

JOURNEY TWO

THE ART OF DARKNESS

I visualize myself in my mind's eye and fall way down. I am falling in a hollow-like energy shaft, stopping at the chakra points from third eye, throat, and heart through earth chakras. I see ropes that remind me of the luminous world of Carlos Castaneda... until deeply down... Suddenly, poisonous snakes attack me... as I struggle to get away in what I perceive to be a narrow passageway; bites at the neck send alarms of fear and dread pulsating through me. A voice, that I assume to be soul, says not to worry.

Soul once again makes her presence known, I can feel her presence, without image, and so she is an invisible voice. We go to soul's cave that I see as a sanctuary for soul. Since serpents have just bitten me, the Greek temple of Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine healing, enters me, and unknown terror fills me: I should not have come down this far alone, without allies. I am in a sanctified surrounding wholly other than what I know. I am in a part of psychic space where soul has residence and where I am not at home.

At the same time, I am asking myself are the serpents' bites an initiation, telling me "danger", "be cautious", "you can kill yourself"?

My possessing mind responds with "only you have the power to poison yourself," with hopeful skepticism. You are flesh, you have a flesh wound, and you are in the world of soul that is not flesh, where the wounds are those of soul, of psyche, of spirit, of the invisible realm. Take heed, I tell myself, that the ground you walk on, seemingly created by you in your imagination, was not created by you; rather, its nourishment and succor come from deeper parts of your being, which does not end with your flesh, does not have skin as foil, as your roots go miles deep into stratospheric steps.

Does everyone who enters these sanctuaries have to be initiated by soul? Otherwise, entrance is never opened. I want the entrance opened, but I realize that I must be awake, aware, attuned, alive, adventurous, daring, defensive, fast, and bring weapons for I have entered the forest of dreams that are not dreams and can be a beast of wilderness for the unwary, unwarned, and unarmed journeyman. I have been warned.

Also, the image of the Greek god, Hermes, appears to me as I flounder in the incomprehensibility. The serpents foretell of the need for Hermes, the swift, mercurial god, who is guide of souls, whose caduceus for healing medicine and contained, controlled, and directed energy are two intertwining serpents around chakra spines, topped by spreading wings.

Image of uroboros appears before me.

SOUL: This is how energy flows through where we are; it is an image of wholeness at both the beginning of incarnation and at the end of incarnation. Our soul's tongue that you are to be speech of and image out of is to figure how to incarnate the world you call "spirit" that lives in the whole of the universe in forms you cannot see, as you are wind tunnel energies that you intuit.

It is the art of darkness. You believe in me, you see me in sound, or you can lose faith or

even decide not to believe, as you did early in life or in Zen. I do not appear and you would not hear me though I am existing, visible and audible, hidden inside the energy images. Soul is so free flowing where one can be in two places at once and exist in one place: inside the visible lives the invisible. This is a reality that you have lived and know well. Inside images lives soul who would breathe life into images, and the deepest are the dark.

We will go there - deeper into the cave when you next visit my home - the residence where out of which you become what you are. (A loud noise.)

RON: What is that?

SOUL: You are transmission; you are the transmission I incarnate for creating the dark eros and dark light out of darkness. You, consciously, bring light that is inherent in the transmission and seen only at certain moments, nirvana and death, for you return to the space that gave birth to you in the womb of the tomb of other beings breeding lives.

Eros, I love. I am raised from the bottom of the sea to the top of the mountain by eros. I wield it in your uroboros. You bring love.

(I am flummoxed, don't know what to make of what soul has said, don't know what to say.)

(Movement of a large circle, large O appears.)

Wherever you are mandala, uroboros.

Soul merges you, mirrors you, makes love, makes eros alive so that the separateness and loneliness has stretching glue. Always whole - first key. Zen is right: always, glue, honey, stretch to close gap. Gap is fatal, separate.

You choose.

Power animals are not residing here in soul's cave. Later, they have teachings for you.

(Images appear: serpents: Eros: red berries: barberries (Rilke's poem is like the tail to the image as it suddenly comes to my mind): fish: orange, vibrant)

Learn to live them: first circle of the labyrinth, first circle of the spiral, to turn the Dharma wheel.

Lose yourself. Let go, shed yourself. Be scaleless. You must give up everything to enter me, be in the redwood forest of what you are really, and not fear, not flinch.

You are in danger and at the edge of the cliff - but you have experience of one who has broken and fallen and lost yourself. This time, consciously. (I feel gratitude, humbled; arms reach out instinctively toward soul.) You know the unconscious far more than your earlier peril. It is part of wider circle - you have the choice of realizing your original and conscious wholeness that are not necessarily the same.

Watch what you call "The Enchanted Being" that gives flavor to the beast, as you see it. Eros and fire and mountain dwarfs as soul sees it. (I had recently called the unconscious "The Enchanted Being," learning the name from an article on the Yaqui Indians of California. I thought the unconscious would want "a name," and this appellation was the best one I had encountered. I was wrong: unconscious never responded differently or with a need for a name. Of course, naming is a human linguistic creation to order the chaos, the chaos the unconscious apparently lives with without need for solid footing. It does not desire identity or being; rather, non-being, nothingness,

total darkness (none of which are evil) has as much sway, apparently.)

(We walk into dense bushes filled with mosquitoes, huge insects, and snakes biting at me.)

Wanting you to be food... (I do not respond.) Understand soul: you see soul as lifeless; soul is the energy form of food imaged to you. Could I take other forms? I have. You are at this stage.

I am not the mirror: you are reflection to reflect, to live as incarnating the immanent out of the invisible to the visible.

I am energy and mover of energy.

