makes for a sad and painful passing. But those who were good while incarnated, the ones who served the Father and lived the teachings of Jesus, these fear nothing and their passing over is joyful.”

Maurício silenced and we all looked at Ramiro, inviting him to continue telling his story. Our friend did not play hard to get.

“I passed away young. I was on drugs, though I wasn't an addict yet, or so I thought. We fool ourselves when we use drugs, thinking we can stop anytime we want. Still, it's when we try to free ourselves that we realize how much we are dependent on them. I started with marijuana and progressed to cocaine. My family didn't know about it and never found out, since I didn't have any reason to justify my involvement with drugs. Today I know there's no rational justification to this madness. My drug involvement started when I was dating a beautiful girl, coveted by every boy in school. She and her gang smoked marijuana and induced me to join them. I started smoking because of this idiotic fear of being labeled 'square' and immature. I broke up with her, but remained in the gang. During a race, playing chicken with a borrowed motorcycle, I had an accident. I fell off the motorcycle, hitting my head on a rock, which caused instant death to my body.

Obviously, I got extremely distraught by the occurrence. I hung around my family and my friends from the gang. These were so scared with my 'death' that they even stopped taking drugs. A few days after passing over, I began feeling withdrawal pains from cocaine. My entire perispirit craved for the drug. It was horrible! At home, it was sheer agony to watch my mother crying. I felt guilty and, actually, I was! I passed away because I had been imprudent, playing with a motorcycle, such a dangerous vehicle, and because I was 'high' while doing it. I

knew I had passed away before my time. My family's suffering made me feel guilty and remorseful. This situation at home was tormenting me too much, so I left and wandered about. I was aware that I had passed over, although I didn't know exactly what was happening to me: my body had perished and I was still alive. I didn't know what to do, and the craving to shoot cocaine was getting worse. I never thought I would be suffering so much. Cocaine was my most critical need. I wasn't interested in food. I wasn't hot or cold, although I was thirsty, at times. So I decided to look for the drug. I knew about another gang that used much more drugs than we did and so I went looking for them. When I found them, I couldn't even come close to them because by their side there were these horrible monsters. Later, I found out that these monsters were only discarnate junkies, suffering brothers and sisters, prisoners of the drugs who were acting like vampires on incarnate addicts.

I was truly desperate! Just around that time, I sensed that my grandmother was praying for me.

She was a Spiritist, the reason our family used to tease her, especially her grandchildren. I thought to myself: 'You know, she could be right! I died and I'm here wandering as a spirit.' I remembered the terminology she used. I knew where was the Spiritist Center she frequented, so I walked over there. The place was open and I entered, a bit ashamed. When a gentleman – a discarnate rescuer – asked me what I wanted I said, begging: 'Help me, for God's sake! Don't they help wandering spirits in here? I died and I don't know what to do. I'm desperate for a fix of cocaine, or I'll die. I can't die again, right? If I can't die again, I don't know what will happen if I don't have some cocaine. My grandmother frequents this place. Help me, please!'

The rescuer was looking at me with kindness. I fainted and fell on his arms.

I'll be forever grateful to those Spiritists, the generous people who gave me refuge. I was taken to a hospital, to a wing for treatment of drug addicts. My

struggle against drug addiction wasn't easy. When I would become desperate, I was kindly helped by the brothers and sisters who worked there. The treatment lasted many months. I had magnetic pass²⁹ therapy, I learned how to pray, and when I wasn't in crisis I would read spiritist books, and the Gospel. I had my meals, drank water, and used to take a bath, but only when feeling better.

When my condition improved, I went to visit other imprudent brothers and sisters like me. I'll never forget what I saw. Suffering as I never thought possible. I saw many deformed youngsters, like those I thought were monsters, who were recuperating but still debilitated. I realized that as soon as they were rescued they would be in the right path toward freedom from suffering. Worse off were those who weren't rescued at all, those who didn't want to be free. I realized I hadn't really suffered a whole lot, because I had been led by my grandmother's sincere prayers. And because, while incarnated, I had not committed other wrongful acts like the crimes that are common among addicts. Also, I had looked for help right away, otherwise I was destined to wander around in misery as so many others. After I was detoxified I came to this Learning Center, where I now study and prepare myself for yet more improvement. In the future, I want to be a rescuer of souls who are slaves to addiction. So, the only need I had as a discarnate – for my own suffering and agony – was cocaine. I hungered desperately for it.”

Ramiro became quiet and Maurício hugged him.

“We're prisoners of whatever we attach ourselves to, while incarnated. I'm sure that you, my young man, will be an excellent rescuer.”

“He certainly will!” said Oscar, smiling.

Ramiro, still eager to learn, took advantage of Maurício's presence to ask:

“Maurício, what happens to people suffering from diseases like cancer? People who take strong medicines to control pain, medicines that often shorten their lives? Do they also crave these drugs after they pass over? Is it wrong to take them, knowing that they abbreviate our corporeal existence?”

“To care for the physical body is an obligation of all of us, since we need it for a period of time in order to live our incarnated lives. We have to utilize whatever the earthly Medicine can offer to cure diseases. If what we take to alleviate pain also shortens our existence, that is not the patient’s fault, nor the doctor’s. I believe that soon science will find new ways to alleviate pain and cure people. Still, my young Ramiro, when we take a drug as an indispensable medicine, it won’t be missed when we pass over. Nonetheless, I’ve been a rescue physician for many years and I’ve seen many react in different ways to pain. Those who endure excruciating physical pain with resignation are helped and soon feel well. Those who revolt while facing the same pain can’t always be rescued, so they continue to feel the reflexes of the disease and the pain. Sometimes they want the same medicines they used to have to be healed, to ease the pain. They’re not addicts and don’t crave for drugs, since they took them as medicine. I’ve seen people here who became dependent on sleeping pills. When rescued, they had to relearn how to sleep without them, having to rid themselves of that dependency. Medicines must be taken when they’re necessary. In the case of cancer, an illness that causes horrible pains, it’s right to take them even if they abbreviate life. It is what the Medical Science has to offer presently as treatment, so its use is allowed – yet its abuse is condemned.”

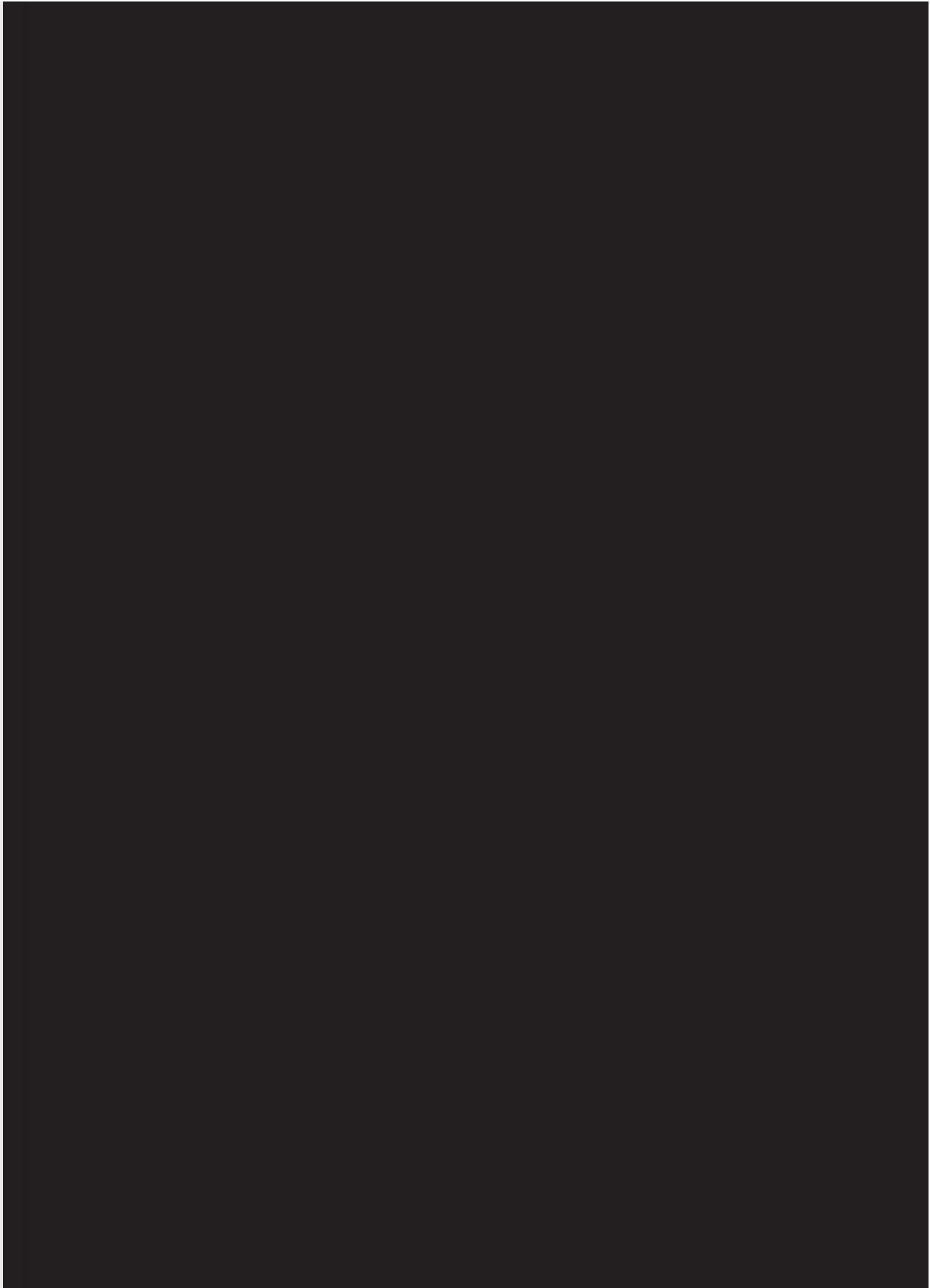
We were silent for a few moments. Maurício, thinking he could teach us some more, went on, kindly:

“We could say that there are two kinds of inhabitants on Earth, among the incarnate and the discarnate. There are those who, by their own efforts, become self-sufficient or useful servants, and there are the needy. Although, between them, we could place the aspiring ones, those who want to learn to be useful.

Unfortunately, the first group is small. It's enough to observe people in Spiritist Centers to verify this. The ones who go to help are few. Most are needy because they want to be. They don't want to take advantage of the opportunities to change from needy to self-sufficient. These needs bring on suffering – as in the case of Oscar and Ramiro – and as with so many others. To be or not to be? While incarnated they can still fool themselves and hold on to illusions. Once discarnate, there's no way out. That's because the energies, the vibrations of good spirits are pleasant, while the energies – the vibrations – of ignorant spirits are unpleasant. The soul, the spirit, is always given many opportunities. It can choose to reflect what is beautiful and good – or the ugly and bad – by using their freewill. The beautiful and the good present themselves harmoniously and in equilibrium, and from this union comes out the love that leads them to spiritual progress. The ugly, on the other hand, present themselves in the turbulence of ignorance, generating hate, envy, insatiable desires, and selfishness, which is the worst kind of festering ulcer. They also generate luxury and libertinism, which renders people into true volcanos of inner conflicts, thus transforming human life into sheer hell, be it incarnate or discarnate.

We must understand who we really are, without illusions, and not who we think we are, bringing about – courageously – our own inner transformation. We must be, now, in the present. The future is a living consequence of the present and not the result of the aspirations of an idle mind, which always leaves this transformation for later on. It's our obligation to change from needy to useful.”

Oscar, Ramiro and I were touched. We thanked Maurício for such a fine lesson. I promised myself not to have any more needs, not only those that are reflexes of the physical body, but also those of nourishment and sleeping. But the most important ones are: to stop being a beggar of blessings, to stop expecting other people to do what I can do myself, and especially, to learn how to serve and be useful.



29 – Translator’s note: A magnetic pass is the act of running (passing) one’s hand in close proximity to a person’s body, without touching it, in sweeping movements, from head to toe, while praying. The intent is to therapeutically cleanse the body of harmful energies and soothe the person.

chapter 19

The Grave

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urious and interested, I had really resolved to learn. I would ask my friends and counselors to clarify my every doubt as they came up. I liked the spiritual life more and more each day. I felt my incarnation period had been really a journey and I had now returned to my true home.

So, it was with much happiness that I accepted an invitation from Arthur to attend a spiritist session at the Spiritist Center my family used to go to. We left the Colony long before the session was scheduled to begin. We took the opportunity to visit my family, some uncles and many friends. As we still had some spare time, Arthur invited me:

“Do you want to go the cemetery and see where your body is buried?”

“It’s so strange to think of my body as buried. I don’t feel it.”

“Good for you! Our carnal body is a precious raiment. You respected yours, took good care of it, yet it was perishable. Well, you didn’t forget that either. You live well without it. Most people feel its loss, terribly.”

