



LIVING IN THE MYTH OF

Psyche
Eros &

RON BOGGS

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PSYCHE AND EROS

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Entry

Living in the Myth of Psyche and Eros: When I first read the Myth of Psyche and Eros, I was in the throes of becoming what I read, living out in imaginal and, sometimes, real life the story that put together a coherent play before my eyes that would allow me to go on stage and act a part, any part, to be part of the drama, to be what I originally was in childhood at play, an actor. Not only did I become what I read, I became what I listened to and overheard so thin was the membrane of separation of the primary and the secondary process. I had not yet learned to use “epithets”, as a wise friend of mine had, to keep from falling into the primary process without rescue. He would under his breath exclaim his epithets in order not to fall in and get lost, as I so often did.

Once having read the literary telling by Lucius Apuleius of the The Golden Ass (or Metamorphoses) and various interpretations of the myth, I was attracted as by a magnet to the myth yet always made uneasy by the myth and whether it was a myth or just a later told tale by an Italian and unaligned author. Despite the apparent irrelevance to my life, the issues raised by my perpetual digging my own grave of disasters pried me open to the myth that had enough glue to pull energy out of the bottom of the sea and wave it through the journey from the realm of the gods to the ball bouncing of the ego.

Where was I? I sought clues as to where I was, as myths, as spelled out by James Hollis in Tracking the God: The Place of Myth in Modern Life, “represent the crystallization of basic experiences of life construed through various forms of imagery.” The story, which is how the human mind analogically organizes the cosmos as experience, and the images that the myth of Psyche and Eros became were like the unwinding of DNA into my imagination and heartwoods. It told of my experiences of life in images that burnt the fires from my wood clear into the chakra furnace. James Hollis explains well the atmosphere, weather, and world that lives you in myth so that images grow like spring from invisibility into visibility and like summer grow deeper and fuller into mystery and mystery revealed when you have learned to live inside its beating and terrifying heart. He says in Tracking the Gods:

Mythic images help us to approach the mysteries. Myth draws us near profound depths of love and hate, life and death-precincts of the gods, the mysteries, where categories of thought falter and slip into dumb-founded silence. Myth is a way of talking about the ineffable. ...Myth is a way of continuing the conversation when the awesome silence gathers. In theory and system one sees the language of mind; in myth one sees the incarnate language of the soul.

At the outset of Psyche’s adventure, psyche is the soul. In Greek, psyche is the word for soul. The Myth of Psyche and Eros is the divine transformation of the soul, from a human to an immortal, where the animal soul that despairs and goes in fits of depression to the verge of

suicide, persuaded from it by Pan and other active imagination figures and energies, is given the energies and purposes and vision and divine marriage that make of them a divine couple that mate in the deep psyche to insure the permanence of the change in the landscape into energies that make psyche one of active transformers of the world, not only a taoist soul. As Octavio Paz wrote, a turning point in Western Civilization had reared its head: dragon slayer or rider of the dragon. By the end of the tale, the bindings of soul with psyche have loosened so that the membranes separating the two and the incarnation and identity of each of these embodied cosmic energies become two differentiated entities: animal soul and psychic energies have differing abodes, yearnings, strugglings, sufferings, consciousnesses, loves and landscapes. Soul and psyche part company, have different histories, and eschatology. Soul becomes “the butterfly” whose nature energies threads from the long history of a different inner life and dark; psyche binds energies of human and divine love whose threads of beauty and terror map the earth’s terrain in and out of the human mind. Perhaps, with vision and perspective it is time to reunite psyche, soul, and butterfly. This thread would be so weaveable that a vessel forms for the Self so that the Self can enter into dialogue and companionship and combat with the ego.

Soul and spirit have a long history of conflict and innumerable differences between them, and the myth embodies one thread that unbraids the silk while braiding with thicker weaves. Quoting Hollis, in The Swamplands of the Soul on the difference between soul and spirit: “If soul is the purposiveness of life, the investment by nature in the individual, then spirit is the energy, the libido, the eros for the journey.” Psyche and Eros and Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, and Zeus, God of Thunder and father of Eros, and the helper of Psyche in her mortal to the death conflict, for Psyche, with Aphrodite. Four different energies threading through coupling and mortal yet civilizing combat, like energies of merging streams for turning the banks into containers for rivers to wholeness.

Complexes, which can be the result of internal traumas as well as from external ones, Jung discovered, could be created or attached to “moral conflict, which ultimately derives from the apparent impossibility of affirming the whole of one’s nature.” Psyche, and myself, both, found it impossible to affirm our life and the whole of our nature. By this moral conflict of inner objects that we would not live out but only live in the imagination we created the external conditions as our fate that reflected our inner life although we had no awareness of it as we acted in the throes of upheaval, downfall, and self destruction. (See Jung’s writing on fate.) Look at the myth as a fairy tale, and the story as the inner life of Psyche; look at my life at the time as a mythical one whose life events were seamless generations of inner life and history that can be read as a fairy tale whose primitive, primal logic and erotic fervor and moral mortal combat and life lessons learned and refused make sense (psychic sense) of the bone shuddering heart attack that struck where the roots of the world tree grasp out its urgencies of fate’s eros, unwinding and unbinding the threads by which I had hung myself and enspiriting a new life lived ensouled by the dark vessel of Hermes. Out of these tales, Psyche and I came to live out the axis mundi, where the ego-self axis begins like flint on flint to light darkness with fits of spiritual yearnings and desires and the soul carrier to bring you deeper into the yearnings so that it becomes the food feeding you. You are not alone,

never have been, but it is not the god or gods of history although there are tracings. Awe and wonder. You are inside of mystery before you are aware of your location and its existence, whose beauty brings you in but whose strange nature and land, like a dream, disorient, disrupt, make each thought crags where death lurks always, loosens bodily bindings so that familiar becomes strange: self takes the image of Psyche, the anima, in order to be the story you are “lost” in for only by being lost can the taoist, no footprint left behind, soul be in a state where earth will come to you of its own accord, as nature has lived in you for thousands of ancestors.

The self loves beauty. Combining both vivifying energies, love and beauty, activates its resources in the psyche, drawing the Self out into living Psyche in active initiation of its images and life. Another story line of the Myth of Psyche and Eros is, thus, transformation of the soul and spirit needed to meet in the green meadow of the true meaning of inner beauty and how only with the coming alive in the psyche, along with its companion, terror, can the ego-self axis be awakened out of the dark, “dragon bred”, sleep of the guileless and innocent to be in combat and arm to arm dialogue with the Great Dragon, who is ever demanding and circling, wanting the beauty attracting it out of its lair to give it what it craves: attention, devotion, love which is beauty. Consciousness concentrated on the Self that it may feed and elaborate on its inner journey that you have the choice to join and reject. The Self will react accordingly. Suffer the tears of terror and the eclipsed landscape. Once you turn inward, as the Buddha said, the attention you give to your buddha nature fires the light of the beginnings of the spiritual journey, the survival from which is no where possible and improbable. We must learn to breathe in dragon’s breath.

So this is the third story line I find compelling out of mutual history with the myth, having lived the soul’s curative powers in my healing the simultaneously thundered and lightning struck tree that had split open by splitting apart to reveal emptiness and echoes, like out of the beauty box, demons, gods, goblins, dwarfs, spiritual masters, creative artists, animas, shadows, personas, stories and myths spewing out in gushes of water jettisoned energies and terrors that turned me into a paranoia horn, obsessing and distressing in a new world, one I began to call the real “new world” discovered by journeys to new continent. Divine transformation of the soul, how inner beauty like an artist draws to you as second skin, as doppelganger, as your twin, who has a whole world you know nothing of (and we call it consciousness? and our strivings, moral?). The transformation of inner beauty is Psyche’s overall task so that she opens the Beauty Box, that the Far-Looking Tower warned her not to, and swoons into unconsciousness, becomes the image of the divine beauty, the daughter, Persephone, Queen of the Underworld, reborn as mother, Demeter. Eros awakens her, as Psyche had previously rudely awakened him, with renewed spirit and completion of the pregnancy, bringing out into the world the inner beauty Psyche displayed in the form of everyone’s daughter who has lived and gone what she has gone through, birthing a daughter named “Joy”. The third story line is one that is not obvious on first or second reading: the awakening of the ego-Self axis and how that activation happens and what the intent is of this different type of threading of existence. In other words, how you become the richness of your inner life and the inner images living you so that you are the four seasons and realize their tellings of reality to you. Truth then becomes a testing stone for your journey. Everyone one is the stories

and lives in moral depths that the spiritual storms leap out of you, usually involuntarily, into what has secretly been growing in you, a secret even to yourself until the evidence reveals the truth, you are the soul's vessel, and its healing power, weather the terrifying dark bleak unblinking nights. You realize a whole soul is a compass for the journey you never learned to read and ignored for outer education and fulfillment as you were ignorant, arrogant, and spiritually and psychologically blind. Then, like Buddha, you learn compassion for all that you threw away and lost because they only shape shifted into other energies trying to open you to the terrible splendor of the universe. Compassion learns you lessons you never knew existed. You were educated, but you had no knowledge despite your most vehement protests to the contrary.

Questions? We are in the religious dimensions of the Psyche, for this is where the spiritual engine of continual skin scratching dissatisfaction with everything, everywhere despite the beauty in front of you every day, pulls you, when you think that you are being pushed by yourself, like the little engine that could, into "Sacred Chaos." Until the days when the spiritual itch either wears itself out and you are in anomie for years as you are being replanted or the itching is so ferocious that you have to dig deeply into your skin, your neck, your heart, your balls, as it never ends: you scratch yourself until red with the swelling welts of many demons dancing in your skin chakras: you are on the edge of the cliff. Your fate is no longer in your hands, but your fate, as the myth shows, is never foreordained or determined as the resources of Psyche are so abundant and rich that choices always fly up, as the eagle did, to complete the task. The moral vision you exercise is not between life and death, for death in Psyche and with soul is natural and enamoring, but between using the richness of the soul to ravel the world into a story or unravel the weave and woof into chaos. When you get there, it is the "sacred", the gods, god, sacrifice, numinosity, the self, the image of the god, the synchronicities that surround you that like the sun brings out the planted roots from seeds to blossom, that the "fragile" ego encounters, hopefully in a sealed container, the pregnant, secret questions that the Inner Presence asks of you in the valley made to meet and talk.

Are the sacred energies infusing humankind for thousands of years too numinous, powerful, chaotic, enveloping, dark, primitive, animal for the human mind and heart to deal with because these powers and inflictions and healings are too powerful for the "ego" to fold together so that it cannot overcome, is destroyed, driven crazy or insane, becomes schizophrenic, hews to splitting, etc. the little speck that we are? Or because the ego and our other resources are too small, too limited by the evolved mind and psyche that the avenue, openings, flows, imaginative stage, heart work and the needs of the dark cough of incubation of evil for the whole earth so that virtually any of the more powerful, sacred infusing through us have a difficult, winding, chaotic journey through a too small passageway we have evolved to survive but not to catch the universe in the way it could be caught if we had different apparatuses? Are we too small or narrow or too unconscious of spiritual beings to image and live the energies that earth's nature has grown into our very core, as Jung says, our rhizome, or are the sacred energies too robust, powerful, shaping and chaotic for us spiritual beings to incubate and incarnate except in the most religious of ways? That is, spiritual and religious are not the same practices: one is individual and says there never is any salvation and one is communal and through the species instinct grasps for salvation.

From this perspective, we have only begun our spiritual journey by taking the first step, and the spiritual and religious practices and groups are like rivers flowing who have asked the questions of the cosmos from the human perspective when we are not the center of the universe and should be asking of the reality of the cosmos that we manifest. My answer is spiritual freedom that like the freedom in every other human endeavor threads with the highest aspirations of the heart muscle exercising the attention of the mind deep into the mysteries of the organism. Since my tentative answer is freedom, the proliferation of ideas and images can abound, gods are not fixed but bring eternal change into living beings, moral and ethical visions and guides must at their roots have no tyrannical or inherent blight that sanctions the mass diseases that have afflicted the religions of the world. Humans, in other words, are not here to be saved or to worship gods, for there may be a god or no god or imperial suffocators of the earth; rather, we are a journey of discovery to explore with consciousness the nature of the cosmos and every living being to ask of the cosmos, in, yes, our limited way and vision, what it needs of us and wants of us to shape the sky wide energies that live in us that opens our seasons into spiritual homes that accomplish aspirations that are truly singularly communal, in freedom and compassion. Part of this is Jung, of course, but the rest comes from my direct experience, especially of Zen and rejection of the Christian religion, not necessarily of the insights of Jesus of Nazareth.

Buddha gave insights into suffering and how to end suffering from his direct experience. The Myth of Psyche and Eros is as well a story of suffering Psyche, as well as Love, Soul and Spirit, and how they communicate and shape from within themselves the resources to end the suffering in divine marriage. The myth is a direct story of the source of suffering that the Buddha said was the origin of suffering: the mind from which everything flowed though in our ignorance we could not see we were the origin of the stream and the stream's images and ideas so diffusing, projecting, emotionally unclaimed and cliffed were we humans that we lived in a world we made and forgot we did and also lived in a world we did not make (nirvana, satori, original mind) and thought out of existence so that we thought we made the world that we did not make, as we enter a larger stream when we are resilient and pliable and bodily strong swimmers and breathers.

From the beginning of the story, Psyche has her own inner beauty and knew that that inner beauty was more important than outer beauty. Those societal tellers of tales who spread the word that Psyche was more beautiful than the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite, and fed the goddess' jealousy, initiates the action in the story. What she is innately, what seasons she would be in their abundance and natural setting, blossoms in her while the society seeks to limit her role to one of competitive beauty. How would she become what she was, not just a creature of nature or of society? Inner beauty is one of the most energetic and aromatic attractors activating the Self and the growth of the imaginal plantings that bring the Great Dragon out of its lair into forms amenable to shape shifting images and discussion, growing the dark and light, the beauty and the terror, in mutually cultivated fields, valleys, mountains, and gardens.

I.

“PSYCHE, ON THE HIGH CRAG”

Psyche, on the high crag, dressed in funeral black, an alchemical color in which she will be inside of for much of the ashen story, placed there by her royal parents, following the insistence of the Oracle, the first inner messenger we meet who knows the spiritual history whose encoding Psyche is about to play out, who tells the King that if he wants his daughter married like her two older sisters, he must place where we find her to meet her bridegroom, whose dragon origin conjures monster images from the Oracle but significantly not from Psyche. At the top of crag, the first of many abysses that simulate depression, despair, hopelessness, she speaks out to those who grieve for her apparent distress. You should have grieved for me when you proclaimed me a second Aphrodite, she declares, displaying the inner beauty and resources in the face of societal terrors that rip people apart as well as the natural terrors of journey. Though still young and innocent, she looks inward to the key to her true reality. (Many works articulate and translate the Myth of Psyche and Eros as originally told by Apuleius. See, also, Octavio Paz, The Double Flame: Love and Eroticism and Jean Shinoda Bolen’s cogent retelling of the myth and a Jungian analysis of it on Sounds True Recordings, Boulder, Colorado, 1992, “The Myth of Eros and Psyche.”)

How soul becomes psyche and, then, transforms into butterfly, divine erotic attracting beauty ingrained out of one’s own inherent patterned psychic life, starts with the soul’s experience inside the human mind where none of the wholeness that drives soul is present at the beginning of Psyche’s journey down green valleys and up black mountains. Except the unwinding thread of the urge through the labyrinth and the threading thrown out as the rope of yearning.

“As above, so below,” goes the alchemical motto, pertinent as Aphrodite, as Dr. Jean Shinoda Bolen has emphasized, is the alchemical goddess. “As within, so without,” would be a phrase for spiritual incubation and practice. Psyche becomes pregnant, alchemically transforming her body to bring new life, creativity, her daughter, Joy, into the world. “As heard, so spoken,” tells soul’s journey to echo back. “As transformed, so transformed” ego and Self display their images on stage. Body, soul, spirit, and Self go through transformation in the myth.

What has been left out: the imaginal heart? Thomas More, in his work, Dark Nights of the Soul, speaks of

*the truth of things can only be expressed aesthetically-in story,
picture, film, dance, music. Only when ideas are poetic do they reach
the depths and express the reality.*

He goes on to explain in the image of the American poet, Wallace Stevens, that the poet is

*‘a man of glass, who in a million
diamonds sums us up.’ You have that*

*capacity within you to be the poet
of your experience. Your dark night
may help make you into a person of
glass, transparent and readable.*

Psyche is a poet, an artist, whose experiences and the images out of whose roots those experiences are born and bear fruit and are plucked from the trees or vines. Once more, beauty's splendor threads with "a dark luminosity" following the ancient alchemical tradition of the "Black Sun."

*Imagine a black sun at your core, a dark luminosity that is less
innocent and more interesting than naive sunshine. That is one of the
gifts a dark night has to offer you.*

When we first hear Psyche speak, when she first emerges out of her societal family whose royal energies of King and Queen, mother and father, initiate her in order to marry her, laboring to bind her into a mirror of who they are, as her two older sisters have done when they married royalty. But draped in the black funeral dress that signifies her death to her social role, she stands on the crag of the first mountain of the story, where, what we today would call, her vision quest begins as she leaves the kingdom filled with royal energies, energies so adeptly and richly described in the many works of neo-Jungian psychoanalyst Dr. Robert L. Moore, Jungian psychoanalyst. She descends into soul making and soul work.

What world are we entering? Who or what is bringing us into that world? Where are we located? How do we tell how to go ahead?

Death is who her parents sadly believe she will marry as Psyche's body is draped as her persona's shadow, which will die, out of which the shadow will emerge to integrate what she had rejected. But this myth is one where death is always at the boundary (boundary stands for core experience living outside of the ego) as she leaps from the cliff, proof of her young courage and her willingness to descend and to die. She willingly descends into the lair of the dragon, the image of the dark self in the myth. The wind gives her buoy on her descent into the unknown country, placing her in a green meadow (greenness is the color of Aphrodite, according to Edward Edinger) with a path to castle like structure with walls filled with jewels and crystals, beauty and splendor of the external world but also the hint of the treasure hard to find of many later fairytales, as amplified in Edward Edinger's, Ego and Archetype.

We are in the middle of an ancient myth, going back thousands of years to a sacred story evolved from the followers of Isis, the Egyptian god of fertility, as well as the Greek mythology of Demeter and Persephone. Being in the middle of an ancient psyche, and being opened to the boundlessness of liminal space, it is reality of living tale telling true that the wind takes her on her descent. This is not a disembodied spirit entering her life; it is one of the primitive and ancient of the gods whose history goes through Greece, through Egypt, the wind god, Hermes, who is also the

god of liminality, the creator of landscape and space, the boundary maker and crosser, and the guide of souls into the underworld as well as the bastard son of Zeus. According to the work of Murray Stein, who has written impressively on Hermes, this swift god creates and defines space in the world and psyche, both the vertical(upper and lower) and horizontal(inside and outside) worlds:

Archetypally, we can see in the image of Hermes a mythical statement psyche's innate tendency to give definition to perceptual and mental horizons, to mark edges, to define spaces. ...Beyond the boundary lies the unknown, the uncanny, the dangerous, the unconscious....

Stein continues his astute observations,

Hermes standing at the boundary marks a psychological and sometimes a moral limit and calls special attention to the space being entered or left. When he first appears, he may create a new space by dividing a vast horizon into the 'here' and the 'beyond,' and thus he creates both consciousness and a new unconscious. His intervention in the perceptual and psychological field creates new possibilities for consciousness, also new edges and boundaries beyond which lie the mysterious 'others.'

Hermes, Stein explains, is a god on Mt. Olympus, whose ancient and territorial displays bring us to

...his connection to the source of life, to archetype and instinct, to the self. Hermes states creativity. ...the presence of the erect phallos of Hermes' monuments has to do with his deep and indeed essential association with the instinct of creativity.

The wind god ties together body, soul, self, and imaginal creativity messengering new landscape, new psychic world, and new language, a tribute to this communicative poetic and metaphoric god. His history begins at birth as inventive, playful, creative, cunning, and joyful child, able to challenge even his most potent brother, Apollo.

Psyche's descent into the valley portrays her deflation, her depression, her morbidity and suicidal tendencies, and disorientation: so that the darkness of the dress she wears is the desperation and despair that await and engulf her yet her face, representing who she really is in her inner life, remains uncovered, open, free, exposed, a light, a beacon, a resource, a skill, a device, a god tool to fend her way in the deepening dragon's lair, where darkness and its shadowy realm reign.

The night before I was to begin this part of the myth the following dream incubated me into a larger, more delicious succulence(as the soul tells me here what to write) that images Psyche's descent into the underworld. The dream follows its course:

I and another person are watching a scene.

Four to six female animal handlers wearing light brown uniforms guide a huge green gila monster across stage. The monster attacks the females guiding and tending to him. The monster bites into them. We see that one of the guides being bit into pieces and having arms and various part severed from her body. It looks like severed humans, like in various shamanic and mythological stories. I and the person who are watching this scene play out are horrified by it. We cannot believe what we are seeing. We, also, realize that we are watching television.

I think in the dream, "Is this the new reality show?" Awake.

So succulent is the liquid inside of this dream that it will feed me for years.

Right now, psyche's descent into "the dark night of the soul" leaves the fluorescence of the dismemberment she experienced on the way down to the green valley an initiation into coloration of the dark self permanently imaged on her new reality. I was in disbelief in my dismemberment and its illumination tracing through my life, like the forming of a new alchemical life to bear a child, as I stepped off the cliff and had no idea where I was, where I was going, or why I was pushed and pulled to begin. I knew only I wanted to wake from the dream, but it was no dream. It was the new reality.

I needed new eyes to see the new reality, to really be awake. And to wrestle with the monster of the dark self that had awakened me and would not be denied or assuaged or deanimated. I would never again would be alone, Hermes would always be with me, as would the Inner Presence. Psyche would never be alone though she did not yet know that new reality. In addition, the frame of the mythological, like the frame of the television in the dream, the vision birthing us is cosmological and archetypal so that the path we take, the decisions we make, the figures and gods we awake and who dream us change the nature of the reality and world we live in, usually, without our at first being aware of its presence and appearances, for ignorance is at first imperative in order not to die from fright. As Jung says, what we do with our consciousness is the decisive factor in the fate of the universe. And as Zen remonstrates, there is no permanent, unchanging self, the monsters you see are the monsters you create.

Walls speak to Psyche in the first of a number of active imagination scenes, and from whom she receives help, guidance from jewel encrusted walls, enclosing the treasure hard to find and the inner beauty of fairytales and life, and the home of her bridegroom. The light sparkles and

dazzles and the meadow of green plants, grasses, and flowers, and in the plainness of weeds hint of the precious jewels, like the Hymn of the Pearl, and abundance or “greatness we allow ourselves to see in our own souls.” Robert Bly, in his telling of a northern tale similar to Psyche and Eros, eschews the psychological stakes in the story over “infantile grandiosity,” for the mythological stakes of “true grandness, the fragrance of greatness in us, the true gold of grandiosity.” Psyche, and we, have been transported by Eros Hermes, with his magician energies, into a territory, another domain, not amenable to the human royal energies. We find ourselves inside a sacred story because according to Bly “the images...resonate in some holy place.” (Bly, p.88)

When I first read the story in the midst of my debacle, I was, like Psyche, without any eros, connections, relationships. I was an isolate. And I could not see anything “sacred”.

Night envelopes us completely now, not just the bodily night worn by Psyche. Inside the walls, it is darkness, secrets reign. Psyche’s bridegroom, Eros, and she make love in the dark as she is told by Eros that she must not look on him. Psyche, in other words, is in the dark not only in her relationship with her marriage partner, who is the son of her enemy, Aphrodite, and in how love is more than two shadows dancing in the sheets. As many commentators have observed, she is in an unconscious state relating to true erotic relationships and the nature of love. Psyche, as well, cannot see the sacredness that entwines mortals with the self and the images of sacred energies that palpitate around her dark lovemaking connecting her not only in her loins but in all other parts of her. We must enter the phase of black gold and live there before we rise up, like kundalini energy, into the sacred realm, where we are initiated by the very experiences that threw us out of the dark womb of love.

Creative darkness perhaps might be a good description of nothingness, where the knot of consciousness, its light, can be untied and recombined, thereby birthing consciousness in continuous changes: the conception of birth, the birth and chaos of creativity, the womb of the other consciousness presently called the unconscious, the light of the stage that show imagination’s images and shadows.

These features show the alchemical black of alchemy is incubation inside the alchemical darkness of the egg before it is pierced by the fiery sword of the intense and apprehensive alchemist, where death occurs as birth occurs and the soul true beauty gestates.(See Michael Maier’s emblems in his *Atlanta Fugiens*, published in 1617, at Gilchrist, [The Alchemist’s Path](#), xiv.) Alchemy expresses in its images and practices this creative darkness:

This whole Cosmos...is full of Life. And there is nothing therein, through all Eternity, neither of the whole nor of its parts, which doth not live.

For not a single thing that is, or has been, or shall be in this Cosmos, is dead.

(GILCHRIST, IBID, P 30, QUOTING THE DIVINE PYMANDER OF HERMES TRISMEGISTUS).

Half of the Yin-Yang swings, swinging the other half of the inside food for the psyche, and alchemy's extravaganzas, like Jung's esoteric and trippingly languaged insight pulled out of the ever "fertile darkness" of the Archetypal Self, and Zen's enlightenment into plainness and everydayness and nothingness and absences and not-selves open the nut to swing until we step out of the history we were born into and into spiritual journeys that address the mysteries that wrap us in darkness. The mysteries await with space enough to bounce the questions in order to give creative birth to the ones that really matter: tell you true, tell you reality, tell you freedom, tell you soul's story, tell you how you are what you are by how you have been made up, and feed you on humankind's food it has to cook over millennia to be more than breather on this planet. We must be this earth if we are to be large enough and with enough spring and summer roots of darkness to grow a worthwhile meadow and world.

After a night of lovemaking, Eros is gone before the first blush of dawn. What other gods conjured into darkness, where the Self has the sacred space to transform? Did Eros want to be sure Psyche would imagine him as he wanted to be seen since he controlled the dressing and coverings and she would not be dazzled by his beauty or his immortality? Did he want to be loved for his own true self, also? He got his way, he controlled, he overawed, but the price was Psyche's innocence and lack of discernment, a price eventually Psyche found too high to pay.

Spiritual darkness is the psychic space from within which we wrestle with unknown beasts, where the god is in disguise and we do not recognize the issues that stake our lives and our next unknown step deeper into inner psyche, more spacious than space and more powerful, as mysterious as that sounds, and from urges of testosterone and hormones that slap the flesh into frenzy sweat clouds that perpetuate the species with a brief taste of ecstasy to whet the appetite for the spiritual ecstasy. The couple builds a mountain that they must climb in the dark. Or light. The choice is theirs to make, as it is ours to make.

Birth of love consummated by sexual union made dark by the necessity of mating mortal and immortal parts of our being, a mystery we feel with bony fingers to explore along the carpet of bodily ecstasies we become the roots to shamanic type journeys into the territory of soul and spirit and their spiritual lovemaking and warfare. The sensuous skin resistance as you move along a lover's thighs or breasts wants it to last forever. To paraphrase William Wordsworth in another context about the same territory, we get imitations of immortality.

There are many entry points; any point can be an entry point. Plus, Psyche asks the Zen beginner's question: don't know?

Once asked and in a receptive mood, there will be replies and more, don't knows.

Significantly, night is her first initiation into spiritual union, merger. Night looks like a cloud, covering up the light of the sun, at first; night is alive with the yin-yang of pregnant light, an

endarkenment, that fills space with different realities with which we need to wrestle with and come to moral and ethical as well as spiritual terms. Darkness is the ink; light is the pen. She will urge herself to return to the union and merger. While this will spur her journey, there will be choices she makes in darkness and in light: merger with the Self, divine marriage with the Self, or conscious relationship that transforms the ego and transforms the Self whose erotic relationship connects Psyche's inner story and history with the evolving cosmic story and history out of the parochialism of mortality and the ambiguity of immortality. The question changes from "Why are we here?" to "What has humankind done to justify their existence to the cosmos? What have they created, gifted, and shared that the cosmos has not done to end suffering and nurtured conditions that births compassion throughout the cosmos?"

Psyche cannot see Eros; her love is blind. Given that it is Eros who grows wings to passions and sensual fullness to body and echoes vibrations awakening soul to become enamored of another we must imagine the dark shadowless wounding of the heart that he inflicts into the body of Psyche or it is his lust for her he shrouds in darkness. No shadows; the imagination is given free rein, as if we were inside of the womb of night as love, its joys and pains, conceived in dark among the stars, briefly for an eternity. Psyche lacks vision, and she is a world whose energies, figures, staged events, gods, synchronicities, and demons can crack her daemon and split forever her being where the onrush of spiritual immortality that she is unprepared for may cause a permanent flood and night cloud of consciousness. She needs to see in the dark with the tools of the dark, a different tale, or with the tools of light.

Eros tells Psyche that she must keep when she visits her sisters his and her secrets, their unshared and shared, unrevealed and revealing love. One secret involves his identity; of course, she does not know who he is, she lacks the truth. So she will have to tell a story to her sisters that lies and thereby tells the truth and is revelatory. The second secret is one where she must teach herself to learn how to delineate between herself and her surroundings, for both Eros and she are being conceived anew in that darkness made pregnant by a god's and human's lovemaking, for she is pregnant. Eros tells her that if she reveals the secret that she is pregnant their child will be born mortal. If she keeps the secret, their child will be born immortal. Having a child is a form of immortality, the continuation of the genes of the family and species. Looking alike, down the ages. Being a mother, she would look on the child as precious beyond compare, loved, in normal circumstances. Mythology, however, nourishes the soul at boundaries and in the core where we are not who we think we are when we first fall of the cliff. Eros and Psyche had conceived love out of the rejoining of "the animal soul and the spiritual soul", and that rejoining is a mythological theme, according to Bly, in "Story Food."

Having secrets has been one of humankind's most contagious growths. Eros encourages Psyche's inner life, her differentiation from the outside, as well as living her own life, her own history, her own and her child's and love's uniqueness for her imaginative life is now different from every other human on earth yet archetypally similar to every other human on the earth. The imaginal and secret life of humans that percolate and live in the unrevealed and psychically charged back stages of the imagination where killings, murders, loves, hatreds, sexual lusts, wars,

cannibalism, taboos, and all the weakness and strengths humankind are prone to have free reign and can when conditions are right force the individual to live out the imaginative energies inhabiting the person. Psyche can live out some of those imaginative energies or, given direction by her quest and the secrets, she can learn to discern herself in the world that lives behind the world: dark secrets, sudden deaths, unknown gods, jumping off cliffs, love between human and god without identifying with the god (a key to Psyche's maturity), a child at the mercy of the courage of her mother, of a Psyche whose erotic rebirth and love share enough of herself that the scattered resources of a Psyche become a story inside of the story. As Bly, once again, has astutely observed, following along the lines of the psychoanalyst, Heinz Kohut, that "without genuine grandiosity, personalities fragment" in Psyche's time and in contemporary culture as "there just isn't enough gold to hold the pieces together." Psyche begins her adventures without genuine grandiosity as she has no erotic relationship with the whole of her being that can weave a wholeness that shines out divine gold.

II.

“PSYCHE’S BLISSFUL STATE”

Psyche’s blissful state, as Dr. Bolen describes it, cannot last. She visits her sisters, Jealousy and Envy, her blood relations that are love’s natural emotional companions. “The kernel of all jealousy,” Jung insighted, “is lack of love.” This lack of love can be extended to envy by way of projection onto others who have what you do not have manifested in your life. Psyche has been in the realm of the magician and the lover, where the energies of disguise and darkness are productive of reorganizing the energies of her life for, significantly, she emerges from darkness of her honeymoon, full of the honey of eros and under the influence of the pregnant moon. Inner life grows within her. She enters a world of light that does not cohere with the honey of eros.

She brings her sisters gifts, which her sisters hide. In the darkness, love has been conceived and is incubating; Psyche expresses one of the virtues that love gives birth to: gift what you have been given, learn that lesson if you are to be in relationship with the Inner Self, share with others the beauty that can heal, since how we heal the psychic wounds remain a mystery to humankind. Gifting what she has been given, the inner jewels and riches can grow within Psyche. How are the riches of abundance spread?

The world of beauty where she meets her sisters, the world of light is the opposite of the world of night. Her sisters tell of the kings they have married, who are the opposite of Eros: old misers who hoard and will not share their riches. Psyche’s story in the light is the lie that tells the truth of what she has discovered in the night, the opposites are sun and moon, night and light, white and black, yin-yang has again shifted in balance. There is not one without the other, neither or one or both are good and evil. Psyche’s story draws not from royal energies but from warrior energies that for the first time enter the myth. Hunter with his bow and arrow feeds his family, a human version of Eros, an attribute Psyche will sorely need, as she will soon be a huntress seeking to satisfy her hunger through the forests seeking the lost Eros, in need of food and spiritual nourishment to survive the tests she must endure to mature. Psychically, when hunger of the most basic kind and its related sibling, spiritual hunger, make a hunter of your existence soul will nurture you to hunt and find the food you require and did not know you needed. But only if you stoop low enough and turn your face toward the earth and lay yourself out so that your ear’s funnel attunes to the almost silent and whispered voice of soul.

Her sisters blister her story, so Psyche tells other stories of who her husband is, but they accuse her of not knowing to whom she is married. They remind her of the Oracle:

Psyche would marry someone not human, a monster, and she would not know it. We, just like Psyche, are in the dark and don’t know whether her husband is human or not, a monster or not. Does something live in us that is not human and may be a monster? Does something live in us that would kill us without compunctions? What does monster mean?

We next move into the revelatory scene that Octavia Paz called a turning point in Western Civilization, and it is one that has gathered a plethora of distinguished illumining interpretations

and guidances by poets, scholars, Jungians, Freudians, mythologists, and archetypalists whose shoulders, to use a soon to be pregnant phrase, I stand upon so I can use their dark and light and tao and yin-yang weavily changing balancing for we are talking to ourselves, telling ourselves what the Psyche that lives us and in which we live is, is not, and is and is not. Soul always is listening and, like moist earth, absorbing, and in the night sounds are heard more distinct and reach farther into the depth of the forest, where the eyes of darkness, as well as the waves of light carry consciousness so soul, as earth's ear, turns suffering and joy, death and life into poems that sing with fervor the very moment of movement inducing opening our morning eyes.