Inner Friend is that: he is the energy and the cosmic Enchanted Being who lives the energy images of soul, who ropes through to the cosmos.

RON: (river crossing) Another reality across the river, heading toward me. (I realize immediately the source of this image: an article on soul by Marion Woodman, Jungian therapist and analyst, entitled, "Waking the Soul," in Seeking the Sacred: Leading a Spiritual Life in a Secular World (Toronto, Canada: ECW Press, 2006), pp. 27-41: "A dreamer is walking through the woods, exhausted. The journey has been too hard, too long, and there were too many places where she fell down unexpectedly. Finally she gets to the river and she is thankful to find a boat. But when she looks across the river she sees exactly the same scenery on that side of the river. She says, "I can't do it. I cannot go any further. I've had it. I'm exhausted.' When she looks again she sees that there is a swath cut through the forest on the other side, exactly the same as the swath that she has cut on her own side. Who do you think cut that swath? Her soul is coming to meet her. As the dreamer looked more closely, she knew that whoever that great Presence is that holds this universe together was holding her together, trying to create a connection between them, a bridge. Every effort she made, every ambush she had fallen prey to -- her entire journey had been honored, mirrored on the other side. The metaphor of the bridge implies energy moving back and forth across a place of possible meeting, one frequency of energy moving across into another.")

(Wind responds, swift shifting, near, close...)

SOUL: Spirit wants anchor, wants juice, wants the spark that never dies once lit, but you must know flame, as you must live water in order to walk with soul on soul's journey through your mortal talisman bones of life.

Your first excursion into soul's cave: the vividness and vibrancy and juiciness and truth of your journey with soul rests with the intensity of your desire and vision and living to believe, to trust in the images that soul is though soul itself is not image and is always invisible but is the one who makes visible.

We flame, flare, merge & sear, separate with burns - merge to heal and to flower to be in eros with.

I am here to experience you. To understand how you experience life - to be in you in a way as you are in me and if you want to incarnate the cosmos that soul's energy brings to your life - and makes you whole - a world - a cosmos - conscious of itself - you make the journey. Your choice.

I see your bites. They tell me your history. They release your history. You must let the fire under your feet stay no matter the heat -- for earth's kindness is that the Enchanted Being has the healing that forest has.

SOUL: *I am Images.*

When you return, I am waiting.

For a first time, you went well.

I am a moon for you.

Later, soul's forest is waiting to enliven you.

Comments

Questions raised by the journeys with soul:

- 1) Were bites initiation, and, if so, why initiation by soul or in soul? What am I dying to and transforming into? Am I being taught new life?
- 2) Surroundings cave: I see that I have ignored the surroundings: I need to explore the landscape of soul, fill out just where I go to.
- 3) What is soul? What does soul? How does soul? How be with soul? Soul making?
- 4) Soul's history - need to ask, inquire and investigate, as it not my personal history. It is universal, cosmic and, so, how enters into and relate to ego? What are experiences of soul for they are not my experience? They are "other" but is the soul the other, another, both, neither? Does other appear as spiritual twin, doppelganger, in other people, or at other critical times? Is soul a daemon or is it far more, which I think is true, and can shape shift into voice and vision for person.

Soul Enters Dreams

The reciprocity that is psyche flows whereby what you bring you intensely into your focus of attention changes you so that you who posed the questions in your inner imaginal world are reshaped into the questions by the beings to which you asked the questions.

Dream state: awareness, suddenly... in dark charcoal gray black night cocoon... peer into the blackness of blackness like smoke covering the eyes, with no leeway... when soul says:

"Welcome to the soul's cave where you are metamorphosed into images, when you become images and forms and beings that you are and live in and live you. The imaginative screen is running your life."

Dreaming viewer responds, "Don't you form those images? Aren't we in your cave where you do your sculpting and forming?"

Soul replies, "The art of darkness I form, mold," to which I confess, "I am confused. We both make images?"

Soul answers, "Forming from darkness, consciousness has little foothold until soul can give the image and dance and voice. It strives for light. I do not strive for light. I am the creature of the darkness and am the lens on your beam when you crawl and learn the secrets that inhabit you."

(Explosions: arousing desires for awakening, dreaming viewer looks, sees many fires around soul's cave, invited to participate in the dream, walk to the campfires. Everyone becomes an island, entire of itself (echoes of John Donne poem, who I loved dearly in my youth, lost in the earth he thought he could conquer.) Large island alone.)

Upon waking still wet from the dream, I say, "Thank you for your kindness and, most particularly, your closeness, being inside what woke me in the middle of the night." I entered the dream as one of the dreamed, the ego realizing it is being dreamt and waking to another reality. Questions, questions, questions?

Reflection on Uroboros

Marie-Louise von Franz, in Individuation in Fairytales (Zurich: Spring Publications, 1977), p. 31-32, comments on what Donald Lee Williams in Border Crossings: A Psychological Perspective on Carlos Castaneda's Path of Knowledge (Toronto, Canada: Inner City Books, 1981, p. 112, says are the "creation and destruction of symbolic patterns of wholeness [that] is a frequent theme in the process of individuation." Von Franz elaborates on this theme:

People may draw mandalas of some kind and you have the feeling that in their active imagination they are dwelling in this mandala. You might think that the growth of the inner nucleus of the personality would grow as a tree does, always growing another ring. You could imagine that someone might draw a mandala in one way and then later differentiate it in some way, but it is not true. In general the dreams show that this is not directed by conscious tendency, but is always completely broken up and then rebuilt. It is as if nature produced a pattern of wholeness and destroyed it again in order to produce a more differentiated pattern.

Consequently, we have the experience of the labyrinth of the psyche, the spiral of the imaginative journey.