So we went to the cemetery, which is such a contradictory place. Some do not like it at all, thinking it is a sad place. Others enjoy walking around. For them it is a pleasant atmosphere. It is a place of suffering for many, and of hard work for so many spiritual rescuers. I examined everything as we strolled around. There was a group of idle spirits – ugly and dirty – sitting on a wall, telling jokes, laughing boisterously. They did not see us, since it only would be possible if we wanted them to. We are more subtle and they could see only those who vibrated attuned with them and with matter. We did not stop. From the entrance, I could hear moaning and desperate wailing coming from some of the graves.

“Many do not accept the death of the body, and they don’t want to leave it,” Arthur explained.

I saw the rescuers, spirits who patiently try to help, alleviating the suffering of imprudent brothers and sisters who loved the perishable matter more than their souls. The rescuers also try to counsel the troublemakers, who are always at cemeteries and yet do not live there. These howdy hooligan spirits come to cemeteries because they do not have anything better to do.

When I came closer to where my body was buried I saw two ladies I did not know, whispering:

“Patrícia died so young. She was pretty and refined.”

“She studied and worked. She was a useful human being. She had a future, poor thing!”

They then prayed for me so sincerely.

“They don’t know I have a beautiful present and future,” I said.

“Many people who don’t understand the continuation of life feel pity for those who passed away. Passing over, for good persons, means peace and joy. For the evil and idle ones, it is the beginning of the harvest of what they sowed while incarnated.”

I was grateful to those ladies and I also prayed for them, thanking them. I encircled them in peaceful energy. Arthur enlightened me a bit more:

“Often, prayers don’t reach those we want to help, but they positively benefit those who pray.”

We walked a few steps in silence. Suddenly, Arthur stopped and pointed it out to me: “It’s here!”

I looked at it carefully, analyzing. It’s a simple grave, very much like my family’s taste. I did not feel a thing, really! Slowly, I read the wise words chosen by my father: ‘Here lies the mortal remains of the physical body Patrícia used to live and manifest herself among us. We miss you.’

I looked at it and meditated for a few minutes. I had prior knowledge that my spirit would survive the death of my body, but only now I understood why Jesus said: ‘Let the dead bury the dead.’ Many souls are spiritually dead beyond their physical death. I looked around and I saw spirits that, besides having lost their bodies, continued to be dead, blind, and dumb to the life in unity with God.

Therefore, they were dead to the eternal truth. Observing closer, I saw that there was no substantial difference between the incarnate who denied the existence of the spirit and the spirit who forgot his likeness to God. The emanations from one, as well as the other, are dull, ugly, and even smell bad, as it happens to incarnates who have bad vibrations and do not tend to their personal hygiene.

“Let’s go, Patrícia,” Arthur called me.

“Yes.”

It was a relief to leave the cemetery. I did not like cemeteries while incarnated, and still don’t now that I am a discarnate.

We headed for the Spiritist Center, as planned. I was very pleased to see the structure made of mental energy standing alongside the material construction. It is an energy field that discarnates cannot penetrate, consequently many of them think they are prisoners in some Spiritist Centers. If they stay, they have to wait for the appropriate time for orientation or assistance for whatever their troubles may be. Spiritist Centers are simple places and I knew this particular one well.

The mental energy construction that only spirits see is actually a Rescue Station area that tends to sick discarnates. Everything is clean and comfortable. There is a yard for the incarnates and a garden for us. The volunteers greeted me, smiling, as if they knew me.

“They really know you,” Arthur explained. “You used to come often to this Spiritist Center when you lived here. This is the place where you prayed so often for our unfortunate brothers and sisters.”

I answered their greeting timidly, and thanked them for the attention.

“Patrícia,” Arthur said, “I have some work to do. You stay here with Tião and Lourenço. When the session is about to begin, I’ll send for you.”

The ‘here’ that Arthur referred to was the front of the building. For incarnates, there was a gate, a narrow corridor and a door. For discarnates, there was a narrow corridor and, after the gate, there was a small room which served as a reception area. It was the place where discarnates would go to obtain help and orientation. The same way incarnates go to these places seeking help, so do many spirits.

I stayed there, quietly observing everything with much curiosity. Soon, the discarnates in need of assistance began to arrive. Many were accompanying the incarnates.

Tião’s and Lourenço’s job was to record the requests, then the counselors would study each one and try to help in whatever way possible. A lady came asking for help for her son, also a discarnate, who was wandering in the Lower Zones. A gentleman came to ask for help for his incarnated daughter, who was having marital problems due to the influence of a disturbed discarnate.

An old gentleman approached. He had difficulty walking and lamented:

“I came here to ask help from Mr. Joe. I’ve been sick for a long time and I’m getting worse. In recent times everybody seems to ignore me. They don’t pay

any attention to me nor give me any medicine. Nobody talks to me. I didn't do anything to them. I know Mr. Joe; he helps many people. I came here to ask him to help me. May I talk to him, please?"

He spoke sluggishly, looking sideways. Suddenly, he stared at me:

"Goodness gracious!" He screamed. "It's Mr. Joe's dead daughter! It's a ghost! Help!"

I ran away and hid behind Tião, not knowing what else to do. Lourenço approached him and calmed him down with magnetic passes, while other workers came by and took him into the Center.

"Soon, he'll receive orientation via incorporation,"³⁰ Lourenço said, smiling.

"Do I look like a ghost?" I asked my friends, laughing. "The poor man was scared out of his wits. I didn't want to scare him. I don't want to scare anybody!"

"You don't haunt anyone, but rather fill with light and joy every place you visit," said Lourenço, kindly. "The discarnates who don't recognize their condition fear other discarnates. Many are afraid even of their dear departed relatives."

I stayed with them, trying to do whatever I could to help. I was recording requests rather distractedly, when I heard:

“Pst!...”

I looked up and saw a young man smiling at me: “Hi,” he said.

“Hi,” I answered.

“Can you see me?”

“Yes.”

“Cool! I was afraid I was becoming invisible.”

I stopped writing and looked at him. He was young, well dressed but dirty. He continued smiling and looking at me.

“It’s been a while since I’ve talked to a babe like you. Do you know you’re very pretty? When do you quit working? Can I wait and take you home, or maybe go for a walk for a while?”

I was surprised and, again, I didn’t know what to do. Lourenço came to the rescue.

“Hello, young man! Don’t you want to come in and find out why everybody

thinks you're invisible? Don't be afraid. Come, we need to talk.”

The young man was scared, but Lourenço's face inspired trust, so he went in with him, but before he did, he turned to me and said:

“Wait for me at the end of the session. I want to talk to you. Gorgeous!”

Lourenço returned quickly.

“Patrícia, this young man doesn't know he has passed over. He'll also receive orientation.”

“Gee, what a night! First, I'm a ghost, then someone comes on to me.”

I could not help but let out a good laugh.



30 – Translator’s note. Incorporation is the phenomenon that allows a spirit to communicate through a medium or psychic in order to interact with the physical world.

chapter 20

At the Spiritist Center

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hen the session was about to begin, Maurício came to get me. We went to the main room and sat down on the right side of where the people were entering. This particular area had been reserved for visiting discarnates. We sat on chairs that had been materialized out of cosmic energy and placed above the material floor, and not on the chairs used by the incarnates. I knew all the people there and it was a pleasure to see them again. Mentally, I said a prayer for them, a prayer of gratitude this time, for all the prayers they sent my way. There were many discarnates bustling about, some were workers, others were visitors like me, and there were those who would be going through orientation. The latter group stood in lines, formed by the Center's workers, aiming to keep everything organized.

I saw the young man who had talked to me before. When I looked at him, he was staring at me. He waived his hand and Maurício smiled, noticing my embarrassment. Once again, I did not know what to do. The young man continued to waive, so I waived back a little 'bye.' He seemed content and I moved behind Maurício, so he could not see me anymore.

An incarnate man introduced himself and asked about a personal matter that was worrying him. He was accompanied by a discarnate, who was visibly dominating him. To us discarnates, it was obvious that this gentleman possessed the gift of mediumship.³¹

“We’re all free to decide on whatever we want. We have our free will. Those who so desire can frequent Spiritist Centers, and only those who want to work usefully utilize their mediumistic powers. Sensitive persons need the support obtained from the presence of their discarnate friends. That is the reason mediums usually need to go to Spiritist Centers. These discarnate mentors are good spirits who help us in our daily lives. They counsel and protect the sensitive person against perturbation from hooligans and needy spirits. In order for this protection to exist, these guides – who are spirits aspiring to grow and work for the Light – make it conditional on the medium’s participation in the work. If the medium decides not to cooperate and help, that’s all right; the spirit guide continues alone, working and helping. They don’t stop just because the incarnated person doesn’t want to work. They just won’t help him. The spirit is ready to help the medium, but it wants him or her as a partner, so that both can work and grow together. When they work at Spiritist Centers, both learn and advance, so they can help discarnates and incarnates as well.

When mediums don’t attend Spiritist Centers and – consequently – don’t have the support of good discarnate souls, they suffer the effects of harmful, negative energies. They either learn how to get rid of these destructive energies, through study and research, or they go and work with good discarnates, helping others.

We all should strive to transform ourselves and help in the transformation of others, so that someday all of us can be happy. Mediums don’t have to go to a Spiritist Center; rather, they need to find ways to learn to help and be helped. In the final analysis, there’s no better place than a Spiritist Center for that purpose.”

An incarnate who was a regular at the Center, wishing to learn more, asked my father:

“Can we learn from the persecution we sustain from ignorant discarnates? Is it right to always try to get away from them? I’ve seen many people coming here, having their problems resolved, and never coming back.”

My father thought quickly and answered:

“Many people come to Spiritist Centers to ask for help in order to get rid of enemies, as if they were going to a store to buy an item for their comfort. Others go to Centers thinking they are doing its busy workers a favor, and they expect quick solutions. Incarnates who act this way don’t realize that – if there’s something wrong with them or their well-being – it only happened due to their own imprudence. They think they’re suffering because of someone else’s errors, a typical selfish behavior. They think they didn’t do anything wrong. And that God, by alleviating their troubles, would be doing nothing more than His obligation. Once they’re helped, they forget completely what happened and revert to their old ways.

Others however, seek help when they encounter the evil influence from troubled discarnates. Yes, it’s right to seek help. And once helped, they stop and think about what happened. Two things call their attention: first, their inner turmoil prior to the relief, and then the relief itself. They will understand that something subtle, invisible to material sense organs acts, sometimes harming, sometimes helping. Based on this understanding, they start their own transformation on the road to better themselves.

Many incarnate workers at Spiritist Centers, when helping people in need, start being persecuted by vile spirits, who might attack them. But instead of feeling like martyrs of the Light, benefactors of their fellow human beings, they use the moral whipping as a way to uplift themselves.

In my case, when a disturbed entity is not pressuring me, I miss it because the negative pressure they exert on me keeps me on guard with my thoughts, attitudes and actions. In order not to suffer these inferior influences, I solidify my attitude in the proper use of the things of God and Nature. To some,

difficulties mean punishment; to others they mean opportunities and encouragement to work on their own self-improvement.”

A young lady asked another question.

“Is all suffering a release of debts from the past or do we suffer also for other reasons?”

“Usually, we suffer in order to pay debts from the past, but not always. There is no question that today is the consequence of yesterday, the same way that today is the cause of tomorrow. If my circumstances are adverse today, and if I’m aware that I can change them, then these adversities become less harsh. We will always have opposition. Let’s remember that our giant spiritual genius – Jesus of Nazareth – said: ‘Come to me all of you who are burdened that I will alleviate you.’ Every difficulty becomes punishment – or martyrdom – for the individual unsatisfied with what God has given him. Conversely, all difficulties turn into opportunities for improvement for the one who tries to understand, serve, and love God. Let me give you a very common example in our current daily lives. It’s normal for a dirty person to wash, to try and cleanse him or herself. For many, however, a bath is a sacrifice. Some enjoy being clean, others enjoy being dirty. For the individual used to cleanliness, filth is a punishment. For others it doesn’t make any difference, since they enjoy being dirty. Those who dislike it, yet find themselves dirty, become upset. Our errors and vices are like dirt. It is necessary to try and cleanse oneself in order to feel clean. But sometimes one wishes to be clean without leaving aside the things that cause one to feel dirty. This struggle to cleanse ourselves often brings us suffering. It’s like the alcoholic who enjoys drinking, but doesn’t like the hangover. He or she wants the hangover to be taken away, but wants to continue drinking.

Many people behave similarly when they seek Spiritist Centers trying, through magnetic passes, to eliminate the upsetting hangover of their errors – yet also want to continue with their vices. This conflict is the cause of much of our

suffering.”