Two sisters fester into oil lamp and knife, each related, as Psyche, having lived briefly in darkness, learned enough of absorbency, a necessary trait to learn to teach oneself the ways of the world, spiritually, soulfully, psychically, and energetically as well as archetypically, to turn raw love-loveless based emotions- into tools of discovery. The question is will she drown in those absorbed emotions? As I've said, there are many entry points, and Psyche has entered the voyage at a rubbing raw grease spot without salve to sooth the doubt of not knowing, and creating monsters in the imagination out of the dark in response to our history as an animal species. What she does, she does naturally, as a Psyche. What happens, however, does not happen naturally. For we enter another world: Psyche has turned inward, her skill to be who she is is dependent on her ego's ability to open vision with the light of consciousness and cut through light and dark into discriminating reasons. Like other western myths, she enters the dark lair of the dragon and imagines that she may have to kill the monster in her fear.

Unlike other western myths, she does not find a monster. Or does she? And she opens more deeply up as ego discovers that someone else far more powerful than it is "It," and that they live in the same darkness. Or do they?

As Psyche stands over sleeping Eros, with the knife, like the butter knife I carried that caused major disturbances and reverberations echoing throughout my descent and my mind was a cutting friend, slicing me up into discriminating pieces, lopping off any relationships and from the whole that had once been a piece of the mountain but continually rolled downhill into boulders, stones, pebbles, dirt and dust, until I was at the bottom of the stream whose flooding washed me into the depths of the ocean, where Poseidon in the dream came to me to transform me, which is where Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, goes after her rage and anger at Psyche and Eros at the beginning of our myth.

As Psyche stands over sleeping Eros, with the oil lamp shining through the darkness that Eros had enshrouded her in we stand poised between darkness and light, foreground and background, and consciousness and unconsciousness at the moment of revelation, just, as centuries later, in a dream of Dr. Jung's as he walked through a stormy, wind filled night, cupping a candle of consciousness, to protect it from going out so important was consciousness and so vast the darkness and the perils of the night. His work amplified on this image. My light went out in a moment of falling off the cliff; the skills to turn it on and into a candle, then a fire, a lamp, a lighthouse, a beacon, a dark sun, a moon, a sun I searched arduously through many stormy, windy nights, walking endless nights, until many intellectual, psychological, and spiritual sources became

a stream running into the works of Dr. Jung and his experienced psychic tool masters and the Zen masters who trained in and against the stream on the belief that the mind is a skill making heart that can learn and unlearn ways of knowing and being and, like the Tao, enter darkness and the void and be, after a long journey, where we were when we began the journey, in the original mind, though we did not know it, and now with the moon trained eyes of darkness. We, always, had what we were searching for, and, as The Buddha said, only by looking inward, not outward or to anyone else or thing or religion or movement, can you gift yourself to your life and let the lotus in the muddy water open to reveal who you really are, and aren't and can never be. So black; so bright.

Bly, once again, in "Story Food," succinctly, pulls together the works of Marie-Louise von Franz and Erich Neumann, as well as many others, on the myth's reverberations and intriguingly drawing in of psyche by Psyche to create an interior space of story and image building tools and image making.

The lifting of the lamp, and the distress it causes, is famous in mythological and psychological commentary. Almost all commentators agree that the lifting of the lamp is related to the soul's intention to increase its consciousness; some relationship that has earlier been allowed to remain 'in the dark' becomes illuminated. In human life this illumination often causes the relationship to end. A break occurs, which is painful in the extreme. So the story asks what the soul is willing to pay for increased consciousness. That is a proper theme for the sacred story.

Soul's courage in the face of the terrors of the untamed imagination and in the face of possible loss of its love cuts through the underbrush of terror to give light, if not hope, to her imaginal heart.

As she looks on her husband, she finds...not a monster, but the most beautiful of young men, physical splendor in form, a god, not only a god, but a god with the bow and arrows and wings of a god, a god with the power to inflict pain in the heart, love's needle and threading into mythological story to despair, and so wings, like the wings of the messenger god, Hermes, to, like the shaman bird, energize and enliven and invigorate, to soar and be in ecstasies and fantasies of lover's nests. Wings, bird's heads, erect phalluses, antlered and energized head voltage, and serpent's spine of earth's total terror and joy are the soul's drawing, creating of us out its own ethereal substance to show us how it is in the world that we may see and be seen by the universe and know we are one with it. Soul's story told teach us to learn true speech, true art. In short, Eros, god of love, her lover, who makes mortals, like Psyche, fall irresistibly in love, as he did with Psyche. That story has ended with the revelation of Eros. Psyche sees Eros for what he really is; she, however, has no experience of how eros yearns, pulls, evaporates, springs forth, weaves the unweaved, lacerates, lashes, demands, sulks, invites waterfalls and cliff diving all for the eros of eros, so self-immolating can this fire be and burn and free. Her enamored with him becomes conscious as she falls in love with the incarnation of the beauty, drawing out of Psyche's darkness the beauty that had a

home in her deep mountainous crags and recesses.

Did she see a monster? Yes and no. The yin-yang paired heart changes balance.

Beauty is the monster is one way of looking at the foolishness that the mind and heart deal out as fate to young lovers, seducing them to perpetuate the species, to immerse themselves into seas of misery, hate, jealousy, envy, fighting with shadows, and murders and lusts and rages and angers. But beauty as monster, here, is living in the river of night of the delusion that the person who sleeps next to you is what he appears to be, in an imaginative bubble that lasts only as long as unconsciousness of the imaginal hearts can stay caged and tamed and not rise like a lighthouse in a stormy night out the darkness to begin questioning how to steer in the engulfing storm. Beauty, indeed, can live as monster in one guise, especially if it is forced or in its irresistible phase.

We saw a monster, and it was not beauty. Psyche has to learn that what you see, appearances, are not what you get, and that what you get, is not what you asked for, until what you asked for turns into stones that you stub your toes on, and you learn prayer is too powerful to be expressed unless spoken out of another part of your being, perhaps, fired by an imaginal heart in love with the monster.

Let me qualify monster. As Psyche gazes upon Eros, a drop of hot burning oil burns into his shoulder, and, he is "as if mortally wounded." (Bolen, *Myth of Eros and Psyche*, tape) (Perhaps, it is a way to give an immortal a taste of mortality in order that the god and human connection can begin to know they must build the bridge if they do not wish to kill one another and learn span the river to be in wrestling and conversation over years.) The wounds of love go deep, deeper than the ego, or the personal unconscious. They go clear to the Inner Self, the Archetypal Self. From the Self's perspective, "dragon-bred", the monster is beauty for though it draws ego and Self into communion from the non-human point of view beauty is not in the eyes of the beholder. Human beauty and our species' need for propagation are in us as earth creatures. As divine creatures, the monster of love may not be archetypically understood by the gods, the immortals, as worthy of commitment and imaginal story.

The divine announcement is fulfilled as the monster is revealed as immortal, a god (from the human point of view, having monstrous proclivities, if the mythologies of human's are any guide). The dragon is present, escapes death, and the lair, and the dark Self movement out of darkness rebalances the yin-yang in creative tension, reversing black and white. Transformation of monstrous beauty must occur in Psyche as the transformation of monster as beauty must occur in the Archetypal Self that inhabits Psyche. For both to occur, ego and Self must bond, either in darkness or in light, in good or evil, in love or in war, in relationship or conquest, a foray that never ends and can embitter or enlighten.

Love wounds so deeply that its healing can only come from the night, from the unconscious, from the realm of the gods, of sacred energies. We see a monster and we do not see a monster gives us a clue as to what occurs after the drop of hot burning coals wounds the shoulder of Eros: he has no shoulder strength in which to raise his bow and arrow. He is no longer the young hunter. Aphrodite, who is furious that Psyche is being worshipped as a goddess for her beauty, berates him. (Bolen, *Myth of Eros and Psyche*, tape.) Eros flees not only the castle, but from Psyche's life.

His absence will become a presence in the myth, as he is off stage, in the dark background of the myth. Psyche seeks him and the story moves forward without attracting erotic, fully committed, energetic, loving relationship with other parts of the soul.

How are those soul threadings created in the psyche is one way to look at what occurs in this myth.

Eros has fled; erotic nurturance's absence tests whether Psyche can live without eros, without conscious relationship. Or would the story of Psyche go in the direction of her enamored with her own beauty so much that she believes the tales, that she is immortal, more beautiful than Aphrodite, and she begins to worship herself, build herself a temple to herself, make a religion of herself, where she can do no wrong, kill those who do not agree with her, and become as many petty gods and goddesses have in the past become a tyrant that turns a culture of abundance into a blight on the earth and its creatures and the humans who strive to make a living and get through life, stumbling blindly trying to find light and seeking guidance. She has a choice, and it is in her relationship with her unconscious, with her Higher Self, the god energies, the immortals that shows how beauty and monster entice and repel, hide and reveal, lure and push away as if they were a human stream worth the swim for what it reveals and what is on the other side of the river.

III.

“AND TO THE RIVER PSYCHE GOES”

And to the river Psyche goes. Eros defies Aphrodite and hides Psyche from her in her murderous impulse, ordering him to make her fall in love with the most repulsively evil of men. Beauty become monster and inflicting suffering beyond its worth. Psyche is now in a world where there is no Eros. She appears to be alone, abandoned; she apparently has no relationship or connections. Like the Buddha, when as a prince he left his castle in an inward turn to find out why there was suffering, death, disease, and infliction of affliction abounding in the world, Psyche awakes and stands at the rivers edge not as Narcissus' self-inflicted image wound of his own self, all ego, so that he drowned, but, remember, she still wears her black dress, carrying the night in her chrysalis heart and the shadow of the union of Psyche and Eros into worlds full of grief, loss, suffering, death, and the infliction of affliction on her. And, as the Buddha meditated under the bodhi tree to enlightenment, to end endless suffering, Psyche, like the dark's child, journeys to keep and expand the small vision and end soul's suffering by learning the skills necessary to live in a world without Eros. What Psyche finds, like the Buddha, is that life has allies, consciousness rests in the original imagination, like human sun in blue sky. The dead world she seems to have entered is alive and breathing and breeding and growing, as fertile, fecund, and robust as summer, background to the foreground of seeming dearth, as she will be taught to see how the world is really woven together and with what gristle and muscle and sinews it takes to bond it together.

Shockwaves and absorbency, experiencing what it feels like and means to go through the mythological living of going from human to archetype. We are being shown the weather that forms the lands and gardens and the forests and oceans. We are being drawn in, as the psyche that lives in and surrounds us, draws us as a human needle writing the stories out of the blood of the pumping imaginal heart.

We have entered what is a world of death as well as the realm of the gods, the unconscious, the archetypal world of the Inner Self, where she will find she is never alone, as the ego is never alone, as she finds that the ego portion of her cannot save her or solve her problems or comfort her or help her keep the secret growing within her or save both of their lives.

This world is an old world, but young Psyche has not lived here, or been to shamanic areas, or the underworld or the upper world. Nothing she has envisioned so far is enough to put her bones and frame and soul together in a wholeness that yin-yangs sun and moon, night and light, life and death.

Psyche jumps into the river to end the two lives, as we are born yin-yang twins and grow out into two lives, as a suicide for the loss of Eros, to kill the loss, end the grief. Her tongue is salty with the taste of death; she welcomes death. This leap into the darkness of the waters tells us the listener of the story that this is a true Psyche, our Psyche, whose traumas of the fires of consciousness with the waters of the unconsciousness, can be extinguished by such an act. Psyche must know death intimately, live with death, as Zenists sit among the graveyards to die before you

die. To burn away and to burn through to the heart's core so that only the essentials, the essence, the internal flame, striving to wholeness, the digging through the filth that covers what you know lives there shines like the inner sun.

Mortals that we are, deeply into the story, we could not predict what happens next, telling us Psyche has entered a wholly new mapless realm where she, and we, require territorial markers, such as herms, that boundary the liminal space. Surprisingly, the river throws her back, no light, all wet, all full of unconscious ideas although the unconsciousness that is the water tells her she cannot live or die there. The river lives. We are in a world we have seldom lived in for very long and with great fear, terror, and trepidation: the tragedies of the Greeks and Shakespeare come to mind. Having been thrown back into the living world, she is told that she will not immerse herself into the world of lostness and become a thing of the unconscious, a spokesman absorbed by the waters, so she fragments, becomes psychotic, in the waters she sees as air. The psyche that I've come to love and trust spoke that sentence from our experiences in the dark waters. The river speaks to Psyche, saying that it will not be responsible for the death of the bride of Eros. She is in a living thing, and it is our first intimations of immortality, to borrow a phrase from William Wordsworth, of Psyche. But she is like no hero or heroine of the West. It is as if we were inside the body of Psyche, gestating, being born, being warmed and incubated into light and trauma and death and love, and hopes of love for why have hope otherwise, and her body full, swells with the articulation of being designed to support, sustain, feed and nourish and give breath and fluid to, as if we were living in an unconscious consciously, a new child, whose journey to wholeness would be supported and configured and infigured, and imaged and minded and imagined so that the human would become a sail that had the buoyancy of life leading one where one did not know where one needed to go but where you were yearning to be because it was the blossoming core of who you were from the beginning, an egg, out of which transformed the miracle of this one life, yet related to all other life and things by the very energy speaking you as you are spoken through.

Soul's world, like the golden color of a chrysalides, is like an insect that goes from larval stage through to adult stage, to a butterfly, a transformation of what appears to be a most insignificant, small, ephemeral, short lived golden into bursting out with winged body, out of inner darkness into flight of the soul, lover of the sun, a crawling creature whose life absorbs the lessons of darkness to become a creature playing in the light.

Soul responds to despondency, despair, desperation, as when I earlier quoted Bly, by giving you what you need: if you need to go over water, soul becomes a boat. It is a metamorphosis; you need a wind, it becomes a sail, and lethargy turns into going forward. You are in darkness; soul images the light. When Psyche is in her times of trouble, soul becomes a sponge to absorb the waters and salts of life that experience can squeeze, and Psyche can drink in the succulent waters of life. Everything lives, can speak, will be second sight, and gathers heartwood and even earth that lives within Psyche to speak out her true calling, the art of the imagination as a master craftsman.

For the first but not the last time, Psyche finds no refuge, no safe haven, becomes a refugee,

when the water throws her back. Aphrodite, with her sacred energies, can go to the bottom of the sea. Although Psyche is connected to sacred energies, whether for good or evil, she does not have sacred powers or energies. She has farther darkness to live through for she must grow heartwings. She must learn that she goes to the bottom of the river not to die but to live (like Aphrodite), entering the stream energy. She is night, despair, in inner blackness; yet, nature tells her that it is a darkness that hid her lover and her that is now an outer darkness for all the world to see: rejected by Aphrodite and Eros, she now appears to be rejected by nature, in a totally hostile world where she appears not to have the resources, stamina, imagination, mind, skills, and patience to survive. In fact, interpreters have mentioned how passive, inactive, unheroic, and indecisive Psyche is; ego in relation to the Self appears to be these things, but when mutually bonded, the opposite of these are the facts. Looking at Psyche as individual soul sees only partial revelation of the stream toward wholeness; whereas, the whole of Psyche in its features of drawing, like archetypal water and nature gods, streams of energies into imaginal events and figures and speeches and images, awakening the fullness of abundance the Psyche possesses, grows wings, as we will be spoken to, and be shown fullness and emptiness, to use a Zen phrase. Two perspectives, like yin-yang, help here, like night and light, individual and wholeness, emptied of illusion and filled with substance and sustenance so that soul is food for the nourishment needed for the spiritual journey we all encounter, whether we engage it, as Psyche does, or not once the light wakes the soul to her conscious journey. Psyche, in this unfriendly world and friendly world, is at risk; our psyche lives in such world and is on such a journey, we are at risk, as well.

Again, Psyche is never alone and is spoken to when soul forms the metaphoric image that will instruct, as it is a skill making organism, by throwing back her predicament and what she must prepare to do, imagine to do, and do.

Psyche is laid low, lost, as she cannot even take her own life. She does not know what to do, she is overwhelmed by what has happened to her, with everything apparently conspiring against her. She panics, she is in an animal state whose anxiety is like the upwelling of a river of imaginal heart terror ravaging through the shaking body until the mind and its thoughts are umbiliced to the anxiety flood of paranoias, exposures to the world, helplessness, trappedness, asundered by thunder, until you rush like the blood of the heart out, act on every animal impulse that contracts and releases the heart muscle, ideas in flood: do this, correct it, do that, be found out, do this, be exposed, do that, reach out for rescue to calm the flooding, only momentarily, refuel, new terror, impulse-act-react-same impulse-imagine-revelry-stirs old trauma-100 tandem scenes-new impulse-death-ah, kindness, baby-new scene-turn head-impulse-act-react-whirlwind-no end, no beginning-need sleep, can't sleep-exhausted-ad infinitum-inhaled by terrors living you out in the mind's imagination and the burning heartwood. Until, melt to sleep.

Pan appears to Psyche. The Greek god of fields, forest, wild animals, flocks, and shepherds is a nature god. He appears with the guise of the legs, horns, and ears of the goat. He looks half animal, half human, as Eros looked human, but was a god. His features are ugly, would frighten if you met him out in your walk in the woods. He looks like he may be a monster, but he is not to Psyche. What looked beautiful hid a secret; what looks ugly tells the truth; and one related to spirit and

one to soul. But again, yin-yang. Pan's etymology is in its inclusivity, universality, as Stephen Larsen spells out in The Mythic Imagination. We are in the land of metamorphosis, a country that exists today as well, animal, humans, and gods and demons after centuries of being our ancestor's inhabitants are forms and figures, creatures of a creatureliness, spirits clothing souls and cosmic quizzicalness and questions that thrust through speech to us in the stream of poetry and guides the hands of the painters and sculptors.

Listen to the hymn of James Hillman to Pan as he tells the nature of this god from the inside out, and so that you can without panicking know why Pan appeared when he did to Psyche and said what he said.

Panic, especially at night, when the citadel darkens and the heroic ego sleeps, is a direct participation mystique in nature, a fundamental, even ontological experience of the world as alive, and in dread. Objects become subjects; they move with life while one is oneself paralyzed with fear. When existence is experienced through instinctual levels of fear, aggression, hunger or sexuality, images take on compelling life of their own. The imaginal is never more vivid than when we are connected with it instinctually. The world alive is of course animism; that this living world is divine and imaged by different gods with attributes and characteristics is polytheistic pantheism. That fear, dread, horror are natural is wisdom. In Whitehead's term nature alive means Pan, and panic flings open a door into this reality.

He speaks Psyche; he speaks me: the world alive, imaginal in throes of a separate, and independent life, my skin twenty miles wide, everything subject, alive and in dread. This world is natural and the terror is real and a living part of you and your surroundings, which can govern you. Natural and divine, you learn as a nail who builds many homes, and one day your soul visits the wild animal in one of the homes you've built yourselves in hopes that in utmost despair you will be found and soothed.

Generally, where panic is, Pan appears. Usually, he is labeled the cause or, at minimum, the god inside of the panic. In our myth, however, the pipes that Pan plays reverberate silently throughout the trials of Psyche, like a silent song or music playing in the background that you never hear or are aware of, as in a movie music track to the emotions and ideas of the scenes of the movie. Pan soothes Psyche, and she listens to the music he plays as a song; she must win the love of Eros. Her natural, open, in light, life affirming, and inner throwing out of darkness into the light of day task can turn the mind into an ear of the cosmic story being told. Her soul filled, spiritual, Inner Self, imaginal heartwood journey leads her to where the very being of the living and loving within her can be, as in song, sung to life and played out into the light with the black intertwined, yin-yang.

She has had a life altering experience and seen a vision and had a death defying experience.

She is a well full of the river of loss and unassuageable grief. The pipes and hoofs of the white goat ring in her ear, soothing her and recalling her to the falling rocks along the perilous crags and edges as it is the one conspicuous animal whose skillful surefootedness allow it to navigate the mountainous terrain and climb the mountain to the summit, which although Psyche does not yet know it is where she will find her new home.

While unsuccessfully seeking Eros, which is what a psyche does naturally, Psyche seeks out her sisters, her blood relations of Jealousy and Envy, who believed the oracle and who out of fits of emotions expressing who they were, made “dragon-bred” into a monster. With their contagious passions, Psyche lit the light that brought her where she needed to be.

Psyche was in a new landscape. Pan, as Dr. Bolen points out, is her animal soul, sensual, natural, life, sexual, music, the food of the soul, bodily being, as she is in her pregnancy.(Bolen, Tape) Her sisters married miserly, puritanical hoarding rich kings who made no relationships. In fact, they destroyed relationships that make severe life in its hatefulness and the fear of the pure beingness of the animal soul in all of its tentacles of root graspings.

Psyche tells a tale that Eros awaits the two sisters. She leaves, uncaring of what happens to them as they run up the mountain to the crag and leap off, thinking Eros is waiting for them. When Psyche leapt it was a lover’s leap; when her sisters leap it is the family’s leap. The relation with the family as primary must end when the lover becomes foremost. This time, no wind makes its appearance to save them from their death. They’ve lived jealous, envious lives filled with resentful, miserly and hoarding of riches so that there is no catching when an individual falls into destitution or poverty or falls through the cracks of the society that provides no catching. They lived self-inflicting wounds. There is no psychic richness to share and spread and grow with, unlike the alchemists who practiced “growing” gold, and as Psyche practiced the riches she had found by bearing gifts to them, to give and share what she had, to grow the bounty. Not even an amorphous spirit wind came to provide sail for them.

Murderous Psyche, animal Psyche, ugly Psyche, monstrous Psyche! We, finally, have a monster. Or do we? We no longer have a Psyche that despite everything took the shocks of living and moved forward without revenge, resentment, and the slinging of verbal combat to inflict others with the wounds she was suffering. Has she imbibed the spirit of her sisters? Or has the panic stricken words of Eros that he would revenge himself on her sisters spread into Psyche. When you fight for your life, concentration of the mind and focus gathers the psychic, animal, soul, bodily, spiritual resources to survive and to steer for the trudging and falling and failures of seeking take their tolls. Everything else falls away as unimportant and inconsequential. Yet, is she still a Psyche worth the trials she is going through? What we are really probing is: what makes Psyche what she is, different from other Western heroes and heroines, and how does her makeup propel her on her quest, as hidden in the dark as it may be, and, remember, Hermes, god of communication(relationships), boundary marker in liminal states, is in the blackness. Following the work of the Jungian Archetypalist, James Hillman, we can say the “blackness of night is ‘the source of all evil,’ but that from the viewpoint of the Orphics, ‘Night was depth of love(Eros) and light (Phanes).” Psyche’s relation with Eros produces a state of self-forgetfulness so necessary for

the mind and the person to accomplish what they set out to do.(Marlan, The Black Sun, pp. 193-196) But in that state, the resources of the “dragon-bred” Self, dark and shining, may rise to the surface provided by the opening of the ego at the wound, at the scar trauma, at the grievance, and the burn, at the deformity, at the imaginal well spring that summers out of the depths the inner life and soul making and spirit gathering awoken to connect Psyche to the soul shattered parts into relationship and action and moving toward wholeness. She struggles and is a being unique to western literature. This psyche is not a dragon slayer, she does not use the warrior energy to overcome her situation. She lives her predicament, in the fullness of its exposure: she has made conscious the need to bring light to love and all of its beauties, terrors, tragedies, and uglinesses. For this, the waters of life, the unconscious throws her back, rejects her for she had not the proper relationship to the deepest archetypal Self, the god energies who is also the higher Self, that are “as above, so below” and “as inside, so outside”. The appearance of Pan shows us what Psyche imagined she had made love to and wedded. After the wounding of Eros had ended the irresistible phase of love, opened the soul searching phase of discovery of diving in to find an imaginary love life that matches the real person, where Psyche is the poet artist who can sketch the black and white that conjoined by experience and expression.

Yet, as Jung so often observed, the act of consciousness that frightens the Self is necessary in order to grow and develop and is a new element in the cosmos, entering the moral and ethical conflicts and conundrums that grow like the forests where humans live. Jung emphasizes the need for the ego to confront and relate to the unconscious, to not be hostile to the Self, to not merge with it, but he discovered that humans needed to relate and grow a bridge and landscape between the ego and the Self in ways that bonded and bounded each to the other while each stayed fully committed to their view. Jung’s succinct and instructive phrasing is that the unconscious will present to you the face you, the ego, turns toward it. The ego learns it is small, insignificant, and is not alone in the psyche, and, especially, it dies and does not have the power; it is not god. The Self learns its floodings of energy is destructive, its forced mergers and sacrifices is not how humans can be of service to the cosmos let alone their fellow human beings and cultures. Relationships lead to transformations and a path to synchronicities that turn and weave you in the direction you need to go, with guidance from the Self, Inner Presence.

What is the relation of Psyche to her sisters exposed in the scene? Her sisters told a tale of a monster, and Psyche acted upon the imaginal life created. Psyche told a tale of a beautiful god lover, and her sisters acted upon the imaginal life created. Psyche’s action threw her out of the world of the gods and began her most human and mortal life of rejection and seeking; her sisters’ actions threw them off the mountain, thinking they would be rescued by a god, only to plunge to their deaths. Psyche lived through a symbolic death; she created actual deaths in her psyche.(Bolen, Tape)

Psyche does not live in a safe world; the very evolution of the structuring of mental energies and thoughts show the connection between animal survival, forethought, and imaginative figuring. No one, voluntarily, starts on the journey Psyche has begun; urges, incidents, events, traumas, tragedies, familial histories of mental disturbances, yearnings come in many spiritual colors and

soul whisperings and Self promptings and challenges and lead you where you consciously do not want to go but where you have no choice but to go where the Self and soul have, on occasion, sung their multilayered poems or art that when written or drawn must, are, and will be, lived out and through, whether you are awake to it or whether you want to do so. Psyche is an instrument of enormous grasp, reach, fears, trepidation, power and organizing energies; it also is an instrument through which the Self uses to strive for its goals. Without conscious ties, the string of Ariadne is lost; or, you express the deepest parts of who you are by learning to be the instrument of the Self and the Self your instrument, with independent conscious choice and relationship borning out woven life.

Remember the black funeral dress of Psyche's: her sisters death symbolically ends her ties to jealousy and envy. Unlike Hera, who is sister and wife to Zeus, Psyche will be only wife to Eros. I say symbolically instead of actually ending because Buddhist practices relating to meditation and ending of attachment to desires clearly show how long, difficult, and involved is ending of such emotions in controlling one's life through the infinite resources of the mind to attach itself to things of this world and cause suffering. Also, we are talking about the ending of attachment to desires that cause suffering, not the desires of compassion, or the desire for others to be free of suffering, and of the desires of love, or the desire for the happiness of others. It is a significant differentiation, plus it opens mental space that can be used for other more skillfully useable actions. (See Ladner, *The Lost Art of Compassion*, pp. 55 & 66 and on confusing desire and love see James Hollis, *Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life* (New York: Gotham Books, 2005) p. 169)) Love is not only passion, but it is a world for hosts of a cacophony of archetypal energies whose psychic powers the ego cannot adequately contain the splendor of as it does not naturally turn to the interests of others in its struggles although it will be storm tossed between the larger energies of love and the jealousies and envies and bitternesses and clingingness and escapings into love's cloak in order to avoid reality. Also, we exist at different levels of love: human, sacred, animal, soul, and imaginal that in the psyche merge, meld, and flow in separate streams depending on many life experiences.

A second act of consciousness has taken place, a darker revelation moves through Psyche, a deeper wound than love. We are in the archetypal world of love but are in an "other" world as well. She uses her magician energy to invent a tale to send her sisters and their world to their deaths. (See Bolen on importance of death to Psyche, Tape). She has destroyed a world, inflicted death, a common occurrence in the landscape of psyche, soul, spirit, Self, and imaginal heart. Depriving jealousy and envy of their feeding hosts, she has freed energy, mental space, and heart knots that stop threads of energy from generating imaginal and thought scenes and streams to solve human predicaments. In order to find Eros, she found that she needed to cut her attachments to her family and their draw of social constrictions and restraints, use what is natural in Psyche and act from a more powerful place in the Psyche, nature, in order to kill what is truly monstrous in the world, run on only self concern for oneself and destructive of nurturing and sharing. Hoard or gift, miser or love sharing, withdrawal riches or expand the jewels fight to the death. Psyche is in the midst of an impermanent world where she has been thrown back on her

own resources twice, into stunning consciousness, light and dark, life and death, human love and sacred love, all toward creating a child that weaves the dark and light together. She chose light; she chose dark; she chose conscious love and she chose conscious death. In psyche, this malleable tool of beauty and terror, of the unexplored territory of the imaginal heart, the soul loves death and its exploration as much as it interest itself in the goings on in life that can inform it of its cosmic mission here in the lowest forms of life and things. But, also, archetypally, resurrection accompanies death, as in the myths of Persephone and Demeter, Orpheus and Eurydice, and Ishtar and Dumuzi, telling the tales of how passion and the dark have redemptive powers. Or, metamorphosis may occur, and the dead may return in differing forms, but maybe in a more helpful, more instructive, more outreaching forms and figures and speeches.

The burn of passion that wounds Eros, the heat of headlong lovers consume themselves, burns into the imaginal vision and heart of Psyche, also. Psyche carries the light and the heat, the burn and the deep wound to the body and soul. St. John of the Cross writes of this enrapture that can drag down to suicide or death or life and love:

O dark night, my guide

O Sweeter than anything sun rise can discover

Oh night, drawing side to side

The loved and the lover

The loved one wholly ensouling in the lover.

(MARLAN, [THE BLACK SUN](#), QUOTING HILLMAN, P. 163)

Psyche's and Eros' hidden relationship, their secret love, gets nurturance symbolized by the child she carries, as we are in Psyche, not Psyche in our head and heart, and as Psyche is in a larger world, as Psyche grows to where an "other" world is in Psyche, having been ensouled by the other lover. They are the silent webs being woven behind the scenes, between scenes, and being shaken in the scenes that open Psyche and us to how psyche works in the natural world where there seems to be no relationship between Psyche and Eros and other parts of Psyche where negation raises its head and where the fertile web of richness support variegated life and loves and death and rootlessness, where everything not only because of her conscious action but also because of who she is rejects her, as the very existence of soul is so often denied by many and even at different stages of life. Outside of the known world, she is denied death after being denied love. What is Psyche: she is unnatural, unconnected, and now rootless without family and lover, a refugee bereft of natural and cultural supports. On her journey ever more outside of the boundaries of culture and society she journeys ever deeper inward bringing the light she lit to see the vision of the beast, love as beauty and desire, closer to her own face and swelling body, covered in black, to see the vision of Psyche, and finds the vision of the beast, seeing her flesh burning wound, soul as beauty and desire.

Love and soul exist in two different worlds; one in love with life that causes so much suffering and death, and one in love with death that causes so much healing and life. Love is archetypal energy that defines boundaries and relates psychic space; soul is archetypal energy that defies boundaries and explores unknown psychic spaces. Societally, we may be in a taboo world; soulfully, we are in indigenous world where the inner fire that opens our eyes and gives us vision metamorphoses chaos and havoc that rush in on night clouds. Soul is experiencing itself as soul, the myth relates, and must do so before it can relate to Eros as Eros.

Psyche easily changes into animal, or beast. There is a long history of the soul in its scatterings and flights due to traumas and shocks to the flesh and bones of psyche and in its metamorphic nature. Let's explore this nature of psyche, as the myth has taught us to do, from within the darkness, a creation myth of a creature unlike any other creature in nature, who can be, like we are, every other creature in nature, by the very light that, initially, frightens it with dread and, yet, builds a stage on which nature can play itself, mirror itself, and reflect on the deepest, darkest, most monstrous of creations, darker than night, in its destructiveness but enthralled with jewels of beauties that light the psyche and its songs.

Stephen Larsen, in his [The Mythic Imagination](#), explores the shamanic and metamorphic and changeling quality of the psyche who "knows well how to wear the scales, feathers, and fur. It puts on skins and antlers, like the *sorciere* of *Les Trois Freres*, and wears a tail, like a million children galloping about their backyards." He continues,

Proteus remembers the experience of changing into all beings. The Celtic wizard

Amerigan says, 'I was in many shapes before I was released.'

I am stag of seven tines...

I am a shining tear of the sun

I am a hawk on a cliff,

I am fair among flowers...

I am a salmon in the pool,

I am a hill of poetry,

I am a ruthless boar,

I am a threatening noise of the sea...

Who but I knows the secrets of

the unhewn dolmen?

With the Myth of Psyche and Eros, we are in a tale that is in another tale that is telling another tale. Universal and intimate are the inner and outer experiences; we see psyche as individual and we see psyche whole as we project ourselves into the soulness of who she and we are. We are not

in the world of belief, but of experience, of intimate knowing, of breakdown, of falling apart in one's own multiplicity, an out of boundary experiences.

Carol Gilligan in her work, The Birth of Pleasure: A New Map of Love, uses the myth of Psyche and Cupid as the framing device for her trenchant psychological and feminist probing of the myth. She writes that

Metamorphoses is a novel about transformation, changing a shape or overcoming a form. And then I remember that this ancient story about love is presented as an old wife's tale, a story told by an old mother to a young woman on the eve of her seemingly perfect marriage, and that shortly after telling the story, the old woman is hanged-like a member of the Resistance. Suggesting that this is a dangerous story to tell, this tale that asks us to see and to say what we know about love.

It is, indeed, as she says, about transformation of ourselves and our world. But "we are all in trouble", she writes, if this story is about a timeless myth of love and soul. Nothing is timeless. We are in trouble; the myth, despite its ending, shows we are in deep trouble, in deeper trouble than she acknowledges in her work, as evidenced by the tale itself. Her new map of love tells a new myth of Psyche and Eros, a pleasure to help the losses and sufferings. I am looking at the myth from a different point of view, and end with joy, using each stitch of the cloth weaved and each spin on the web to add the tears of grief, loss, depression, despair, and fracturing fragmentation into elastic warmth and intimacy, resiliency and alertness to shock to say when we say "joy" we speak "mountains" we built out of the water and tears and blood and hates and passions, and stresses, and breakdowns and breakthroughs, and that joy is impossible and indestructible. I thank her writings for their clarity and insight.

Back to monstrosity: seeing with the small light into the dark the beauty that reveals the lie and the truth. The Self, the idea of the wholeness of the psyche as formulated by Jung and others, is a structure "that includes both consciousness and the unconscious, light and dark," to name only two, that is a "central, ordering principle at the core of psychic life," experienced as "an unknown mystery that disseminated itself in multiple archetypal images across time and culture." (Marlan, The Black Sun, p. 212 and See the works of Robert L. Moore on the energy and structure of the images in the deep psyche.) These "symbols of the primordial human being" combine "stubborn differences and...monstrous complexities" that "lead to humor, astonishment, and at times divine awe."(Marlan, *ibid*, p. 213) Shadow accompanies the Self, as it is companion in all things human, of "the unnamable, invisible, and unthinkable...a Divine Darkness...a non-Self."(Marlan, *ibid*.) Others have called this the Dark Self. Zen goes farther by saying there is no Self, nothing stands within or behind us that is substantial or real; meditate, go within, until the individual dissolves in the solvent of the original mind, into the bliss of nirvana, beginning another cycle of attachment that must be lived through.