My father, then, read the Parable The workers in the Vineyard (Matthew XX:1-16) and explained:

“Most of us accept the Divine invitation to improve spiritually during different phases of our lives, considered as work, at first. We have faith and try to observe Divine precepts and laws. These laws improve human relationships on a day-to-day basis. Those who devote themselves to this improvement are, according to the parable, the salaried. These believers in Divine kindness and protection dedicate their lives to the practice of the fraternity, solidarity, and love, prescribed by their faiths, as the foundation which will ease the arrival of a new era; an era when mankind will stop killing and exploiting each other and being selfish. They work unwaveringly in this way of living, motivated by Jesus’s promise that there will be a new Heaven and a new Earth.

Jesus always used material symbols, instilling them with great spiritual meaning. The vineyard symbolizes the Cosmos, and the Cosmos is God’s house. We are all called to participate freely in this communal life – not in a narrow and selfish way – but in a complete and unconditional manner. The fact is that we are children of this Cosmos, and as such we should behave accordingly. But while an awareness of this affiliation doesn’t occur within the individual, we are delaying for more or less time our conscious participation in this universal symphony. As in the parable, we could divide into eras the various times we place ourselves at the service of the Divinity, living and sharing His vineyard.

But in this cosmic document – what this parable really is – we still see opposing purposes among those who serve our Lord. Within the context of the Word, those who are called are working and serving the Lord. But the motivation differs between them. That is the reason for the complaints from those who have been serving the longest. The selfish personality, which only works expecting benefits, payments, or positions of grandeur, measures whatever it expects to

receive – be it payments or benefits – by the extent of the effort exerted in the service of his Lord. This virtuous person still doesn't see him or herself as a Divine heir. This Lord is still something apart, not a part of one's intimate nature. So, the payment expected is a function of the deprivation from idleness, sensations, and pleasures that one undergoes. Valuation is still contingent on the comparisons between the individual and other fellow human beings. This person is still a slave of time and space, of much and little, of debits and credits. Although a practitioner of virtues, he's not yet born again. Others, with a greater understanding ability, no longer work comparing or expecting payment, be it in the form of possessions, pleasures, or awards. And not even as a function of spiritual ranking.

They know they are children of the Lord, and so, everything belonging to the Father also belongs to them. Also, everything that is theirs has always belonged to the Father. They labor for the joy of it – because the only guarantee of perfection in an activity is the need for it to be done with satisfaction.

Their attitudes are perennial since they care for the things that belong to them. They're the chosen ones.

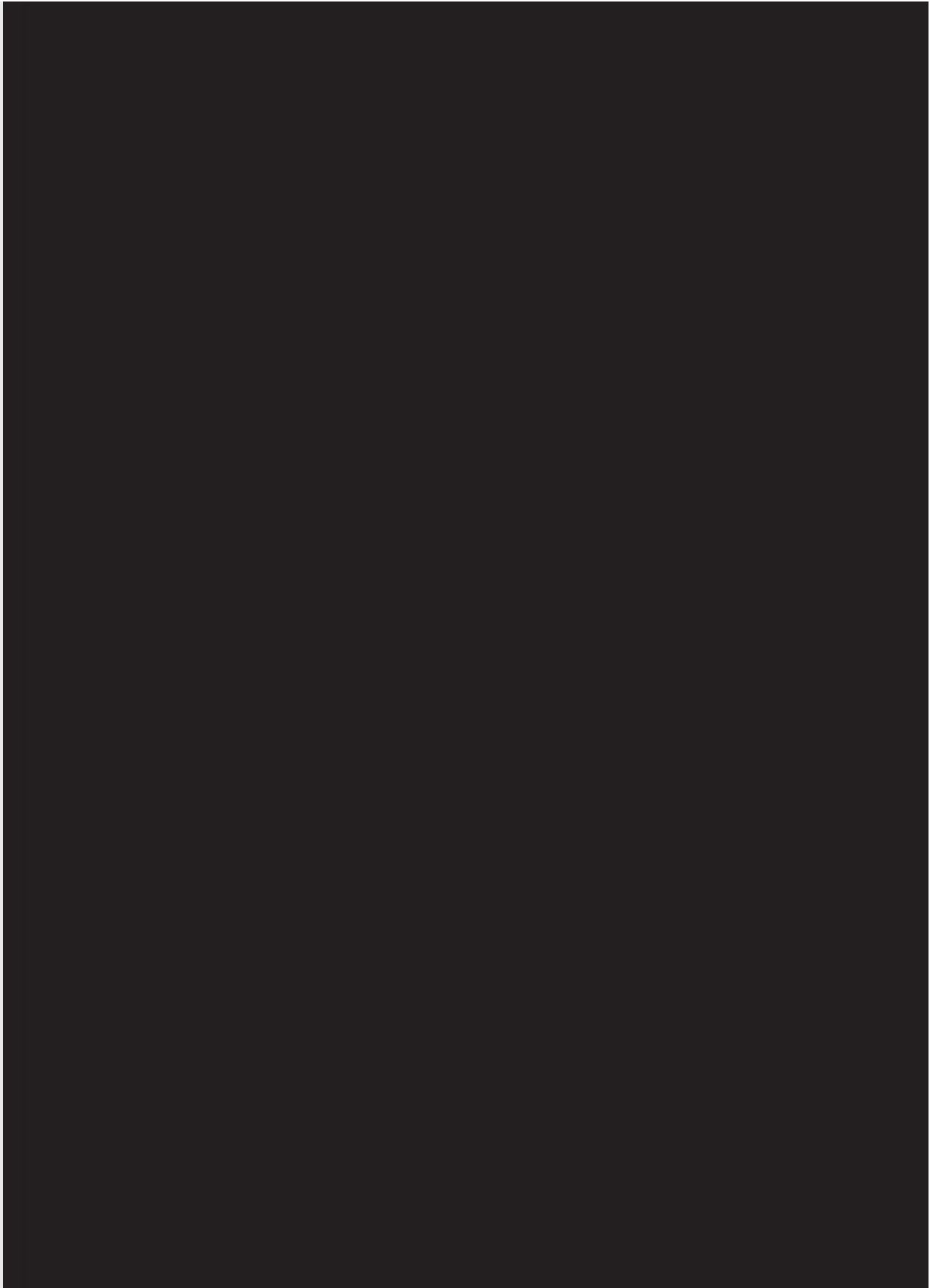
Notice that in the parable, those who arrived first wanted to receive more than the others. As we said, they were still concerned with quantity and social standing. The others did not care for payment, because they enjoyed working in the vineyards of the Father, simply because it was also theirs.

These two classes of persons work in the vineyard simultaneously, but they are very different from one another. The Lord's compensation comes based on this difference. To the selfish, God gives, as payment, success in the physical and mental plane, in the form of material possessions, social position, physical and mental satisfaction. To the detached from material concerns, God gives peace, love and joy, and everlasting happiness, which are not dependent on either time and space, too much or too little, but rather on a state of being. They're the

beloved children of the Lord, alluded so many times by Jesus.

Those in the square were just waiting to be called to serve. The lazy ones did not even come to the square looking for work. They represent the ones who do not worry, at their stage in the evolutionary cycle, about developing the talents all human beings have in an embryonic stage. They no longer will be employed, because the current cycle is finished. They will have to restart in another place or world.

As you know, it has been two thousand years since Jesus of Nazareth made the invitation. It's up to us to participate or not in this vineyard, to work expecting payment or not. It's in our hands to build here and now a new Earth and a new Heaven. All we have to do is to want it. So, let's get to work!"



31– Translator’s note. Mediumship: a natural capacity of every human being to communicate with spirits. In Spiritism, practicing it is the object of intense learning and exercising, in order to serve the forces of Light and improve the medium’s own spiritual progress.

chapter 21

Indoctrination

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he indoctrination³² of discarnates started immediately after the sermon. The lights were turned off, so as to facilitate concentration by avoiding visual distractions. This was done to create an environment conducive to mental projections, which were going to act with greater facility in the astral world.

While incarnated, I had always enjoyed to pay attention the indoctrination of the discarnates. Each one had a story to tell and some were quite interesting. Now, observing the process and the assistance from this side, I liked it even better. It was so much more fascinating. Yet I felt rather uneasy when I started watching so many mutilated souls, showing definite signs of torture. This particular group had been liberated from the Umbral by the workers from the Center. They had been held prisoners and enslaved; some looked stupefied. I observed them and I pitied them. Maurício whispered to me:

“Patrícia, nothing is unjust. We reap what we sow. The reaction is proportional to the action. At least two of these souls will ‘incorporate’³³ tonight to talk about their lives. You will find that they ignored the teachings of Jesus. When incarnated, they lived lives of pleasures, materialism and hurting others. Two of them were warlocks or ‘Macumba’³⁴ priests, performing evil deeds for money. They used discarnate souls as servants, but afterward the situation was reversed. It was their turn to serve. Still, all of them will be rescued, healed, and taken to a hospital in the Colony for rehabilitation.”

Many of these unfortunate souls availed themselves of ‘incorporation’ that evening. Many of them did not know they had passed away. Normally, when discarnates are forced to compare themselves to incarnates, they get to understand that their carnal body has died. Whenever we, discarnates, come near an incarnated person, we notice the difference immediately, unless we are completely duped and refuse to accept reality, pretending not to notice. Comparing myself to an incarnate, I am lighter and freer, because the perispirit is a much more delicate and subtle body than the material one.

Knowing what was going through my mind, Maurício took the opportunity to continue teaching me:

“At a Spiritist Center where serving the Light is the goal, ‘incorporation’ is done to help. The discarnate soul needing help receives guidance and cure during this charitable work. The perception of being incarnated or discarnate is largely mental. Since the fear of death – or the unknown – is prevalent, the discarnate soul fools itself, thinking it’s still in the corporeal body. There are spirits, however, who are conscious of their condition and enjoy incorporating. They have not yet awakened to the spiritual reality and, therefore, their mental body finds pleasure in the physical needs. These usually require serious and honest orientation. Most of these – who haven’t received this type of orientation yet – do not want even to hear of it nor consider any personal change. So they ‘incorporate’ in careless, ignorant mediums, who don’t frequent places that follow a Kardecist orientation. When they ‘incorporate’ in these kinds of mediums, they feel all earthly desires coming back to them instantaneously. In many cases, they even do favors to incarnates.”

“Wow! I didn’t know that there were discarnates who enjoyed the feeling of being in a carnal body!”

“Those who idolize matter, and enjoy only the pleasures, but not the pains that a body can feel, like to ‘incorporate.’ But let’s pay attention now. The

indoctrination is about to begin.”

Two from the group of slaves that had impressed me so strongly were the first to obtain help through ‘incorporation.’ They spoke briefly about themselves: they had done evil deeds, and when given the opportunity they failed to do good to others or to themselves. Failing to do good to themselves meant that they had the opportunity to learn, to educate themselves morally and religiously, and still they neglected to do it. They had lived, while incarnated, without the slightest concern about passing away, without thinking that they would be forced to reap what they had sowed. The entire group had their perispirits healed and rebuilt and then they were directed to another line to be taken to the Colony.

I was so relieved to see them free of all that suffering, wishing from my heart that they would fully recuperate spiritually and that their pain had been enough to teach them to really turn to God and to distance themselves from evil.

The gentleman who had been scared by me was awakened and also received his orientation from the mediums. He was so preoccupied with his pains that he forgot he had seen me. Upon being told to compare his body with that of an incarnate, he understood his situation.

Many spirits who showed trauma in their perispirit were also helped. These troubled spirits needed to bring harmony into their consciousness to stop feeling like incarnates, with all their illnesses. The impressions of the mortal body are indeed very strong. A spirit continues to be sick as long as it does not understand that its physical body has perished. Destructive remorse also leads to an injured perispirit. How imprudent are the majority of the incarnates! They do not think that the death of the body can happen to them, so when they pass over, and suffer, they become desperate and despondent.

The young man with whom I talked before stayed on the line. At first, he seemed just to be having fun, nonetheless he behaved well, later on. He paid attention to the orientations received by the other spirits and began to cry softly. He was intelligent, and soon understood that he had passed away. Lourenço came to help him, hugging and comforting him like a baby. In Lourenço's arms, he remembered how his carnal body had died. He was frightened. What would happen to him? Lourenço showed him the Learning Center at the Colony where he would go. He finally calmed down and fell asleep. Lourenço placed him on another line, since he would not need to 'incorporate.'

What a relief! I could not stop thinking that it must not be pleasant to be a spirit and act as an incarnate. Unfortunately, I know that it happens with most people. Passing away is natural, it happens to everybody, and yet when the body dies, most people feel lost and disturbed. It is worse when they have not done good deeds during their lives and it is horrible when they have done evil deeds. Living as a spirit is usually not too different from the life the person had when incarnated. Those who render cult to matter become attached to it. Those who treasure spiritual qualities become fortunate in the spiritual plane. One should not live worrying about death, but neither should one ignore it. Not thinking of one's own death, and not understanding that it is a normal occurrence causes endless despair, because the perispirit is an exact copy of the body. We feel the same needs until we understand and overcome them. That young man found understanding at the Spiritist Center. He would be taken, with the others, to a Colony where he would learn how to live as a discarnate. What he felt was the fear of the unknown, of what would happen to him. For many, the idea of hell is really strong. When one understands that death is not so complicated, fears disappear and hope arises.