Alchemy's portrayal of these mysteries help to clarify them with "strange and paradoxical

confluence of images” requiring the alchemist to enter and live the images by constellating these “marking a desubstantiation of the ego that exhibits both death and new life, light and darkness, presence and absence,” a black sun.(Marlan, Ibid, 212) Edward Edinger’s works have shed light on Jung’s investigations that “the living experience of the Self is a monstrosity. It’s a coming together of opposites that appalls the ego and exposes it to anguish, demoralization, and violation of all(that is)...natural, reasonable, and normal.” The unity of opposites are a vision of monstrosity when not well differentiated and recognizing their having separate realities, when given premature unity, as Marlan explains, quoting the insights of James Hillman:

To go through the world seeing its one underlying truth in synchronistic revelations, its pre-established harmony, that God is becoming man and man is becoming God, that inner and outer are one, the mother is daughter daughter mother, puer is senex, senex puer, that nature and spirit, body and mind, are two aspects of the same invisible energy or implicate order, thereby neglects the acute distinctions joined by these conjunctions, so that our consciousness, no matter how wise and wondrous, is therefore both premature and monstrous. And by monstrous, alchemy means fruitless, barren, without issue.

It is not “a symbolic putting together of two halves or two things into a third,” so that it is not “the reconciliation of two differences, but the realization that *differences are each images* which do not deny each other, oppose each other, or even require each other.” In the soul, the alchemical conjunction reveals itself “as a recognition, an insight, and an astonishment.”(Marlan, ibid, PP. 153-155)

Psyche is with child; life conceived in unconsciousness; sexual union of dark love merged two unseeing beauties, undifferentiated, but not without issue. Consciousness, the moment of recognition, of insight, and astonishment, when Psyche’s light torches back the night to enlighten a purposively darkened Eros as well as the light’s wound to un-consciousness, to release the borderline images of mirroring that produce opposites. (Just as Psyche’s two sisters mirror each other and her, producing opposites.) Images of the dark Self, of the wound of consciousness to unconsciousness, to the dragon in his or her lair, startles with opening scenes into differentiation. But will the moment of enlightenment, the mirror of Psyche-Eros prior endarkenment, produce a complexity of opposites that are monstrous, premature: without issue, barren(that is not in further, greater, more expansive, invasive consciousness, wholeness.) Ironically, and not so ironically, it will be in the unconscious where we will spend our time and where we will discover that what consciousness revealed must be lived if it is to impart that experience into the deep psyche and archetypically transform a human Psyche, one who understands her mortality, and the inability of her ego to be heroine to itself and slay the enemy, thankfully, into the goddess Psyche, an immortality, who cannot die, but one who because she has experienced death and drowning as

well as familiarly, erotically, intimately, and personally impermanences, knows better than the gods what immortality means in the first journey into the sacred ground of energies and then become at home in those sacred energies resourced in the deep archetypal psyche. Yin-yang carried along by Tao, as a river carries water, and water sifts and erodes deeper the stream.

In this myth, the unconscious, an “unknown”, according to Jung, calls the powers of consciousness into question as we sink deeper into the other world. The story inside the myth frames us as the Inner Self, the Inner Selves of the myth speaks directly to our Inner Self, scorched by the fire light, puts the light, consciousness, to the test, to trial, to who is the monster. Simultaneously, the frame of the myth gives Psyche the fire light to explore the darkness of the “dragon-bred.” Consciousness seeks to test the “dark” powers of the unconscious. Yet, a third power or energy has a say in the outcome of the myth: soul, who is quiet, unassuming, black, lowly, inquisitive, sincere, and explorer and death lover, whose transformative nature can grow, in the most hostile and dangerous of worlds, by hanging on a branch transform from the inside out, into a butterfly. Fourthly, from outside of the frame of the myth, we can see what the story is and what is not, for as Bly, in Story Food, has so skillfully woven, sacred stories tell about what is not, what is absent, what is unknown. Zen seeks the end to self cherishing of the ego: can the myth show that even if the ego is defeated and overwhelmed and not up to the task so that an imaginary is built up to secure it from its own follies and foolish denials, as a castle wall, impregnable, and yet be nourished and cherished and loved by the whole of psyche and its inhabitants and erotic unions. Emptiness and fullness.

The world of unity gives way to the world of multiplicity: a world in which Milosz warned us of the difficulties of staying together and a world Rumi welcomed as he did open his morning eyes to the dream speaking in the villagers he spun around to and with. The world of unity is, however, not what Milosz imagined, or, at least, not as he imagined it. And the world of multiplicity is not always supportive as Rumi experienced. We need both of them, with each having their distinct realities, as Hillman has argued.

IV.

“SCENES CHANGE IN PSYCHE’S SEARCH FOR EROS”

Scenes change in Psyche’s search for Eros, who has fled to his mother, Aphrodite, from natural to cultural, without a change: Psyche stands outside both realms, she cannot draw sustenance from the territories she attempts to enter: the stream and, now, the temples of Hera and Demeter. Her only psychic food is the guidance of the nature god, Pan, to seek Eros, both mirrors of differing aspects of the expression of desire in its earthly, sensuous, sexual form and in its heavenly, yearning, sharing form. Hera, wife of Zeus and mother and societal representative, refuses refuge to Psyche in her temple: your issue is not on my sacred ground but with Aphrodite. In the temple of Demeter, mother of Persephone, wife of Hades, she is refused refuge with the repeated exclamation that Psyche’s issue is with the goddess of love, Aphrodite, mother of Eros. Demeter was the mother who sought out her daughter when she was kidnapped to the underworld as she smelled a pomegranate by the lord of the underworld, Hades. In the well known myth of Demeter and Persephone, mother and daughter, ensure the agricultural cycle of the seasons, where the climax of the story comes when Persephone is released from the underworld for certain months of the year to make fertile the world for planting of crops while returning to the underworld for the other months of the year. This fertility cycle myth of an “underworld psyche” provides food for life, sustenance and abundance for the needs of psyche, soul, and human.

A line from Shakespeare surfaces to fertilize the world we have entered in the myth for the we are in psyche, psyche is not only in us. Shakespeare asked how with such rage could beauty hold a plea whose action is no stronger than a flower. Is that where we are: where Psyche, like a flower of inner beauty, can seek her love with actions and decisions, and determinations that are no match or equal or have not the power or human domineering as those she encounters and who she faces, struggles with while she uses the small light of seeking in the vast darkness of rejection, dejection, projection in taboo territory? Psyche is outsider, not acceptable to society or even myth; where she goes she should not go, but she goes because she is who she is. As refugee refused a home, comfort, denied identity as mother and daughter and wife and, most importantly, who she is, she is the most dangerous of individual living things in the known world, a creation myth, a birth of an archetype and its energies, and a journey into the world of the sacred where many have never returned and where heroes and heroines are made. Usually. The known, acceptable underworld psyche rejects Psyche. This is a myth that goes where madness, suicide, flooding, engulfment, laceration, self immolation by unknowing kindling, volcanic eruptions of slime and pus and light and fire burn away the flesh and skin from the gristle sinews out, where the fire in water burns keeps burning so hazardous is the territory for humans without psychic guides, spirit animals, gods and goddess who make food for vision, and soul companion and friend because silence slowly builds the vocal chords of song out of the trauma of dark and light and discovery.

Aphrodite’s wrath has swept through the land providing Psyche with no port in the storm. She has risen out of the depths of the sea even more filled with rage to humiliate a rival in beauty. Are

we seeing a monster's work, the doings of a spirit complex of love, in personification of a goddess, allowing us to see how all of the passions get caught up, as in a tornado, in the tragedy and comedy and the walking wounded of love, an arrow impossible to remove from the body? Her son is partially wrapped up in this spirit complex, despite his defiance of her and attachments of mother love, a spirit complex of love, a vine seeking to entwine Psyche and Eros. Yin-yang of weather systems. Rage of unharbored love, unalloyed energy a wind storm through the landscape. Of beauty as a beast and a god and as human, as a weapon of jealousy and envy. Mother love and rejection, with only Pan, a god hewn from an animal with horns and sewn by pipes, as Nature, befriends her. Human passion let to rage loose upon the land, unnatural, a human war, to equal war human's do out of being human, unnatural though it may be(a debatable point, itself.) Aphrodite will give a boon to the man who brings her Psyche, who is called a runaway slave, bestowing on him the kiss of the goddess. "Runaway slave" tells more than the speaker knows. Psyche embodies the freedom feared by those who see that she is on the loose, outside of normal boundaries, who has "polluted" through her actions. Chaos abounds; Psyche symbolizes that chaos to them. Psyche is a slave to love of Eros. If she is a slave to passion, she does not speak it or act it. She, however, is seeking in a world without Eros, without relationships, without connections, without even the myths of fertility that gives creativity and fertility to psyche even in sterile times. She is slave to the whims of a world ruled by jealous love, rageful love out of the depths of the deep, and competitive love where the tincture of beauty has worshippers while Psyche whose actions and seekings and struggles are the embodiment of true, deep, lasting, heart enriching beauty that can one day be gifted to others as it has been gifted to Psyche, who has no followers.

Psyche will not be denied, however, unsafe and imperiled as she is in her total aloneness, alienated from all resources that an ego can rely on and draw on in its little circle of lamp light inching its way into darkness. She is a human whose life has lost its meaning, but for the seeking of the love lost, as she found it worth the struggle, at times, and her ego and its resources has not the connections and power to challenge real monstrous love. She stands alone, she is alone. That's what appears to be implicated in her plight; but Psyche is never alone, stands on energetic resources that rise, like chakras, from the balls of her feet, up through her groin, needling through her heart, and up through the top of her head.

She has courage, taking heart as her resource, as the fire that lit the light, she enters the temple of the enemy, where she is met with the infliction of pain and agony by the attendants to Aphrodite, Trouble and Sadness(or Habit), and is beaten and dragged along the sacred grounds by Aphrodite. Psyche's silence speaks loudly here; she does not complain about the burden she carries, rather her worthiness never leaves her though those punishing her are working to bring her as low and prostrate and unworthy a position as possible. On sacred ground, Psyche does not grovel, does not confess unworth, does not shield herself from the blows love and love's minions throw on her. Her character reflects back on love, its real and awful nature, its habits and attendant sorrows and troubles that lash any creature surrounded in the archetypal energy of love and eros. Again, the monster being shown us in the light is the nature and consequences of love in all of its forms: animal, human, sacred, gods, and uncompassionate. Love as survival tool, beauty

as weapon, gods' rage unleashed in psyche, and how it beats down through the flesh of the fruit into the pulp and depresses and dejects and introjects what she fights to reject: the burn of passion that flares open the heart and consumes it in darkness.

Did you notice? I almost didn't; in fact, I did not notice it. The Inner Presence in me who has been writing this in partnership with me popped the image into my mind's eye, imagination's stage: a reversal of fortunes has occurred within the psyche that will affect the whole of psyche and all of the future actions. It is similar to Jung's reversal of background and foreground that occurs at crucial turning points in one's spiritual, soul filled, and imaginal struggles, usually when you are staggering under the burdens that you realize come from within you, not from without you, or at least for the most part, as the lacerations and bleeding from the flesh and bone wounds, when you look, look less coagulated, less black, less pusfull, less like an arrow slit aiming at your heart, love's language, and spinning off fantasies of delusions for the fragments of lost soul. When reversed, you do not shrink, you no longer reject yourself, no longer deny yourself, no longer hate the ego you are, no longer live in the hell you create but begin to build as you would a forest or garden, one step at a time, through laborious arm tiring drudgery until you find you love the work, that gives joy, and you learn a little of the language of joy, and thirst for more of that fountain. You no longer see with the eyes of the world; you see with the eyes gifted you by the journey struggles that threaten to overwhelm you and do, as suicide is a rake on the heart that mirrors the rejection of the suffering, but the mirror no longer enamors and entices. You are not Narcissus looking at the flower, falling in love with your own image, and drowning.

When the light of Psyche revealed the truth of Eros, it also inflicted a wound to Eros, a burn of that same light, a shoulder injury on strength, as Psyche takes Eros' weapon, an arrow, and pricks her finger, drawing red blood, a wound of the beating heart, and drawing love out of her for Eros. A mortal had done an immortal deed; Psyche's deed of consciousness and the wound it inflicts with the energies of love's passion takes wing into the realm of the ego, into trying to explore into familiar territory of nature and culture, and beyond them into the unconscious and Inner Self, where societal taboos forbid exploration except in accepted religiously controlled morals and ethics. Religion, here, is the enemy of spiritual exploration and discovery. Ego must change; Psyche must weather those changes; consciousness and wound must be explored and their story told; and unconsciousness, in the form of the gods, Inner Self, must transform as well. As when she fell from the mountain, from untutored inflation down the cliffs of depression only to be caught by the winds of Hermes, she crashes from the inflationary act of the deed of immortality into the depression of humanness, without the time at this point in the myth to raise the significance of this deed, what does immortality mean to the human psyche and to us as individuals and as a species?

Reversal: Psyche will do the forbidden, she will wake up (perhaps, why the teller of the tale was hanged); when you wake up, depression is your early road that you must master, must make a friend, before other avenues of energies are loosened and become available to you. And dirt mound of depression is the animal in you, the smallness, the need for others, the need for supports and the hating of them; it is the original tongue, and its guidance once its language is made an

intrinsic part of expression becomes an unerring intuitive reading of the animalscape you as a human live in. And in the animal is the spirit, is the god, once you've learned the life of the animal whispering in your visionary ear.

Reversal: Can Psyche take on the powers of immortality? Is she capable of immortality? What is immortality? Immortality as an idea is in the background of the myth; Psyche itself, with the powers of Eros, is new, and, if she is to explore this myth, how will she, a creature of nature and culture, become immortal and by what avenue? Psyche become a goddess; what grandiosity are we in; what is death and its relation to immortality: we have entered the home where soul lives and has stories to tell us?

Reversal: Rejection of Psyche follows the incarnation of new vision. The river throws her back; she is refused refuge in the mother goddess temples of Hera and Demeter, telling us Psyche is not fit, will not survive, to be mother, to be with child, for what she did is expose love to scrutiny, to the incinerating flames of inquiry and discrimination, a knife to cut off the head of Eros, to open the heart that bleeds, that pulses with life, is not some ethereal, ideal, far distant, highly charged but uncontrolled rampage of imaginary couplings of energies, vining and losing the clarity and insight that are needed in the midst of heat waves. Psyche is a new creation in the world; part of nature, part of culture, yet more, far more, and far more dangerous and bejeweled, and precious and fragile and tensile strengthened and enduring and struggling and willing to do unending struggle, not give up and seek, no matter the consequence: Psyche as river, Psyche as paradox, Psyche denied entrance into the sacred kingdom where the source of life and ideas and creativity come from. She will struggle to find the source out of which her individual spiritual journey was written, in images, and now in the flesh. Psyche finds the source of archetypal powers that confronts her for she gains entrance to its source, the temple of Aphrodite, where she is hammered by the woes that cleave to love like slaves to master, compounding crawling and flying, abasement and absoluteness, but Psyche never abjures, though she must struggle with the possibility of failure, suicide, as she carries a new creativity that nature and culture do not understand.

Reversal of the reversal: from Psyche denied support and sustenance, nurturance and resources, cultural supports, except for bodily nature god, Pan, she is held up by the invisible, like the wind that carried her to Eros, that challenges the archetypal power and energies of the Goddess of Love in her home territory, where she lives and controls the world and imaginings of love of many types.

Having struggled this deeply into love's tragedies, fatalities, and cruelties as well as punishments, Psyche has entered a world of sacred energies and spiritual complexes, wars, and loves where immediate death may be the consequence of foolish travel, and unknowing sleeping and dreaming, and where the human's cosmic struggle with the expression of its energies known as truth and freedom, falling easy prey to slave to false gods, and believe lies because they are beautiful. No safe world exists; this world is even more fraught with quicksand, the image of unsafe landscape, of walking on a spiritual journey, and disappearing, sunk into the interior, lost forever, or never to return, or make what sunk into, a fact in the outside life. One leg of truth and

one leg of freedom, Psyche's mettle, where more than courage will be required of her, is going to be tested by Aphrodite in order to see if she has the resources to survive and live in the sacred realm where Psyche has ventured and violated the taboo of entry into the goddess of love's abode. A new love is conceived in the midst of the turbulence of ferocious pummeling of defenseless and seeming resource less Psyche, the outcast, the outlaw. And, as the myth repeats, what appears to be real is not real and any reality we brought with us to the myth is revealed as not real; a multiplicity of ways of viewing that are nourished by love's heatings. As the teller of the tale, like the author of the myth, knows that this is a dangerous story not only for Psyche for she is all of us and her myth is our myth, and the death of the teller, like the death in the myth of Isis and hinted at in the Eleusian mysteries, gives the seemingly lowly initiations that we are participants in, just as Psyche is, in the mysteries of who or what we are: we have entered sacred realms and scape.

V.

“TO THE SUFFERINGS OF THE LAID LOW PSYCHE”

To the sufferings of the laid low Psyche in the midst of the sacred, Aphrodite complexes these love starved and crazed thrashings with tasks to test her by trial, not of fire or miserliness or war or dragon slaying, but of who or what she is, revealing the dragon and its nature and the nature of beauty and true love. Her strengths and weaknesses are in her, in the core of her being. Is her beauty, as a metaphor for depth, more than skin deep; or, to put it another way, is her beauty a substance of worth that gives something new, of use, and of value to the world of the psyche and soul as well as love?

The tasks Aphrodite gives to Psyche are not those of a traditional western hero; she is a heroine of a different light, if we can call the following actions heroic, as such action may not be the best way to convey her experiences. They may be more important than a hero's experiences. Interpreters, at this point, observe that these tasks that Psyche is called upon to accomplish in order to survive are initiations. These tasks can be seen as initiations if seen in the following light: death of the old life, ego, and birth of a new life, larger life; death of one identity, birth of a new one, ritualized and symbolized by depth spiritual experiences that put one together as a human spirit being ensouled in a new way -- the tasks given to her and how those tasks are accomplished. Psyche is on new sacred grounds, has new sacred tasks, uses new sacred energies to release soul and reveals to Psyche how the spirit complex of love can be suffered and lived through, how the unconscious is a far more powerful, discriminating, and creative a resource than the ego castle thought in its defense, and how the Inner Self and how the sacred energies abound and communicate in cosmic night.

In a large room, seeds of grain such as wheat, millet, and rice, among others, are strewn in a complex mix across the floor of the room too numerous to count. No identity could be distinguished among the grains that can grow to sustain life. Psyche's task is to sort each seed out according to its kind, wheat with wheat, millet with millet, and rice with rice over night.

Psyche enters darkness once more, linking her lovemaking with Eros, planting of the seed, reflected in her rounding stomach, with differentiation of identity required to plant seeds in Mother Earth, linking the task to the myth of Demeter and Persephone. The pomegranate that Persephone was smelling (a gesture of being primally alive and ingesting the fruits of world that are the foods for psyche) when Hades kidnapped her into the Underworld where no smells are nourished distinguishes itself by its many seeds, grained qualities, hard rind, round, red, juicy, pulpy fruit. Moonlight is her lamp this time. The task overwhelms Psyche, as she sees no way to do the task in Aphrodite's frame of time. Hope flees her and despair brings her low, once again. The task appears not only impossible, and, of course, it is, as it not a task that the conscious mind can accomplish. Being awake is the first alert requirement, her very aloneness, alienation, refugee status, her absolute taboo does not mean that she is without resources or, what is not apparent at first light, relationship, especially with the unconscious, an opening that spoke to her in the form

of Pan, the god that reflects her dark sexual and love experience with Eros. A path in has been laid down for she obeys the god and looks for Eros, and so the unconscious will respond to her predicament with images and animals and energies that are of use and instructive to Psyche. Psyche, acting as an ego, is awake to the peril to her existence (she panics again), but being awake in the psyche is only one spark of networks, but it cannot accomplish the task as it does not have the energy, power, vision, and resilient and large enough ego, yet, to act in this new territory, sacred fields.

She has other powers, far more energetic, life affirming, life giving, more useful, and cunning and wisely curious than her ego. As Bly has stated, what the individual needs, cries out in despair for, when the lone bird song on the branch musics for heartwings, soul responds by supplying what is needed, in darkness, in the unconscious. The Self becomes awakened from the spiritual blood spilled in destitute anguish of "smallness" and its unlearned lessons. All of this is true, one leg of her wearing struggle, and open her to freedom, the other sore leg, only if the black, bleak agonies of her desert experience not only turns her inward, but in relation to her inner darkness, become who she was and turns inside out the rejection by Eros and his loss into love and a gift of erotic reachings into the inner life that was leading her. Her room was a larger self, a spiritual container in a sacred world; she needed the powers and energies that could act in this new world. Her relationship with night brings soul out.

Innumerable ants, too many to count, enter the room and work all through the night sorting the seeds, and by morning light, the mounds are like with like: of wheat with wheat, millet with millet, and rice with rice. The accomplished task has ended the mixture, the complexity, the scatteredness, like the scattered thoughts unraveling of a distressed mind into chaos, into workable, useable, life giving array. Like deep within the tunnels of anthills, the mounds contain the kernels of active, prodigious, powerful, resourceful, and communal life. Community of ants completed the drudgery, almost ritualistic work of identifying and placing that opens up the sacred spaces. In place of her relationship with Eros, is relationship among the seeds and the ants, both necessary ingredients of the myth, to Psyche. Love is not only sexual union, it is learning a way to know what is under the earth, in an orderly way, so you can tell what crop you will have by where you are in the field. You can use your imagination and make judgments from the natural focus that each mound draws you into and discerns from the psychic and spiritual food, its origin and what is needed for it to flourish. The ants achieve more than the individual, who works for the sake of the communal task to feed the hunger. Living within Psyche are beings that can see in the dark, and they can present her with resources and care that she cannot receive from the ego. She has allies that she did not know she had.

In order to find out the issues that swirl around Psyche and Eros, we have had to enter the unconscious, and sacred space, where the rational and castle enclosing walls of the ego mind do not function well as they grant themselves what no one can grant, superiority and control, as fear responds to chaos, which truly does confound the rational. But is chaos a creation of the ego that the unconscious has the resources to resolve? Chaos' solution resides in the unconscious, not in the rational mind. The unconscious may give the foundations of order, but the conscious mind falls

in love with the beauty of order and can teach the splendor of that beauty to its collaborator.

Seeds make earth pregnant; ants are communal industrious workers who are focused on where they want to go, what they need to do. These tiny, lowly, earth bound creatures work to separate the seeds by instinct for they are unstoppable as an arrow, who go straight to their task. They can lift far more than their weight; the whole is more than the sum of the parts. They crawl and are the imaginal equivalent of the despair and overwhelm that show Psyche not only how to accomplish an impossible task in the psyche, by using the resources and plantings, seed grains of the unconscious, but to end the despair. What she lacks and needs, she receives, out of the earth, the Great Mother, the unconscious. Psyche is shown that by searching for Eros, creatures whose energies are in unison can use the coherent relationships that can do the impossible, or what seems impossible. These resources come from the unconscious. The repetition involved in sorting the seeds is like ritualization that open up the ego. Abundance and bounty have order and identity, as a stream of thoughts discern themselves from other thoughts. The ants take the seeds of grain that create the world by being the food that sustains it and make distinctive realities in the world.

Ants are life emerging from the earth just as seeds produce life from the earth. Ants do the daily work, the daily drudgeries, like Zen practice, where the spiritual being you are is the spirit and spontaneity you express every day until you realize the end you seek you had all along, but you see it with new eyes.

Plus, the ants may look like tiny monsters, but their work is a thing of beauty, worth the word, depth, rising out the unconscious to complete what ego cannot conceive of even in imaginative solutions.

Soul gave Psyche what she needed. She receives support by the totality of who she is rather than being rejected and condemned. The voices of condemnation are silent. Actions communicate the support and resilience and power offered in this new territory, where creation and generativity reigns. Psyche exists in a living world that can feed her what she needs when she needs it if she is attentive and in attention enough to what is being spoken to her and through her.

Also, notice the silence on the moral impositions of separating the seeds: they are separated by function not by good seeds or bad or evil seeds. The solution comes not from the spiritual heights but from the spiritual depths, from the deepest, darkest part, which is where Psyche has been living for much of the myth. No moral code to tyrannize her or freeze her into image in a fluid world arrives to save her. More practical, useable, humane, generous, gift giving, and compassionate support and guidance show up rather than moral condemnations.

Sorting the seeds can, as well, be seen as a metaphor for the doing the work with one's total being, one's total psyche, one's total soul, in accomplishing the most necessary core of urgency a human being is woken up to. Dexterity of the ego and resilience flourish when you can distinguish one thing from another, when you are the ground floor of this operation.

She is saved by nothing she, her ego, did, but by what living energies that human beings have available to them to form images and insects and invent and work the solution to the mixed complexity of chaos before one. Chaos' mix becomes creation.

The lamp that lit and burnt, like a bow and arrow of the mind, with the power to see and to

wound, briefly revealed Eros, who recoiled from the exposure. It was a small visibility, a revelation that Psyche carried but which she lost in her emotional mountain climbing and cliff falls. Moonlight of this task once more emphasizes the smallness of consciousness in the vast ocean of unconscious, alive darkness. And, more importantly, it provides invisible support to spiritual living where she plums into the depths having walked into the mouth of love's desire, a seed of which she has become an expression, along with the chaos and the clarity of sorting through one's feelings and emotions, passions and projections, pluses and negatives about the relationship and Eros' personality and abandonment, and about the meaning of their merger and now their separation. How does the relationship that buoys and destroys love shrink and grow? We've been shown how it shrinks; now, we see how it can be seeded with psychic food. You must do the work, and it is hard and laborious work. It does not have the glamour of beauty; it is the ordinariness of inner beauty.

Moreover, these are the seeds of the future that are diligently worked on all night by the ants, transforming energy of the unconscious, or the Inner Self, or instincts, into seeds of love, into directed energy through focus and determination of night work. We are in another part of the psyche where the relationship provided by Eros is absent; the task shows how the energy is manifest: how what is most small, but powerful can complete and give spiritual visibility to what invisibly gives Psyche her resilience: like a fish in water or bringing up out of the dark earth into the light of day the very core of relationship, darkness to light, that Psyche needs to learn in order to become deeply in love with Eros and not be attracted by only his surface beauty. Psyche's inner beauty adds additional blossoms.

What makes this task spiritual or sacred? Soul incarnates reality in forming beings and images who can in the initiatory container of the large room do the basic, essential, lowly foundational work of sorting through new and one's own arrangements of the seeds out of which new life, love, energy, food and abundance, and unstoppable, unrelenting, and focused power can grow. Despite the repetitive nature of the task so that it becomes ritualized, clearing the mind to the entrance of spiritual beings and development of relationships with daily activities that are the inside of spiritual growth, each sorting of the grains is new, with new arrangements. Close observation and non-attachment that is the hallmark of Zen spiritual practice, taken from a number of Zen koans, as the task, as each task is, is a koan that one must make one's own and wrestle with, doubt with, swallow, mantra on until it becomes such an intimate part of you that you express the depths out of which it arrives by the digging and planting. Everyday drudgery tells you that you are nothing special, as the task tells you as well, yet at the same time you are the incarnation of the foundation of the core of being expressed in highly charged forms and dances of images. Seeds as a metaphor is profoundly rich in conveying food, source of life, close to mother earth - you are a seed, it is your responsibility to do the impossible, find your purpose in life, whatever it is, at that stage of your life, and gather the total cosmos that you are into a ball so fierce and determined, a marvel of invention, that you accomplish the task before you from areas in your mind where you have never before been and where you now can take up residence. You are like a buoy undulating by the waves of the ocean. Psyche has turned inward, confronting Aphrodite on her home territory, she

has sacrificed to the sacred parts of herself that are larger than the world she confronts and lets the Inner Self provide the means to accomplish what she cannot consciously work through. The task separates and discriminates instead of the merger and union with Eros or the Inner Self. Worlds of night and light are differentiated by the scene. Finally, the smallest acts, the most insignificant creatures, the most ignored and reviled of things and beings, tabooed and outcast, and inconsequential conscious thoughts and ideas as well as stomped upon and pushed aside as a nuisance appear unstoppable enough in sheer number to be powerful enough to build the pyramids of the mounds of the seeds of grain.

The perspective one views the actions of the myth are from the earth up, not from the heavens downward, as Eros flees the light and fears discovery that Psyche is in her very being. Not inflation (identifying with the unconscious or the Inner Self) or spiritual ecstasy or rapture or theology or philosophy or spiritual energy from the light and upperworld accomplishes the task. Psyche is in the profound state of despair, ready to fly off the cliff again, knowing that this time there is no one who will catch her. Soul's energy and metamorphic ability and the creative depths of the soul's music and poetry sing and write in ordinary everyday verse the life the Psyche now has as she has the thousands of eyes of the ants to give her her life and succor and treasure. New eyes to make soul food. The seeds, the grain, the food, the ants, the work done in the depths of suffering now are Psyche's: her dress was black, she lived in darkness, and she now is darkness and knows it. Out of these relationships, love can be discerned and sorted and decision made from the spiritual powers created in this most unusual and non-heroic of myths.

VI.

“WHY HAVE I SPENT SO MUCH TIME ON THIS FIRST INITIATION”

Why have I spent so much time on this first initiation? Because it was through the story of this gnosis and how that gnosis was delivered that I completely entered the Myth of Psyche and Eros. Approximately a decade ago, I had fallen through the floor of society, lived in dirt and dust underneath the floorboards, and could not get out from under the floor by my own hands. I lost my sanity, madness rose up in one instant to change my life into hell, suffering, agony, thousands upon thousands of rages so constricting my heart arteries they were so ever present. I was in, as James Hollis calls it, “the swampland of the soul,” without rescue, resource, money, relationship, connections, friendly psyche and imagination and Inner Self.(James Hollis, *The Swampland of the Soul*) I was at war with the world and with myself and my wife and was a rebel with a cause: to revenge myself on those who tried to kill me at the Social Security Administration in Chicago, the managers. I was being eaten from the inside until I hollowed out.

In the constant hurricane that blew into my life, that originated from me though I could not see it, my dreams spoke to me and finally a number of dreams woke me up, as I’ve already written about: the Poseidon dream, landing on Mars, and the dream where the most awe attracting dark skinned anima figure dressed in royal purple appeared in my dream. I was in love with her beauty, her attraction mesmerized me as I had never been led on before. But she was grace and love and a guide sent, as Rumi imagined, to prepare me, as spiritual food is cooked, as in alchemy, out of blackness stew, to open the steaming vessel incubating psyche with the heat and shine for visits of greater beings and greater adventures and landscapes and guides so that I became a ship, a sail, a wind, a country that by exploring I was building homes that I could come back and occupy and not fear flooding.

My beautiful dark skinned Iranian looking anima stood in a white gazebo and told me things I could not believe or understand in the dream. As a consequence, I did an active imagination with her. She flew me over Egypt to what I guessed was Iran and sat me down along the shoreline that was strewn with thousands of half shells. The other half she asked me to imagine rested at the bottom of the sea. She said that my task was to pick up the shells in the sands, and I was to continue to do so until all of them had been picked up. Diving for pearls was not what would accomplish the task that I needed to do at that time in my life. The treasure hard to attain and the Hymn of the Pearl resounded in my imagination. I listened to her and followed her advice and let it be my guide over years. Over years, I, imaginatively, picked up thousands of half shells that I knew found a match at the bottom of the unconscious.

When I had this dream, my ego needed repair. I, metaphorically, thought of my ego because of the sudden, drastic breakdown as without hands, lacking in dexterity. I desperately grasped for resilience and flexibility in order to grow skills that would repair and mend the hurricane laden life I lived, aided by Jungian analysis, poetry therapy, shadow work to end the waste of years of

most bitter, deep depression by the daily picking up of those shells. I took it to be the work of the ego, to repair the ego. I see now that it was the work more of the unconscious, of the guides provided to me in my time of distress. They appeared, and thanks to Jung, life changed me so that I struggled with great heaving and effort and was able to change my life. I grew ears to hear with and eyes to see with.

You can see the similarities between the gathering by me, at the boundary between consciousness and unconsciousness, of those shells and the ants gathering the grain seeds into mounds, sorting through the difficulties and passions and hates scattered throughout the landscape. Love is a gift; it found me; how, I do not know; Zen helped with its practice of non-attachment and compassion. You still must be food and sifted and sorted out and take the storm clouds that continually change the weather of love and discern the sun behind the dark, so that neither you or your partner are merely projections of one another. End the mirror world and live in the world of true opposites; reality that truth wrestles with. You must learn to sort: you must know the dark and the light, insight into what has been planted and what feeds the desires that have been let loose in a dark, cliff laden world.

When I first read the Myth of Psyche and Eros at this time, it was this first task given by the Goddess of Love to which I was drawn and so entered from this part of the story. I lived in the myth and thought of it over the years, and looked at its applicability and usefulness to me. It, also, made me extremely sensitive to myths as they play themselves in everyday imaginative life and to how myths and the images that tell their stories live you and how that metamorphosis happens when you are in touch with parts of your total psyche that appear to consciousness to be tiny and ignoble, hidden by the grass, and turn out to be mighty, huge, an energy power of unimagined, until now, fortitude and insight.

What you lack, you have although not in ways you discern prior to the challenge. And the challenge is not heroic in the sense that Western Civilization has defined it. The myth of Psyche and Eros is even more fierce, fire bred, dragon laden, and creative in the solving of the tasks than a hero. This old salted wife's tale has ingredients not usually added to heroic tales and whose perspectives frame the myth in layers upon layers of mature experience and, perhaps, long tradition.

VII.

“APHRODITE IS UNHAPPY THAT PSYCHE COMPLETED THE FIRST TASK”

Aphrodite is unhappy that Psyche completed the first task; she throws her into a field for her second initiation, into the kingdom of eros and love. Psyche must bring back, like a supplicant, to Aphrodite what she can gather of the fleece from the golden rams of the sun. The rams butt horns and chase one another as Psyche watches them acting as if they are in rutting season. These animals have a poisonous bite. She can't survive going onto the field of battle, she concludes, and like the first task, when she is at a loss as to how to see, analyze, and decide how to accomplish the task, she once more founders in the morass of abject failure, just where she has so often found herself, and just as often decides once more on suicide. Once more she forsakes herself in her disorientation of losing herself, throwing herself away in the face of unremitting reentrances into the valley of death and despair. Living in a psyche that is “nature alive”, she flounders on the slippery rocky boulders that line the shoreline as she climbs for land, for footing, for being held by solid earth: suicide is not knowing how to live the aliveness, to be alive in the natural animalness of struggling, striving existence. Psyche was never educated in being alive and being in a world that was alive and foe or friend depending on whether you fed it and befriended it as it fed you and befriended you.