One discarnate man on the line to receive orientation caught my attention. He was immobile and rigid, having no movement at all in him. When he was placed near a medium, he received a magnetic charge from one of the discarnate workers and felt the warmth of the medium's body. He then felt pain through his entire body and, little by little, he was able to move a few muscles. He was very happy for that, and with the help of an incarnate worker, was able to answer the greeting:

“Good evening!”

Fighting to overcome his difficulties, he started to talk. While incarnated, he had been a very proud man, an owner of many material assets. His will was law and he made many mistakes. He was strong and arrogant, in love with himself and his image. Befittingly, he commissioned a sculptor to make a statue of himself, and the artist really did a superb job. The statue was beautiful! It was placed in the town’s square so that everybody would remember that he was its benefactor. Yet there is always a but, death destroyed his dreams and illusions. He passed away of a heart attack but refused to accept it, wanting to continue living as an incarnate. After his entry into the spiritual realm his enemies began persecuting him. This lasted for years, but little by little they forgot him. Time went by and everything changed, including his house, his land. Only the statue continued the same. So, he stood by it until it became his shield, as if it was his body. He attached himself to it, and soon, he felt his body harden, moving no longer, not even talking. He could only see and hear what was happening in front of him. It had been sixty years since he had passed away.

The counselor told him to ask for God’s forgiveness and to vow to live according to the teachings of our Master Jesus. He did so, very sincerely. He was tired of pain and had no more reasons to be proud. He was able to walk to the other line, although leaning on a spirit rescuer. He was told he would also be taken to a hospital at the Colony. Crying copiously, which did him a lot of good, he left. Pride and arrogance are two self-inflicted wounds that eventually bleed and cause much suffering.

The indoctrination session was concluded, resulting in great benefits to all those present. All who had been rescued were led to an ‘aerobus’ to be taken to the Colony. This is a common activity in most Spiritist Centers. Sometimes, in other Centers, these spirits would be taken to a Rescue Station or to a small hospital located at the very Center.

The prayer of *Cáritas*³⁵ and the usual one for closing every session were said. Local discarnate workers scattered invigorating cosmic energies over all those attending. Again, Maurício clarified:

“Incarnates, and even a great majority of discarnates still don’t live the faith and fidelity to God. If they had faith, each individual would be a dynamic pole of balsamic, harmonizing, and healing energies. But since we aren’t at this point yet, at the end of the session there’s a mental connection among those responsible for this place. As a result, they project mental energies full of light, peace and love, filling the surroundings and the people with renewed strengths. I want to make it clear that these energies only remain as long as they’re sustained by those emitting them. And, although the environment is infused by the Light, it benefits only those who are attuned and synchronized with the vibrations of love and spiritual affinity.

These fields and energies were wonderful, driving many discarnates to moving spells of crying. They look like a thin and colorful drizzle falling from the ceiling, softly illuminating the entire place while scattering a pleasant aroma. I concentrated and opened my heart to receive those blessings. For a few seconds I felt a little damp and feeling the light coming in through my pores. It was an indescribable joy!

The session ended and the lights were turned back on. Incarnates were engaged in friendly conversations all around. I came up to my mother and kissed her, then I kissed my father. Everyone left, they turned the lights off, and closed the building. But it was not dark at all in the astral plane, as the work would continue for still several hours. A few minutes later Maurício called me to return to the Colony. I still could not volitate back by myself, so Lourenço accompanied us. To leave the Colony, interns like me need authorization. Those who have the knowledge and work there are called residents and they also need this authorization. The only spirits that move back and forth without authorization are those who work in both planes, the Earth Crust and the Colony.

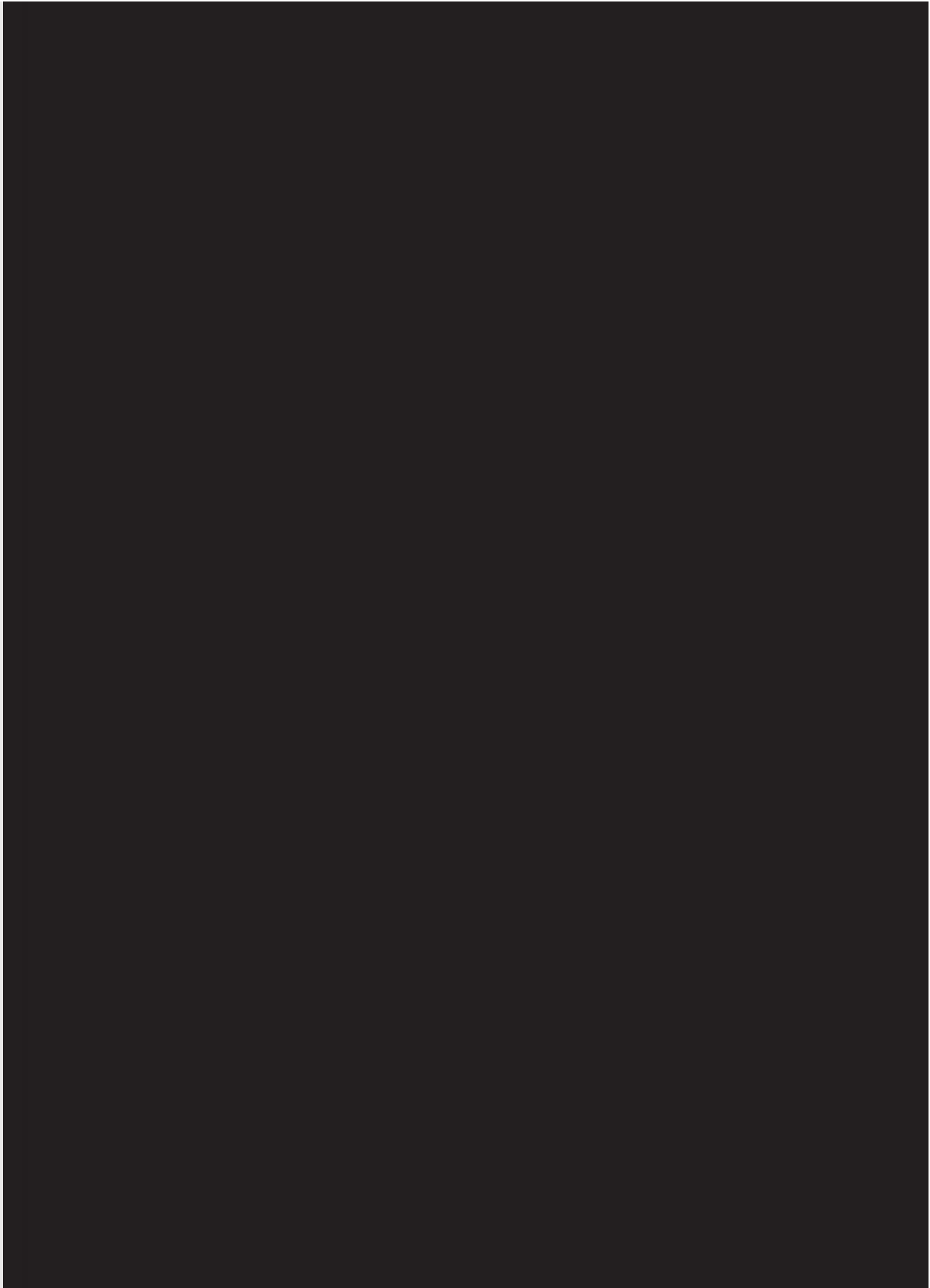
All my visits to the physical world had been approved. Only after a long time did I obtain permission to leave alone.

Colonies are secure and peaceful places, saturated with edifying energies. The heterogeneous energy that flows among incarnates could be dangerous to some discarnates who are not ready for it.

I was so happy! I wanted to learn and be useful. Yet I knew it was not enough to have the will to serve. You need to know how. I have always loved the Spiritist Center and the Spiritist Doctrine. The fact that I participated in such a productive session made me even happier. Gazing at the sky, so abundant with stars, I thanked God, having so much to thank and nothing to ask in return. I pleaded this way:

“Please, Lord, always nurture my will to learn and to be useful.”

To volitate is an amazingly pleasant activity!



32 – Translator’s note. Indoctrination: Spiritist practice used during Incorporation sessions, whereby rebellious spirits are awakened to the need of doing good and practicing the teachings of Jesus, by talking to an incarnate counselor, known as an ‘Indoctrinator.’

33 – Translator’s note. Incorporation: Spiritist practice whereby spirits use a mediums’ body to communicate their problems and be counseled, during this process they obtain knowledge necessary to continue on with their spiritual growth.

34 – Translator’s note. Macumba: an Afro-Brazilian animistic religion. Brazilian version of Haiti’s Voodoo, or Cuba’s Santería.

35 – Translator’s note. Little is known about Cáritas, who reportedly was a martyr in Roman times during the persecution of the Christians. This prayer was communicated to a medium by the name of Mme. W. S. Krell in Bordeaux, France, on December 25, 1873, and published in Belgium, by the Rayonnements de la Vie Spirituelle.

capítulo 22

Hospital

I

paid a visit to the laboratory where our friend Antônio works³⁶ as a scientist and researcher. The Laboratory, which is how he calls it, is in the back of the hospital at San Sebastian Colony. It is a big and impressive facility dedicated to the study and the manufacture of medications. The medications they produced were added to water to treat incarnates and discarnates alike. Typically, all Colonies have their own laboratories and research facilities. There were six students working with Antônio and, like him, they felt a great deal of tenderness and love for the establishment. As I entered, he warned me:

“Little Patrícia, pay close attention and don’t bump into anything.”

While showing me around, he explained that they devise formulas for new types of medicines. At the time of my visit, they were busy working on a new, more efficient compound to detoxify discarnate spirits addicted to drugs. The addicts undergoing treatment stayed in a wing near the Laboratory.

Antônio and his colleagues work and study very hard. They love what they do. Many incarnates erroneously think that spirits do not work or study, or do research. How merciful God is for not giving idleness to us discarnates!

“Antônio, is this medicine good only for detoxifying discarnate spirits?” I asked.

“That’s the main focus of our research. We’re saddened to see these brothers and sisters suffering so horribly. But nothing prevents us from extending our treatments to incarnates as well.”

“Then, what do you do so that incarnates may benefit from these medicines?”

“Well, every time we discover a new medicine, a new treatment formula, we can pass it onto hard working incarnated professionals and their peers. Rescue workers working with addicts can also administer it to them.”

I was fascinated by this place of studies and research.

I also had the opportunity to visit Antônio Carlos’s home – his corner – as he calls it. He was so kind to invite me and to take me there. He lives with one of his daughters in a lovely house. We were received cheerfully. The Colony where they live is as beautiful and pleasant as San Sebastian. Actually, I think all the Colonies are wonderful!

“Dad is never here,” Neuzeli said. “He says he lives here, but he only comes to visit.”

We laughed happily.

Antônio Carlos' corner is a room in the house with a shelf crowded with books, a desk, a chair, and a small sofa.

“This is the place where I write most of my books,” he explained. “I come here almost only to write.”

“Don't you also write at The Writer's House?”³⁷

“Yes, I have a room over there as well. I keep myself very busy, Thank God!”

Antônio Carlos is an extremely appreciated person, cheerful, educated and unpretentious. It was a very enjoyable trip.

Maurício had to do some work at a hospital and took me with him for a visit. A hospital is always a hospital. It is not meant to be cheerful, but neither is it a place for sadness. Rather, it is a place for hope. Hospitals at the Colonies are usually very large. This one was no exception. It was enormous, in fact! Usually, there is only one hospital in small and medium size Colonies. But they are always big ones, since there are so many imprudent souls. Large Colonies have many of them distributed among their municipalities. The authorities at the Colonies pay much attention to the well being and spiritual health of everyone sheltered there. Authorities? Yes, because in all places, even in the spiritual plane, there is someone responsible who guides and administers everyone's welfare.

It is always nice to visit a hospital, be it in the material or spiritual plane. We gain a better understanding of our problems and begin to see their extension from an appropriate perspective. Moreover, they awaken in us the need to do

something for the benefit of those
who suffer.

Maurício loves hospitals. They are a kind of home for him.

The children's hospital is located at the Learning Center, and it is as attractive and simple as the others. It is also very big. It is occupied by children and youngsters during rehabilitation. Usually, children recover sooner because they do not have deep-rooted illnesses and the reflexes from their carnal bodies are weaker. They get well quickly.

The hospital I was visiting this time was for adults only. We stopped at the wing occupied by patients in better condition. Maurício said I would have enough time to become acquainted with the entire place later and the rest would have to wait. This hospital was surrounded by gardens and flower beds, with comfortable benches where convalescing patients could sit and talk. The front of the hospital was impressive, with its big pillars. It was painted white and light beige.³⁸ At the entrance, there is the usual reception area for information about residents and staff.

“Maurício, do you live here?”

“No, I have my little corner on Earth, at the Spiritist Center's Rescue Station. I work both here and there.”

The hospital has many wards, or wings, or pavilions. In this particular Colony these divisions were called wings. I say ‘in this particular colony,’ because the

terminology varies from place to place. Each wing is identified by letters and numbers: A, B, C... 1, 2, 3... The living quarters for some of the residents are in the rear of the right wing. The infirmaries are large rooms, neatly kept and with baths. Not all of them are the same size; some are a bit larger, others smaller. In addition, there are infirmaries for males and females.

Beyond the reception area there is a Worship or Prayer Room where each patient prays according to the Religion he or she followed when incarnated. It's simply furnished with chairs and the walls are white, without decorations. The floor in front of the room is raised about ten centimeters and the counselors use this area to pray aloud at predetermined times of the day. Many patients also use this raised area to visualize altars, images, oratories, etc. They visualize whatever pleases them to serve as a reminder of the places where they used to worship. There is a considerable amount of vital cosmic energy in this room, which benefit those who pray. There is a small library for use by the patients across from the Prayer Room. The hospital workers offer to the patients who want to read them, indoctrination books as well as the Gospel. Unfortunately, there are so many patients being treated at any one time, yet the length of their stay is entirely dependent on their individual efforts.

Maurício explained to me what there was in each wing while I followed him around. When we entered one of the infirmaries, we heard a continuous murmuring sound. It was the patients talking amongst themselves. As we walked in, everyone kept quiet and looked lovingly at Maurício. He moved from bed to bed, dispensing loving care and attention to each one. He took the time to talk, smile, encourage and explain things to them. I stood by his side observing him attentively. When we left the first ward, I asked:

“Why did they stop talking when you came into the room?”

“Maybe because they know I will give them love and attention. Why don't you try and help me?”

“I will try. Maurício, does the hospital receive many visitors?”

“Groups of students and people like you – who want to learn more – visit the hospital quite frequently. The patients look forward to having company, and are grateful for any visit. Most of them can receive visits from friends and relatives, at specific days and times.”

The next infirmary was for females and I started helping right away. I tucked people in bed, asking how they felt, etc. They felt better just by having someone listening to their complaints and showing concern for their pains. I visited five infirmaries with Maurício that day, and I felt tired afterwards. It was the first time I felt tired in the Colony.

“Patrícia, that’s enough,” Maurício said. “You helped me a great deal today. I’m proud of you. You’ll feel rested very soon. We spend so much energy when we work with sick people. Go home, eat and practice some exercise to regain your strength.”

“Don’t you feel tired?”

“No, Patrícia. I have too many years of experience and much more knowledge than you have. You’ll learn with time. As I said, you already helped me a great deal today!”

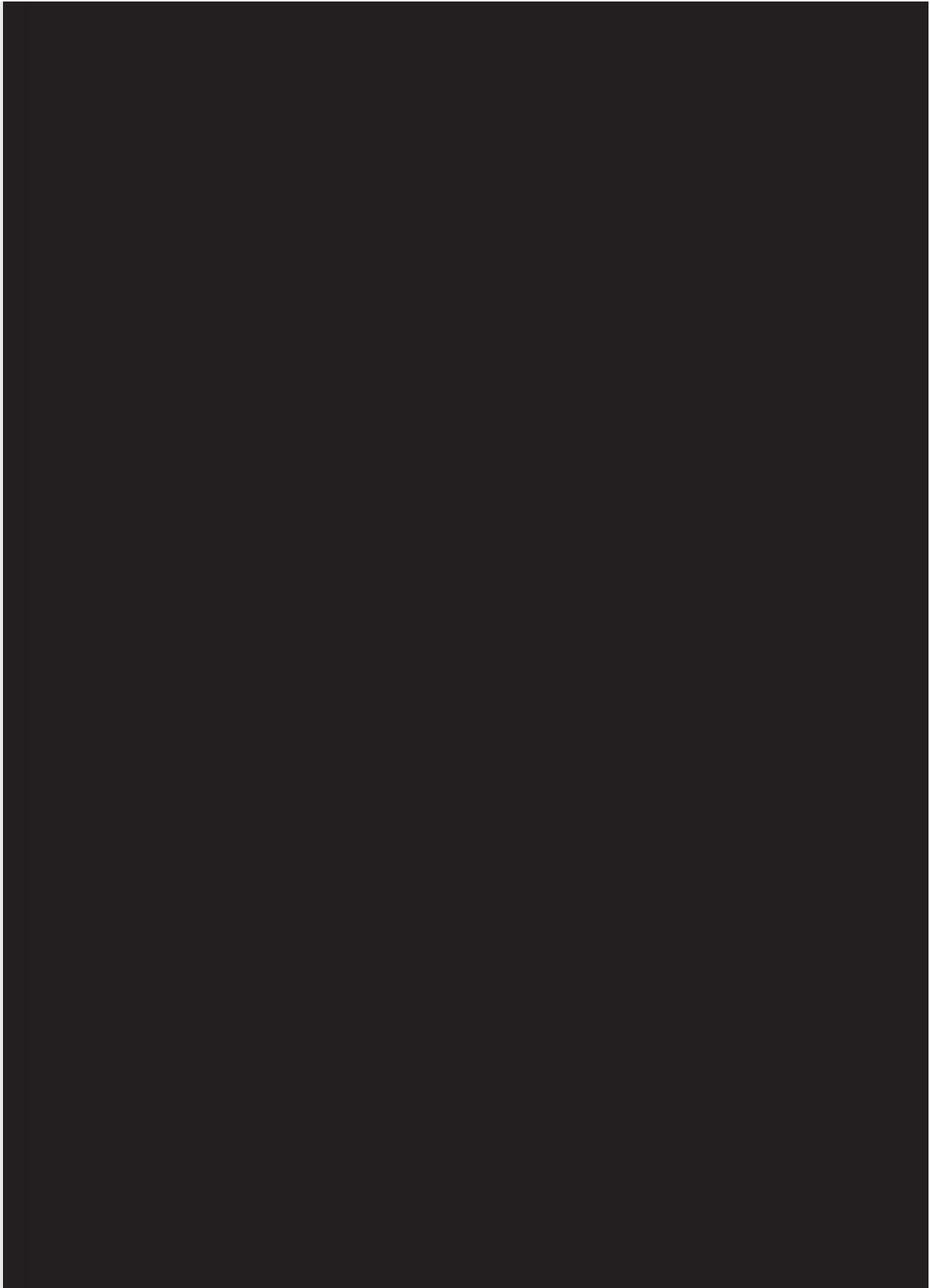
I knew Maurício was just trying to be nice, but his words made me happy anyway. He walked with me to the exit, then he went back inside, still having

much to do in there.

Every time I did something useful I felt euphoric and contented. I thought to myself: 'If Dad finds out about this he'll be happy, and my mother will think it's great.'

I walked home slowly, enjoying the people passing by and the street sights. It was so pleasant to walk around the Colony! By the time I arrived, I was already rested and feeling fine.

The next day, I was going to a meeting at the school where I worked. I could not believe how that job filled me with so much joy. Talking with my co-worker friends gave me a sense of security and contentment. Besides, I was curious about the reason for the meeting.



36 – Note from the spiritual author. Antônio is one of the characters in the book Rectifying Errors, by Antônio Carlos.

37 – Note from the spiritual author. Writer's House is the name of a small colony dedicated to edifying literature.

38 – Note from the spiritual author. The buildings at the Colonies and Rescue Stations are painted differently from the ones in the physical world. After being materialized out of cosmic energy, the paint does not fade or age. Everything is always new, sustained by those who materialized them. They may change colors, if, for any reason, they want to do it. The buildings at the colonies are painted light, but not all of them have the same color; they may be different throughout the entire spiritual plane.

chapter 23

Vacation

T

he meeting was held in a conference room at the school and the teachers were all on time. Mrs. Dirce presided over the meeting. She is the headmaster of the school that teaches how to read and write. Always kind and friendly, she greeted us smiling.

“Good afternoon! We are coming to the end of our school year. As always, we’ll be having a celebration for the graduating students.”

All the courses at the Colony have a time schedule. Most follow the same calendar year as the schools for incarnates in the material world. Incidentally, over here time zones are synchronized with the physical world. The Colonies and Rescue Stations follow the time zone of the physical space to which they are linked. For example: a Colony in Europe, in a space above Austria, follows the same time zone as Austria. In other words, the Colony is in the spiritual space and the country is in the physical space. San Sebastian Colony, above the city of São Sebastião do Paraíso, follows the Brazilian time zone. When it is two p.m. in the physical city, it is also two p.m. in the Colony. Here we have schedules with appropriate time for everything, and everyone complies with them. To have order, one must have discipline. There is a right time for working, for studying, etc.

All courses start at the beginning of the year and normally finish at the end of the

year.³⁹ It is rare for a literacy course to be completed in one year, unless someone just wants to learn how to read and write, and then one year is enough. Usually, the course takes three years, and in that time the students obtain enough knowledge to complete elementary school. However, there are those who have more difficulty than others and need more time. Those who so wish complete the course, though some drop out, but only in special circumstances. Those who graduate have several options: they can continue to study or dedicate themselves to other activities, contributing with more hours to community service or undertaking useful tasks. Every student works.

We exchanged ideas about the best teaching method, and the graduation festivities were finalized with a few quick comments. Continuing the meeting, Mrs. Dirce said:

“Vacations are getting near and we must think about the best way to spend them.”

I was surprised and I think I showed it. Kindly, Mrs. Dirce explained directing her remarks at me, the novice in the group.

“Patrícia, this is the first time you work with us. The others have been here for a while. We know you won’t come back next year. That’s unfortunate, but we know you’ll be taking a course on how to live in the spirit-world. We thank you for your help and we hope you’ve enjoyed working with us.

We have vacations just like the incarnates do, only not as much. All the workers take time to relax after a certain period of work, to unwind or to tend to personal matters. Usually, it lasts two weeks, a maximum of three, but sometimes just a few days. Students and teachers have vacations at Christmas time. It’s a chance for the students to rest after studying so hard. Also, there is a small party – every

year – for those who have completed the course. We, the teachers, deserve our vacations, although I know we don't stay idle. We take advantage of the free time to visit relatives, both incarnate and discarnate. We also help in extra rescue work for those souls who are suffering. It's only a few days in this break, since we'll be back to work in the second week of January.”

“I have been working for such a short time. I don't want to be idle, having nothing to do,” I said.

“If you want to continue working at the end of the curriculum, ask your friends for advice,” Mrs. Dirce told me. “If, however, you really want to enjoy yourself during your vacation, you'll have a chance to see how beautiful Christmas is at the Colony. Still, the reason for this meeting is also to discuss the student's evaluations. You will do it according to the progress each one has made, so that next year we can group them better in order to improve their learning process.”

By the time the meeting was over we had accomplished much. When I left the school, I went to talk to Frederico and commented:

“Frederico, I never thought discarnate spirits would take vacations.”

“Not all of us take them. I never had one. I don't need it, since working is part of me. I try to be useful even during a leave of absence, like now. Still, everyone who works has a right to rest. The counselors at the Colony organize work so that everyone has some free time. During this period we're free to spend it anyway we want within the rules of the Colony. Many spend this time with their loved ones in either the material or the spiritual plane, visiting and often helping them. Many do something else or visit other places. These vacations are important for the neophytes at the Colony, especially the youngsters. It helps their adjustment.”

“I don’t want to be idle during this period. But I don’t know what to do, or what I can do.”

Frederico smiled and said: “It’s good for you to learn how to do many different things so you can devote your time, in the future, to whatever is more useful to you and to others.”

I hardly slept, so I had lots of free time. I asked Frederico: “May I help you some more?”

“Sure. I’m happy to have you with me!”

“Could I really be useful?”

“When we want it, we’re able to,” he answered, encouraging me.

The school was in a festive mood on the day of the closing celebrations. Certificates would be given out in the afternoon. Sincere and contagious happiness was around. The certificate is not considered a proof – the important thing is what one learns. Yet it is still a victory, and those who receive it are very happy.

I thanked my colleagues and Mrs. Dirce for the caring, attention, and assistance I had received during the short time I had been there. I talked to Mrs. Dirce for a long time. She told me she was going to visit her family and afterwards would

join a group of volunteers that would be helping drug addicts.

“During my vacation,” she finished, “I always do this kind of work. Those who get lost in addiction are true slaves, needy of freedom. I really enjoy this kind of work. Still, I find a greater self-fulfillment in teaching, since I love doing it.”

“I like it too,” I said. “But I’m more interested in learning, right now. Mrs. Dirce, I’m very grateful to you. Thank you for everything!”

A children’s choir came to present us with some beautiful children’s Christmas songs and some Psalms. They all dressed alike, in very light yellow, and were very graceful. They enjoyed singing and enchanted all who heard them. They were so happy that they irradiated happiness.