Into this lonely, lowly, stenchful abrasion of the soul, once more, comes another ignored, lowly, out of the way, unseen, even when looked at, inner guide to spirit Psyche to action. A green reed instructs Psyche on the value of waiting, observation, biding one's time until the time is right(politics), and indirection(cunning and subtleties): the sun, at noon, makes the rams especially active, so wait until night when they are at rest, and go into the field and pick from the bushes and weeds the fleece.

Again, we are in rich associational, metaphoric country, so abundant, in fact, that in order to slow down we can approach these tasks as Zen koans, in an “I don't know” frame of mind, in order to penetrate so deeply into the illogic (where the seismic shift moves the fault lines so there is open scar and heaved psychescape) of the myth that the hidden secret impelling her and living her finally is revealed as she is broken out of the fetters obscuring vision and music, reason and truth, and reality and how it incarnates in the world.

Note that for the second time, Psyche obeys the goddess, without questioning her. She did not obey the god, Eros, earlier and it evoked horror and panic and rejection by the psychic world of humans. While she is, or appears to be, at the mercy of forces of the irrational and untrammelled power lust of society, it is not whether Psyche obeys or disobeys the goddesses and gods that convey the energy of the myth although how Psyche relates to the gods and goddess is important. It is how truthful to the point of death she is with herself and the daemon that inspirits her and dispirits her with heart pinpricks that impels her, knowing full well the risks and that death is but a breath away, on her search for her reason d'être, or better, the myth that moves her story into

who she has the freedom to be and the truth to reveal by mining the reality she finds herself in.

Like Psyche's leap from the mountain, her descent into the abyss that would have crushed her calls out the presence of the wind god to catch her. Her leap into the waters of death calls forth cloven-footed Pan, with confirmation of the spiritual split between light and dark, lover and loved, appearance and depth, beauty and monster, Psyche and Eros, to softly play into her ears that she must live and experience this split, the rising and falling of passions and emotions of love, of going inward to the unforgiving country and going outward to be like spit thrown back, and reconcile what consciousness has sundered with the light. Psyche's courage and depth takes this liquid food into her heart for she needs strength for her journey. Significantly, no comfort and help appears to help her survive the pummeling of the goddesses Hera, Demeter, and Aphrodite. For Psyche, it was not impossible for her to challenge them, she was going to be a mother like them, giving her something she instinctively had, not something she lacked. Her desperate conclusions on ending her and her child's life when she was faced with sorting the grain and getting the golden fleece generated the presence of the community of ants and the one reed among a number of reeds to do the impossible tasks. Her depression, her struggle, her riding of the psychic musical scale from mountain to valley to river up to mountain bring into visibility for initiation the impossibility of consciousness to birth images, energies, powers, chakras, hearts, imaginal stories, and animals with the foresight to accomplish life's and love's most perilous journey. Light and knife are tools, carriers and sails of vision; they are not the originators of vision that ensouls Psyche into her quest. Soul forms the contents of her vision. What we are being shown are that these life's food is love and we must learn how to grow and nourish it and tell the difference not between good and evil but between choices sifted through as you feel your way through love's tribulations, discerning which one most nourishes and what are you hungry for. The image is one of ravenous hunger of the ants in their relentless march for food out of their home in the recesses of the earth also needs to be sorted as well within and among psyches. Don't let your hungers stay whole, to eat through you, but sort the hungers, lessen their cravings and desires, and discern what serves you and what does not serve to best grow the food of your life. Notice, also, the work is to sort the seeds, to discern the origins of your impulses to love and desire, into mounds. You do not destroy mounds; you live with all the choices, all of the multiple ways of being in the world through love and desire and hate and despair of desire ever on its wheel and not being able to dismount. Life's struggles and combats and aggressions are not only masculine but part of love and intrinsic to feminine as well. The reed, sitting in the marshlands or swamplands at the boundary between unconsciousness and consciousness, like Pan, gives voice to what actions Psyche must take. Her task of gathering of the gold can only be done by her: she, as we, must find a way to avoid directly confronting the rams, an image of the dragon, in their home territory and go deeply into the depths and find the treasure hard to find. Love gives off the energy that can nourish one on this perilous and body strewn path so one of life's goals can be presented to one, nourished, and navigated into. As Jung says, "Love is the dynamism that most infallibly brings the unconscious to light," and the myth shows us it performing and how it operates as image food and seeds and landscapes for the growth of the soul into Psyche, and eventually in butterfly. In other words, how

an invisible becomes visible through its actions incarnated into living matter.

What does this world we are unfamiliar with and in which we find ourselves living say to us, show us, image to us, enact for us, make us an actor or actress to playwright the scene you are enacting: the darkness commanded by Eros hid the truth, the darkness advised by the reed reveals a way out a confrontational dilemma, sort the light and the dark or solar and lunar consciousness, and gather gold from the shadows, the elusive, the lowly, the singular, and grow gold as that is what the rams do, as alchemy does, grow it and integrate it into the life, love, and death of what or who you are.

Here is the Jungian analyst, Aldo Carotenuto, writing from his well experienced discourse on Eros and Pathos: Shades of Love and Suffering.

In the extremes of love and eroticism, we lose all certainty and become unbalanced. The ego begins to vacillate, to the point where we lose control of our behavior. This state of disequilibrium is a condition associated with being in love, but it is a necessary characteristic of any psychic transformation. It is also a state of mind we try to defend ourselves against. We instinctly sense the risk of being dragged into an experience that in all cultures is associated with the idea of death. All through history poets and artists have evoked death, the most fearful of specters, to give form and substance to the most intense state of attachment to the other. We cannot help trembling in such a situation because the erotic experience forces us to live through one of the most violent of inner conditions.

Psyche suffers through the sorting of life, love, and death as experiences, as states of being that have their own mound, where she can distinguish between each of them, where you have the clumping or chakras of psychic energies. Also, it is not the outer sun that provides her solution but the clothing of night that provides how to explore for inner sun.

Psyche's experience after the loss and abandonment of Eros amplifies her song, in the roar of silence, on the musical scale of the passions, scaling mountains, liquefying mountains in the emulsion of desire and attachment, falling in deep valleys filled with streams of despair and disrepair biting one like summer flies on body sweat. Here is Carotenuto, once again:

Loss and abandonment imprison us in solitude. No experience is as tragic because there is no external resource-and I would say not even an internal one-that can help us. Our only resource is to work through our isolation. One was alone in the realm of love; one is even more alone now, in tortured silence. The suffering is a revelation; we know it will never end, just as shortly before we knew love was eternal.... We would never be able to love if we remained aware that love is transitory. ...(T)his self-deceit,

...is in the very nature of love to inspire a sense of eternity. ...When I am abandoned I imagine I have not given enough or been everything I should have been to the other. I ask myself: What did I do? What should I have done? Why was I unable to manage this situation? And here the specter of death is instantly raised. This is the moment when one wants to die or hopes for some fatal disease or accident because the idea that one's own inadequacy caused the separation is unbearable. This is difficult to live with. The tragic acts, the suicides, are attribute to this.

(CAROTENUTO, IBID., PP. 82-83)

Silence in this myth speaks, and it speaks in many forms and images. Carotenuto's acute observations I agree with except that the myth shows the resources the whole of Psyche has available to her in her isolation and solitude, sufficient to the impossible, more than herculean tasks, that we encounter when we are living out the inner reality of life, love, and death.

Solar and lunar, light and dark, yin and yang change in revolution. We are in the whole of psyche, not just what we have come to invent, "ego", for ease of understanding the subtleties of energy flow and the boundaries. In the heat, intensity, aggression, appearance world where the high noon sun blasts away the opposition full of anger and madness the myth locates the frenzy that is scorching Psyche. Consciousness is a light and a burning, a fertility generator of psychic energy and a unending wound, a discoverer and seer and an obsesser as well as blinder, moral clarity and moral morass. And like Psyche's lamp and wounding of Eros, separating the two of them into who they are before they can be one in love, and the sorting of the seeds, we are presented a scene, once again, where the climax and resolution are enacted by discernment: separating the task and solution, sorting the solar and the lunar energies, no shadows to golden shadows, and producing gold and getting to the bush where cunning and wit and insight and foresight have led you. Here, the golden glow of the rams and sheep, both male and female, are in a dangerous field of combat, as the psyche is in continuous natural turmoil and upheaval whether perceived by awareness or not, have guardians, like dragons, but you must go into the darkness, into the lair, in order to pick up the pieces of gold. This action requires courage and having guides who know the way in and the way back(different risks), for it is as easy to drown on the way back as it is on the journey into the depths where the ordinary conditions the most treasure. Zen conditions.

Separation, sorting, opposition is an operation of the whole of psyche, one part speaking to the other part, one part imaging to another, one producing the psychic, spiritual, soulful food needed for exploration, survival, and guidance. Yes, as Edinger portrays in Ego and Archetype and Neumann explores in Amor and Psyche have emphasized, in their one-sidedness is their dangers, whether masculine or feminine, solar or lunar consciousness. Danger exists as well in wholeness, in the adventures propelling one into wholeness, as is Psyche. Only by separating and sorting their positives and negatives, their goods and evils, which they both have in abundance, can the whole

seed of what they are shine, and the lowly reed speak out of the boundary swamps, where one's feet are wet and sinking in the mud so as to how to see clearly, how you make the moral morass of the sun where you cannot differentiate, blinded by the light, because all jab for their own territory to the moral clarity that is possible by using the dark to reflect on the sun and discriminate and use the sun to reflect on the lunar to see what insights are hidden in intuition, the smallest of things and creatures, and thin, frail reeds as well as in the solitude and silence of loneliness and isolation and separateness so that one can hear one's voice and go so far in to realize it is not one's voice but its speech is guidance and food for the sacrifices you have made to get next to the leaves to shake them of the golden wool.

We are in the field of the Archetypal Self, where spirit enters the image that soul has provided and we are in the field of plasticity, opposites and wholes, unities and multiplicities. Gold, alchemists thought they could grow, as Edinger tells us, for it is in the powers of the Self, or Philosopher's Stone, to grow it. We are speaking here of growing philosophical or spiritual gold; in other words, nature may produce the material, but it our conscious and spiritual concentration and individuation process turning feminine matter into masculine spiritual gold. The myth brings the gold into the feminine, into the dark, assuming that this analogy is insightful and productive of nourishment since dark may be either feminine or masculine, as light can be either of the two: I am learning from myth to separate into the sorted parts so that the spirit can enter the image soul creates.

Gold has the quality of "unchanging consistency and eternity." According to Edinger, the experience of the Self brings to the ego stability that reduces "regressive decomposition"; that is, the ego learns to integrate the golden shadow and not wash back into the riverbed of unconsciousness and the memory material of trauma or childhood. Yet such decomposition works to clear images, to turn one black and emulsive into the earth into order to die and be reborn, psychically, so that one can have a spiritual life and nurturing, inside the roots of the black bark is the white wood, a living matter where soul loves to be in residence. As psyche becomes aware and relationship grows this "eternal" dimension becomes "an important aspect of the experience of the Self." (Edinger, *ibid*, pp. 265-267.) How do you integrate this experience, which in many ways is the experience of evil, your own darkness, and the darkness of the world that dressed you when you made your first step into independence and freedom? As Milosz warned, the voices you hear and the spirits that enter you can be evil. They are here: Psyche battles Aphrodite and her minions; how fight evil and overcome it and separate good from evil. Yet, the tasks themselves are not evil but necessary for Psyche to reunite with Eros.

Remember, Psyche is the lighter of the lamp, the wounder, the revealer of the god, in this myth. Consciousness and its qualities emerge from the feminine, not from the masculine. The masculine is revealed as flying away, as punisher and retributor, as vengeful, as immature, as a mother's boy, as taken too much with himself: in other images, in the dark about himself. No longer: Psyche reveals and wounds, opens a second birth to him: new flesh, scarred, love not of the sky and mind but of the body and intimate and of the flesh, coursing in the veins, red blood. What was black becomes light, becomes red, like the pomegranate, full of life. If life, then love

which produces children, creations of darkness and light, out of two one.

The world masculine that identifies itself with the sun, obsessed and aggressive, needs the feminine, the moon to cloth and make clothes from the wool and to spin gold out of the integration: sun can be evil, consciousness has evil intrinsic to it and it must be revealed and integrated and made a part of one so that one is not lured onto the battlefield where relentlessness and unremitting belligerence are the time of day. All of this we already know. What we do not know well at this time is that in this sun, you are never found; you never know you are lost; you know by sight where you are, why seek what you cannot contemplate: what you do not know. Moral blindness and tyranny of the most remorseless and unforgiving kind. All can be known; nothing can be known with any certainty. Moon can be evil, cold, destructive; in this myth, its insightful and depth qualities ensue, like grafting, on the symbolic tale silently being told, telling to the heart the home being built with spiritual tools and soul's invocations. Neumann summarizes how to accomplish the task of gathering the gold:

It is not under the burning rays of the sun but in the cool reflected light of the moon, when the darkness of consciousness is at the full, that the creative process fulfills itself; the night, not the day, is the time of procreation. It wants darkness and quiet, secrecy, muteness, and hiddenness. Therefore, the moon is lord of life and growth, in opposition of the lethal, devouring sun. The moist nighttime is the time of sleep, but also of healing and recovery...It is the regenerating power of the unconscious that in nocturnal darkness or by the light of the moon performs its task, a mysterium in a mysterium, from out of itself, out of nature, and with no aid from the head-ego.

This way into the Self is one where healing and recovery can be found. Where you can learn to stay sane in an insane world; where you can begin stability in an unstable society that rejects you and your inner world, life, love, and very soul. Its spirit wants to crush you; your soul can create the images and nourishment, out of something as thin as a reed, as obscure as a bush, that will not be imprisoned by the sun grown ideas and images of who you are and what you should do with your life, of who you should love, of exploding the myth of who the monsters lurking in the psyche are and how they form and feed. We have entered a world where the landscape and its inhabitants give us tools to solve physical and psychic problems and point to spiritual, soul, and heart ways of being in the world wholly different than those of the family one had left.

Psyche has learned that one of most fearsome of monsters, with metamorphic and chthonic powers, known to humans is the ferocious imprisonment of the sun for you do not see the prison was not made by you, it has self deluding passageways that are a catch-22, and the ideas and images are those others, especially family, implanted into you and so they appear natural and eternal to you. They are why you must grow inner beauty large enough to identify with, break free of, and defy Aphrodite, climb the mountain footstep by footstep, leap off the cliff into the abyss with the courage that you may die and not have your story told and no tombstone to say you were

here, grow ants and reeds that can grow your own ideas and images and that can teach you how to survive the attempts to imprison you once more or kill you in unrelenting rejection and fear and power lust and envy and jealousy of the society's fear of what is new to this earth: a psyche that grows, learns, uses its tools to skillfully make the hard work of becoming what its very makeup says it can strive to be: revealer of the gods, light to the soul, heartwing, earth creature who out of the ordinary reveals the most extraordinary powers, energies, and strengths as well as learning how to search for gold and to know what is gold and what is not gold.

These opposite experiences Psyche can hold, if only briefly, in consciousness. Once learned, skill will make tools to solve other tasks. For as Hillman has discerned that "we are strangely disconsolate even in a moment of radiance." He further writes that after "Our golden experience" we "again and again will press for testing in the fire, ever new blackness appearing, dark crows with the yellow sun." Do the night work to gather gold each time, perhaps, it will stay longer in consciousness.(Marlan, The Black Sun, pp.193-194)

We are in boundary territory, where Hermes reigns, just as he is in the alchemical tradition of the union of sun and the moon, of Mercurius and Sulphur, and in the blackness of the dark, who is also light, being a slippery symbol of separation and connection, of sorting out which to do, what to do: we require of ourselves the effluence of learning when to merge and have union(empathizing and becoming other) and when to separate and have identity(when confronting the Self). His herms tell us we are at a crossroads, give us direction. Our task, spiritual task toward wholeness is to discern what is important: the ignored, the shit, the small, the seemingly insignificant, the lowliest of creatures. These are your guides on your spiritual journey toward what or who you really are; they give you spiritual food. Soul guides in deeper into beyond the boundary lands; outside the boundaries of society. What rejects you: high-mindedness; established religion and established personality, in boundary or ego experiences; no direct experiences of the gods; a unitary world; a world whose power corruption and religious and moral tyrannies are accepted and condoned as human and humane when they are neither; the society and its mores; the lack of naturalness and nature and connection with them; and living in the spiritual world of ethereal concoctions. You reject. And experience a new world that is beyond the boundary of those royal powers that rule the world. You've dug up your own royal energies. You indeed attract and repulse as an erotic; but the psyche you are is not the psyche you find or divine. Separations and connections that are not erotic, where depression and despair accompany the waters you swim in and dissuade you from glory seeking for yourself and your identity. You are in new waters, where eros is only the generator of, the creator of new loves and ardor and struggle but not the means to the resolution nor the final ending place. Love, in other words, is the necessary ingredient for growth and development of psyche, but it does not contain or cannot contain the sufficient ingredients, the practical and usefully sufficient sorting and gathering that must occur before love has enough vision in which to see the world anew, afresh, a free human in the pageant.

The myth of the golden fleece, of the adventures of Jason and the Argonauts, gives us a way into the nature of what is spiritual, what is sacred about this task that we can add to what has

already been imagined or lived. The reed, the lonely voice of the soul, symbolizes Psyche, the individual who Psyche is, who tells her, like the ships Jason and his fellows sailed in, gives navigation instructions, directions, and how to sail through the treacherous seas of society and nature. It tells her how to differentiate and to use the libido energies and psychic animal powers for what they produce and how they are of use to humankind: clothing and warmth of the wool, how gold is best gathered, like the grains, repetitively picking up the gold from the brambles in small bits, one at a time, not all at once, not charging into the interior space without guidance and a map. This approach lessens the too powerful glow and glory that gold gives when the ego identifies with its power as if it were its own, to bad and evil ends. Radiance you earn to give off is better acquired in small increments, absorbed in living, and integrated as you learn to feast so that you, Psyche, are aware that it is not you who gives off this substance of the invisible love but the Inner Self and spiritual gold that grew from black soil you planted in green earth. The repetition is ritualistic; the turn inward that makes visible the invisible energies that inhabits you, that you may know the gods, that you may determine whether they mean you harm or good, and that you may acknowledge through true sacrifice that is not you, not a hero, who transforms you in your adventures. Psyche's sacrifices have been self-sacrifices, letting the ego go into death, letting her child go into death, going into the suicides, stepping into the darknesses, where you create new life or gather bits of gold.

Let's envision it from a little different view; let's take wing into heart and take the darkness as Eros' symbol: the bride's black funeral dress, the nights of lovemaking and of conceiving, the light into the night that struck love awake in the soul of Psyche, working like ants through the night through dreams and sleep resolving dilemmas, and the lunar night of the boundary country where the warmth of the gold gives comfort and can cloth one's nakedness and the unconscious gives tools to navigate ship that is in constant field of danger and not knowing how to sail the treacherous uncharted waters.

"Brood of Night" is what Cicero called Eros, according to James Hillman in his revisioning work of The Dream and the Underworld. The naming fits our experiences in and of the myth, tells us useful echoes back to us to reflect upon and ingest and regurgitate. Hatching out of night from the warmth, heat to ferment, well up in incubation to flying fowl, winged where the eggs evolve to offspring. Eros is that winged creature of the night where Psyche does her brooding over her impossible, and each adventure further dives her deeper and steeper into the impossible tasks and the ending life, confronting death at each turn and on each task. Tasks or initiations can better be seen as nests where Psyche, pregnant, creating new life, can take from the very processes of creativity and birthing and incubation that psyche is and has inherent in her being and have fermentation and welling up from the night the creatures, subtleties, cunning, and resourcefulness required to accomplish the fledging and take the wings of intuitive and instinctive-archetypal knowings to fly, a metaphor for searching long distance in the psyche for a network, a connection, a lost soul, an unknown, whether it is galvanized energy of the chakras or the being who can guide you and give you food to survive the flight or small creature who quietly commiserates the longings you have stretched yourself on in your flight.

Eros contests not with death, as Freud imaginatively thought through, Eros and Thanos are not rivals; rather, Hillman claims him as the “brother of death,” not the principle that will save us from death. He states that there would be a close bond “between what goes on in dreams and a love that fulfills itself in darkness, in the intangible bodies of psychic images.” Continuing, he writes the following passage:

Thus there is a downward love, and not only an Eros stretching its arms towards the horizon of others. This downward love appeared all through later antiquity as statues of Amor, wings folded, his torch pointing downward. The same yearning for the depths becomes literalized in romanticism and even enacted in suicidal love pacts.

Psyche, the one with the torch in our myth, loves death and is even willing to end the new life growing within her; Eros is brother to death. Perhaps, the mythological origins and the imaginative heart of the myth have it right: it is Psyche AND Eros not the OR of Eros(or Love) versus Thanos, life principle in a continual wrestling struggle with the death principle. Both partake of life and death, have the myths, connections and separations, sortings and gatherings that like day and night, light and dark, Hermes or Mercurius, symbol of the boundary waters that separate or the union of wholeness, for what do human beings truly do to make a difference in the earth world they have evolved in and through: life and death are constant companions, inhibitors and initiators toward action, incubators of the spirit that loves life or is in love with death or a soul who loves the death pangs and responds as a mother to her brood and is puzzled by the life sails that so often sidetrack the mortal. One wing is life; one wing is death; the power of its flight, love. What is new to the world: Psyche(and her ideas and creativity and imagination as well as its deadly curses) and Eros(and his depth divings drawing out virtues and curses). Through these and the spiritual and moral and ethical principles that grow out of these tensions, the human beings mixture and sorting and gathering and envisioning and doing are truly new to the world, a boon and a disaster, expressing in each act, life and death.

“We may realize here that Eros is not so simple, neither in life nor in myth,” Hillman elaborates on the netting, or nesting quality of Eros, building twig by small twig a container for creative birth or transforming into the clothing of night all the fears and terrors that are loose into a brood of netting to catch the souls experience of the blackness of dejection and depression and death, as necessary and life producing as their opposites. New eyes see stereoscopically, one eye sees one way and the other another, and both a truth or an appearance; close the eyes, use the third eye to discern the essence of what was seen, in dark reflection lit by the candle of the consciousness and the playwright of the imagination. Instructively, Hillman summarizes Eros for in the myth Eros is the god, is the son of Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, both of whose beauty is rivaled by the natural beauty of Psyche. Eros has the powers of darkness, the arrows to inflict desire, and the out of boundary riots of the imagination free and brooding in the night. Psyche appears to be powerless, tabooed, isolated, made a refugee from society and from herself, as so

often happens when you make an outcast, an enemy of your own soul, at war, beyond the pale. The myth shows the nature of real power, the nature of real beauty, and how these attributes are attained, not given. Psyche's soul speaks to her, guides her, comes alive and regenerative to her, her spiritual seeds, once she confronts the goddess directly in her temple, facing her with her own identity and losing so much in the battles and being beaten up laden down with unending struggles of seemingly endless failures and, from society's point of view, madneses and pathologies. Psyche beads their sweat off of her and takes the path whose wounds and darkneses are the enlightener of Eros.

Hillman asks of the myths of Eros, not just of this myth:

Is Eros the connecting life principle, a libido that wants unions, as Freud says, and does it pertain more to 'the feminine' as Jung says? Is Eros an ever-needy child of Want (Plato), a sleepy languorous little boy, or a son of Venus, arrowing straight into our life her desires and her pleasures? Does he come 'first' as a progenitor of everything, as some myths held, or 'first' as a virtue in the Christian sense? Or is Eros a brother of Hades himself, as Schelling said? Myth leaves the definition of Eros in perplexity- or rather it only speaks of Eros within a specific context, such as this one, which puts Eros into the bed of Sleep, Death, and Dreams among the brood of Night.

These are the "precise archetypal backgrounds of Eros" that must be imagined and lived through, not romanticized into darkness as ignorance as does today's psychology with its corpulent shining cupids filled full of little boynesses, trivializing its power and energy. "What a person says about love," Hillman goes on, "tells more about the person than about love. It tells within which fantasy his or her experience of Eros is being enacted."

The Greek poets, according to Anne Carson's study of Eros, wrote of erotic experience in which eros is "hostile in intention and detrimental in affect." To which she adds more detail:

Alongside melting, we might cite metaphors of piercing, crushing, bridling, roasting, stinging, biting, grating, cropping, poisoning, singeing and grinding to a powder, all of which are used of eros by the poets.

We know many of these flesh and spirit agonies from the myth. Eros has many forms and images and angles and stories that are written on how love's divine ecstasies intercourse with demonic shatterings, as if we were the animal sacrifice and the god's nod to our swirling blood. Eros has many myths to concretize and play out his or her, depending on the viewpoint, chaos; Psyche has this myth and few pretenders who would calculatngly display and reveal to the world, that is deaf to the powers, energies, and transformations of psyche, that when the two meet we learn that the transformed becomes transformer, as Psyche is the new creative and destructive being in the world whose power reaches far beyond those of Eros. We do not notice this glimmer

at first, the light is so small in a world of darkness.

Noel Cobb in Archetypal Imagination takes wing, as the tasks do to awe and dazzle us with mysteries of the human mind made flesh and blood and real and alive, over Carson's critique to explore deeper into the myth of eros:

This catalogue, as moral critique of Eros' 'heartlessness,' is damning. But as a psychopoetic expression of love's alchemical operations on the soul it is awesome. What emerges is that Eros transforms mainly through fire. To Dante he appears in a fiery cloud(nebulo fuoco). He holds Dante's burning heart in his hand. Eros is the torchbearer. Whether his heat is felt as the melting fires of passion or the scorching flames of hell-torments, he burns. Forms transform. Eros brings metamorphosis.

In the myth, Psyche is the torchbearer, the bringer of a different burning, flames whose light scorches into the very dark, fiery untutored heart of Eros, whose light permanently imprints and images the revealed, dark, winged god. The moment of consciousness cannot be reversed as can moments under cover of darkness where plasticity and subtleties can flourish. Burnt into Psyche's heart is the image of the burnt Eros, the threatening Eros, the fleeing Eros on wings, into love with Eros. A small light in the vast darkness awoke the sleeping gods, causing not only an outcry from Aphrodite but from other goddesses as well. Something new had entered the world on the flames of the torch that represented passions, a new passion that would look at eros in a new light, turning love back on itself and to its source, back to its divine origins, back to where metamorphosis incubates and forms and transforms into the image, imaginal, and imagination.(For a long list of attributes ascribed to Eros but mostly not seen in our myth, see Cobb, Archetypal Imagination, pp. 174-175). Psyche lost Eros. Can she survive without him--always at issue in each scene? Another god, Pan, associated with sex, love, and lust as well as animalness guides her to search for her lost love, telling us that it is the aliveness awakened in her she carries in her. She began there; she will end elsewhere. Her rejections initially by the creatures of her own psyche reinforce the rejections by the goddesses. Her tests are not those Eros gives her but his mother, the Goddess of Love, who is seethingly jealous of the beauty of Psyche, willing to pummel her into submission to her will. Her war is with the goddess, not Eros, who she seeks but who apparently she has not the resources and power to find. Aphrodite's impossible tasks tests Psyche's resolve, failures, willing death and active imaginations in order to determine who shall define who loves whom, who defines love, and who determines the fate of love, and what does beauty and love mean. Psyche confronts Eros, who is like a daimon, who helps and guides her when he gets the courage to do so, and then goes into the temple where Aphrodite is worshipped: she goes into the center of the divinity where she suffers horribly and where love originates: love not as she has known it with Eros, or its demonic quality with a goddess who resents her beauty, and not because she is the mother of Eros, but love nests that try the soul in impossible and insufferable and incurable and heartwing ways that yet skillfully teach Psyche how

to grow wings and fly, an important psychological and spiritual feat. Love as a conscious test of life's worth and meaning, by which Psyche's Inner Self, or the goddess, Aphrodite, and Psyche grapple with the human and divine, earthly and cosmic, concourse to denial, pathways, or merger, depending on the insight and courage of Psyche.

"Eros is not that which brings chaos," Cobb writes, "Eros is born of chaos." He continues:

He is that inherent order in night and chaos, a theopany, an apparition before the eyes of the soul.

Quoting the poet, Rilke, this "theopany of Eros" is described as:

Lost, oh, suddenly, lost!

Divinity in one swift embrace.

Life turns around. Fate is born.

And within a spring weeps.

Eros is initiated as well and is transformed so that he could understand "human love for a human creature," Cobb quotes from Ruzbehand Baqli of Shiraz's treatise The Jasmine of the Fedeli d'amore. Cobb concludes "It is not Love that the lover falls in love with, but the divinity made manifest by Love."

How have humans dealt with one of main forms and images by which divinity enters into the world, courses through the energy centers of the human, goes from heart to heart in "namaste", and speaks and listens and converses with the secret selves and voices and ears that human multiplicity has given them grace to even say, one god only, when turned inward? Or turned outward, denied, argued out of existence or the historical religion's spiritual atrophies of divine energies that are closed up against the human energy wave celebrating your flapping your heartwings that speak when you speak, listen when you listen, nod when you plea, and are your marriage partners with the cosmos.

Eros speaks to one form of love, and despite his fears, importunities and arrows, burnings and woes, he is a guide and helper for lovers. Aphrodite is another form of love who shows malevolence and surface self love. The world is all about the goddess and herself conceit. She gives Psyche tasks that test her depth because Aphrodite expects none, as it is about beauty, which is apparently all surface. Psyche epitomizes another form of love: without self love, self sacrifice for a lover who rejects her, who sees deeper than her beauty and does not take it for more than it is, dying for what she wants and loves, even killing along with herself what she wants to bring into the world. In other words, the stakes are the world, how the world and the cosmos is put together, how psyche and soul and butterfly understand the world in its good and evil, light and dark, hidden and revealed, love and hate, envy and jealousy, human love and divine love. Is Psyche capable of love sufficiently encompassing and motivating and powerful to tumble and rise, tumble and rise like the ocean waves in dejection, despair, defeat, and sunnization, rounded to

completion, expressed in community of action and stealth and subtlety that discriminates how love emboldens and goldens and grows life instead of desiccating, tornadoing, or killing life?

And if the origin of love is divine, whatever the forms expressed in the human being who must live with that supercharged energy flowing and plowing and plunging through the psyche and heart, life must test love in order to see whether its results are carnage or caretaker, chaos and fire or compassion and care, murder and killing or birth and nurturing, and supportive of survival of the heartmind or the death in the love possessed frenzy that is true madness.

In love, energies divine and swirled together with heart and passions of the primal breed storm in constant whirlwind through the lovers and this is what we are being shown: the lovers though separate, human and divine, how enveloped they are in total and in the intimacy of the tender moments that lovers create a world and heartwings out of and imaginatively enszene. You live on the mountain, in love with the whole world, or in the valley, in trance state of agitated agonies of abysmal lostness; you have or are everything or you have or are nothing. Psyche has acquired the way to sort these life giving energies and put together the passions and ideas that cohere together and are able to provide images, directions, and solutions to love's dilemmas. Life in Psyche responds to love's travails to show the need to sleep and mull and work over separating your feelings and emotions, and images. Psyche has the tools to gather gold through indirection and inquire in internal dialogue in the night to go by the bushes, quietly, and pick up the pieces that are of value to her, that she is able to turn into warm clothes and have the judgment to discern how to do the inner work of love to see the dangers and aggressions of lovers and accomplish life's goals by seeing how it is a matter of daily gathering the gold of love, a little at a time, and see each one for what it is, and make decisions based on the individual selections: the treasure the dragon guards can be attained and the dragon related to and made a partner in human love, though very carefully, with much diligence, and continual observations and insights.

What is spiritual or sacred about this task, this nest building, laying the second egg for incubation of the heartwings for Psyche, as she is being taught how to grow wings? Creative darkness' glowing potential for inner work manifests itself, connecting the Eros of their marriage bed and the absence of Eros but the presence of night like a seed or a sheet, or clothing for visibility of invisibility. Catching gold for scrutiny and ingestion into one's psyche provides food for dreams and spiritual wisdom, so difficult to see and practice and so easy to fool oneself about and practice in empty ritualistic forms. You crack the darkness of the alchemical egg and hatch newborn every day, you are the image and heart that enters the psychic energy that flows through you so that, perhaps, like Rumi, the spirits and gods that visit you are lovers and inspirers and not deniers and rage filled guttural life and love devourers. The invisible communities that are all around you, that live so intimately and yet so far away you need to take into visibility, learn to incarnate and you become food for others in an act of love and nurturance. The rams are like the dragons that guard the inner treasure that western heroes kill to get at the golden fleece. Psyche's soul turns to observation, studying the habits of aggression, and figuring out another more abundant means for everyone involved, using the thinnest reed of insignificance to find one ways to pieces of gold. As Shakespeare's Falconbridge says, to use indirection to find direction out. Love,

like the gold, is not gathered nor distinguished nor understood at once but over time. Satori, the spiritual breakthrough in nirvana, comes only after years of practice and nothingness, and it is not the end but just the beginning, even after all of the years of laborious picking and sorting. Like the ants, you finally get your energies together and go in one direction and then you learn discretion and subtleties. It is not the obvious, light filled, big things as you imagined when you began the journey that matter, that teach you to learn to crawl on the ground and watch the ants, the young birds hide from predators or die by being kicked out nest, to see at night and learn the inner spiritual and psychological tools to gather gold, and then how to compassionately implement the flecks of love that grow in you. In the seeds of the night, Psyche can enter the field of the Inner Self, when the ego learns that it, not ego, is the source of the inner sun, and gather from it small pieces of golden wool to thread together a common cloth for ego and Inner Self. The divine energies can be gathered in manageable form and ways that bring them into livable expression and image that engenders creative inner spiritual work.

Why are the tasks Aphrodite gives to Psyche impossible tasks? They are tasks that could only be completed with divine energies and images and creativity and intrusions into the human world. These are not tasks human energies and power and conscious insight can complete. They are like koans--rational thought and analysis cannot solve the problems, in fact, the mind must use those tools until the soul's intuition, the unconscious, the Inner Self provides the images and ideas and dreams to imagine the completion of the task. Death immediately confronts Psyche, she decides on suicide, awakening her to her mortality, sweeping the ego and smallness into the stream of lacks, regrets, recriminations, and utter helplessness and hopelessness. This trauma concentrates the mind into focus and organizes consciousness and alerts the whole of the Psyche's soul into awakening the survival mode of being, attuned to the minutest detail or animal and image that the unconscious or the divine arrives to approach or talk to you, rushing adrenalin through the soul and tensing all muscles for survival or death, but notice: not flight. She is like a lighthouse in fog and storm, ever vigilant, yet depressed and lonely and isolated. The risks and impossibilities in Psyche's soul throw up images of survival or dialogue or landscapes or animal, spiritual, or psychological or divine resources of the soul to mold a reply to the pleas of Psyche. Soul is silence, close to earth, traveling light in the dark with no weapons, only inner guides and reeds, to gather in the night what is difficult and elusive to make of use to humans and psyche. And she will remember that she acted and she gathered the gold and that it was her thin reed of foresight and imagination and thinking that accomplished the task; the specks of gold she gathers will stick with her and have an effect, just as the wool of gold attaches to the brambles when the rams brush by them.

What does this have to do with love? The brooding and specks of enlightenment in the vast darkness and chaos of love threatens to overwhelm life and become obsessive and possessive in love. Sitting in the nest, brooding, warming the eggs, nesting the forming chaos of night, waiting for the alchemical crack in the eggs, show that Psyche needs more than Eros to be what or who she truly is and what she has shown herself to be. She challenges the goddess of love in the war of beauties shows what is obsessive and possessive in the divine energies that Psyche must learn to

challenge and war against and struggle and suffer through. Eros may help inspire her, but what Psyche learns is beyond this god of night yet is necessary and restorative of the relationship of Psyche and Eros that he will have to ingest into his life and heart. Psyche infuses as the transformer as well as the transformed in ways beyond those metamorphic abilities of Eros on Psyche.

VIII.

“AND THE IMPLACABLE APHRODITE FACES ONCE AGAIN”

An implacable Aphrodite faces once again the improbable yet imaginative and hard working, image seeding and feeding, insignificant soul and creative, divinely inspired Psyche. Love and beauty remains the battleground although the issues are integral to and to the integrity of whose powers are the greater and whose views of love and beauty triumph and have sacredness nodded to them, in obvious and not so obvious ways.

Psyche’s third task to satisfy the Goddess of Love, and pre-eminent world renowned beauty, requires her to fill a crystal flask with the waters from the highest spring on the mountaintop that flows coldly down into an underground river. Psyche climbs to the top of the cliff in order to view the dark stream of water spewing out of and down the side of the mountain with dragon-like snakes beside the stream hissing “danger, danger” to Psyche.

Once more Psyche sees that the task is impossible, that she is unable to accomplish her survival when put to the test by love’s continual test to life when she tries to figure out how to do it consciously. She once more decides to leap off the cliff. Once ego gives up just as before and realizes she cannot control the situation and, thus, is in the right mood, to let the inner energies and images do the work and solve the creative dilemma out of the darkness. She is not out to conquer, charge and slay anything out on a battlefield. What is there to slay? By allowing the unconscious to draw the whole of soul up together into a survival mode to image the solution for ideas and thoughts to process the completion of the task. It is when she gives up, when she gives over to the wholeness of her deepest cosmic being that ants, reed, and now eagle appear.

Something more is at stake in the repetitive despair, distraughtness, and disowning of the whole of life and love by ego that Psyche torments through and concludes to end her and her child’s life. Let the suicide and silence speak: this journey we are all on is so dangerous to love and life and in love and in life and so fraught with peril and unknown monsters, evils, blinds, impossible tasks and insupportable suffering and improbable situations and events as well as unheard and unremembered cries that you are like a small fish caught in the teeth of a shark who endlessly shakes you, his next meal.

Innumerable human beings and others, who we do not know of, have not survived the trauma and torment of love and life and the implacable foes and psyche has collapsed or was hostile toward itself and the world evil and conceived in the terror on a battlefield, and they lived there all of their life, shaped by the events that they had no control over, just like Psyche. Those innumerable beings are to be honored for having not survived so that they are remembered and present in those moments when Psyche gives up, and soul or souls leap up trailing vast death and spiritual lineage, with sparks to the light the whole of one’s spiritual and cosmic being into one community of action and direction, all gathered together in one. You must take those along with you when you are there and let them speak, wait for an answer from the abundance. You join the

lineage, you make yourself an ancestor who speaks out.

The eagle of Zeus takes the crystal flask from Psyche, fills it with water from the spring and returns it to Psyche, who now confronts Aphrodite with the full container, filled with infinitesimal drops of the waters of life, which now Psyche holds in her hands, filled with as much grandiosity and glow flow and gold as it is possible for a human to be the current of and not disappear from the voltage.

This task begins with crystal, an attribute we first saw when Psyche leapt off the cliff into the home of Eros, where crystal and precious jewels are described as shining out of the wall. As in prior tasks, invisible Eros allies with Psyche. Psyche must do the work, must go through the struggle to create the imaginal and practical solutions to the impossible dilemmas; the tasks do not relate directly to Eros, they are Aphrodite's -- Psyche, however, has qualities that Eros is and represents that marries disparate worlds, putting together what had not been put together or thought to be metaphors, creative leaps. Psyche conceives of both conscious and unconscious, middle world and underground, light and dark, and human and divine as wholes, which is why I've described it as the rebalancing of yin-yang energies. What we call the "unconscious", Psyche has the images, landscapes, and myths available to her to tell her what is important in her quest (crystals and precious jewels indicate treasures hard to attain and easily lost); and soul welcomes death like life's marriage partner, as one more experience along the soul's variegated travels, a forgotten brother of the Inner Self, her divine energies' eternal views battling time and waste and decay and life's experience. Love acts like eternity in time, taking the qualities of both views and their impactful, disruptive volcanic experiences. What, again, is being displayed is how the whole of Psyche operates, creates, images, relates, with or without eros as connector and destroyer. The myth shows the Psyche on stage, and how what we call "unconscious" today are actors and actresses, ants, reeds, rams, eagles, snakes, et.al. and the total landscape scene, telling us their lives and history and stories and how we can integrate them into in our lives. The treasure may shine and may not be approached directly or with light; light is a useful guide for scrutiny and Psyche has the inner resources to acquire the creativity, skills, resources, and divine energies to lead and buoy the ego, who can use the energies and insights made available by stronger powers in the Psyche. In fact, Psyche is a world, a cosmos, of such energies and powers that she can challenge Eros and Eros's mother, the Goddess of Love, in many of its many forms and images. Where do you choose to live? How much of wholeness and soul are you willing to incarnate to visibility by challenging the appearances of life and love as your society shows in its face. Is beauty beauty or a monster?

This task begins with the empty crystal flask and the need to fill it with refreshing spring waters that flow to the underground river, which connects Psyche with her rejection by the river when she dove in to drown herself. The flask as a container or a nest begins empty, just as Psyche is when she enters on her quest, empty of the nourishments to psychic and spiritual life. This need to know how to seed and feed, to gather wool for clothing nakedness and giving warmth, and to where the true waters of love and life can be obtained so that soul nourishes a full, whole human being out of the incubation stage into divine life and love, which is an everyday, ordinary miracle

(See Paul Tillich on this meaning the “power of being”) tribulations of loving and divining one’s future in the spontaneous revelations of the present. Psyche does not know, the established ways of society are denied to her--she must rely on hidden depths that she did not know existed and whose inhabitants and landscape building had not revealed themselves to her until she needed them: more than soul becoming what she needed when she needed it enters her experience on invisible divine energies.

The last time she faced a river the river threw her back on shore, and, in each task, when she reached the cliff of suicide, the river would not let her die, threw up inner helpers and guides to improbably complete the impossibilities, a sign of creative leaping and imaginative reach and story that many lives and loves could live within the verdant growth. Her third task requires her to fill the cup at its source, at the spring that feeds the underground river. She cannot confront the river directly, she has not learned to swim in it, as the river is too deep, too vast, too powerful and uncontrollable, too learned and otherworldly and other knowing with intuitive wisdom and ensouling songs. The river flooded over and through her, as in madness, but it did not kill her, heaved her lovelorn soul back on dry earth. The river, the unconscious, the whole world that is psyche, chose not to let her take her life and the life of her future child. Just as the wind came to choose for her, the river chose for her if she chose to take the tools the food and waters of life were making available to love and Psyche. On each occasion the resources of the waters of life nourished the severely wounded ego of love and Psyche’s lostness at her bereft and seemingly hopeless situation. Hope has no say in this myth; helpless lostness, as in a dream, is a closer description of the conditions. At each decision of suicide, the stream of life picks up Psyche and guides or shows her how impossibilities, spiritual goals, are accomplished and envisioned: true to mythic imagination, wonder and surprise and inexpectable like a monarch or a swallowtail in play in the sun. Yet a small amount of the waters of life can be attained, only not directly, not by force or aggression but letting the bird soul, the eagle, take up the task into the dangerous waters of the overwhelming ominous waterfaling power to show how to carefully, and in small quantities, to safely raise up from under the earth, underground, the sources of life that feed you and have serpent kundalini power to overwhelm and fry you. Going to the sources you could watch yourself being conceived in image and deed, except we have not the eyes to discern it or the god’s eyes to peer into it although we have been given intuitions of its nature and birthing process, its nesting and incubating patience and nourishments.

Taking a small flask full of the stream of life is doable and useful and productive of creative fishing and imagination; full swimming or immersion in the stream floods the inexperienced ego with unconscious energies into madness, chaotic splitting, and shatterings if it is a glass brittle ego, instead of a resilient and flexible one. The ensouled, or the ensouling, ego, such as Psyche’s, can take the waters by shaping into a container and be a carrier of life, which love needs and needs to be nourished by if it is not to turn deadly and frying and into an invective filled life, as Hillman makes clear in The Dream and the Underworld. The narrow opening of the flask out of which the water can be poured channels the energy and flow of the water, of the energetic renewing life into useable form. Psyche turns, although indirectly, into a carrier of original waters, able to nourish

and take in small quantities of the divine energies in enrichment of the circle of nurturance.

How does soul fashion a vessel for the spiritual food, gold flecked clothing, and water? These tasks are not for Psyche; they are for Psyche to make the sacrificial struggle -- she gives them to the goddess of love. Psyche feeds and nourishes love, nurtures the warmth of love, and refreshes the flow of love. Because it is done not for herself, soul incarnates images and spiritual tools for recycling the divine energies back to herself. Psyche needs food, clothing, and drink to survive; each sacrifice to sort, gather, and scoop and haul to give to the goddess gives her energies and powers that beauty alone could not give her and which truly challenge Aphrodite. The archetypal self relationship grows as does Psyche ability to take in larger and greater, more dangerous initiations into the greater sphere of continents of earth is the inhabitant of, as she gradually is discovering.

Heraclitus gives us a clue as to what is going on in this task. He writes

To souls, it is death to become water;

to water, it is death to become earth.

From earth comes water, and from water, soul.

(HILLMAN, IBID, P. 153, QUOTING HERACLITUS FROM FREEMAN'S TRANSLATION OF FRAGMENT 36)

No earth to have one's feet upon, sucked down into the whirlpool, undulates suicide in dissolution; the ineffable silences of the waters of psyche, the forms and images this part of soul generates what we call unconscious desires whose fluidity and flowing through in order to see through that which we call reality and images. This "cycle of soul-making", as in alchemy, follows dissolution with solidification and terra firma from which springs waters and water enlivens and gives new freshness and vitality to soul.

She connects to the spring at the top of the mountain that the myth takes pains to deepen into steep waterfalls flowing down the sides of the mountain into the interior river hidden from view: water binds the summit with the unseen depths. The water has snakes acting like dragons guarding the treasure, or golden fleece, who aid her with warnings of "danger, danger."

Out of the creative spring once more tongues connect to an earlier task, the rams with the "poisonous bites".

It is the danger of not looking where you are going, of not watching your step, of not taking the measure of where you are and knowing where you are in order to be alert to danger and unexpected strikes or aggression against you. And again, once more, very earthy, close to ground, easily forgotten until seen, crawling, adrenalin rushing energized survival alertness at its nearness, opening one to immediate response, joins snakes with ants and reed.

Out of sight, out of mind; these creatures and things that live their lives close to earth provide guidance that should wake one to the small, seemingly insignificant things of love and life and how the usually unseen, especially if we have our eyes cast on the sky, can have huge consequences. If you are tuned in to hear them and act upon the advice of your total psyche.

Also, "danger, danger" could mean instead that while you enter dangerous territory over

which you have no powers and less insight, you need guides and you need to listen to and learn from them, the snakes could instead and also, a double binding, be alerting Psyche, in this task, to bring her fears and terrors that are right before her eyes and in her pounding heart along with her, let them crawl and curve and move with the forked tongues, like the forked hoofs of Pan, so she would be alert and aware to them to act even though they are present, to imagine though in an impossible situation, and to see how mountain and the stream are a danger and an opener not only to spiritual struggle up the mountain and the insights of drinking rejuvenation in the midst of images of the Inner Self. Love needs these resources in awareness to nourish love. Love needs the waters of life in moderation in order to flow and bind and not be lost in the dark, dangerous interior of the underground where the images that give life originate but where one cannot live or dive into and survive.

Snakes are writhing energies, untamed, always with the fear of poisoning, as the bite of love and hate can poison, so that even non-poisonous snakes become encased into the fear and terror of possible agonizing death. Poisons carried throughout the body, like a poisoned love, can kill the biter and the bitten. These energies are not directed energies as say are the snakes of the caduceus of Hermes, two curving, intertwining serpents pointing upward toward wings, or Aeslepius' temples of healing where the person slept with snakes. Outside the flask, too much energy goes over embankment and in a rush disappears without influence or trace to gather in underground water table to feed and make grow or be dangerous to all who venture that far in. In the flask, energy has a container, and, as Jung has insighted in reference to Mercurius in the bottle, the spirit in the bottle is the contained, powerful, and elusive but long looked for spirit in the bottle that needs to be embodied and incarnated then dissolved and disincarnated in order to keep the flow of life and, after much work and experiment of alchemy, love going.(Hillman, *ibid.*) The spirit in the flask comes from the source of the water and Psyche becomes, as in the earlier tasks, a carrier of energies and spirit and soul, from the sources of life to the goddess energies of Aphrodite, so that she is not only a small ego but a larger being transmitting and originating the incarnation of the natural and cosmic worlds. The nest where she incubates these energies, and where she is incubated, generates the energy to complete the tasks from the whole of Psyche.

The eagle of Zeus soars with the flask to gather up the waters of life. The wife of Zeus is Hera, who we have already met when she was unwilling to challenge the Love aid Psyche, as the battle of love and beauty tends to draw a line in the sand gathering female and male energies as well as divinities into energy mounds, clumps of wool, or flasks of water against one another is constant war. Notice that there are more than two mounds and clumps of wool and one flask: the war between the sexes and the gender issues raised by this myth are well explored elsewhere, the unique qualities that Psyche possesses throughout this myth that makes her worthy of immortalization in the myth may derive from the feminine energies of love as well as from the dual aspects, even triple ones, as well as multiple views, energies, images, lives, and impossible side by side rifts and fissures that uneasily fit together. This myth and marriage is about more than the battle of the sexes and gender although they are portrayed, as Gilligan explores in [The Birth of Pleasure: A New Map of Love.](#)

Once more natural creatures and plants frame and solve the impossible riddle, with snakes and eagle taking their place with the ants, mounds of seeds, reed, and wool of gold. These “carriers of soul...help us see in the dark.”(Hillman, The Dream and the Underworld, pp.147-149.)

“Gods come in animal forms, that animals are what Gods want most in sacrifice” requiring a ritual of relationship with the divine energies, Inner Cosmic Self.(Hillman, *ibid*) That is, they do not want us to give up our animal being in the sacrifice; rather, they want us to acknowledge the animal in us to give to the divine the most valuable part of our being out which all else becomes human. In this myth, these gifts of dreams and deeper root growers are not the top of the food chain, not what traditionally has been sacrificed, nor tricksters--rather, earth groundedness, in ordinariness, in the little ignored things that save lives, that tells you it speaks for the larger life and given on daemonic splendor and quests.(Serpent partakes of this initiation as well: The Jungian analyst, Joseph Henderson, in The Wisdom of the Serpent, has written about snakes and has made the following observation: “The wisdom of the serpent, which is suggested by its watchful lidless eyes, lies essentially in mankind’s having projected into this lowly creature his own secret wish to obtain from the earth a knowledge he cannot find in waking daylight consciousness alone. This is the knowledge of death and rebirth...sheds its skin and reappears as if renewed.” The surprise of awe and wonders gives images and doing the hard work of imagination and thought to prepare the ground for creation of unexpected help and guides. This myth is closer to the primitive gods, to the primal goddess energies, the enriched divine energies that emerge out of a multiple simultaneous understanding of the world fully in song and dance with the metamorphosis that is the psyche, as well as one the major qualities that rushes blood through the landscapes looking for fevers’ cures or curses, eros. Birds are souls and “winged death demons,” a close association with the appearance of Eros while the invisibility of snakes, that like the ants, “slips away through...holes in the ground,” an image of the elusiveness all around you and the untamed energy and twists and turns that life offers up to ask of you: these lives have lives that you must honor and relate to and become a familiar with if you are to survive. (Hillman, *ibid*.)

This time the creature has a direct relation with divine energies, which need to be sorted, fed, gathered, and contained, replenished. The creative powers that Psyche’s impossible task inspires to bring to full spiritual light and the soul’s inventiveness do more than thwart Aphrodite in her quest to be the most beautiful of all and the unchallenged authority on love. They challenge the Goddess of Love for, as I’ve said, this is love as death, death as love, for Psyche faces what Aphrodite forces her to, death and her inner quest that she may not complete. Which one is stronger, or how does the balance between the two shift in the soul? Can Psyche’s love as life, life as love match the mother and son dark and night powers with so small of a fire and so little experience in the inner country of myth that lives us all? We refuse to see its cosmic connections and we wake up to it in peril, struggle, grief, terror, sacrifice, and all the cliff hanging mad making psyche. So furious and heart numbing is this wake up, as it is for Psyche, for no one goes on this journey voluntarily nor believes she or he can survive and psyche twists and turns to avoid the pain and grief of the deep, abiding, forever traumatic suffering lacerating throughout the soul with each heartbeat, so sewn in the bone of life is this pain.

The eagle is a bird that can fly over the mountain top and who has the mythic power of Zeus, who is the supreme divinity on top of Mount Olympus, hinting at Psyche's future. The eagle, like the soul, is also an obvious hunter, bringer to death. Psyche has hatched and grown wings, that are not like Eros enfolded wings, but has heartwings to raise her up, metaphorically, to what she has climbed since her beauty challenged Aphrodite to the top, to the source, that links upperworld, middleworld, and underworld. Psyche partakes of the eagle's powers, as well as Zeus', the vision of far seeing, of spiritual flight and insight. These resources and bird in flight is new to the myth, new powers. Psyche now has connection to the spirit-bird, a winged goddess. (Remember Aphrodite is a daughter of the sky, born of the sea as goddess of love and sexuality. Images of her in flight on a goose over "dark earth" "shows that she belongs to the spirit world, between water and sky, far from the stolidity of land." The bird-head masks of the Paleolithic Period show the same connection with "flowing life or the water of life.") (See Neil Russack, Animal Guides: In Life, Myth, and Dreams, An Analyst's Notebook, pp. 85-95, as he weaves these themes from images of Aphrodite, Sappho, and Marja Gimbutas, The Civilization of the Goddess: The World of Old Europe (San Francisco: Harper, 1991)). What connects the eagle to the prior tasks and snakes is not this flight and height, but its ability to focus, to hunt, to find, and eagle out with vision the water and have the dexterity to gather up the waters. This ability to focus, to see from afar the smallest of movement or of flow, to see close to the earth, this perception of concentrating on the task, using all of one's soulful and spiritual resources and powers is what relates the elusive lone eagle, usually, in flight to the lowly ants, reed, and snakes. Far seeing vision, the ability to view from the mountain top, give Psyche the same soaring powers of divinity that Aphrodite has to go with her descending qualities of humanity while the impossible spiritual tasks give her the intimate, close observing and heart watching and face moving weather of love that tells and distinguishes the truths and lies of love and whether you can survive death in love and how the darknesses of eros can be enlivened and enwebbed into how soul lives in this inner country. Psyche's heartwings connect life source, waters of life, love's matings and marriage, and divine energies and powers. Love and beauty, in the form of Aphrodite, wars to the death with love as life and death, in the form of Psyche: the glue that immortality stakes out in the networks that sees no difference between life and death draws the shock of divinity into the cosmic struggle: Eros, Psyche, and divine energies, and Inner Self, all transformed and transmitters, more than themselves when being themselves. Each suffering event and adventure for Psyche, like a piece of golden wool, she takes more and deeper into herself what had been the sole possession of Aphrodite: love and beauty, erotically drawing out like a thread of divinity into visibility.

Psyche dissolves at each initial spiritual encounter, opening her to all of her natural cosmic being, to the "power of being" living in her, her total psyche, so much larger and encompassing than the brain in the mind. She is becoming more whole with the completion of each task, more unknown, unsuffered, unaware, unscened, unimaged, unsouled parts of her being come alive and live and become the ensouled in the imagination of the different worlds and energies of Psyche.

The impossible tasks that Psyche endures are, as I've said, spiritual. Only powers beyond the ego are drawn from the images and energies of the Inner Self, goddess or god energies in order to

live a complete, full life. Dante's dream of Eros feeding his heart to his beloved Beatrice ends with the weeping Eros gives Dante dream inspired poetry into a fully embodied life. (Cobb, Archetypal Imagination.) Dante tells us a great amount about the flowering of what we see being explored in this myths. Dante, then, went on to create an impossible visionary spiritual world that you only can live through by bringing and being in your whole living, imaginal being and experience it and discern if any of the impossible tasks you find you must spiritually take as one your soul's tools to create and be in the world and out of which the being alive you are is so far down that you meet these others and imaginatively alive other beings and other worlds. You become responsible for the inner life of all beings and you bring the same sense of compassion you've been shown despite the societal rejection of all that you stand for and did.

Let's look at someone whose experience in real life faced him with spiritually impossible tasks that he survived. He lived inside death, and love brought "inner riches and spiritual freedom". His situation is comparable to Psyche's, but his circumstances are even more dire and unhelpful. Victor E. Frankl, the German psychiatrist and author of Man's Search for Meaning, was a Jew who survived the concentration camp of Nazi Germany. In his imaginative reimagining of his intimate experiences with death, eros, psyche, and soul, the light of the imagination fired by his "beloved", his precious wife, just as Dante dreamt and wrote poetry and his being out of his "beloved", Beatrice, created image "more luminous than the sun which was beginning to rise."

All of his cosmic and poetic and spiritual being soul he brought into vision:

A thought transfixed me: For the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth—that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world still may know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved. In a position of utter desolation, when man cannot express himself in positive action, when his only achievement may consist in enduring his sufferings in the right way—an honorable way— in such a position man can, through loving contemplation of the image he carries of his beloved, achieve fulfillment. For the first time in my life I was able to understand the meaning of the words, 'The angels are lost in perpetual contemplation of an infinite glory.'

The inner gold that the vision was able to bring up and bring alive into the world and give him the waters of life and food to survive led him to conclude that the "contemplation of her image" and "my mental conversation with her" proved the following phrase: "Set me like a seal upon thy

heart, love is as strong as death.”

While the myth shows no salvation or even inklings of rhythm toward that mythology, Frankl’s observation point to how Psyche could have felt in her stripped down and despair filled, hope drained tasks that only where the energy more powerful than death and more inventive than death and more intensive could stave off death that was in her every footstep, as it is for all of us, as we are death maker for others and other species. We must, like Psyche, grow Eros, imagination, spiritual insight, heart probes and wings into the dark mysteries of love, and come to know that one needs to look close enough, study long enough, prepare and discern many times, and let soul display its learned tricks and plays and images to open the multiple natures of who we are and give ego, the small, insular self the taste and food of love that leads into the inner underground streams of life and death, where you must learn to breath the air of the guides who have come to free you if you listen closely to the earth and absorb the guidance. All of these multitudes Psyche is and yet acts as one and dissolves into many: this rhythm we are also and learn metamorphosis.

Psyche has grown the wings that the myth has forecast and these wings are from an immortal bird, that of Zeus. Her heartwings can fly and soar and see from afar where the spring is. Accomplishing this task, Zeus has sent aid and comfort, as we point towards the climax of the myth. Psyche carries in her being soul and the butterfly, an image of the soul. Once more what we see is not what really is occurring in the myth. Having the power of Zeus, the supreme god, as perplexing as his personality and history is, in the form of the eagle at her disposal, we need to ask a few questions because the answers lead us to just who Psyche is supposed to be in the myth and what her true power and beauty are. The divine energies become openly available to Psyche. Does she identify with Zeus or the eagle? No, they are her total psychic creations to complete the impossible task.

The wings she grows point to the needs of the myth and the darkness of her lover, Eros, whose sensual and sinuous relationship, helps propel both of them into their future. Does she become inflated with merger with the god, as she did with Eros, while the goddess energies reject her totally in obedience of love’s societal and divine powers? No. The ecstatic and divine union with the erotic beingness of the gods, as portrayed in Rumi or Kabir as well as western mystics, are nowhere apparent in this task. Does the eagle point to changes in divine energies sufficient to change the balance of power that is represented by Aphrodite on the subject of love and the curses and epithets of love and hate, jealousy and envy, death dealing and death defying, the change balance of tao as it changes in the spontaneous creations of human beings? Possibly; yet it only points up, to Mt. Olympus, too rarified, and, too often, disconnected spiritual energies that the anemic blood that runs through lovers keep them alive when they do not recognize that they died years before, mythically and metaphorically.

In the light of the myth, Psyche is a carriers of eagle’s wing; in the dark of the myth that Eros thrusts so peremptorily upon Psyche, as if she could not grasp his magnificence and significance in the light of day, and perhaps at that stage of her life she could not, Psyche becomes the butterfly. As bird and butterfly, stereoscopic visions, flexibility, love of the sun and the night, the agony of birth as well as incubation and transformation, the shamanic heritage as we are the ancestors to

our ancestors if we would inherit worth, the flight of recovery and finding soul lost in the trauma and lost in the trauma of becoming conscious of Eros, and the trauma of Eros exposure out of the dark and mysteries, and to gather soul as you would the wools of gold, meticulously, laborious, diligently and intelligently.

But remember, the third task has Psyche almost to the top of the mountain, able to see into the spring of life. When you have been privileged to peer into the inner treasure and see how it operates, in dreams next appears the image for the superego, Zeus, who warns you that you better be authentic, real, truthful, honest, and not for your egoistic ends if you are to have the guide and nurturance of divine energies and images and waters. The cosmos does not give live divinity for the asking; you may reject it and live a full life or you may love it and lead a different but much more interior and singular life. The choice is yours.

The spring dives underground, hinting of the fourth task, linking the underground of the life to the underworld, populated by death and the multiple lives and beings and tasks that are the cosmic needles that thread our lives into weaves we run to grasp and loosen at our peril as we clothes ourselves as we run naked through our lives shouting for ourselves and our salvation when there is neither. What you do receive as gifts, like Psyche, and in healing, as the fire Psyche is undergoing, is the release from bondage, spiritual and inner soul. The waters and snake point to the chthonic, or earth, gods and goddesses, the gods or goddesses or spirits of the underworld that Greeks distinguished from the Olympian gods. Chuang-Tzu would be listening inside the Psyche for how the tao goes.

For the first time in the tasks, Psyche soars and climbs to the mountaintop after adventures and two initiations into the depths of depression, despair, and suicidal caverns without paintings until the painters came along and the blankness of life enlivened and entered soul and life's waters kissed the lips for soulmaking. The spiritual struggle often has been portrayed as if climbing a mountain. Dogen, in his fluid poet's Zen master stroke of seeing mountains as rivers, races into my mind, as I equate what part of our being, ego, then Self, then No-Self, must be transformed and liquefied through meditation and the techniques of Zen and no Zen, first dissolving the mountain of the ego, then the mountain of the Self, then the mountain of the No-Self: no words, only direct experience that you end up at the beginning wholly transformed completely into the river of life flowing through you, as creature of the cosmos, transmitting the losses you attained and non-attachment you left behind, until after satori and into death you experience that there is neither birth nor death, yet you do not live through an illusion but a very real, hard thumping, insubstantial world.

Psychologically, we are shown a new path that Psyche can now travel, one that shows how much more dependent the daylight, middle world is on the darknight, underworld where the high springs that originate creativity and inner treasure cycle from the upperworld into the depths of the underworld whose mysterious ultimate source is the original flow of water up from the water table that supports earth's root system. From the depths to the heights, depression to manic activity, despair to elation, suicide to ecstasy, death to immortal, grief to eros, undirected energy to focused imagination, infliction of affliction to healing by inner energies, and enemy crushing

sacred powers into dust to love winged sacred powers into life restoring drink. From the heights back down to the depths cycles the inner energies of Psyche. We are not presented how these energies transform and operate, how we discriminate and sort them, how we come to be aware of them and are able to become a witness to them and then to engage and dialogue and direct these forces of energetic cosmos giving us what we call aliveness, a garden of variegated passions and ideas that are continual, like the tides, that test our ferocity and fire and our care and concern beyond our narrow ego world. Your imaginal ego needs the moral and ethical compass that filters the light and dark, evil and good, love and hate, grief and eros, yin-yang taos. Love is an engine whose embracing powers has the ability to coagulate and confound these energies into a veritable concatenation of storms and bliss, heart earthquaked or beloved's image feeding the springs of the heart, to where you live in the combustion of confusion unless, like the myth tells us, we go through the needed routines to incubate us and learn differentiation of energies and love, life, and death and the relationship of these three powers.

As I said, Psyche now step by step, task by task, has climbed far enough up the mountain that she can bring herself out of the remorse of the dissolve that is needed to open her sacred being to flow into her ordinary being that the multiple energies that live her can become visible, appear and accomplish the task. Incarnating the spiritual beings who come to her aid, soul gives gravity and solace to the grieving Psyche, who realizes she may die on the way toward wholeness, that she is only half of the human without Eros, for love is that passion, divine energy, and mind curving idea generator of bliss and imaginal world alivener that is "other" and "alien" and "outsider" that is given breath and lives inside you by beauty and sexuality and compassion and empathy, among other things, to urge love into the veins of the imagination, creating plays that live out the player, who believes she is the playwright. Metamorphosis is psyche's way of entering and living in another human being and experiencing another human being. Love in the form of eros and compassion and empathy open the flesh and soul to the secret of love, its mystery, you are more than one person and you live more than one life when love's imagination wakes you to the imaginal and spiritual heartwings of disconsolate and ensouling bliss and absence, beloved and jealousy, anguish and merger, sex and epiphany. You race, you climb and descend the musical scales of the passions, like a sisyphian love. You suffer and you are in the love you most want to live inside of; you see no alternative way to get off this torment, this bliss. Until the fires cool through the tasks imposed by love that you must either bring insight into and grow or shrivel and vegate in limbo. Love's limbo can live a long time.

Psyche does not identify nor is she inflated, as I've stated. She is worth and has shown the stamina and fortitude and courage of heart for the gift given to her by divine energies: grandiosity. Earlier I quoted Robert Bly in his "Story Food" on the "mysterious source of abundance inside of us" that show the stakes of the mythological tale where the "gold" or greatness "we allow ourselves to see in our own souls." We must go through initiations, impossible tasks that do not look or feel like spiritual quests that test you to see whether you have any treasure or anything precious to give something uniquely universally human to the cosmos: love and compassion, ephemeral things that, paradoxically, make the blood flow through the

cosmos, giving an imaginal heart of courage as a gift composed by the musician song master in all of our psyches. The “gold of grandiosity” Psyche has available to her, providing her with the power and energy to prevent her from fragmenting.

Since this is a mythological tale, not a psychological one, we are shown how the nesting incubates, how the treasures are unearthed, how ordinary and ignored are the most magnificent and strongest of things for beings, and how divine energies give you the actual, real, incarnated beings that ripens soul, allowing it to ensoul unknown psychic country.

Mythologically, we are presented the gifts and curses humankind lives out, how death is mate to life at every step, and whether we live and imagine large enough and creatively enough to keep the curses to ourselves, and give our gifts in ways and worlds that tell the humanity and the cosmos we were worth the air we breathed and the large compassion of heart and imagination we labored in nightmarish struggles to incarnate to a suffering psyche, us and other beings. Love and beauty, beloved and incarnated, tells us the world and us do not need salvation; we need what Psyche and Eros, together, embody and we do not have. Yet, not one way will triumph; multiple trials tell us Psyche incarnation of enough energy and powers to defy the goddess, in a struggle with human who is acquiring divine energies, is worth it when the rooting, planting, growing, and transforming, join the spiritual soul with the animal soul, as Bly succinctly imagines it.

The imaginal world of this myth is metamorphosis by love, in life, through death. For death in psyche occurs continually and the process of death and rebirth has a long ancestral history that Psyche and we partake of in our daily spiritual and out of boundary experiences. We cross the threshold when Psyche jumps off the cliff. The threshold world that emerges is a deliberately unfamiliar and thus surprising one, shocking to the ego, as it could not be otherwise given the ego, for each decision for suicide shakes ego loose from control and disabuses ego of stability and its immortality, and the needed humility to open and let other more abundant and enlarging and worldwide energies and power of the Inner Cosmic Self enter her. We need alertness to the dark and demonic side as well as the light and divine side. As we’ve said these live side by side, fissured though they are, and the myth is showing how to live and see and create in and from the dark and the dark powers while fighting the powers of light, with the insights of consciousness of Psyche against herself and her world that has been arraigned against her by her implacable enemies that try to infuse themselves into her and defeat her through the most bone crushing imaginatively impossible koans. To challenge Psyche where she is supposed to be most powerful: reason and reasoning and logic, figuring out the world. She does this without Eros but with the beloved in her imagination.

She is dying to the young maiden she was who was set, like her sisters, on a royal marriage in support of her family’s societal aggrandizements. She will be reborn not out of the ego but from larger, more creative, more experienced, wiser and more depthful energies of the Inner Cosmic Self and the divine energies that express the multiple beings that we are in life with. Our choice is whether we love them and relate to them, and they come in the dark to give us eyes when our conscious powers cannot, although the powers of conscious psyche are needed to discern good from evil, and thus envision and in heart eros, or we reject them and that we are taught and learn

from family and society that they not only reject us but are our enemies and at war with us; when, in fact, we have not yet learned the original and creative language of psyche, soul always is present to those in love or in war and can be given speech and imagination if you learn the lessons of living close to the earth. Again, it is our choice, even in the face of reason, facts, logic, appearances, and ideological depth denial, love has the power of metamorphosis that only death can challenge. Walk outside your boundary life into psyche's myth tells your soul how to piece together life's impossible puzzle and mystery. Defy the world, live out of the impossible choice you've made that has no human sense yet is full of psychic, spiritual invigorations of tapping down into its roots system and the clarity of astonished life. The splash of spontaneity wakes you and surprises you until ingesting the smell of garden growth you become the ink that writes on white paper fed by the imagination that feeds and nourishes the differing hues of creative life.