Lúcio, one of my students, came closer and gave me a poem he had written. The verse was simple and praised teachers and the joy of learning. Touched, I thanked him.

“Patrícia,” he said, “when incarnated I was mentally retarded, an exceptional child. I passed on long ago. I recuperated slowly after been rescued. As soon as I felt better, I started to work, taking care of simple tasks.

My counselors insisted for me to study. Yet I became interested in learning only recently. I was ashamed of my deficiencies. While incarnated I had only heard that I was stupid, without any smarts, so I suffered a lot and I felt much pain! I had been rejected, gone hungry, been cold and very sick. I was an adult when I passed away. Everything is so different here. I love the Colony! I sense I wasn’t disabled in other lives. Still, I don’t want to remember the past. I’m afraid. The

counselors told me that I'm like a green fruit, not prepared, not ready to remember the past. I honestly don't want to remember. So, I have to learn everything all over again, but now I do it with pleasure."

Lúcio walked away and left me thinking. Mrs. Dirce was nearby and, noticing how deep in thought I was, she approached me and asked:

"Why are you so thoughtful?"

"Lúcio told me he was an exceptional child when incarnated. He feels he used to be intelligent, but doesn't want to remember the past. He prefers to learn all over again."

"Patrícia, no person is retarded without a reason. And the reasons might be numerous. Lúcio doesn't want to recall his past because he's afraid. Usually, these deficiencies had their origins in the abuse of a brilliant intellect. That is why over here we're careful not to make recollection of the past a painful experience, nor an obstacle to spiritual growth. The past is gone and we can't change it. We can build the present and the future. If Lúcio wanted to remember, the responsible department would study his case and would help him remember, but only if it was for his own good. Many spirits are too immature for this experience. Remembering his past could help him to enrich his knowledge, if he was educated and evolved."

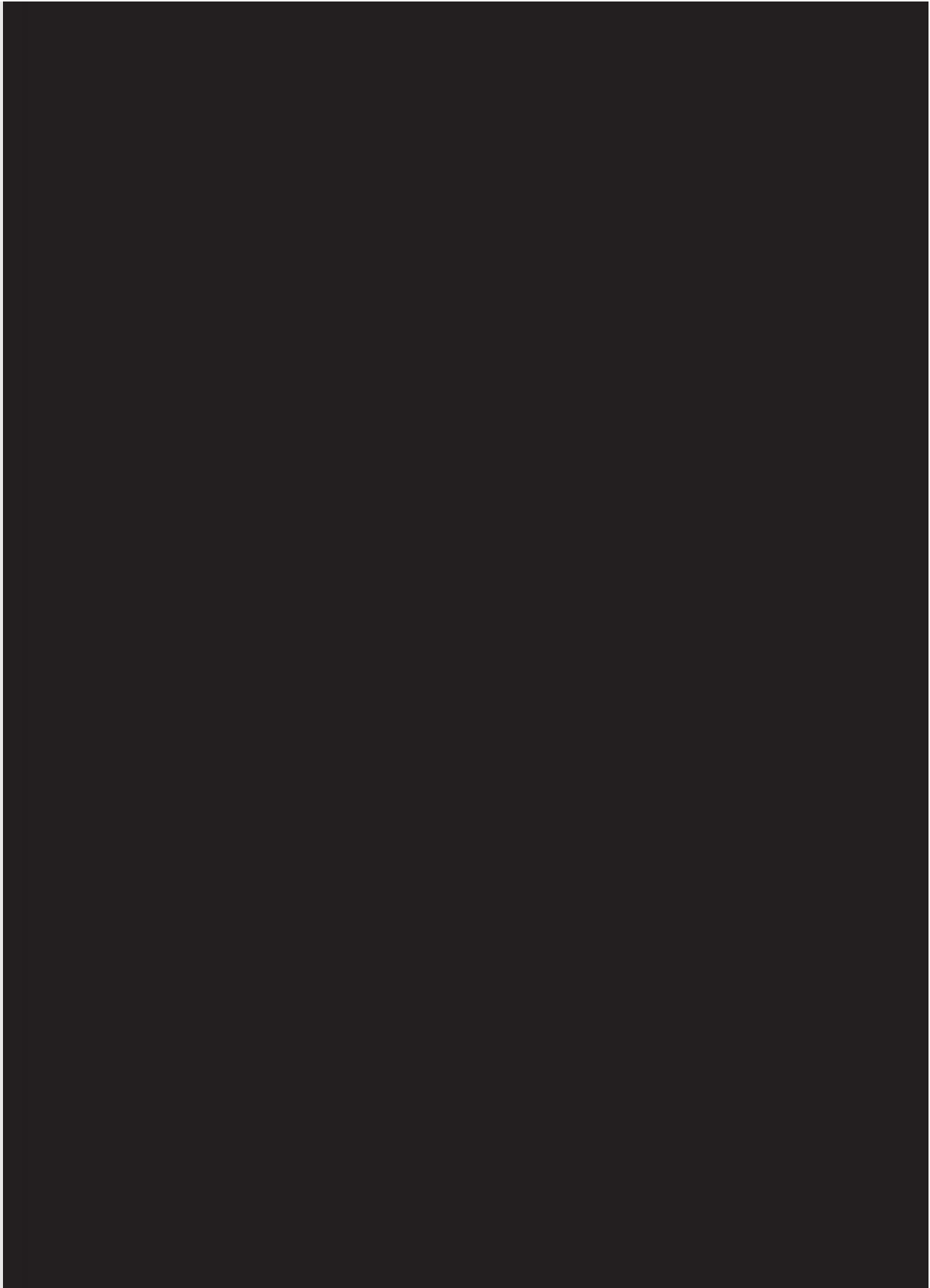
"But he has difficulty to learn."

"He hasn't been able to free himself completely from his deficiencies yet. But he's learning, and not only improving himself intellectually since Gospel lessons

are also being fixated in his mind, forcing him to re-educate himself.”

My pupils offered me many hugs and many thanks, plus a bouquet of flowers. I was very touched. The party was great! Christmas was coming and it had always been a big holiday for me, although my father always warned us that dates were not important and that Christmas had become a material occasion to most people.

It was the first time I would spend Christmas as a discarnate, and I was very curious.



39 – Translator’s note. In Brazil, the school year begins in January and ends in November.

chapter 24

Christmas

C

Christmas was coming and I knew my family missed me. That longing was painful. Memories of special occasions came back to make me miss them even more. Times of festivities are times when family meetings are marked by affective recollections and nostalgia. I had been receiving many prayers, messages, and powerful incentives to continue to be happy. Well, I was, and still am, very happy. I was thinking about that situation when Maurício came to see me.

“Maurício, I’m happy, but my family misses me. Is that right? Sometimes I think I shouldn’t be so happy,” I asked.

My friend laughed.

“Patrícia, everyone loves you dearly. You are, and will be missed, yet time will make everything easier. What do they wish for you?”

“For me to be happy!”

“So, when you’re happy you’re doing what they wish. It’s not selfishness. If you do what they ask they will end up doing what you wish for them, which is being all right and not suffering. Many think like you. They seem to feel somewhat guilty for being well while their beloved family is not. However, one shouldn’t think that way. One should get better each day, learn even more, be wiser, which is the only way one will be able to give others some happiness. Only those who learn how to love can radiate Love and Peace.”

Christmas at the Colony is indeed wonderful! Youth groups and children organize recitals, dances, seminars, and meetings to exchange ideas and to listen to music. All of that just to be busy and to avoid feeling nostalgia for incarnates. This way, they ease their own recollections by having a good time.

A group of youngsters had planned visits to other Colonies and invited me to join them. I accepted happily. They had so much energy! They were going to sing and stage a play they had produced as amateurs, although some were really gifted artists. This group always showed beautiful and healthy plays, which brought forth profound teachings. Many of the songs they sang are known to incarnate people, especially the Christmas ones. Some others, really great ones, are from song writers of the spiritual plane. Children and youth groups form their own choirs and are always performing at engagements around the Colony and – when invited – in other places too. They are always in high demand because their performance is top notch. Besides, music is such a great therapy! Adults also participate in choirs, music groups, and theater performances.

We went by ‘aerobus,’ very slowly, to this very nice trip. This neighboring Colony was very beautiful, just as the others. We were cheerfully received and, after the show, we talked for a while, exchanging ideas. I really enjoyed this outing.

In our Colony there is a big square with flowerbeds in the shape of hearts, formed by tiny blue and white flowers with pleasing aromas. At the center of the

square there is a rotunda where choirs usually perform. There are also many comfortable benches and even some swing sets. It is called Consolation Plaza. I asked Frederico the origin of that name.

“When the Colony was planned, this square was created so that the residents could gather for recreational purposes. Many nostalgic discarnates would go there seeking consolation. Hence, the name.”

A group of foreign youngsters from Italy came to visit our Colony. They performed at the Consolation Plaza, singing beautiful songs in Italian. It was a huge success.

“I thought I was going to understand everything they sang,” I said to Lenita.

“Understanding another by thinking is only for spirits who know how to do it. Those with perfect affinity among themselves are able to transmit thoughts. We can accomplish much with our minds, but we have to know how. Thoughts only have one form, and very few discarnates know how to use this means of communication. The majority has to learn the language spoken by the other. Every Colony offers courses in Esperanto in an effort to establish better communication among all peoples,” Maurício answered.

“I want to learn Esperanto and thought transmission. I’ll write that down on my to-do list,” I added.

We laughed heartily, since they knew that my to-do list was already enormous. I have a notebook where I record everything I want to learn and the courses I want to take. I have already taken several of them. The rest I will take later, God

willing. The Esperanto language is widely disseminated in the spiritual plane, with every school offering courses in it. There are also many books written in Esperanto and a lot of interchange is carried on in this language among all the Colonies around Earth.

Organizations in the Colony usually plan long programs during Christmas, with daily performances of plays, choirs, and concerts at the square. Everything is very cheerful. The Learning Center is completely decorated with Nativity scenes. Trees are decorated with lights and colorful balls, resembling similar decoration used by incarnates. Everything is done with the intention of cheering the children up. Workers dress up as clowns, there are games and dances, and the children are very amused. There is no exchange of gifts though, only sincere wishes for harmony and peace. Every year at Christmas, there is a lesson with a theme. This year it was: The Meaning of Jesus's Incarnation on Earth. Banners with this slogan, and also with greetings for residents and visitors alike, were posted around the Colony. There were lecturers around the entire Colony about the theme chosen. It was very beautiful, educational and touching.

“What if Jesus had not incarnated among us?”

I went to the Learning Center several times with Lenita to meet with Ana. The place is big and even more beautiful this time of the year, with all its parks decorated. The counselors organized several leisure activities and entertainment, almost all in the open air. We talked a lot, meeting in groups to discuss the lectures we had attended. When Lenita spotted some sad isolated youngster, she would go to them, dragging me with her. We would approach them cheerfully and introduce ourselves. She has such a pleasant conversation that soon the youngster would feel better and we would introduce him or her to a group.

The Colony gets very busy at this time of the year.

I had the opportunity of meeting several acquaintances and to talk quite a lot those days.

I also watched my family on TV several times.

Christmas went by very festively, although all the rescuers worked very hard, just as they do during every holiday season in the physical world, when there is always so much abuse. The end of the year here is simpler. Most people make their new year's resolutions and everyone greets one another joyfully, with wishes of happiness and hope. Right after January 1 everything reminding us of Christmas is removed and all goes back to normal.

My first Christmas in the spiritual plane was very fine. Anyway, how can somebody feel sad celebrating Jesus's birth, especially knowing about the enormous significance of His teachings?

chapter 25

Experiencing Difficulties

I

had the opportunity of visiting my parents accompanied by Maurício. When I got home, I was astounded. A disturbed spirit was standing by my mother's side. He was ugly and dirty, had long beard and hair, and big green eyes with a cynical and mean look. He was trying to suggest to my mother the idea that I was suffering. He had his eyes fixed on hers and was saying mockingly:

“Patrícia is suffering in the Umbral. Your daughter is very unhappy. She is crying and calling you. Was it worth it to have been good and a Spiritist? That didn't stop her from dying. She is suffering!”

“Man!” I said, indignantly. “How mean!”

I thought Maurício was going to remove him, and yet my friend did nothing. I looked at him with supplicant eyes, without saying a word.

“Patrícia, we discarnates cannot do what is up to incarnates to do, even though we love them so much. Your mother knows how to handle deplorable brothers like this. He is talking to her, but he can also listen. She can answer him and guide him or simply refuse to give him any attention.”

“Can I help her?”

“Do you know how?”

I felt powerless and wished now – more than ever – to learn how. I thought for a few seconds, and since I only knew how to neutralize harmful forces with prayers, I trusted it might be enough. I concentrated and prayed for this brother with all my faith. He became agitated and left our house quickly. I approached my mother and talked to her:

“Mother, I’m happy! Don’t pay any attention to those who want to upset you. I love you!”