IX.

“BEAUTY PROPELS AND SHAPES THE PLOT OF THE MYTH”

Beauty propels and shapes the plot of the myth in ways that point to its radiance as, not only a sexual attractor, as a butterfly to a flower, but like the waters of life of the last task, reach deeply into the depths of human consciousness and the cruelties and monstrosities as well as the splendors of love. Beauty propelled Psyche over the cliff; it now takes center stage, and we begin exploring its root system and love’s sun and rain garden. Taking Aphrodite’s beauty box, Psyche must have Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, fill the box with beauty, beauty’s radiant ingredients, so the Goddess of Love’s beauty will out splendor that of Psyche: this is Aphrodite’s fourth task of Psyche.

Drawing her down, once more, she must plunge into depths and deaths of the underworld, psychically speaking. This task shapes her into what appearances show as a momentary self-destructive act for she is in mortal war with Aphrodite, and love and its beauties and how they see and are seen through are the prize. This final task puts her in a life situation where the “Fates” seem to conspire against her, and she is being demanded to act against her own self-interests, bringing enrichment to a goddess who wishes her death and whose desires bring her into an “alien” or “other” underworld from which she will never return, hopefully. These are desires that kill and will end Psyche’s stubborn and resilient struggle with her, she hopes. Conspiring against her, beginning with the river, paranoia would be a natural reaction of Psyche to the “fate”, a term as we’ve seen she has defied so far; in fact, Psyche has shown that fate is not inevitable and life situations caused by love and its loss are not determinative. Psyche lives through each task by death and dissolution and giving over to greater powers in her soul, she awakes each time, like the inner life she carries, mythological creatures to feed and nourish her into larger being. Notice I did not say that the hatching of the eggs, the accomplishments of the initiations, were successes or triumphs, as these words have little meaning in this myth, as does “hope”. She is not her tragedies, she is not her experience; what she is becoming gives her ways to live life and love differently from what events thrash her against rock or what experience nurses injury in her so that she can like the waterfall let go to a larger life and experiences.

The psyche being described in this myth is one who is cut out of the center of the royal realm into a mythological life ostensibly because of beauty, thrown out into the wilderness, made “taboo” and “alien”, cut off from the sustenance of the culture, whose mythological themes show her alienation and exile, and being the enemy of traditional religious practices and goddesses. All of these scenes of extreme violation of the cultural mores and established ways of being human in the world in the Myth of Psyche and Eros isolates the psyche, looks at soul without the cultural attributes or at least tries to shine a light on the inner darkness and death and life that wraps around the threads of weaving love.

What is human about Psyche? What is sacred? How spiritual, a monster, a darkness? How

earth bound is death? How much influence does psyche have: is the mind in the brain or, as Jung reasons from evidentiary materials, do we live in the psyche whose unknown and synchronistic energies live us out or we learn to mythologically take them into living and loving so that we live them out in more conscious and instructive ways? Or with Zen, all is psyche and psyche has no self with meditation allowing the meditator to see through the illusions into the original world that human only have hints of. Is Psyche a plaything of the goddess or has she an inner self fully engaged into cosmic circuits of energy that form images and imagination and phosphorous thoughts and ideas so that she is a mythological creature in her own right with the powers of the gods and goddesses available to her if she approaches them in a way that feeds the seeds and water to each other? How creative and empowering is Psyche? Does she need outside energies to accomplish spiritual and human tasks? Is she a new, independent source of human life that needs to be explored in her own right? How deeply can soul explore into the depths of psyche in order to bring more and more of the mysteries of human existence into the realm of life and love so that we grow large enough to live a cosmos with compassion and empathy, bringing it what only we can gift to it, or leave death and the underworld to soul's multiple lives and images and loves and odysseys and leave it for the imagination to live out? As we are in a world that draws us close to the earth, even entering the holes in the earth, dissolution and death in psyche and the real life of the psyche are portrayed in this myth, both light and dark; good and evil; upperworld, middleworld, and underworld; dissolution into creativity; rotting into growing; and being and becoming.

With no confidence in how to even enter the underworld, despair dissolves Psyche and death displays human's spiritual conundrum: at the lowest points in one's life, and we have seen 5 to 7 suicidal fishing holes depending on how we are counting, the energy that carried her onward rushes back in an undertow downward away from her world's tasks that is to go consciously down into the underworld where Hades, brother of Zeus, whose bird also is the eagle, reigns, and the lostness of spirit and negation of life prevails.

Is it the absence of Eros that causes this depression of love or would it make no difference whether Eros was with her or not? It appears Eros' flight from Psyche causes this surrender to these gut wrenching flesh wounding decisions and not a realistic, albeit conscious, decision to her unrelenting implacable dilemma that makes death of her spirit, her child, a chosen option. Recall that to this point, as far as illustrated by our guide, she had informed no one of her pregnancy. Yet, she has chosen mortality over immortality for her spirit, for her child, on a number of occasions. This Psyche is no ordinary mythological being. What is it about Psyche? Is she pathological, too naive, lacking in nerve or courage, passive, and in the dark with a too small of a fire to see with its not knowing how to see in the dark or have the dark teach her to splice darkness with darkness and give off phosphorous? She is none of these: she appears without fear, even the fear of death, an attribute of a totally isolated, alienated, and love lost soul may throw away and resist intimidation and affirm her total rejection. She is courageous and fire is lit for her. These questions arise each time Psyche faces the erotically spiritual null and void; we are asking the wrong questions. These are strange initiations if one looks at them in this way. While it appears

the lost love of Eros and being in a dependent state of separate love would be accurately reflected in the depression and despair from loss of eros' energy to Psyche's command. That would be true if this was a myth primarily about Psyche and Eros where his absence would not only cloud our love eyes, as they have, but darken our ability to see what was really going on. The myth portrays a war of different forms of love, showing the societal carriers of these loves aligned against a new kind of love. And, just by Eros' absence, by carrying his epithets of darkness and daimon and death, we are all invited into the treasure that is Psyche, a new mythology on the landscape, to see how it is created and operates. Without Eros' presence, we go inside the inner soulmaking imagination and practical doings and dialogues and incarnating spiritual tools that serve humans to be more than humans. Without Eros whose wings speak of the sky creature, the whole of Psyche comes alive and creatively invents out the logic of the dilemma, imagining in depth, out of the earth creatures. With no eros, we are in another part of Psyche that we see do things that Eros could never do. It is yet unnamed for to call it unconscious or underworld is not song loud enough to praise its gift to Psyche. Psyche's gift in return will become apparent.

Going beyond all boundaries while she doubting that she has the capacity to go there, at the same time throwing away all known societal principles, she climbs a tower, connecting this ego construct with Eros' castle, a symbol grappling together the two love's lost in the Aphroditic torments, to throw herself off, like she has done before, so we know she will do it. This "Far-Seeing Tower" relates it to the far seeing eagle of Zeus. Foresight, prophecy, intuitions, the ability to shape events and people through the powers of the mind, to bring clarity to the spiritual path, to plan ahead, and to imagine a "beloved" reunited with the lover tells us where we are if we have the insight, fortitude, stamina and endurance to listen to our far-seeing tower: you dream, you imagine, these produce shaping currents in the stream of life, the strongest current being love, that will create the condition that will lead to the erotic recurrence, and you, like Dante and Frankl, create the life out of splendid beautiful love indelibly inscribed by life's pen when love's arrow draws blood. You are not the fate of your condition; you have a choice always, even if death is one of those choices as it may have worth to it in its inherency to the individual.

Repetitively, as in a ritual, when Psyche abandons all hope, it is like an invocation to the earth beings, a phrase that aptly describes her guides, companions, and friends who appear in active imagination with the unconscious or the whole of Psyche, made more whole, like a bird or butterfly migration from Canada to Mexico and the equator and beyond, every task widening the compass wider and wider over the continents in detailed mapping of the new worlds. These beings appear to do the work, guide her how to do the task, appear to do the work, and, lastly, to guide her how to do the task, and she then works to accomplish the fourth task. These rhythms, like the rivers and waters, bring us into the rhythms of the earth and our heartbeat takes up in silent chant what we hear echoed through the myth. Psyche, as ego, must learn to integrate what rises from the unconscious and do the work so that what she most deeply roots into in her journey to the center enters the world as an action of soul, ensouling the world. Two times, Psyche must let earth beings do the necessary task work; she must learn to yield to the tao, doing nothing is the

great doing.

As she readies herself to leap off the tower, the Far-Seeing Tower tells her that she does not need to commit this act. This task you can accomplish, “it” tells her. She can enter the underworld at the “Vent of Dis”, vent being a small opening, like ant or snake holes, for passage big enough for humans to enter and Dis is the Roman mythological name for the god of the lower or underworld. The Greeks called this god, Hades, “the Unseen One,” the one god with no face or image, where the spirits of the dead who live in the depths and are invisible reside. Or what is dead and deadening and death loving in Psyche and our psyche. Both mythologies identified Dis as Pluto (“riches”), a euphemism for “the frightening depth of Hades.” and “unconscious as the giver of wholeness, a storehouse of abundant riches, a place not of fixation in torment, but a place, if propitiated rightly,..offers fertile plenty. Let me quote this in full as Hillman clarifies the issue: is the underworld the unconscious, as he states have they been merged, today. Or, are they separate territories, boundary lands, where depths and creativity may converge but are distinct realms? “It is not difficult to transpose psychology’s conceptual mythology into the mythology of the underworld, nor is it difficult to envision the relationship between dayworld and nightworld as the hero’s descent and your modern notions of the unconscious as reflections of Tartaros and Styx, Charon and Cerberus, Hades and Pluto. Pluto, especially, is important to recognize in our euphemistic references to the unconscious as the giver.... Euphemism is a way of covering anxiety. In antiquity, Pluto (“riches”) was said as a euphemistic name to cover the frightening depth of Hades. Today, the ‘creative’ unconscious euphemistically conceals the processes of destruction and death in the deeps of the soul.” It helps to remember that we are in a mythological tale, a form of art where psyche tries to plumb the heights and depths of its existence on, in, and above earth.

The ant mounds have become the place of death mounds. Psyche, now, will, like the ants and snakes, enter the earth, like a reed in swamp water, where in the dark, like in the moonlight collecting the golden wool, gather from Persephone the treasure hard to attain, the beauty box, in the world that has no water of life contained in it as it is the underworld ruled by the brother of the most powerful of the gods. Power in our myth rises from out of the earth, resides in the natural, in the ability to descend, be at home in the interior and be fed by the archetypal alchemical monstrosities that are growing into beauties that the conscious aware mind can smell and taste and vibrate to, and leave this home of immense unknown substance, and ascend, which is as treacherous as the descent. Soul is hunter and planter. (For the importance of the wholeness that only by following both of these paths will wholeness be attained: one as soul’s desire for wholeness of the individual and one as the soul as the axis mundi, the descent into depth and the ascent of soul out into the world, see Z. Juhasz, The Soul’s Journey: A Mythic Imagining of Exile and the Return Home (Doctoral dissertation, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2005)) Psyche, like the seeds and grains, must be planted and, like those seeds, she must become a seed, a grain that grows by what and how she acts in the underworld: she must sort herself, be able to differentiate and discriminate in the underworld for it is a world of death. The root world she is entering is one of seeing in the dark, of doing instinctively what is needed to be whole or die, and to survive, like the shaman world it is a remnant of, she must bring back from the underworld what the goddess

of love commands is her possession.

“It” tells her to bring two cakes with her: one for the voyage of descent in and one for the climb out in order to feed the barking three-headed dog who guards the threshold into the underworld. There are no animal companions to be expected in the underworld. She is to take with her coins for the ferryman in order to cross the River Styx. Thirdly, three times during her descent she must not respond to palpable suffering and the outstretched arms of imploring pleading. With cold eye and with ultimate ends in view of the heart, she must see herself in the afflictions. Once she entered upon her first descent down the cliff, the natural world came alive and guided her. Once she descended into the underworld, humans come as specters with no guide, even herself, to comfort and save. Listening to her guide, love and death tell the cold lesson of life that she must face and let guide her. Lastly, she must meet Persephone to have her fill the box with beauty, and she must bring it out of the underworld to Aphrodite without opening the box. As Dr. Bolen exclaims, Psyche is given advice no other mythological being or human is given in Greek, or for that matter, Roman mythology.(Dr. Bolen, Tapes.) And for very good reasons.

Hillman gives us an entry into one of the reasons. He states that “it matters very much the way we descend.” He continues to explore the reasons for the descent:

Ulysses and Aeneas...go down to learn from the underworld which re-visions their life in the upperworld. Hercules, however, goes down to take, and he continues with the muscular reactions of the upperworld, testing each phantom for its reality, e.g., at the vision of the Gorgoneion, he drew his sword, and Hermes had to inform him that it was an image. The shades themselves had fled on his arrival.

On Hercules’ arrival into the underworld, he attacks the three-headed guardian dog, choking and chaining the animal. Orpheus descends into the underworld in order to bring his love wife, Eurydice, back from the dead but does not keep his bargain with Pluto because he looks back toward Eurydice, turning her to bones and ashes. And, as we will explore in more detail later, there is Persephone violently pulled by Hades into the underworld, raped by Hades, then married to him as a bargain to cycle the seasons of growth and fallowness. She becomes Queen of the Underworld, with her name meaning “bringer of destruction.”

Where is Psyche in relation to these reasons for the descent into the cold, the manner of their descent, what they bring with them, the guidance given and bargains struck as well as what they must bring back and how they must bring it back to the middleworld or upperworld? Psyche is on a search through life, love, and death in hope and despair that the experience of these are full and rich enough to speak, to convey, and to image exploration of soul and soul image(anima), and then into butterfly(uniting soul and soul image), moving from underworld, middle world, to upperworld. Psyche’s spiritual experience is to reunite with Eros through the dark Self so that the self-inflicted wound of red life giving love carries the complex dilemma of trauma, within which the archetype of love in the form of Aphrodite has been constellated, into the multiples and multitudes of dissolves that wash and heave, like the ants, in the acids of the unconscious that the

waters of life and death stream in through her that repairs barren soil. Creative Psyche in face of death, murder, being outcast, taboo, shunned wars with the Goddess of Love. As Aphrodite said, Psyche is a slave, a slave to love, to the task she commands even though she seeks freedom, relief from suffering and punishment. She is at war to free herself from being the slave to the goddess energies and whims and those who due her bidding. Divine wrath and divine creative vie for dominion over Psyche: Psyche goes through the impossibly spiritual task to get the powers of Eros to help her, if he can. She discovers along the way that the wealth, budding wisdom, and subtle energies she is being given and is acquiring by virtue of who she is, Psyche, do not allay the despair and abject filtering of various forms of love's arrows. They are part and parcel of who she is and how soulmaking occurs and how the anima or animus emerges to nourish her and the images guiding her. Psyche's guide gives specific instructions: this is not an adventure, and heroic free for all, a battle for victory of upperworld over underworld, ego over unconsciousness, as the underworld is not the unconscious or the shadow, though it has elements of both of them. The manner of her descent focuses on the task that she is told she must accomplish, keeping her *nekyia*, archetypal descent, on Psyche and Eros, for embryonically she takes Eros, a new erotic energy in the world and psyche, with her for she is pregnant. (See Hillman's distinction between the night sea-journey where the hero returns in better shape for the tasks of life and *nekyia* where soul takes dives deep for its own ends and so there is no "return". (Hillman, *ibid*, p.168)). As isolated and abandoned and desolate as Psyche's condition is, she is never alone in her adventures and tasks, as she nourishes as she is nourished and carries the symbol of the new world, new birth, rebirth, and renewal, and the affects of erotic love developing and evolving within her. She brings with her cakes and coins and carries instructions spoken into her heart into the underworld; she carries out the box of beauty into the middleworld. These worlds are not opposites, Psyche carries, like the child, the daylight into the nightworld and carries the child to be named Joy, from darkness into "sweet sunlight." One inside the other; both living like yin-yang carrying both image and unseen, light and dark, birth and death, love and hate, and heat and cold. The bargain Psyche makes to go in, and she goes in voluntarily and involuntarily, forced, against her own interests, a shouting clue of love's hidden threats, by Aphrodite that she will not open the box of beauty given to her by Persephone. And it is important that her ultimate destination is to Persephone and the ointment of beauty she has in her possession. And it is important that the box reminds the mythologist, you, of opening Pandora's box, we don't and yet we do want it opened, wish or truth, insight or misleading myth. Like Eros, who was sometimes called the first of the gods or the youngest of the gods, Pandora was first mortal woman sent by Zeus as punishment to humankind from the theft of fire by Prometheus. She opened the box Zeus gave her, releasing all human ills into the world or, in a variation, letting all human blessings escape, leaving only hope. And hope or the giving up of hope activates interaction within Psyche and the interplay between the two plays a significant role in our myth.

Psyche's underworld descent echoes of the violence of and violation of Persephone in her encounter with Hades. It is intended to echo the mythology, to have the Demeter-Persephone myth active and working in the imaginations of Psyche, and us for we go with her, for her

downward journey, like Eros' downward pointing wings, to Persephone whose encounter with the "Unseen One", Hades, was forced and culminating in a marriage of necessity, somewhat like Psyche's, or rape, which was not Psyche's experience. However, the dark, deep echo is that Psyche's lovemaking and marriage to Eros was done in the dark with Eros, the "Unseen One", a marriage of necessity, nevertheless, framing Persephone and Hades in our journey, and then the Persephone myth revises our initial imaginings and raises questions of the original darkness of Psyche and Eros. What is not in doubt is the enlightenment and endarkenment of Psyche's crucial exposure of the marriage bed and of Eros out of the weave of darkness; she initiates for both of them the love, inflicting her own wound as well as wounding Eros, after the light of consciousness shines beauty. But how deep is that love: is it the love of beauty or the beauty of love that lights the fire that burns her heart awake and moves her eyes and feet on her dark encrusted encounters. Or, as we've seen, is the question: is beauty monstrous or can love be monstrous, either alone or when combined?

What is it to live through a *nekyia*, reside in the underworld for what seems an eternity (time loses its timeliness; death is your companion: living is death agonies, death speaks, eternity's bells that give love to life become silent; breathing, contorting nightmares awake and are alive without control and in metamorphosis), and you, somehow, as if from "unremembered wings", by a miracle ("power of being") that you do not know or feel or intuit or sense you scale the cliff or walk back up the hill until you find yourself startled that soul's life is its own that you must live its life and find its lost loves and deaths, and the promptings of divine energies no longer stay silent or are no longer willing to reside in the background. Chaos has turned you upside down; you can now live with chaos and uncertainty with resilience and welcoming for you know the discomfort and anxiety are guides. ("Unremembered wings" is a quote from a poem by Pablo Neruda written about what happened to him when poetry found him and what it did for him. The poem was translated by Robert Bly. This idea of miracle as the expression of the power of being comes from the works of Paul Tillich. Upside down idea in the underworld comes from Hillman, *ibid.*, p. 48.)

"The point of view of life ceases" when we enter the archetypal depths, writes James Hillman, whose views state a nuanced and well imagined psychological and mythological understanding of where we are so that we can look at the experience of soul of this myth of Psyche and Eros that adds to and differs in the reporting from inside the original cavern. "Now phenomena are seen," he states, "not only through the eyes of Eros and human life and love, but also through Thanatos, their cold unmoving depths unconnected to life."

By turning matters upside down in this way, we participate in Hades' rape, which is, let us remember, not just psychopathy, but a central initiatory mystery in the Eleusis myths.

This rape threatens the intact psychological system that takes its strength from life, holding to human relationships and the natural ways of Demeter's daughter. Rape

moves the Persephone soul from the being of Demeter's daughter to the being of Hades' wife, from a natural being of generation, what is given to a daughter by mothering life, to the psychic being of marriage with what is alien, different, and is not given. The experience of the underworld is overwhelming and must be made.

This style of the underworld experience is overwhelming, it comes as violation, dragging one out of life and into the Kingdom that the Orphic Hymn to Pluto describes as 'void of day.'

This "Persephone experience", something that still happens in the soul, is a part of the mystery of Eleusis. He states, in elaboration:

...occurs to us each in sudden depressions, when we feel ourselves caught in hatefulness, cold, numbed, and drawn downward out of life by a force we cannot see, against which we would flee, distractedly thrashing about for naturalistic explanations and comforts for what is happening so darkly. We feel invaded from below, assaulted, and we think of death.When the bottom falls out, we feel only the black abyss of despair, but this is not the only way to experience even this my theme.

"Many Gods and heroes have chthonic aspects and epithets," Hillman observes, "so that we may descend through many archetypal styles, not only as does Persephone." Even inside that myth, Hillman points out that while Persephone fought and the "disaster of Demeter" occurred, Hekate was "listening or watching" the agonies of soul "observ(ing) our own catastrophes with a dark wisdom that expects little else."(Hillman, *ibid*, pp. 48-50)

With Hillman's clues to guide us, Psyche's experience of descent shows us what happens to soul that the myth allows us to live vicariously and see imaginally, at the same time reflect the vision story of myth back upon itself so that it clarifies and provides structure to, psychologically and mythologically as well as spiritually, loss of and to soul and being lost in soul. As well, the Archetypal Self, as divine energies running loose or experienced as dark or being at war with as well as unalloyed sacred experiences, speaks out how the myth presents Psyche to psyche and experiences itself and redacts itself to imagination and mind, and how Psyche also differentiates herself, and must differentiate herself, from the god energies.

The defining moment in this myth has often been said to be Psyche's shining the light upon Eros, revealing that she has married a god, or at least a daimon, whose erotic energy gives love buoyancy, power, rush, imaginative adrenalin, heart thumping blood pumping. So powerful is this aphrodisiac of revelation and living in the original animal sexual erotic human imagery and lustfulness and satiation and human desire and pleasure that we forget to notice that, yes, the lamp of consciousness shines out and can be seen as a symbol for human freedom from the

darkness of the psyche that we intimately live in everyday (if darkness is an enemy), and yes, it shows Psyche separating herself from erotic energies, on purpose, with intent to find the truth. The myth presents this famous scene as the turning point for Psyche's and Eros' relationship from which all else follows.

That is, if we forget that Aphrodite is in hot pursuit of Psyche to do battle over beauty, a battle it turns out for the control of soul, self, spirit, and heart. Such a war occurs in everyone of us, and it makes a difference who wins and what the meaning of going to war is: beauty or is it consciousness or spiritual power or soul's journey? We are the battleground, we have been for eons, and the erotic and imaginal and divine energies and powers have blessed and cursed us with their songs and whirlwinds. We would do well to learn to read soul signs and spirit invasions and self freedom in order that we can justify our human existence to the cosmos, whose gods and energies we have only so far seen little of and only been introduced to: we are still taking our first step.

For most of the myth, Eros is absent from Psyche; she learns that she must seek him. She must learn most of what she knows. She may be naive, but she is not innocent, especially from the movement of acting like a god and dressing the night with charged erotic energies and from sending her sisters knowingly to their death, although she and Eros are complicit in this act. She experiences and is experienced, despite her youth. If we take the insights of William Blake, the English revolutionary poet, to heart, from his songs of innocence and songs of experience, innocence is not something you leave behind but is something you take with you to embed it into experience, and out of this marriage the powers of both infuse you into love experiences. (Thanks to David Whyte on one of his tapes for this idea.)

It is the absence of Eros and the search for Eros, and the willingness of Psyche to listen to her voices and active imaginations that help define her path and where she will end up. That is, other energies and powers exist in the psyche that are as powerful or more powerful than love or are activated by life and love and imminent death and thread the strands of love's curse to see without adrenalin and love's potion and magic spells and incantation of the psychic frenzy of desire. We might even call these awakened psychic insights into how itself is put together and works out its stories compassionate of other parts of itself; this compassion comes only with fully exploring and enlarging and an insightful psyche. It is learned through the fires of experience.

Mother's rivalry with Psyche, now her daughter-in-law, over who is the most beautiful, the goddess or the mortal, salts the wounds of Psyche and Eros that Psyche exposed when she drew blood with fire. The mythical imagination that stirs the love stew is beauty, the contest for dominion over beauty, for who wins that power wins the war, a shibboleth that acts as a touchstone for the bearer and envier.

Psyche's war with the goddess of love frames what happens to her and why and how Psyche descends into the world of the Unseen One. As we've explored, the war over love and beauty is all encompassing. The defining moment of the myth begins the process of differentiation of Psyche from divine energies, dark and light. Love, the myth elaborates on, is of divine or of sacred origin, and presents the powerful concatenations of energies and blindnesses, and illusions of beauty and

monstrosity that overwhelm Psyche and us. As this is a myth, the energies and powers war, bargain, compromise, aid and abet, create natural allies and foes in order to explain in and to psyche by showing their presence and manna without restraint. When young and when driving under the influence of hormones and estrogen that feed psychic hurricanes and tornadoes, they think they drive well; in fact, what they see is not what is front of them and they are not driving. How you regulate these energies and this glow of gold where life becomes love and its absence, death, so that the imagination becomes servant or slave to sacred energies it cannot see through or show the lamp of consciousness upon they are so in union, merged, one, is an extremely important issue? As alchemy does, the divine marriage or union that climbs the tree of life through sex to spiritual is two as one, not two into one. Spiritually, there needs to be a differentiation, a separation, an argument or dialogue or contentiousness that raises regulation of these energies and images and spiritual complexes as you rise and see more and need to integrate larger and more complex landscapes and mindscapes (thoughts without images, yet attached to emotions).

Psyche's courage shows us how to confront these overwhelming heartstorms that rise from earth and fall from sky, whose home is in the heart's imaginative factory of infinite complexities and invisible powers. She, as well, shows how to regulate and relate to and be in communion or war with goddesses and gods and the sacredness, that lightning whose power we see manifest and striking so that we fear and appropriate it with offerings. We comprehend its natural powers over which we have little control and so create rituals and ceremonies to channel and provide a cup or container to be of use to humans and not destroy us or others. Until you can relate to that sacred energy not out of fear, but love, with all that that implies. And in this myth, it is the ordinary and the ignored and the lowly and the unseen ones that present themselves to be seen as important for this is soul in its elements and its loves, grounded, under earth, in underworld, in death, in love with making ego lost and giving it an earful of how to handle the loss in and of soul, if ego would grow ears sensitive enough to listen to soul's plaintive songs and melodies. Out of soul, the depths, direct experience comes out of the solid roots and foundation of spiritual life and practices. All to struggle as deeply as possible to truly transform from within, like the divine child Psyche carries, see how you use the ordinary tools to be where Zen tells you you end up, at the beginning seeing reality truly for the first time; you realize the journey you've taken is now you, you are the journey, and you make and transform psyche as you soulmake.

Psyche separates from that most enticing and alluring of feeding of archetypal energy, flooding darkness that possesses all of being with its rich nutrients of love, sex, awakening, enlivening, and imaginal creative force from the deep recesses penetrating through all defenses and invisible barriers. Eros gave ego energy; its bargain, do not look closely as even stronger forces threaten and can be fought off with ego's erotic energies and weapons; result, life ego identified with as at war with death, and it blamed itself, not Eros, for love's dilemmas and evils while congratulating itself on its triumphs. At war with the Goddess of Love, and shaming her son, other goddesses related to love and its tragedies, Hera and Demeter, withdraw all of the culture's gathered archetypal energies and approved channels of imaginal spiritual life where soul can be assured of nourishment and ritual support for the images it loves. In the first of three rivers that

Psyche encounters when love resides at the bottom with Poseidon, god of anger, the whole of her being is thrown back, rejected. She is not permitted to go into unconsciousness, once she has deliberately shown the light on Eros, on herself, and her workings, adventures, and darknesses. The volatile mixture of love and anger or rage flooding into unconsciousness tells her that she cannot enter the unconscious directly, by diving into it without knowledge, she cannot live there or die there, with so much flooding and water, in a deluge of suffering and agony over loss of part of her soul, as a part of Psyche has married Eros, only it is not the whole of her as the myth clarifies and stories out into the open.

In other words, Psyche cannot get from its unconscious what it needs when soul has not developed an ongoing, communing, and loving and compassionate relationship that allows each one to live through its own version of life. Psyche has multitudes living in her and more than one point of view. (The three rivers round up a comprehensive insight into various parts of the unconscious. Psyche's second encounter with the waters of life shows her how to relate to these unknown forces and energies within her, intuitions, dark reasonings, imagines, reflections pulling up what needs to be focused on and acted upon as well as imagined. Take a little water, contain it, then take a nourishing drink or one with a surprise, unknown taste, and your soul's imagination is off to take you where you have never been before but need to go but did not know you are there in soul, in dream, so go there in body: be one. The third river is the River Styx, and it shows a different world: cold, hateful. You do not dive into, drink from, nor help anyone swimming in the deadly water for it is an engulfing experience, an experience where you would die of the "bends of the deep" when you traveled to daylight.)

Tortured and tormented, with the natural lustfulness of the god, Pan, in the background, showing that is what she remembers from her encounter with Eros so she has more to learn of love. She stands in nature, outside the boundaries of culture and society and conforming natural landscapes, without apparent weapons, resources, and love. Psyche is exposed, as exposed, vulnerable, and stripped naked as she had done to Eros. Eros flees to mother and has a home. Significantly, Psyche has no home, soul has no residence; we are in boundary territory where she cannot go back and Eros has no powers; and the forces and powers of divine love and comfort are arrayed against Psyche, apparently. She lives in total hostile, enemy, unknown territory. She does not know where she is; she is lost, abandoned, taboo--feeling the thrusts of society as if they were arrows at her situation, how she got into it she wonders and so wanders, meanders through the desert she finds herself in, assuming she is truly a freak of nature, having no natural allies and no means by which to solve her impossible dilemma and tasks. She may be a creation of nature, but she is more than a creature of nature, culture, and society. The authors of the myth have Psyche where they can study her and come to grips with and ruminate on and rewrite and revision how she works, what sparks her, what are the forces that propel her, how love contours and contorts her. Psyche, they find, can speak and act for herself, and soul has a life and love of its own. We definitely are in boundary territory where Hermes helps guide us.

Six times Psyche not only contemplates suicide; she decides to die as well as kill her child along with her. Though as Eros tells her you keep the secret of your pregnancy from the world,

and our child will be born immortal, suggesting what is immortal is inside of us and what we ourselves give birth to; we have mortal and immortal longings and aspects that we must fashion and let grow and mature. It is our choice to choose one or the other or a mixture of both with the energies that course through our hearts and minds. Every time she makes this decision of abject disconsolation, Eros is absent, or is, perhaps, present by his absence, so invisible are the so long tentacles of love. Being at war with one's archetypal energies, or gods and goddesses means ego does not have these available to buoy and sail her in the solar and lunar winds of these energies. This archetypal despair and depression that sees no love and life and hope tortures and torments you to roll down the mountain without the spirit of the wind to cushion your fall presents the withdrawal of these energies into the unconscious that you need to be aware of for you need to know where the enemy is and it is in you and you need to know the consequences of the war and work and imagine and burn the heartwood to figure how to reconcile and succor each other. Better to be in communication with these images and sacred powers, appropriate with rituals, and as you are fed, feed, nourish. It is a two-way street. Alternatively, the archetypal hopelessness could be the flooding in depression, an inflation of identifying with the god energies, without being aware of this hyperactive maniacal activity. The human engulfed in sacred cosmic energies that have no clue as to death and destruction and self slaughter, let alone self sacrifice: in darkness with the lights ablaze. Psyche's war with divine wrath, with the dark energies of love and life, and Psyche's allies in the dark self make Psyche's perilous journey true to its history, past and future, and a voyage that tells a paradigmatic myth that can guide our souls, if we would open up our hearts and build our home out of the images soul gives us for mortar and brick; the foundation will include the lessons of the earthquake of descent and the hurricane of love as well as the pipes and hoofs of Pan, ants, reeds, eagle, and far seeing tower.

The suggestion of the impossible dilemmas of life, for we are exposed to more than love and its rivers, voices out of the ever vigilant, sorting, figuring, creative work to ameliorate the unexpected and unexpected ways of resolving the conundrums of love, life, and death. Though ignored and partaking of the dark and lowly, you must know what it means to be a slave in order to know how to free yourself. No sacredness makes what you do extraordinary, Zen practice says. There is a whiff of fresh air, of freedom that comes with these psychic helpers, guides of the soul, who are doers. Perhaps, they relate to the Eleusis mysteries or the myth of Persephone. The mystery here is, being natural and created out of the dilemma, they are the defining images for Psyche's journey; each one's images reveal different images though the energies and creativity would rise from below the floorboards of culture. These are truly Psyche's guides. With the right attitude toward your own psyche, they will appear as guides to you for soul loves its images and gives you images to feed you even if they are not what daily life appears to need at that time if you travel closely enough to hear her love song.

Where are we? Psyche is not Persephone though a part of her feeds into her myth.

Persephone was an innocent young woman out in the fields picking pomegranates when Hades pulled her violently down into the underworld. Demeter, like Psyche, searched frantically for the lost loved one. Hades raped Persephone, and forced marriage in a bargain upon her.

Although she became Queen of the Underworld, she visited the upperworld for certain months out of the year. Although the Lord of the Underworld had no image, it was the divine powers by which the god got what he wanted, dark though those powers were and invisible, thus all the more frightful and spectral. Such a god of forbiddenness, hate, violence, and death, who you couldn't see and didn't know existed, make you awake to the possibility that you may be invaded and taken over by powers unintelligible to those who refuse its language and turn a deaf ear to soul. (Milosz' fair warning.) In other words, Persephone received her identity from her role in the underworld; moreover, she was flush with the archetypal energies that overwhelmed her that she identified with those energies, and thus her epithet, the great destroyer.