My mother felt better and I was relieved to read her mind: ‘Patrícia is happy! I’m not going to think otherwise.’

“Will he come back?” I asked Maurício.

“I think so, but if he does, your mother is free to listen to him or not. Let’s trust her common sense.”

We left the room to see my nephew. He was slightly sick, not able to sleep at night, feeling the effects of the harmful energies emanating from incarnates and discarnates around him. Since children are so sensitive, he felt them badly. That made me sad for a few moments.

“Patrícia, sadness doesn’t help,” Maurício advised me. “Pray for him, give him a magnetic pass, disperse these negative energies.”

“A poor baby, so small and suffering! I feel so helpless trying to help him!”

“You can’t suffer in his place. Each one has a lesson to do as part of their learning process. That’s why not all discarnates have authorization to visit incarnated loved ones. They have to be ready and aware of the problems they may find. It’s not easy to see loved ones in distress, particularly knowing it is not always possible to help them.”

Days later, my parents went to visit my aunt. Maurício and I went to see them again. My father was being attacked by the dark side and, with him, everyone else from our family. More than ever before, this phrase came to my mind as ringing true: ‘Wherever there is Light, darkness tries to extinguish it.’

A little sensitive cousin of mine had put the entire family worried. There were no spirits near her. Troubled souls do not enter my aunt’s house. Still, they can act from a distance and were so doing it. They would concentrate on the baby and make her look obsessed. She was crying and irritable. They were making her behave like me when I was incarnated, wanting everybody to think I was obsessing her. My father concentrated for a while, prayed, and gave her healing magnetic passes. He was able to destroy the link that connected her to the souls from the dark side. She went back to normal, but I was still worried. Maurício explained the question to me:

“Patrícia, these spiritual brothers and sisters need counseling. We will be able to help the situation by indoctrinating them during the disobsession meetings.”⁴⁰

“But in the meantime, they’ll continue to disturb them...” I said.

“Incarnates know how to defend themselves. Didn’t you see how your father prayed and disintegrated with his mental force the harmful effects they had created? These souls will be our friends some day.”

Noticing that I was still disappointed and indignant, Maurício continued to elucidate me:

“Wisely, the spirit Emmanuel said in one of the books he dictated to Chico Xavier: ‘No one rescues a drowning person without enduring the whipping of the waves.’ The Light – sustained by faith and wisdom – becomes stronger when it’s under attack, each blow adding to its splendor. Disturbed spirits can induce us to do evil, and in this hostile environment we can give in and act in opposition to the Divine laws. Troubled spirits can harm us as we suffer with their siege. They can even affect our physical body, but at no time can they make us become evil. It’s in this hostile environment that the good and loyal servant strengthens herself or himself, solidifying their will to live for God. That’s why when we prevent loved ones from being tested by those spirits we might be stifling and frustrating them. They wouldn’t be sure, if they faced the same situation again, whether they would have the strength to overcome it. You know, Patrícia, that many believers in a Heaven without problems indulge in illusions. Opposition and integration are integral parts of all activities in God’s creation. Talking about this subject reminds me of the call made by the Great Master: ‘Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light’”⁴¹

My friend paused for a brief moment, then continued his elucidation:

“Think about it. He doesn’t induce us to think that He will provide us with an idle life, but just that we will learn from Him that the difficulties we might endure should not be seen as punishment, just as situations of trial. If we win, we will feel the sweet taste of victory over our inferiority and if we succumb, we will taste the bile taste of moral defeat.

Think about your own case: you were born in a family not unlike millions of others. You came to the physical world, then left it, and didn’t leave any marks. When you heard and read about the improvement of your personality, you woke up to the development of your human potential to become consciously good out of your own spontaneous and free will. You had sensed, and will know with full details in the future, that the end of your life in the physical body was going to be more or less difficult. However, with your constant exercise in good attitude, you paid off your past debts and passed over peacefully. Actually, you did not even see your passing. When you woke up, you were among friends.”

Maurício silenced and I began to reflect on his comments. My friend was right! I thanked his precious lesson with a smile.

On our trip back to the Colony, I thought long and hard about what I had seen and what Maurício had told me. Only then did I understand why many residents do not have authorization to see their families. When we see them happy we are glad. When we see them going through difficult times we must be strong, because sometimes all we can do is to cry with them.

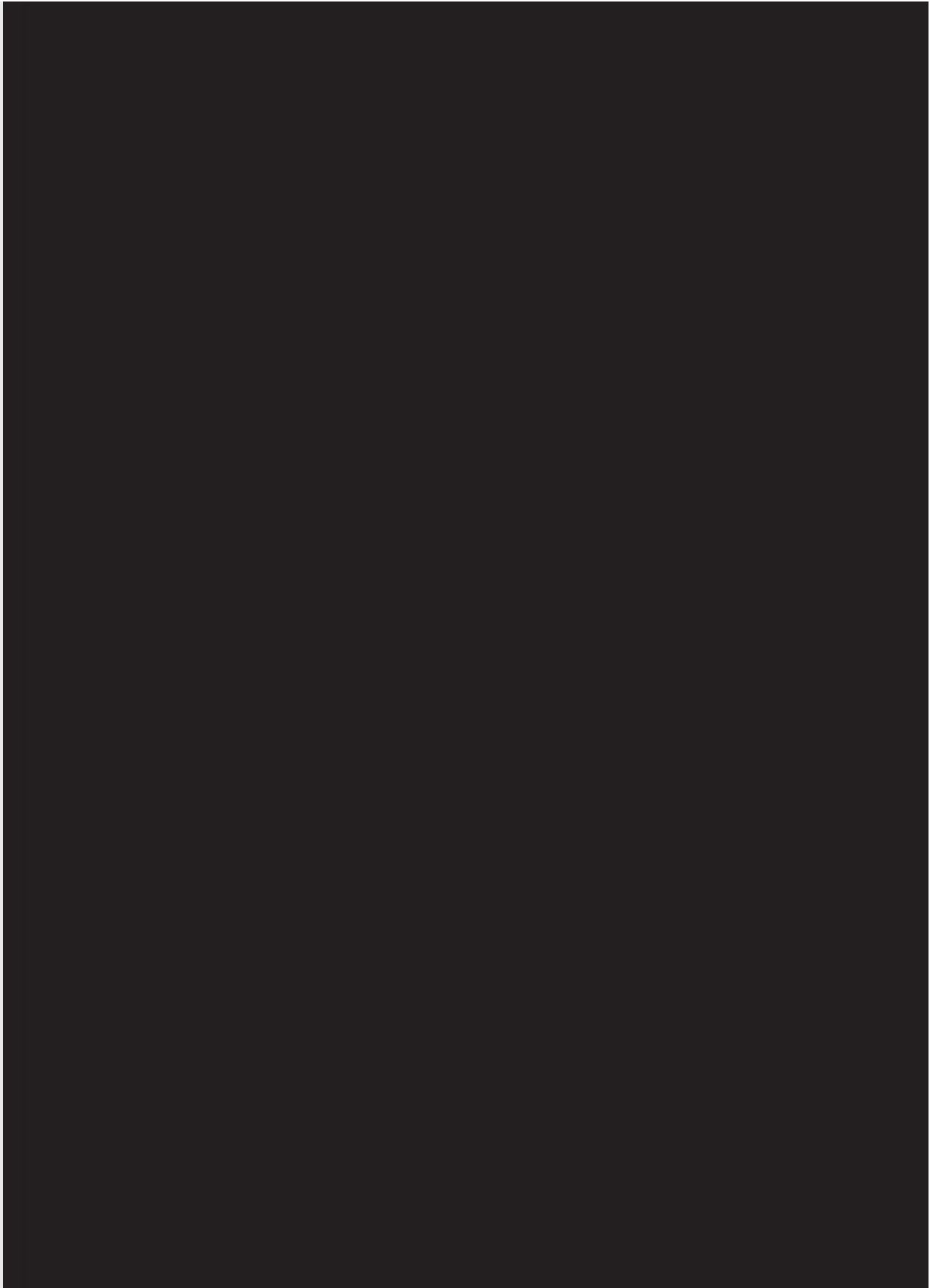
I know of many sad stories about what happened to Colony residents who visited their families. It is not easy for a mother to see her small children orphaned, sometimes on the streets or with a stepmother who mistreats them. Or for a father to see his children fighting for his fortune, or a son robbing another son. Or for a son or daughter to witness their parents blaspheming against God

because of their passing over. It is not easy for a discarnate to hear about betrayals and about loved ones sinking deeper and deeper into vice.

Discarnate souls must be prepared and firm in their discernment in order to triumph over adversity, otherwise they may become desperate. Even those who learned to love everyone as their brethren, or those who work and study to become residents of our Colony, servants of the Lord, feel the suffering of those they love. Only those who know can understand that there is a reason for things to be the way they are, that despite their love for their relatives they cannot interfere with their freewill, and that the harvest belongs to the one who sows.

In these moments of solidarity with the suffering of loved ones, I am reminded of the apparent disencumberment of the extraordinary and genial Nazarene in His famous phrase: ‘Oh, unbelieving and perverse generation! How long shall I stay with you and put up with you?’⁴²

Over the years, I have ardently wished to be able to help them, or to suffer in their place. But I know I cannot do somebody else’s homework, because I would be preventing them from learning. My understanding is that a person shows lack of mercy when he or she deprives someone from growing. Therefore, every time I sense my family has a problem I pray and send messages of patience and encouragement for them to make optimal use of the lesson that comes with that problem. The difficulties we overcome spur us toward progress. Problems solved, lessons learned.



40 – Translator’s note. Disobsession is a Spiritist therapeutic process whereby disturbed discarnate spirits are counseled (indoctrinated) during the process of spirit incorporation. See also footnote 33 & 34.

41 – Note from the spiritual author. Matthew, XI:28-30.

42– Note from the spiritual author. Luke, IX:41. “Does every medium have to belong to a Spiritist Center?” he asked.

chapter 26

Working with Frederico

I

was so proud of receiving my bonus-hours. Every worker is entitled to a rest period, but those who work during their breaks earn double. I did not need to rest, so, with much enthusiasm, I started working with Frederico. When activities were hard I felt tired, but I would soon recover.

My friend had an office in the hospital wing reserved for patients who were in better health conditions. So that you can understand what happened, let me explain our situation. He worked as a psychologist or a psychiatrist. I was his secretary, making appointments, filling out forms, and directing the patients to the appropriate place. Well, while they talked to Frederico I had nothing to do.

“Patrícia, would you like to come in and listen to our sessions, so that you may learn the reasons why these brothers and sisters come to talk to me?” Frederico asked me.

“Yes,” I answered happily.

It was then that I learned about the problems that keep the majority of them under treatment. I would listen without saying a word, sometimes I felt like laughing, other times I felt touched. As my grandmother used to say, ‘Nothing

like helping out to make one understand.’ Witnessing these sessions and empathizing with other people’s problems made me thank the Lord for not having similar problems, and for not having created them for myself.

Most of the problems for those there were related to their incarnate loved ones. They would request a visit to their families or to help them. Yet, a person cannot help when he or she is still among those needing help. Almost everyone would talk about their incarnate lives on Earth and about how they passed away. Frederico would listen attentively, asking questions from time to time. Some would complain about the disturbing cries from their relatives, while others would ask for advice on how to avoid listening to the wailing and calling from theirs.

“You must pray for them,” Frederico would say calmly, “and be patient, for time goes by and soothes everything.”

My friend would give answers to everyone, advising them wisely. He would also write down the earthly addresses of those in worse distress. When he was finished with his office hours, Frederico would go to their residences and counsel their incarnate relatives. He would try to help by encouraging them to find inner solace and to stop troubling their departed loved ones.

There were also different types of complaints. Some thought they were forgotten, especially by their spouses. Some would request to come back, even in their same former physical body. Others did not want to reincarnate, to be born in another body, but wanted their own old bodies back. One of them even asked to come back in his own body – only ten years younger.

Sometimes, I would think: Frederico will not get out of this one. But being a great expert on the human spirit, he would talk politely, calmly convincing those

capable of a better understanding. Some did not like his answers, but ended up being persuaded anyway. Many would return several times until they managed to overcome all their difficulties, or part of them. Unfortunately, this occurred because they were so fixated on their problems that they could not concentrate on anything else. Others, still, seemed to enjoy their problems, and therefore required an even more intense form of treatment.

Let me describe some of these cases, not for curiosity's sake, but to serve as a lesson to all of us.

“Listen to this, Dr. Frederico,” said a gentleman. “When you hear what I have to say, you will agree that I’m right. I was always a hard-working man, having many assets. Honest, not always. I can’t lie, I know I can’t fool you. I just duped a few suckers in my business. My first wife helped me a lot. We didn’t have children. She passed away and so I married another one. My second wife is a beauty and we had children. Yet I found out that the miserable hussy betrayed me. So, I tried to kill the wretched louse she was with, but he killed me instead. So, I want to go back and take the kids away from her. Yet I don’t want revenge. I suffered enough wishing for revenge and have already forgiven both of them. Still, my children will be ruined with her. They will fail, I’m sure. I don’t want to go back as a discarnate. They wouldn’t be able to see me. Couldn’t you help me go back?”

Patiently, Frederico tried to clarify the situation for him:

“My brother, while you were among the incarnate, did you ever see a spirit come back to their dead body? After all this time, your body has turned to ashes. This is impossible! I must remind you that everyone, while incarnated, has an opportunity to do the right thing. Your children are not abandoned by God. You can help them.”

“But they won’t listen to me. They won’t pay attention.”

“Don’t be discouraged without even trying. Have you read the parable of Lazarus and the rich man?”

“Yes, Lazarus, who was poor, and the rich man who died and wanted to come back to warn his brothers, yet he couldn’t.”

“Read it again. And this time, pay more attention.”

“Can’t you help me?”

“Yes, I can. I will go to your home, and try to help your family.”

“I really wanted to go back as an incarnate, take my children away from her, and raise them better.”

“My brother, you have reincarnated several times already. If you returned remembering, maybe you would try to change for the better. But, with the necessary forgetfulness, you would probably err again. Why don’t you derive strength by learning good morals?”

That gentleman left not very happy.

“Frederico,” I said. “I can’t believe he made this request. I thought discarnates were more self-aware.”

“They should be more aware, still, discarnates don’t differ from incarnates that much. You don’t become better just because you passed over. You become better when you learn. While living his physical life, this gentleman didn’t worry about raising his children properly. Now he’s sincere and he’s worried about them, but it’s too late. He’s like the rich man from the parable I recommended him to read more attentively.”

“Yet, he made such an incredible request: to return to the same physical body!”

“Although they know it’s impossible, they try it anyway. If that were possible, many would be going back that way.”

“It’s a good thing that it isn’t!”

Frederico went to this man’s earthly home and tried his best to remind them of their responsibilities. The following day he tried to calm him down. He told him that his wife was a good mother and that, at least, she loved her children. The man decided to follow Frederico’s advice to better himself and to learn, so that he could help his children in the future.

A lady with a suffering expression that pained everyone around said tearfully:

“Dr. Frederico, I don’t want to seem ungrateful. I passed away, I suffered a lot, I

wandered in the Umbral, I was rescued and I feel better. However... I don't like the Umbral. It terrifies me and I don't want to wander anymore and... I don't want to stay here, either. I don't like it here. I'm treated well, yet I receive the same treatment as everyone else. I can't eat meat nor have my cocktails. I hate being discarnate! I wanted to really die. Death is not like what I expected. If, at least, there was a Heaven..."

"If there was a Heaven as you thought, do you think you would be there?"

The lady did not answer. I thought it was strange. She was the first person I heard directly that did not like the Colony. Frederico continued:

"You madam, are unhappy with yourself. You are receiving what the Colony can offer. While there are many who are happy here, there are also malcontents like you. What do you really want?"

"I don't know. I didn't want to pass away, but I didn't like my incarnate life either. Maybe if I could reincarnate rich, beautiful, and intelligent."

"To do what?"

"Be happy, enjoy life."

"For how long?"

“If I knew that, I wouldn’t be here,” she said impatiently.

“My dear sister, have you tried being happy through work, by being useful?”

“No.”

“Have you tried feeling happy by helping others? You need to learn how to love yourself, then learn to love others. You must stop being a needy person and start being a useful one. It’s written here in your records that you’re well. Why aren’t you up to helping out?”

“I think it’s too difficult.”

“Try to be useful at least twice today. Come back tomorrow, so we can talk some more.”

The lady left as she had entered, tearfully.

“Frederico, she complains about being in the infirmary. Why did I have a room all to myself?” I asked.

“Patrícia, Jesus recommended us to live – while incarnated – treasuring spiritual values, giving proper worth to our true nature, the one that accompanies us after the death of the body. All those who did what Jesus recommended think they’re undeserving of a simple treat like being housed for a short period of time in an

individual room. For these, it's fortunate just to be here. Others, proud and imprudent spirits, don't like to mix, forgetting that we are all brothers and sisters, and that the Father is one. They arrive here as indigents, and some demand privileges they didn't earn."

Little by little the lady's attitude changed. Frederico did all he could to make her understand that only working for the Light would make her happy. She started to perform some simple tasks, but still grumbling. Frederico told me her counselors were trying to help her to overcome her laziness, otherwise she would have to reincarnate. The Colony does not shelter idle spirits.

A gentleman looking some thirty-five years old entered the room, a bit ashamed:

"Doctor, could you please help me? I like it here. I want to stay, still I miss sex."

"You like it here because you found the solution to one of the burdens that afflict human kind, which is the struggle for survival. You have been given much here and even the reflexes of your illness have waned. You're sheltered, well fed, you don't feel hot or cold. In other words, you're comfortable. But at the same time, you yearn for the pleasures offered by the material world. You miss only what you thought was good, the pleasures. I'm going to help you. As a result, you will not be bothered by the echoes of the pleasures from the physical world or any other circumstance. It's necessary – however – that you choose, with all your heart and attention, an objective in the spiritual world where you now live and dedicate yourself to it, with all your strength. This way, the energies that today bring you an echo of the past will be channeled to this new goal. I advise you to be useful, to work, and to study. Also show interest in doing good to as many brothers and sisters from right around here as you can, and to those suffering souls housed in other parts of the hospital. In due course, you'll be partially freed from the echoes of pleasures of the material world – in your case, from sexual desire."

I had heard a woman complaining about the same thing before and Frederico had told her to turn, with love, to an activity, either work or study, so that she could be partially freed from these desires.

That gentleman was the last one to be seen that day. Since there was some time left, I tried to learn more by asking Frederico:

“Why would that lady be only partially and not completely freed, since there’s no real need for these instincts here?”

“It’s the attachment – or slavery – to any behavior that brings about gluttony, sex, lying, and gossips. Also, the vices which appear harmless and the ones that are really harmful, from society’s point of view, are part of humanity’s incessant quest to fill its physical emptiness.

Man is the sum of all experiences by which humanity has grown throughout the uncountable millennia known to us. The first sense to manifest itself in living beings was touch, and it was through it that Man felt his first pleasures. The second – and big one – was survival. In other words, the need to feed oneself and to procreate. Still, talking specifically about procreation – the others being on the same level – it is people’s biggest dilemma, since they condemn promiscuous sex, yet they don’t explain or teach why all have it. If it’s bad, why have it? If it’s good, why repress it?

The key to the question is in its origin. If you take a river and build a dam in the middle of its course because you don’t want its waters to run in that riverbed anymore, then your work will be endlessly having to reinforce that dam every day. Its waters must be continually repressed and each day they’ll grow stronger

and have more pressure. If you drop your guard, the dam will break and its devastating action will be felt a thousand times stronger than before, when it was in its normal course. It's the same with this incredible vital energy. Its first surge is to seduce the individual with pleasures so as to guarantee the perpetuation of the human species. The human being then becomes a slave to this energy, a mere reproducer of the species. Because the progeny is heavy on the shoulders of the parents, the intelligence's shrewdness takes over so as not to abstain from pleasure and finds ways to avoid progeny and to keep the pleasure only. Other individuals, due to devotion or faith, abstain from the use of this energy altogether. And this can, in a near future, make the dam burst out and do even more harm – conversely – this can make the energy dormant, drying out the riverbed, and still causing damage. Instead of building a dam, or deadening the energy, some human beings try to find out where this energy – capable of making a living human being to be born – comes from. Recognizing that this energy is born from the Eternal Being itself, they can avert it from the riverbed of worldly pleasures – which provides for the perpetuation of the species – and redirect it to the spiritualization of the individual, providing for the perpetuation of the soul. Freedom cannot be achieved by suppression, but only from the understanding of whom human beings are. As a result, they use all the energy that sustains them to enable themselves to be reborn as a new kind of human being. A cosmic citizen, no longer interested in selfish pleasures, but in the glorification of the manifestation of God in mankind and in all its children.

Patrícia, I couldn't talk to that man as I'm talking to you now. He wouldn't understand it. He's still a slave to his carnal vices, and even if he finds a greater purpose for his life, he'll be just partially freed, since only those who do as I just explained will be freed completely. He wouldn't understand, as much as only a few do, what Paul of Tarsus said: 'Nature suffers and moans from labor pains until the son of man is born.'"

After a few days working with Frederico, with whom I learned so much, I asked him if he liked what he was doing.

“For a long time, Patrícia, I have been studying human beings’ behavior in all its facets. There is no work I don’t like. I’m happy helping out.”

I saw so many different things in these few months as a discarnate. What will incarnates think when they read what I am describing? Will they laugh? Will they be amazed? Will they doubt it? Well, only by passing over can one verify it.

chapter 27

Preparing to Study

I

was increasingly eager to learn how to be useful. By now, I slept only a few hours a day and ate very little. I had learned to absorb nutrients from the atmosphere and drank very little water. A few days before Christmas I completed the course on how to feed myself, which was very effective. The water here is different, magnetized. I feel it as perfumed. I have always liked to take many baths, so in this course I learned how to create cleanliness in my body, as well as in the clothes I wore, by applying hygiene with my mind. Not having to eat gives one so much advantage, like not needing to use the bathroom. There is no need to urinate either, if one does not drink water in excess. I liked that very much. I had started to live spiritually. The impressions of my carnal body and its needs were being mastered.

Soon, I was going to continue my studies. So I was very happy to hear from Frederico:

“Patrícia, I’ll be one of the instructors in the next course you’re going to take.”

“Will you leave your wonderful work? Will you do it for me?”

“I love all forms of being useful. This work is temporary. After this course, I’ll

return to teach at the Higher Education Colony. I've wanted to participate in this course for some time. It's always a good idea to refresh and renew your knowledge."

"Frederico, I'm so grateful. I enjoyed working with you, and working at the school as well. I'll do it again, I'm sure."

Frederico smiled.

"Patrícia, it's good to enjoy working on many tasks and to learn about many ways to be useful. When you finish your courses, you'll be able to decide on what is best for you and for a greater number of persons."

Maurício gave me some tips on the course.

"Patrícia, you'll live temporarily in the residential section of the school, a part designated to students registered for this interesting course. In this course you'll learn more about the spiritual plane, its objective being to instruct discarnates on how to live spiritually and to familiarize them with everything: Colonies, Rescue Stations, the lower zones of the Umbral, assisting the spiritual work done with incarnates, etc. For those who have no knowledge whatsoever, the time spent on this course is very intense. For those with some knowledge, like yourself, it takes less time. Everything is well organized. There is a precise date to start and to finish. Yours will last nine months. It's a small group and you will have three instructors."

"Do all discarnates take this course?"

“They should or it would be the ideal if they did. Unfortunately, the percentage of those wanting to learn is small. After all, in order to take this course, they need to be well adjusted, conscious of their discarnate condition, wanting to be useful – and most importantly – they must love the spiritual plane.”

“Who will be taking this course with me?”

“The group is excellent and you’ll like all of them. You’re the one who passed over most recently. The others have been around here for years. Some are guardian spirits to incarnates, or aspire to be. They learn in order to guide them better. Others have worked at the Colony for a while, and now they have shown an interest in learning about the entire spiritual world.”

“Maurício, is this the only way to get to know the spiritual world?”

“No, this course is the easiest and the best organized method. Many workers get to know it by serving and doing rescue work. Anyway Patrícia, you won’t just watch – you’ll learn by participating and helping.”

I found out that my room would be occupied by another person. I had been there for such a short time. I knew I was going to leave it someday, so I was not sad. I thanked my grandmother’s lady friends with all my heart for the loving welcome. My violets would stay with my grandmother until I finished the course. Later I would take them to the School Colony where I would be going. My violets were beautiful and flowering. Contemplating them gave me even more reasons to learn and to continue to be happy. I took them to my grandmother’s room and placed them on her window sill. I would have small breaks during the course, when I would come to visit my grandmother and my

violets.

I packed some of my belongings to take to the campus. Whatever I thought was not needed, I left with my grandmother. At the scheduled time, Maurício came to get me. We walked side by side.

“Patrícia, my task with you ends today.”

“Maurício, I know you don’t like ‘thank you’s. Still, I tell you from the bottom of my heart: Thank You! I hope I didn’t give you too much trouble.”

“It was a pleasure! We became good friends and we will continue being good friends forever.”

We entered the school through a different gate this time. I knew that area, but at that moment it seemed so different, more beautiful somehow. I had come to this place to study, to be a student, and this made me feel different. I was curious to know about this famous course. I had heard much about it, while incarnate, but also during these months at the Colony. What would I really study? What fantastic things would I see and learn?

I felt so emotional that my heart started beating fast.

The End

■

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