Psyche is not innocent. The myth begins with the rumors that she is more beautiful than Aphrodite. She wars with the gods, the powers that be, and, as anyone who has stood alone against the full brunt of the storm of culture, society and inner conflicts that that war produces, a battlefield where at first psyche is your enemy, rejects you, spites you, sends you images that would destroy you: when truly the ego, the small flower (recall Shakespeare: how with this rage shall beauty hold a plea whose action is no stronger than a flower), stands alone, every inch of humanity and cosmos arrayed against you, paranoid and not, howling in the night, loose upon the world: the myth says you have powers and energies you never even knew existed, and with Psyche you are and contain powers and energies as potent and incarnatable and evoking of manna as those who line up against you although that is not apparent. Psyche seeks, as does Demeter, though she has within her new life, and in her combat, where the minions of Aphrodite unmercifully beat her, as the goddess does, her tasks tells us that this myth is more than about love and it hopes and fears, or the silly Cupids, or an ineffectual Psyche. The far-seeing tower tells her how to enter and be in and return from the underworld, and what she must do and must not do. The far-seeing tower tells her how to act, how to be seen in the unseen, invisible world: how consciousness can journey into the invisible world and come out whole. Far-seeing from height gives foresight; in depth, darkness from below exploring the unseen invisibles gives insight. Like Persephone, Psyche is forced into the underworld, much like a slave to the tasks and searching for what soul has lost, where she is to recover part of her soul that had been lost in her ordeal and the disappearance of Eros. However, the archetypal depressions occur in the daylight in Psyche; she must with guides and fully awake and consciously aware of the danger, terror, and risks that going down into the world of the dead entails, solve another of the mysteries: how to do the impossible spiritual task that appear to the rational and safety minded ego incapable of doing because beyond its powers and insights to do. A surprise at every turn; meandering like the rivers that flow the mind. In other words, Psyche is the beneficiary of prior journeys by heroes and adventures into the underworld and what they have learned. She now knows not to go unprepared, using sorting, foresight, reasoning in order to go into the depths, find what she came for or accept what is given or shown her, and return the way she planned. As she is Psyche, she must become a familiar with this territory and know the terrain and how to act and be and, even more importantly, what not to do, or when you must disobey, as you must disobey the gods or at least have a conscious dialogue and common life together. She will go into the underworld many times, as we do, and our journeys

can be like Psyche's or Persephone's, or Hercules', or Ulysses'. We can discern our experiences, as we bring back different features of soulmaking.

X.

“FORCED INTO THE VENT OF DIS BY APHRODITE”

Forced into the Vent of Dis by Aphrodite, who once again thinks that the task is impossible, especially with it being the underworld, Psyche descends armed with knowledge, food, and coins of passage to where she would not voluntarily go if her war with the love goddess was not to the death and she did not seek Eros and life. Her secret is the child she carries into the underworld. And she knows what she must do and not do. In this world for this task, psyche must not meander but be a beacon and focus and all concentration. We descend into the depths where soul is more fluid and loves death, to explore the Hades-Demeter-Persephone mythology, in its depression and violences, that we may bring back something useful or discover something hidden inside of all of us, a mystery (we are the cosmos). We know psyche takes us where we don't want to go but where soul has something of treasure for us if we have become knowledgeable about the territory, know the landscape and landmarks, the scars and scares, the dead and deaths, the horrors and tragedies, and the inconsolabilities of being alive inside the land of the dead. We may be there in dreams, suddenly, after long illness, in the middle of a breakdown decades in the making by soul in order to bring you back from the dead and bring back parts of the soul that had been lost and forgotten and forbidden about, live a life of depression and despair and be in the underworld most of that time, or being on a soul's journey into spiritual awakening that rings awake eternity's bells and shows how to accomplish the most difficult of psychic and love and life tasks despite harrowing cliff hanging living. We may enter there, according to Hillman, by “entering the mode of reflection, mirroring,...pausing, pondering, change of pace, voice, or glance, dropping levels.” “Such reflection is less willed and directed,” he writes, “it is less determinedly introspective like a heroic descent in the underworld to see what is going on there.”(Hillman, *ibid.* 52)

In other words, Psyche must go into the underworld if she is to be whole, win her war with the goddess of love, reunite with Eros. There is no choice: the middleworld consciousness and tools can be used in the underworld; the underworld treasures and terrors and horrors that have been gifted to you you bring up and bring all the experience back into innocence so that you are buoyed on the sail of the Inner Self and you can use as tools in the middleworld as well as in the upperworld. These worlds are not opposites; you live them simultaneously and concurrently; you infuse them but learn to differentiate and keep them separate yet part of the whole, like yin-yang flowing balance.

Psyche's conscious descent, active imaginal confrontations and dialogue as well as acting on the advice given her that prepares her for her archetypal descent of bringing her fears with her into her journey in the underworld. As we'll see, these experiences makes her call to go down different than the Persephone experience though we may go down through deflation, depression, inflation, or conquering hero like Hercules; another avenue of descent, an excursion throughout the landscapes of the depths, and the mountainous ascent would be Psyche's more receptive,

listening, responsive, communal, communicative, collaborating, conscious, knowledgeable ways into the interior that opens the gates to the center, once you have been told of the gates and how to open them and of the center, even deeper in than the underworld. Humanity, thanks to the men and women who have contributed their lives, creative life, and struggles to going in and mapping this territory and are doing so today, owes a profound debt to all of them, and praise and the closing of eyes to those who never returned.

Much like a snake, in Greece an initiatory healing life energy that lives in unseen darkness whose bite can be fatal, Psyche initiation into the underworld is through the Vent of Dis, and the “serpent as chthonic side of God, the part that slips away into invisibility through holes in the ground and embodies the soul of the dead person” leads her into another world. Cakes baked out of the sorting of the first task, Psyche can when confronted by the barks, exposed teeth, and growling snarls feed “the dog of fear, who bars the way to going deeper.”(Hillman, *ibid*, p 149) She is to feed her fear, feed the hunger that is behind the fear, and seed the thrice headed monster of passage into the interior. By alchemically cooking and eating, Psyche is in every bone in her body and every nerve fiber of her soul alerted to the viciousness of the world she enters that requires propitiation in an appropriate manner in order not to be torn apart, in body, spirit, and soul. In Psyche’s case, as she brings her baked fears with the cakes, she is thus being told to bring her fears and terrors with her as she experienced them and as she imagines the underworld to be. Cook these seeds, do not leave them behind. Bring all of your being with you into the underworld. When she climbs out, she will bring her underworld experience of terror, fear, and death with her into the daylight world.

Gold coins, like the small bits of gold of the second task, allows Psyche to exchange life for death. She can spend some the gold’s worth and value that she has acquired for other “riches” of the underworld. She must learn to value the unseen, the spirits, and the invisibles, and test their worth, after all she is Psyche. She now can take the perspective of death as the ferryman, who has been given the coins of society, of commerce, of Hermes’ realm, the messenger of the gods and the guider of souls into the underworld, ferries her over the river of death, exchanging the waters of life of the third task, leaving behind the coin of the realm, the last human image. Soul loves images; these images it loves are not human images. Now, Psyche has lost her middleworld image, her identity, she now changes to become unseen, invisible; she is in night as deep and engulfing as when she met Eros and his epithets, this time consciously. She has exchanged her daylight visibility where she incarnated out of the invisible into nightlight invisibility living in what it means to be “in death” where shades and shadows do the moving.(Hillman, *ibid*, pp. 20 et. al.)

Once more James Hillman imagines us into the underworld in a way that helps clarify what is going on in the myth and with Psyche and the significance of the mythical actions for psyche and for us today. One, “the underworld is psyche”, according to Hillman. “What one meets there is soul,” he elaborates, as when Ulysses meets Ajax and Agamemnon, and they are called “psyches.” “Soul comes first,” in the “underworld Ba of Egypt and the underworld *psyche* of Homeric Greece [where] the whole person [is] as in life but devoid of life.” Everything becomes and is in terms of psyche, fundamentally changing the experiencer about life. “Underworld images are ontological

statements about the soul, how it exists in and for itself beyond life,” he explains. Further, quoting Jung on his comments on the Egyptian and Tibetan books of the “land of the dead” as guidance, “the primacy of psyche, for that is the one thing which life does not make clear to us.”(Hillman, *ibid*, pp. 23-24 & 46-47)

We are in a “psychological cosmos” since ancient mythology is their psychology, and our psychology is our mythology(Hillman, *ibid*.) As a very wise man once showed me, psyche meanders and is an infinity box that has everlasting variety and combinational abilities as well as a metamorphic and transformative nature.

Soul speaks to soul about soul in soul’s language; in the middleworld it is image, and in the underworld it is invisibility, the unseen, the unimaged. Soul is subject and object, subjective and objective, two or more but never more than one, never merged but whole even when partitioned or partly viewed, form and content, the glue that throws the imagination sticks into the air and the glue that cannot stay glued, dissolving into its constituents parts yet able to be seen as whole because whole. A liquid fluid that gives images and spiritual energies material forms and images and bodies that molds and flows simultaneously. We see, we witness what lives us; we enter images, enter soul, we live what lives us, we embody soul even though we are in psyche, two wings of the butterfly, ourselves as the moth body, struggling with the spiritual materials squabble inherent in our cosmically evolved earthly bodymindheartchakra; soul’s images enter us, we live the interpreted image, act to follow its beat, in our best moments.

Two, soul is never satisfied with visibilities, wanting “to go ever inward and deeper,” Hillman quotes Heraclitus on the need to go to the dark because the unseen has greater strength than the seen. Soulmaking in the depths, he insights, “works through destruction, the dissolving, decomposing, detaching, and disintegrating processes....”

Underworld images are nonetheless visible, but only to what is invisible in us. The invisible is perceived by means of the invisible, that is, psyche. Psychic images are not necessarily pictures and may not be like sense images at all. Rather they are images as metaphors. An image in poetry and the entire imaginative process of music, of course, must be heard with the ear, but they are listened to with a third or inner ear.

(HILLMAN, *IBID*, PP. 26-27 AND 54)

In other words, what we see in the underworld shows us what is unseen, combining and likening disparate things and beings to each other in the ways they are alike or similar so that form, substance, image may express, be, or represent the invisible. Rhythms, pauses, silences, between the lines, intuited intuitions, notes and enjambments, mountain and valley where the animal sits waiting for us. The complexities cohere the contradictions. Metamorphosis forms out of these contradictory complexities to image and shape and form something new to the world. In the underworld, the soul and its souls give direct verse and imageless image to what lives in the depths and how to survive in the deeps and what needs to be done there and how to approach the

depths in order that one can come back alive: Psyche's instructions perform that function coming in a long tradition of underworld journeys and what is in that underworld. In order to be worthy of the god energies, a descent into the underworld appeared necessary to the ancients; to be whole, Jung and Hillman say you must know it thoroughly and become soul's verse and song, or its partner through active imagination or the arts of psyche. It is a most precarious and elusive time, spiritually, as you can become mixed and enter the imageless image and energies of invisible energies whose deadliness and power can inhabit you completely and reverse your life and entomb you in love's hates and jealousies in which you are lost to your original goals while ultimate goals transmogrify into death's slave, whose clutches vise you into disappearing to yourself, a phantom, an invisible who has no substance and breathes only because that is what you do with no meaning or possibility of meaning, no life with no possibility of life, no hope with no possibility of hope. Walking dead or gesticulating death.

Psyche, by the time she goes into the underworld, suffuses Hillman's five d's for depth, above, leaving the decomposition to the underworld. Her ego has no defenses left; it has survived although barely and Psyche, as a psyche, must follow soul, as a soul, in depths that as she goes she soulmakes, as Hillman points out; that is, creates psychic space where there was none or only darkness or chaos. How to do that and not breath in darkness and cold and hatred and evil, though the word has more of a middleworld edge to it, that would kill the life as you knew it? You never are the same through a journey into the underworld.

The fact that she is so narrowly circumscribed in what she must do in comparison with, say, Ulysses, is not because Psyche has less depth, understanding, or has less mercurial and meandering qualities. It relates to the nature of the myth and its purpose, which is to portray how dangerous, terrifying, agonizing, impossible, debilitating, dissolving, unforgiving, unrelenting the wars and combustibles of love and love's arrows are and its combinational algorithms with life and death that can make one feel whole's ecstasies before wholeness is a fact or tear one apart as if you were the dragon's meal or make one be chaos in midst of sunrise's beauty or liquefy mountains and valleys or live on the treadmill of this bipolar world.

Psyche has been totally isolated into solitude by the authors of the myth in a way that allows us to study how psyche or the soul works, experiences, becomes image and spirit and expresses the inner self or selves and cosmic, divine energies. We see psyche as content and as the whole of being, as mind, as ego, and as divine, as dragon and as cosmic inner self, as animal and as god, as human in extremity and half human as monstrosities, as ideas and ideologies as obsessions and compulsions, as tyrannies and freedoms, as personal and archetype, as appearance and substance, light and dark. We can discern how she mythologizes about herself, how soul makes soul, how she lives by telling stories to turn metaphors into earth that can form and bring stability and solidity to a fluid cosmos and world. We see in the midst of becoming an archetype, whose energies have the capacities to direct mind and body to accomplish the living purposes for soul. We see how soul creates, projects, withdrawals projections. In the underworld, invisibility: soul has no image. The soulmaking of psyche is below.

Jung argues that soul's primary process is to make images; Hillman argues, at least in the

underworld, soul's task is to make soul, more soul; he extends that argument by imagining how the ego and its energies can be reoriented toward the primacy of soul as seen in the underworld: we live out of soul, not out of the ego. In the myth of Psyche, we are not in the modern ego; we are still in the realms of the ancients where soul's primacy holds sway. It is an extremely dark myth, showing we are in deep trouble, indeed, but we are not without resources and knowledge picked up over the millennia. The myth shows the primacy of the direct experience of the Inner Self, the Archetypal Self, the inner dragon in fashioning the flow of divine and egoistic energies in ways that the wars of love and life and death become the combatants on a larger, cosmic battlefield, but in ways not imagined before and not fully made conscious in the man-made religions out of the cosmic spiritual forces that flow and live. How do we learn to practice it, and make home in a receptacle worth the gifts given and the beauty seen that would justify our existence. The myth repetitively returns to the theme that the spirit, spirit complexes, and spiritual practices are born and ferment and foment out of the close attention to the energies of the earth. Spirit complexes invade ego-Aphrodite invades and pummels Psyche unendingly, without pity. Spirit, the myth says, comes out of soul. They are not at war; that is, the conflict between soul and spirit are a modern phenomena created by otherworldly religions. The war of love that is being enacted in this myth emerges as image out of metaphor: out of the Inner Self or divine energies whose sacred power or manna may or may not feed or be one with spirit or soul. The war is one of self, individuation as Jung expressed it, and soul. Primacy of soul does not mean that the spiritual practices that incarnate and regulate divine energies are not important. It is rather to say the god energies of the Self, or No-Self of Zen, encounters with soul have more to do with incarnating the original being we were, Zen, or the imagined original being we were, religion, or the vision of realized, fully compassionate human being. Sacred and divine do not necessarily have to go together; the small things of life can serve as divine inspiration. And divine is both the dark and light, unconscious and conscious although those energies are usually too powerful for ego to regulate without an inner moral and ethical compass. In sum, inner self is not spirit nor soul; soul is not necessarily in conflict with spirit; and if soul is given primacy, as I think it should, for its more realistic view of the structure of the earth, which is depressive, it cannot accomplish the human goals of life, love, and unending depth of suffering and grief without the energies of the divine energies or the Inner Self, in order to harness it to compassion and ethical and spiritual actions and goals. Ego does not have the energies by which to complete soul's journey and life's project for the individual. The god energies provide the soul with resources and with the light of conscious the foresight to walk the unknown devastations and glories that flower everyday and everywhere in and through our inner living daily life. Divine energies are inflationary, grandiose, identifying and merging, calling for love unions, maniacal, top of the mountain terrain, tyrannical when identified with; soul is deflationary, small, individual, separating, isolating, low, loss and lost and loving both, individuating, bottom of the valley, burning fire in water when identified with. The spiritual practices that would discipline both of these energies flowing and housing in us we have only begun to explore for our human freedom from outer and inner tyrannies and our human truths from outer and inner tyrannies have only just begun.

We have entered the land of the dead with Psyche, carrying our fears and dreads with us, going where we do not wish to go but where we must go so resistance is our companion on each footfall down the valley upon valley. We know we will be appalled, we dialogue between ego and others in our psyches, as we hold ourselves as steady as we can, trying to keep courage and knowing we must take what terror we encounter and make it familiar and engage it and not turn away and deny it if we are to be worth the journey down and return worth our existence. We have no buffers; everything we see and do is raw, abrasive, edgy, sensitive to the point of explosive, scanning for enemies and specters and imaginary's imaginaries. Never before have we heard our heart beat so loudly and been aware that, yes, it is true, our heart is a seeing animal, wiser than we, but foolhardy and fickle, that we must at the same time listen to its voice and see with its visions and not fall into its heart traps. Heart's imagination is our human gift we know beats in us.

Psyche encounters three times, she was told those souls who would ask her for help, and the far-seeing tower warns her not to give them succor. She must, as Dr. Bolen states, must harden her heart.(Bolen, tapes.) We are in the land where the griefs and agonies of the heart and its loves have no bottom, are endless, would engulf her and she could drown in the cold and deadly waters of rejected love, reviled love, cold love. She would be as her sisters were. One point to remember is that hardening the heart to the realities of life is not to make it cold, unmoving, uncaring, lacking in compassion. This is not a myth that explores the compassionate heart and the many ways to solve Psyche problem in different ways than this myth portrays. We are in the underworld, and given the legacy of prior myths, we must adhere to certain traditions because they have proved themselves in the past in the creative fictions of the society. It tells us that we are speaking about and to the heart, and the soul whose food it feeds to the heart, in a perspective different from the daylight world, whose unseen substances show a different perspective that makes a bottom, a landscape in which to stop one's descent, to gauge and engage the heart and sound its depths and force it by fierce piercing to wake to its needs and the needs of its imaginative life, which includes soul. Psyche must wake up to her own self-interests before she can give and love and reach out for the benefit of others. Love's delusions must be dissolved, first. Hard lessons: live through them, you will know why you were helped by other parts of your psyche; you will realize that compassion for others is an expression of who you became because of what you suffered, grieved, and agonized through. You do not help because you need help; you give compassion because they need help and you know from experience that they cannot get through it alone, without others understanding of their malaise and condition and situation of love, life, and death.

First, Psyche encounters a crippled man and crippled donkey. Kindling has fallen off the donkey, the man asks for Psyche's aid to pick up the wood. Psyche walks on.(Bolen, tape) She, who had been aided at every turn, will not help the man who needs the wood to burn to keep warm in the cold underworld. No heartwood, or so it appears. Perhaps, it is kindling gathered from the enclosure of the first task. Also, remember, the myth is inside the book, *The Golden Ass*, in which the lead character is changed to an ass for most of the story.

Second, three nearly blind men drop needle and thread they were sharing on the ground

before Psyche. They cannot find them when they go searching for them. They ask Psyche to find it for them; she walks on. Needles and thread enable one to weave and sew wool cloth, like those of the second task, in order to cover nakedness from the cold.

Exchanging her coins with the ferryman for crossing the River Styx, the dark, cold, infernal “river of icy hatred that protects the underworld and is holy and eternal as are the God’s oaths that they swear by that frigid river,” Hillman writes. “Glacial cold--psychopathic, paranoiac, catatonic,” Hillman continues, “is not absent feeling or bad feeling, but a kind of feeling of its own.”

We can meet Cain, Judas, and Lucifer by being aware of our own desires to be false and to betray, to kill our brother and to kill ourselves, that our kiss has death in it and that there is a piece of soul that would live forever cast out from both human and heavenly company. These desires that seek no redemption and have abandoned all hope also move in the therapist’s heart--not only his charity and faith. These desires of the Ninth Circle give that cold psychological eye that sees all things from below, as images caught in their circles, an eye that glitters with the inhuman insight of Lucifer, light bearer.

Here, we have circled down far enough that we’ve reached the psychotic region, where no human warmth or human heartwood burns in the frigid air.(Hillman, pp. 169-170) As Psyche makes her Stygian crossing, she is implored to help those swimming in the river because they had no coins to pay the ferryman. To their pleas Psyche refuses to respond. Her experience in the underworld of the dead appears to be unlike her experience of divine and animal aid to gather a specimen from the waters of life of the underground of her third task. (Ibid.) She does not bind herself to those swimming in the cold, deadly waters of the underworld river. As she was betrayed by Eros, she appears to betray those who seek her rescue. She killed her sisters. She attempted suicide a number of times. Is she any better than Aphrodite in her treatment of Psyche? In her cold act, she condemns the swimmers to sure extinction. In her three encounters with water: she is rejected when she seeks to drown herself in the middleworld river because divine wrath powers stretch into the natural world, psychically; she is helped by divine gods and animals in acquiring the small quantity of contained waters; and only the unseen god rules where the river of the dead flow with no life giving sustenance possible.

Let’s look at these three encounters a little differently and put them in a slightly different context and place them in the rhythms, repetitions, and breath of the myth in order to see from a different perspective.

The myth has the middleworld comment, sometimes very subtly, on the underworld, because they assume the reader would know about the underworld. The underworld, also, comments on the middleworld, again sometimes very subtly. You must enter the myth and live inside of it just as if you were Psyche’s child so that you can see what is occurring from the inside out, darkness commenting on light, light reflecting on darkness as well as their interactions. They not only

comments on the other, each one provides guides and aid and insight and psychic nourishment and food, whether seen or unseen, for journeying in the other realms. You can do a psychological reading with the dark touchstones; you can do mythological soundings with the visibilities of the invisibles. These spheres of psyche, the ego and personal unconscious, the underworld as a form of archetypal energies or creative fiction to cohere the contradictions so that they may be held in imagination, and the collective unconscious communicate with one another, provide language and images that can if understood correctly be used to aid the bearer and struggler in boundary country. This communal nature of psyche emerges out of the myth. It is not the only way to view the psyche and its constituent parts and the wars that are unending. The ego must be awake and go into the underworld; what it takes out of it can be of use in ensouling the conscious parts of the psyche. Only peering into the underworld while standing a distant from oneself, fortifying oneself against its effects, and denying its existence do not have the needed outcomes for soul and psyche and inner self as well as the practices of the heart. With the insights from the underworld, spirit and its ferocious complexes and attempted invasions runs into defenses and guidings that it needs but cannot get from the middleworld.

Seeds bake into cakes: underground to underworld; food for passage in and out of the soul's country; without the lesson of sorting ingrained into Psyche, she cannot make the necessary discriminations, even enter the underworld as an aware and alert ego that has probability of return; multiple legged ants to four-legged dog as they go out of the hole and Psyche goes into hole, frequently as love requires the slow process of crawling through your passions, separating out revenge, jealousy, envy, lust, fear of dependency, love, etc. as you must get down and live in those passions in order to know them and then dive down, using the reasoning you've learned, and look at and with the far-seeing heart separate the wheat from the chaff, the good from evil, the love from other passions in the cold light of love's multiple lessons: the work of psyche is slow, methodical, moonlit, evaluative, metaphoric in essence, and transforming of randomness into priorities --takes place at night and goes into the dark--the tasks, in other words, are intimately related to the underworld as the worlds inform each other and their insights can be of use in exploring the other world, as the darkness of lust gives way to the light of love that Eros enwraps and enraptures Psyche, and the unseen world is evoked. We see that Psyche loves not only beauty but being enraptured as one of her basic soul's loves so that we must as well learn this task of sorting for soul's sake in order that we may gather the experience to sing or contradict the soul laden honey of enraptured beauty; and food exchanged for passage is like being inside the initiation ceremony where you are ingested into the tribe at puberty as new food, new souls in exchange for terrifying unknown myths that you must now learn to live and live on the inside of when soul is lost and the fire cannot be started and no threading of the needle can put psyche together so invisible are we drowning with no one to help us no matter how hard the plea to be saved.

Gold gathered by foresight, cunning, and basic moonlit work of watching psyche as psyche acts, then reflecting on those acts and marking them by image or experience or trauma or blood or oath or heart tremor or new imaginative characters or playwriting in reference point or symbol or

remembered note, passage of poetry that carries your rhythm and beat; gold may be more a discovery of shadow work than underworld work though the insight and experience learned in it by going into the terrors of your existence connect the networks between the two realms; out of the wool warmth for the cold regions, using the hard work of picking in moonlight off the bushes in danger of being mauled by societal forces whose aggressions scapegoat on one who gathers true power and is seen as outcast and outsider, appellations that Psyche has thrust on her for she is being storied and analyzed in a new and nuanced way that realizes her power and does not know how to analyze it and how to treat it and how to integrate it to be of use to culture and society in the furtherance of its end.

Psyche's war with culture and society is a surprise in the myth that needs understanding; gold to coins to put to use what gifted treasures you've found in order to help you in perilous situations; moonlit night of the second task with cold River Styx, leaving the middleworld identity which is not of use in the land of the dead, rather the treasures you've found along the way may be of assistance; exchange of image of gods to unseen god, to a realm where you are in danger of being swallowed whole as a meal for a demon god; politicians butting heads in the second task aggressively warring with one another, reverberates in the middleworld world and the cold of the underworld.

First: river of the unconscious and rejections with acknowledgement that the natural world is a creature of psyche and its energies and divine and made sacred in images and powers; second: waters of life, once again, feeds to goddess in a useful contained way where the natural world acts through the energies and images and powers of the psyche and soul; third, the River Styx, the river of the dead, that protects the underworld, cold, full of hatred, where Hades, the Unseen One, reigns along with Persephone; as the Buddha said, we are a stream, we must live in it while this myth shows the incredible danger of water to soul for the snakes warning is right, "danger, danger"; Psyche shows no experience with the unconscious forces coursing through her as the myth is telling her her story that she may wake up to it as she woke up Eros by using consciousness and foresight and cunning and wit; suicide, murder, death and the suicides of love or love's suicides, lifted by the far-seeing grandiose god energies that love activates, and the death of loved ones and of a love and how the dead continue existence in the soul but not in the realm of the Inner Self, in the same ways and manners; the myth says psyche and psyche's energies determine even the middleworld, high underground springs, and underworld waters and life and death through the sacred energies that live in her or whom she wars against as well as in whom she is living, without consciousness in the myth; hot Aphrodite of the river of rejection, a self destructive image of lifelong refusal of others to recognize your worth and treasures by making invisible, making fun of you, treating sensitive and vulnerable spots as attack points to enslave the love object after the person has enslaved their own love--that is, love is not an independent force in the psyche, it is dependent and easily becomes enmeshed in larger energies and powers; Zeus of the river of life carried by the eagle, a natural power, which the lover cannot get from ego, only from the natural and powerful, though many times unreliable, if inexperienced, forces and since these spring fresh water from the top of the mountain, from the upperworld, Mt. Olympus, where the sacred and

divine energies that are images as living in you and outside of you, larger forces that his myth shows are psychic and spiritual forces through soul, inner self, and heart and imagination flow--the danger here is vertigo, a psychological and spiritual threat to ego and psyche who do not know the upperworld and its initiations and the incredibly hard work it is for psyche just to get as far as she did on the mountain with divine and spiritual help to reinforce soul's own psychic powers and incredibly long reach into the interiors of its surrounding world; and Hades rules the land of the dead where actions are, according to Hillman as well as others, obverse and perverse, when compared to actions in the middleworld although one must be careful in reading the signs as it is easy to be misled or to mislead oneself and the souls that live dead in this world, as they do in dreams and imagination and in the heartbreak's agonies over the dead loved ones who have such difficulties parting this earth and who go into the earth one last time--heart cannot accept or live the losses while soul's love of losses and indifference to full body's suffering, griefs, and agonies writes our light dark and takes into countries we have to this day little reliable guidance, perhaps death is a compassion that we need to live into in order to live life and really respond to love's deadly waters: we are responsible for making them life giving and human and worth it and compassionately, the next step into myth after love's tribulations.

Threes appear as a most predominant pattern in the myth: three sisters; Psyche, Eros, and Joy (this third, the inner life, growth, creative, divine child, symbol of new life out of devastation of old, cold life; Psyche does three tasks in the middleworld before the symbolic fourth underworld task; she carried three things into the underworld with her: cakes, coins, and ego, whose terror she must bring with her and live through the coldness of paranoia of the battlefield where you believe death stalks you or the lostness of psychotic rage that rhythmically dissolves ego defenses and lives in the cold hatred of oneself as a living breathing flesh or ants crawl through your skin as helpers, then terrorizers, as you think to yourself you are a living a nightmare, it has taken over your life and you are at its mercies which are merciless; three rejections by goddesses: Aphrodite, Hera, and Demeter, all mothers, with the plights of mother love combined with love in marriage, and loss of a loved daughter as well as three acceptances, eventually, by gods: Eros, Pan, and Zeus: which may be an origin that have stimulated studies of this myth as one of paternalism and gender, with none of these gods being reliable companions; three mountains: Psyche jumps off initially, the mountain of the third task, and Mt. Olympus; three exchanges: cakes to the three-headed dog for passage and out, coins to the ferryman, and the box of beauty from Persephone to Psyche, making psyche, in equivalency terms, a coin, a means of exchange, exchanges of energies and divinities, of traumas, of images, of imaginative scenery so that we can live anywhere and in any situation and be a multitude of experiences whose only clue as to when we change or transform is the ability of boundary gods and lessons to be there and applied to know the country and the boundary experiences; three encounters in the underworld where Psyche must not help, she must not respond, an analog for the three rejections by the goddesses--in other words, she must learn to take on the power of rejection for pleadings of a love that is dead, take on some unseen sacred, divine energy that can allow the heart to see that it is a fire that can illuminate or burn, and these god energies can help you differentiate between these situations of the heart and

its lover; she does not merge or become at one or in union with the goddesses or the gods, rather, she shows in the underworld that she can take on unseen energies and powers that later become sacralized and embodied without identifying with them and incarnating them in actions and in her life's experiences in order to survive, blossom, love in the most dire and dingiest, lowly and soul revealing of the worst in your lover, spouse, and you as well as culture, society, the gods, and the seeming cosmos when you are under the powers beyond your reach though the incarnation of separating from the heart yet not letting it reach out its hands to turn into a cold heart by binding in oath so that Psyche will know when to help and reach out and rescue and save and succor and comfort and be inside the other person in compassion and when not to do so in a love situation and with a loved one; and three worlds: upperworld, middleworld, and underworld, in each one you need attention to detail for they have wholly different details and issues and imaginal lives and artistic expressions and all of whom are Psyche and their wars and communications and loves and boundaries are in many ways the subject of this myth of psyche and eros through love, life, and death, as they each represent in mythic and imaginative forms and structure different experiences and energies of the totality of psyche, and these are shown in mythological form separately acting independently as the myth shows while concurrently and simultaneously operating as energies and images and powers and archetypal structures in the psyche as each live inside the other, like Dante's circles, when one is to the fore, like Psyche's child, expressing the image as well as the metaphor for the unseen similarities and contradictory complexities that the symbol represents.

With this different perspective on the nature of the interactions and how they relate to one another, let us look again at the three encounters.

Crippled man and crippled animal that he rides on the back of for support and for endurance over rough terrain and the third thing, kindling wood, showing Psyche her crippled structure and what is natural for human use to burn the wood to ash, as corpses sometimes are before entering their earth home. Recall, also, that the tasks thrust upon her by the archetypal goddess expresses the energies whose numinosity courses through Psyche's young life. Where Psyche is the weakest, most vulnerable, is where divine energies enter and take over without awareness, so that spiritual tasks look impossible to do and do not even look like the tasks that love needs to make it aware of for what love does to the spirit and heart. She must become conscious of the spiritual travail of parts of her own soul where "no songs are heard", that dead part of soul, that is unexplored and unearthed, unlandscaped in which she may become lost. Just where Psyche is low, earthy, close to the ground, weakly defended, easily traumatized, is where she must meet love's passions and light if she is to commit to memory her sufferings. Her ego's energies cannot defend against attack by spirit complexes, traumas, and divine energies that radiate manna unless other sources in her who know how to create a solution by imagining the solution, out of the most ignored part of soul, that part that lives hidden from view and can lift many times its weight. Psyche has no powers over the ants. Food, its origins and how it is grown and produced, becomes a metaphor for what Psyche needs to survive. Soul's food is a necessity of life, and it feeds love's imagination.

Love cripples, the underworld speaks to the middleworld Psyche by showing her herself in

the first task in the cold dark reflection and unfeeling but touchstone honesty. She hasn't learned to feed her soul, she does not know how to produce the seeds, sort the grains so that, like the new life beginning in her, she can originate her love out of the depths of who she is and not have eros' arrows and self lacerating wounds of love fill her with love's remorse and spiritual spiral down into the burning hells of uncontained and undifferentiated love. In other words, she must go into the underworld out of which love's psychic and spiritual roots grow so that she can be like her child, a creator of new life and a divine child of dark and light. Love cripples the animal in her, in its lusts and basic survival desires where her imagination is filled with wounds and yearnings that need to concentrate on planting the seed and fields and harvesting the needed food and cooking it. The carrying donkey may be linked to all aggressive rams which carry the golden wool, as a form of being crippled. The ants are a metaphor for being able to walk as well as work efficiently and methodically which Psyche's ego cannot do. She requires assistance from other parts of soul. Love cripples the human in her, as we have shortly before seen with the murder of her sisters. Love cripples the structure of psyche and its energetic flows and its balance and how to regulate the maniacal-depressive swings between mountain and valley for she cannot clarify by sorting and sifting the passions and hearts in how to contain love's fires from consuming the ego, from being love's suicide, in self-immolation thinking she is a creature of the light. The dark consciousness and the forces of night and unseen powers of the unconscious that make known their presence in the underworld moves her more knowledgeably through her soul than the light of consciousness has done in the middleword. The source of divine wrath, Aphrodite, is a reflection that shows though its mighty reach and powers that aim to cripple Psyche and her unconscious. Lastly, love cripples, and it has crippled Eros for most of the myth, exposing weaknesses that his deadly epithets and underworld history belies.

Psyche and Eros wounds of love cripple as does the unendurable loss of new infatuated love. How is psyche able to see itself in true reality the way it is: the wound, the trauma, are like a tornadic whirlwind gathering the dark stormy, electric thunderbolts of energies and uncontrolled rage and fury sucking into itself all the powers and any loose kindling until it is an open sore. Like cures like, as they say. The more it opens, bleeds, suffers, has conversation between different parts of soul, and through the lived terror rhythms inside poems and the music that plays death and disease and disaster and devastation as symbols and rhythms and lives between lines and notes so that silence lives and breathes and, if large enough ears, you can hear them and dance to them. Until the trauma becomes a soul with a song, a language, a poetry, a music heard once and never forgotten in parts of psyche where no songs are sung. These begin to create and suture the wound and through archetypal healing, using various techniques, the wound transforms itself into a blessing, and you are in a new life with new poetry and language speaking to you in what life decides for you when you are ready, a calling that matches to depth of agonized grief and a joy beyond the limits of music and poetry to express. You live in the yearning and the wound and are both and neither, all at once, impossible just as are the spiritual tasks for Psyche.

Love is blind as well as love blinds. In her second task, she cannot see for the light. In other words, light blinds as well as the dark, meaning the light and dark of love. She could not see how to

avoid the aggressiveness of the rams and gather the gold wool. She, once again, could not see how to do it, could not reason it out. She had to be told how, this time by a small thin reed.

Three blind men, three blind spots: She had yet to learn the close observation of behavior, the uses of the moonlight, and needs to be cunning, skillful, and deceptive in matters of love if the needs arise. Like the thin reed, the lost thin needle and thread, the sewing of clothes to keep the blind warm at night, in the cold. Like Ariadne's thread, she needs to be able to find her way through the labyrinth that she is in. Psyche did as she was told and through subtle weaving and threading between rams. Psyche could not see how to do the task; she did it when she was nearly blind; night in moonlight, seeing in the dark.

Love blinds so that one cannot see what one is getting into, what is going on, what is going on around them and so not analyze the situation one is in, making the aggression of the battlefield between the sexes a dangerous situation for women, men, and psyche. She cannot do it on her own, needs help from a reed. A reed, you rarely see, unseen. The eye of a needle comes to mind: love is blind in the middleworld by the light and enraptures of the goodness and beauty and delights and desires of love. How can such goodness be wrong, so misleading? How can it be illicit or destructive? Impossible, not with these worldwide feelings that could turn the sun on in the morning so powerful are the forces rising in one and flowing into the beloved who returns the favored gift, in an exchange of dancing suns. The very nature of love, despite its despair, give hope and are one of the greatest boons to humanity and the world, or at least until you look at it from the cold, calculating, unimpressed, unmoved, unseen view of love and its affects and destructions.

As Psyche exchanges coin for passage, souls who lacked coins for passage swim across River Styx. They plead to be lent a hand. No binding takes place; Psyche is unmoved, no exchange takes place. We are near water whose danger about which the snakes warned her. We are near the unseen waters, at the top of the world and the bottom of the world. Eagle delivered a full cup. Significantly, and as before, Psyche delivers the water to the goddess, feeding the numinous divine energies instead of herself though she is at war with the archetypal power. She receives and gives away the water of life.

Love identifies with the strongest, gluing forces of life, and when she identifies with forces larger than herself, with the archetypal energies and powers that have the power to destroy or survive, this time with Eros, as a binding though absent force, in order to do war with even more powerful energies that can crush through the ego and live out another life without the individual being aware of the takeover by interjected love arrows. Identifying with gods or goddesses, merging with their manna in order to do love's work of earth, means one has given up the animal that would be human in one and sets loose the enemies of life. Love kills. Love kills life when love makes an enemy of life by identifying with the archetypal energies and not differentiating from them in order to be free and give to the archetype or the divine what it cannot attain on its own. Psyche hands the water of life to the love goddess who would destroy her. She has been fighting more powerful, sacred, and all encompassing energies than herself and has acquitted herself in her war. Now, "danger, danger" she has ever so subtly given away her power that psyche must never give away, her power of soul to be who she is and live free however much the poverty and

isolation. She is a slave. Love makes slaves of those who follow the bidding of the gods without human moral and ethical reflection, which means remaining fully an animal and being in the animal parts of soul's needle that threads together the worlds of psyche whose silent sounds can be heard suturing and clothing the agonies of suffering we face ourselves with everyday.

Her reward for completing the third task is to live, and another task, into the land of the dead, where there is no natural help, no succor, no care, only cold, hatred, with no natural life. Psyche did not have the means to get the water. She lacked the riches that would allow ego, like the reed, a symbol for an ego that wants to go down but will not, stuck in the in-between boundary lands of soul, soul as content not as image or whole being. She must find passage into the underworld and go on the voyage, with oars to steer and boat soul provided that gives safe and return passage. She, also, follows the guidance of the far-seeing tower, at least up to this point. She is looking at herself in her third task as she looks at the pleadings and helpless arms and reflects darkly, a dark complexion, on her middleworld tasks, telling her a colder, harder, more bitter, inconsolable reality that truth must face: she must exchange the coins for what is unseen, for what she could not see with the eyes of consciousness in the upperworld. The eyes darkened by the souls seen. Soul as invisible looking at invisible sees souls; that is, soul in the underworld has no image, unlike in the middleworld where soul produces a continuous flow of images into imagination. The obverse, perverse of what happens in middleworld, natural to not natural, occurs in the underworld. (Hillman)

What occurred in daylight world soul critiques in nightlight world. Opposites like hot and cold, love and hate comments on light by night, showing what was lacking and what was provided by light from a different perspective. Her three tasks made "seen" what was "unseen", "imaged" what was "unimaged" "thought" what was "in depths". Shown by her underworld journey into the depths of her own soul that love made her blind, crippled and a killer, she enters the realm of Persephone, at the residence of Hades, the Unseen One.

Psyche survived being thrown into the wilderness by small, ignored parts of the natural world that appear to perform no useful function to or in Psyche. Parts of Psyche of which she was unaware, parts that she never knew existed that constantly sent her images and symbols that she never learned to read and reimagine, until they appeared and did the needed work and tasks. The archetypal energies of the goddesses arrayed against her for her natural challenge, the beauty she was born with, to Aphrodite. She is thrown into the archetypal challenge that she does not appear to have the strength to meet successfully. She meets archetypal challenges with tools and skills and decisions of the Archetypal Self, the divine energies calling her to who she is and must be, a voice of the dragon, speaking for the unconscious. The fourth task shows her weaknesses, just as Psyche challenged and showed the archetypal weakness of Eros when she used consciousness to lighten the dark. Now, dark, which is not the unconscious, but a place in psyche where the traits we have seen earlier predominant. This separation of worlds allows perspective, as Hillman argues, and more importantly, it shows us how psyche communicates outside of the ego, between various parts of places that beauty shines, where it is boxed, where life or death reigns, where soul has no image. This myth uses the underworld to comment on the middle and upperworld, and

archetypal energies to war with one another. In the tasks, Psyche shows that in psyche there are natural forces strong enough to challenge and differentiate and hold one's own on divine grounds, as we are being shown the most manna and unseen and cosmic energetic forces that parry through psyche.

In daylight, she received the gifts that she could not expect, each one surprises, source of wonder, each one creating solutions. Conversely, in nightlight, she is in a different realm or world where she must not reciprocate the gifts, rather is informed that she must not aid other souls, and has been taken as the need to harden her heart to love and its death arrows if she is to survive the journey to beauty. Let's look at this in a new way: we are in a place in the psyche where "no songs are sung", where nothing can crack the cold, the hatred, the usually unseen animosities that feed soul and imaginations with the pillage of other souls and persons, people and countries, egged on by the angry, lustful, and unremitting god energies. It is not so much the hardened heart as the unmoved heart; to know when to be moved by love and empathy and when not to be moved by them, to know when to act in one's own self-interest and when to be compassionate and know that one is helping someone not for one's interest but theirs, the voices of the heart that plead to save those souls that cannot be saved as you must know the heart well enough that the voices of the heart who have built up worth and treasure and listened closely enough to the voices of soul and self will not need to be saved for the souls that are so far underwater it is too late. You need to bring to light heartwood, voices of heart, and the pleading souls that you may in the daylight know when you enter the underworld and when you need other parts of your psyche to save yourself when challenged by an impossible spiritual task, such as love and its archetypal constellations: it tears apart the heart in war, drowns the souls in crossing the boundaries, and beauty darkly draws one down into the depths, what once looked like mere surface, mere mirror. A mirror of a different sort. A mirror that shows love is so dangerous and mortifying that you need to bring your fear into the underworld, that is bring courage, for you must face what has no face, what is unseen in you and in your heart, what lives unseen you that may ravage the landscape so powerful is it, so that you may become alive to their existence and advice, its loves and hates, its ecstasies and destitution, for the outstretched arms are arrows the souls have pointed at themselves and killed themselves. You reach out, you are bound to their arrow wounds. Eros is present, even at these depths, unseen darkness but felt in the cold that has left the heat. Psyche must learn to recognize the dead souls in her, the part of love that has died and that may on return to light be looked at anew since the dead are left behind, to hear the pleas of the dead souls she has known and know as she is watching them today she will one day make the journey and will she have the passage food and treasure to pay for the boat soul to float across the guardian river and not suffer these agonies that are in her face and hearteyes, trembling. She can return to day and prepare for mortality and immortality, given what she has seen, as both are at issue in Psyche's passages and adventures.

Ever suffering, ever diligent, ever dutiful in order to get her Eros present and to obey the desires of the goddess in order to do so while continuing to war and thus challenge the goddess energies. Having come across of River Styx into the realms of Hades and Persephone, through the

outstretch pleadings of the souls in the river of the dead, leaving behind what is dead in her soul, beyond revival, beyond young, manipulative infatuations and bodily slappings that desire gives wings to. Going to her lower depths, she experiences what Mary Oliver, the American poet, describes in her magnificent poem entitled, "The Journey."

*One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice--
though the whole house
began to tremble
you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
'Mend my life!'
each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.
It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.
But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice*

*which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do--
determined to save
the only life you could save.*

XI.

“SIX TIMES PSYCHE DECIDES TO DIE”

Six times: Psyche decides to die. At the very depths of those despairs and dissolutions of ego she enters where resides the loveless, violent, oppressive, negative marriage of Hades and Persephone. Psyche experienced a variety of the darkneses of the unseen one with Eros, but the pull toward death, toward her own unseen depths and possible death, as one who knows little of the land of the dead, so she never knew life. She, so far, has kept the secret of her pregnancy so she must care and love her child and want it to be divine. What other secret grows in her? Persephone fills the ointment into the box of beauty and hands it to Psyche. In other words, Persephone gifts her, (even here in the underworld, gifts matter) just like when she was in deepest darkest death throes six times. Beauty in depth, that has no face, but pure gold. Inside the persona lives the archetypal darkness of Persephone, in the home of Hades, and Aphrodite, at the bottom of the sea: why beauty radiates, attracts, becomes deadly, is a “glow”, is manna though it appears to be only skin deep.

It is psyche deep. How to regulate those unseen energies that so suddenly, while distracted by eating or by beauty, rushes the cold of iced air through in like you thread through a needle’s eye that you pulls down over the depth cliffs that has no ending, no landing, unless you imagine an end, in this infinity box, and you are taken over by the archetypal energies and live them out without being aware you are in their grip and being in the imagination of larger, more dangerous forces. The darker self unleashed; you must then relate to the darker self, argue with it, challenge it, live with it, wrestle with it, do not merge with it, do not “hear voices”, “speak for god” “enjoy the favor of the universe”, “god told me to kill, I acted morally and you should, must believe that I do.” Evil. You must have the moral and ethical strength to fight the evil living and breathing you, and telling you impossible stories. Gradually, through active imagination, nurturance, soul guides, and cherishing ego you can come to cherish whatever divine or god energies you discover coursing through you and living you in order to ask to not flood or craze you, or split you with archetypal energies. Regulating these energies you can love the self and your great grief cry can happen to the self and its great transforming can happen to you, as the poet Rilke imagined the communal reciprocity. “It” becomes a “He” or a “She” or “Being” that wants, like Rumi, the dance of the beloveds.

One more hint that what you do not see is more potent than what you see in the underworld is the ointment of beauty. The fundamental question is, “What is beauty doing in the land of the dead?” Is beauty intrinsic to it or brought to the underworld as a possession of Persephone?

Persephone spends half of her existence in the daylight world and half in the nightlight world, as Queen of the Underworld, wife of Hades, the Unseen One.

Half human, half goddess: fertility, and growth and seeds along with death, destruction and marriage as sanctioned rape where Persephone’s pull down into the ravaged lands was

involuntary. She had no choice, was given no freedom, was forced into her fate, as if there was nothing she could do about it. She had no choice and no choices were given so that she could have the freedom to decide her fate. Fate for Psyche began with who she was, intrinsic to her, beauty that challenged the beauty of Aphrodite. When she left the royal lands and dropped down the winds of Hermes or Eros into the lands of soul struggling with humanness and its being awakened here amidst titanic energetic battlings, she met her destiny in Eros.(Paz, *The Double Flame*, pp. 44-45, for his view of the wind as Eros.) Whatever the motive for her revelation of the god to the light of the psyche that soul must learn or be taught how to relate to, witness, engage, and use as guide for its own natural guidance, Psyche's actions brought to light not only the darkness of her marriage but also it reversed her fate. She exposed the dark unconscious destiny that would have been her fate had she remained the slave of desire as well as the slave of a god or goddess. (I use and extend Jung's idea of fate as that which governs the life of one from the unconscious that the individual has never made conscious and those dark energies appear to him or her formed as destiny. One of the tasks of life, of individuation, as well as in Zen, in some ways, is to make conscious the dark and light energies forming you, making them conscious and consciously choosing what you live out and how much you live out, within the circumstances and situations in life in which you find yourself.) She determined her freedom from her destiny, from nature, from who she was told she was to who she was by her choice.

Psyche's actions transformed her own fate, with consciousness by exposing that she could make her own choices, decide her own fate, even if it meant continual suffering, isolation, and war with the spiritual forces of energy that helped propel the society. What occurred in the world between the animal and the divine, that is, in the human world where divine and animal and human, upperworld, middleworld, underworld seemed to war with each while communicating and intertwining lives together. In this in between world, psyche faced the archetypal energies and self indirectly enough that she was not immediately electrocuted by the charge of the lightning bolt of the gods, as in madness and schizophrenia, while having available to her the full panoply of soul and spiritual and egoistic resources that could take shock and terror through enactments and incarnations by the healing and guiding parts of the soul, so much larger than the brain or mind as we know it. Her war with Aphrodite over beauty, personal beauty and divine beauty, as they are related to one another in this myth, means she must experience the unseen underworld life of Persephone's, and be accepted by the goddess in the form of the gift of the box of beauty in ways Psyche did not experience with Hera, Demeter, and Aphrodite. The ecstasies of the sexual lusts and desire and agonies of love of her dark time with Eros show themselves reversed in the meeting of Persephone and Psyche: the agonies of dark sexual lusts and desires, hidden, of rape and manipulation of a life by a god without the human being able to speak up in her defense and render her judgment, metaphorically or psychically speaking. Psyche who has experienced the ecstasies of love now meets its opposite, the horrendous envelopment of the power of forced marriage and rape.

Since her lightning of the dark deed that froze Eros in his tracks, and so startling was it that it would take time for him to recover, questions fly on who or what this Eros is or was or the reach

of his power and how sinuous and sensuous is the connections and relationship the encounters of the strength and resilience of erotic flow within and without the human. Is Eros beautiful or deadly, a companion of the light or of the dark? Is it a wind, a dark shaman, or a creature of the underworld let loose in the interior as a communicator yet never a safe one? Or is it a *daemon*, “a spirit whose life is lived between gods and mortals.” And is this the land that we are in. Octavio Paz continues his description of Eros as a communicator and “to unite living beings”:

Perhaps that is why we confuse him with the wind and represent him with wings. He is the child of Poverty and Abundance, and this explains his nature as an intermediary: he links light with darkness, the world of the senses with the world of ideas. As a child of Abundance, he distributes worldly goods. It is the one who desires who petitions, the one who is desired who gives.

Also, Eros is a “cruel divinity” whose “arrows respect neither his mother nor Zeus himself.” Paz is referring to the “cruel energies” of eros that society “must contain and channel” its “irredeemable destructiveness” elaborated upon in the works of Sigmund Freud, Frederick Nietzsche, Marquis de Sade, and D. H. Lawrence. (Paz, *ibid* and Bruce S. Thornton, [Eros: The Myth of Ancient Greek Sexuality](#), pp. 212-218.)

The magic of beauty acts in this myth as a metaphor for magnetic, unseen energies of archetypal desires of love, that is in play in every love of the human, because it is an attractor of primal importance to the Archetypal Self, the divine energies. The attractions of the gods and goddesses to beauty and its devastations and destructions as well as its blessings and wellings of affection and jealousy, all rolled into a face, a bird, a body, a tree, a sparkling grass are legendary. The myth here treats beauty as primary archetypal energy that gives ascent and descent through ego and through its defenses and into the in between world as well as the other worlds that are landscapes existing in psyche that can be explored and exist even if they have no song that gets to that world. Being in the underworld, we learn that unseen beauty is more powerful than seen love though its powers and traumas and engagements and destructions of that seen love is manifest, at its base in the recesses of psyche is the mixture of human and divine, mortality and immortality, intimation that attract soul and the Inner Archetypal Self for metaphors make images out of energies, as imagination or language. In other words, who Psyche is and what she does and the archetypal images she is battling against in order not to be enslaved by them for she knows where her unattached desires long for and like a tornado or like a drawing up the water by the sun after a rain or the actions of a windmill turning a waterwheel the Archetypal Self and soul appear and make known, announce presence and aims and needs and pleasures and displeasures to the active parts of psyche.

Right before our eyes we are revealed naked from the inside out. Right before our eyes, living right in the center of us and we cannot see what is in front of us--as it is invisible and powerfully summoning like a magnet pulling up and out as well as down and in the unseen being before your eyes: you are not private, you are public with all the public exposure of and to and for eros in

mortification, the beauty you see is more than human, goes deeper, farther, and higher than you fear to go. Love energies, like gods and goddesses, who have divinity in them by reason for their being are always public, and most public when most unseen, and so shame or humiliation is the first reaction to exposure. You incarnate the cosmos, manifesting its energies in desires and love that appear in the magnificence to never need justifying only expressing; it is divine and it is intimate, not abstract, a flesh not an absolute, a lip that kisses not a volcanic fire that smothers and sees longingly, looking deeply into your deepest passions when you look in your beloved's eyes, incarnated self, an unseen presence always, into which you flow and glow like invisible beauty's song that, like the bird's, comes from, you imagine, the deepest, largest part of soul. You know it as you know your breath.

Beauty is mortification, and this is why it is in the underworld, in the hands of the "Great Destroyer." Mortifying was Psyche's light upon Eros. The flight of Eros should separate beauty's unhealthy and evil affects; it does not in the least. That is because dark beauty and its attributes are not just the realm of Eros; they are intrinsic to soul and its efforts to make whole the human they find themselves temporarily within and living and drawing sustenance or hostility from that human bodily form. Aphrodite, throughout the myth, seeks Psyche's shame and humiliation as total defeat and enslavement. Psyche is not the slave to desire, rather she is being shown that shame and humiliation is intrinsic to the desires born of lusts and love. We are in a world of archetypal evil in the appearance of beauty; light hides the light, and only night can reveal what the very light conceals and denies, but it is a very dangerous, cliff walking, terrifying way. Psyche's aim is to free herself from the archetypal insufferable tyrannical waves of the love goddess, as she differentiates herself in each step along the way, sometimes more successfully than others, although the forces against her are exceedingly relentless and powerful. How do you differentiate desires and lusts from larger spiritual and soulful matters; how do you climb the chakra ladder to be a magnate, a psyche whose synchronicity attracts the beings and things it is enacting in order to be large enough to have them live in you and let them thrive while having them a new part of your being, as you are creating a new way to be in the world, one you've never be in before because psyche has been willing to risk and story you into its ways in the world?

How does beauty act on the psyche, what effect does it have? In order to answer these questions, let's look at a poem in which the poet's sight of beauty makes a beautiful bird into a beautiful mind and translates it into a beautiful world. Wendell Berry writes of the coming of immortality, as humans have the ability to understand it:

*The yellow-throated warbler, the
highest remotest voice
of this place, sings in the tops of
the tallest sycamores,
but one day he came twice to the
railing of my porch*

*where I sat at work above the river.
He was too close
to see with binoculars. Only the
naked eye could take him in,
a bird more beautiful than every
picture of himself,
more beautiful than himself killed
and preserved
by the most skilled taxidermist,
more beautiful
than any human mind, so small and
inexact,
could hope ever to remember. My
mind became
beautiful by the sight of him. He
had the beauty only
of himself alive in the only moment
of his life.
He had upon him like a light the whole
beauty of the living world that
never dies.*

Beauty signals life and draws out immortalities, as fleeting as the passions, as immortal as earth, as living as world. Beauty makes us present to the world, takes the most abstract, brings to the face of the world heated the deepest coldnesses of the underworld, the energies that flow in and through the unconscious that can be structured by magnets, as this is the most potent and, as the poem shows, the most engulfing, all encompassing, illuminating and enlightening magnet, like sparks of nature or shining lights, ointments, that open the heart, like a bird, in a way no other emotion can as it is a harbinger to flight, from the deepest twisting roots of love that lay in the unadorned and ever ready flow to adore heart. Beauty makes life real, gives it substance, apparently; greenery of summer is a beauty that keeps the eyes awake all day. Beauty transforms by making you naked to yourself and if the attitude allowing you to go naked to your lover, accepting the beauty of the nakedness in the lover for what it is, the perfect expression of divinity or what is immortal and abiding and binding and worthy in human existence.

Apuleius stands Plato and his ideas of soul, beauty, love, desires and how to attain immortality as spelled out in his Symposium by Diotima on his head, just as you would expect from an old wife's tale the teller of whom is hanged shortly after the telling that is being told inside the metamorphosis where the hero, Lucius, is transformed into a golden ass for most of the story. (See Michael Grant, Myths of the Greeks and Romans, pp. 357-372 and Paz, The Double Flame, pp.44-56) A dark, tragic story within a dark, comedic story, whose ending like its other virtues does not fit the pattern, just as Psyche whose meanderings and soul images and dreams fit no pattern. At least, not at first. As inside of Psyche, a possible divine child has been seeded and growing as a creative symbol, just as at the bottom of soul inside shit in a dream are specks of gold, as I can report. We are the ass, suffering for our curiosity, must see ourselves in that beast of burden before we can treat ourselves and others aright, fools that we are in our most shameful and shameless extravaganzas. To this mixture, Apuleius added his spiritual practices and ambitions throughout the myth and has Isis, to whose mysteries he had been initiated, appear at the end of his work. (Paz, *ibid*, p. 29) The Archetypal Self and archetypal energies and their workings, uses, and battles permeate the myth.

The ointment of Persephone placed in the beauty box is out of sight, invisible, not contaminating the surrounding world, in a place deep in the middle of one of the most terrifying of Greek myths. Ointment disappears into the face to enhance beauty, divine beauty that is as vain as human, when it stands as mirrors for the larger generators of passion and images and ideas, ties the deep well down which Psyche has reached the bottom of when she received from Persephone the box of beauty, closed, secret, to the persona, facial, surface qualities. From the bottom to the most superficial for marks and distinctions, so deep are the beauty marks and the attributes they attest it. The war between Aphrodite and Psyche over beauty thus is not merely the embodiment of nature's most precious survival strategy, attraction, and the darkest of the darkest secrets hidden inside the secret of the box that allows beauty's ointment rise from the horrendous underworld up, up into the air and light, and continuing to rise to Mt. Olympus.

XII.

“PSYCHE TAKES THE BOX OF BEAUTY”

Psyche takes the box of beauty from the hand of Persephone and ascends out of the underworld. Psyche opens the beauty box and falls into fog-like sleep, like death. This swoon, as Dr. Bolen points out, is similar to Snow White's swoon in death-like sleep upon eating the apple. Unconsciousness or seeming death, an imitation of what happens when one encounters beauty, a putting the light of consciousness to sleep so that it cannot see what it is that is truly in front of it. That is, reality trumps truth; truth cannot be stood; the mind must do by indirection what it cannot do by direction. Beauty with an underworld's smiling leer. The cold treasure that if one understood the effects of beauty on the psyche and the spirit we would see that its attachment are alluring and potentially deadly. Its deep roots we ignore at our peril, for what is the ointment of beauty, the beauty that attracted the Unseen One, Hades, to ravage Persephone. Persephone is now an Unseen One, cannot be seen. What does beauty hide: death, the unseen one, that always lurks in the form of time, aging, dying. Beauty is the urge toward immortality, a way of speaking of that desire and its ramifications. The Unseen One you cannot see, that is invisible to all but the invisibles in psyche. Unseen beauty is deeper, and its acquisition and the truths that it tells about yourself act like a mirror in the middleworld as the journey upward to visibility reveals its depth power and the resonance of true treasure but one that comes from the coldest cold and not the hottest hot. Beauty can draw you down, depress you if you do not have the inner beauty to sustain your walk on solid earth. You need roots that when you moisturize the underworld in your skin, and both men and women do it when they look at themselves in the morning dream and pronounce themselves beautiful at the end of their time before the mirror of the underworld. Zen says end the attachment. Swooning: the unconscious rises like a river (the river that originally rejected Psyche as it was filled with the divine energy of the goddess of love, who was born from the sea, whose name meant "foam") and swallows the whole of the ego, engulfing, making the ego lost and flooded.

In other words, Psyche's freedom from eros and the goddess of love began when she fired the dark up with the powers of reasoning and consciousness. Does she, therefore, end her search in unconsciousness again, defeating the victory she accomplished and suffered so much for? She suffered for freeing herself by not accepting the mortifications of desires. Does her swoon presage her failure for despite everything allies came to her side and this time what allies does she have and what can the sleep of consciousness mean for Psyche and her soul searching through corridors of beauty, as a symbol of the desires of love and lusts as well as spiritual aspirations?

Her sleep-like death is another revelation although an unseen one, invisible unless you look at it askance. Psyche sleeps the sleep of death as she must in order to take in the enormity of what she has just been through in the land of the dead. She sleeps the sleep of the unconscious, letting unconscious awake in her dreams and tell her what she has been through and shows her death and life and love so that she can begin to build her life in the upperworld using the knowledge that

she has acquired in the underworld. After such a terrifying journey, the unconscious, which is like her divine child, for she has not spoken of her secret, is her secret, as it has been all along, and has been her ally and the archetypal self that manifests and incarnates in her journey for that is how she is large enough and grandiose enough and potent enough and spiritually worthy enough to challenge the archetypal goddess of love. Psyche must know the death of others, and the deaths that haunt her soul, as if she were a hollow tree for the world's entry into daylight, are herself in disguise. She is each death. She becomes a familiar, an ally, with death, as the dreammaker, the Archetypal Self, horrifies and mends and guides her. Sleep for Psyche becomes a guide, a way in to the unconscious that allows her to travel to where she might not be able to get to otherwise.

Psyche's differentiation from Aphrodite is complete; she has differentiated from Persephone as well. She is in a fog-like death that takes place when you leave the underworld and enter the middleworld, hoping to forget, like crossing the River Lethe, the horror sights and heart rendings that threatened to crush you as you saw the futilities and love's furies that cripples, blinds, and kills. Psyche had no place to hide and no more defenses; secrets act as defense, are scaffolding for building psychic bodily armor; the secret of beauty Psyche now has revealed to her though it put to sleep the light that revealed Eros. One last secret that only Psyche and Eros know defends them and binds them and waits to be revealed in her journey into wholeness.

The beauty box is also a metaphor for the psyche. You can only infer what is inside the box by its affects on the emotions and the souls of others. We, our own psyches, are being tested: we project into the invisibility of the beauty box what we most want to appear. We know it is an ointment; that is all that we are told by the storyteller. We see the affect of the unseen by the reacting to its appearance and infer the overwhelming nature of the beauty. We are mysteries to one another as well as to ourselves. Analogizing the child inside of Psyche with the ointment of beauty inside of box of the mind, the mysteries explore in the myth how these seeds become the image and body that emerges out of the mysteries. Beauty and creativity have equivalency almost to the point of being the same thing so that beauty stands as a symbol for creativity. The box with beauty as the entry point is the psyche, the mysteries of the mind over a larger world than mind usually is considered, and mysteries of the unseen through the adventures and events of Psyche and Eros and their encounters and tasks give face to invisibilities that this myth is exploring. It is why it had to go to the underworld as it is the unseen, invisible world that humans inhabit and are living them that humans determinedly deny are doing so and even deny the very existence of what is living them is being illuminated: Inner Archetypal Self or No-Self, soul's images, spiritual stage on which to enact the incarnations of the mysteries the psyche is, and heartwork that the imagination opens the human to in the throes of archetypal energies of gods and goddesses that express the sexual and spiritual desires of lusts, loves, griefs, suicides. Released by the beauty box metaphor into what later Jung would call the "collective unconscious" for lack of a better name, the myth gives guidances as to how soul images and guides itself through itself by means of itself for itself by way of seeing through, mirroring, differentiating, healings that we see as madnesses, as earth beings of active imagination that teach us to look closely at our lives and always be present and awake, weaving light and dark to reflect upon each other and learn the yin-yang balance, the

tao. The underworld shows the journey of death requires the food baked through life's experienced story in order to receive the secret of the journey of life, the secret that cannot be told, cannot be spoken but can be seen directly although with unintended consequences so powerful is the aphrodisiacal effect, fog-like sleep of swooning into unconscious.

The secret of the journey of life: be awake, stay awake and totally aware and what you are seeking is seeking you as you have guides that can take you deeply in and heave you up the cliffs. The unconscious, like Psyche's first encounter with the river, rises up and overwhelms the conscious mind and puts it to sleep: beauty's affect on the soul and its love of images so says the dark truth of the underworld whose forgetfulness by the dayworld's somnambulance becomes the vision of the image of beauty as a symbol. Silence speaks and images dream, and we are not who we thought we were in our ravings and daily imitations of what life and death are: every day a metaphor for the beginnings and endings, birth and death: how much do we want to and can we remember and how much do we want to forget and can forget. We are the crossroads, where Eros or Hermes stands, where soulwork is to incarnate into existence as much of the Inner Self and cosmos as possible and live in the archetypal and imaged imagination that psyche embodies in its agonies and joys.

Psyche loves beauty; yet beauty is asleep as well. Invisible Psyche sees the invisible beauty, sees divine beauty. She acted like a goddess, she sees what the divine loves. She is mortal and when she acted as an immortal without guides because she was once again disobeying the archetypal energies warring against her she went into the state of consciousness that occurs when a human acts by identifying themselves as a god or goddess; sleep of divinity for the human is when the dreamer imagines he is the dreammaker and is able to do with the dream (the world and persons) what he wants with little moral or ethical compulsions. Of course, left out of mix is the assumptions that dreams have such moral or ethical compunctions. That is, beauty acts not like a stimulant to desire, as it does, its effect becomes narcotic of desire putting one's moral and sensual faculties to sleep in pursuit of one's desires that become imaged and embellished in the ointment of divine sanctity and you, like god and goddess, unaware of the archetypal swirlings around the copulating couple and imaginations.

The beauty box illuminates the disappearing ointment of ephemeral beauty and its immortality and its visible invisibility of love. When you are completely in the unconscious, where the total complex of the Inner Self or trauma or spirit complex or archetype has taken over the ego functioning without you noticing the masking by invisible ointment, invisible to invisibles, the archetype behind the complex of beauty and love of beauty, you have no way of grasping that you are not yourself as you disappear to yourself, you become the unconquerable illumination of the unconscious, you speak out of it and see with the ephemeral eyes, immortality. Left loose of its former boundaries to one untrained in boundaries and boundary markings, the unconscious runs rampage, as it knows no other way unless it is challenged back or boundaried or loved in expression of love or a beauty returned for beauty's flow, a reciprocal communion. At war, you are ravaged as enemies are savaged when the subtleties of its life are unknown to ego, uncared about, and, to paraphrase the Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, when he asked his soul, what she had done

with the garden that had been left in her care. Soul must learn to discern by guides and practice and hard lessons to look behind the ointment, a modern version of the ancient mask, for true beauty, not as Plato would necessarily, but for survival and for the sake of the health of the soul.

This swoon, unconsciousness, since the underworld comments on the middleworld, shows us Psyche's actual state through the myth, that she had been captured by the beauty though a part of her was free and interrogating of the faults of beauty. She was asleep, as many spiritual traditions say you are, was unaware of her condition because she was not a slave to desire but in the sleep of desire and all of its attendant manifestations, love, and lusts, sexual enamourment, ecstasies and arguments, and killings. As long as you are in the sleep of desire you never wake up to divine beauty, to true beauty, to spiritual beauty that psyche has the resources to explore, image, speak, and mythologize. Beauty's sleep would be one of the Buddha's attachment to the world that show you are asleep and from which you need to wake up.

Pan, son of Hermes and a nymph of Arcadia, and associated with the god, Dionysus, and the bacchanalia, flames Psyche with the desire to unite again with Eros. The way out is the way in as she goes to Persephone for the box of beauty, where divinity's gifts reside, for she truly loves Eros, as wounding and confounding and darkening as that may be, as inexplicable as what is inside the box. She acts out of her own self-interest by opening the box of beauty. She has won the war with Aphrodite for she has the ointment of beauty. Remember the box is invisible and, like Pandora's box, its power for good or evil is unknown until the box is opened.

It is how the observer opens the box and with what mind-set that not only informs but determines the nature of the spirit about to fly.

(CAROL K. MACK AND DINAH MACK, A FIELD GUIDE TO DEMONS, FAIRIES, FALLEN ANGELS, AND OTHER SUBVERSIVE SPIRITS, P. 272.)

Psyche once more pays for her curiosity, in the long line of westerners to whom curiosity is punished and the creative desire to see into the closed box of itself lashed for disobedience so hateful of true freedom is this tradition. She is no longer inundated with the rush of the love goddess powers and whims and beatings. She has weathered the archetypal wars and is exhausted into unconsciousness. Her "mind-set" is love for Eros for the spirit she lets loose upon the world is the desire of Eros for his love, Psyche, as Psyche's love for Eros opened the box. Psyche is responsible to her soul for what desire and love does to them and those effects are as varied as to what was released from Pandora's box, leaving hopefully hope in the box as a gift of the goddesses.

Psyche is free; whether she will survive depends on the archetypal powers and energies she herself has unreleased and has been nurtured within her and into the others she encountered. She risked her mortality and that of her divine child in order to challenge the archetypal goddesses, as well as gods, since it was a war of divinities, on equal footing: not to be a goddess, but to be in communication and dialogue with the energies alive to her silent breath.

The swoon of beauty has a number of facets. It brings closure to the series of events and tasks that began with Psyche lighting the darkness upon Eros: symbol of light and dark, consciousness

and unconsciousness. As this myth so intimately portrays the light and dark, the day and night, the feminine and masculine can never really be separated as they reflect on each other, either unconsciously, without awareness, and so being under the control of passions and idea images that fling your mind, and your heart, back and forth, or consciously, as in reflection of underworld on middleworld. Psyche is wounded again by beauty suffering into unconsciousness what had awakened her to beauty that harkens back to the beginning of the plot of the myth moving out of the kingly lands into Eros' landscape into the in between nature into the goddess kingdom and the natural world and supernatural world. The swoon is one more proof that it is the awesome power and energies of the unconscious, energies of the Inner Presence and other archetypal energies, that is on display in the myth. Its powers of creativity and its powers of destruction; its powers of light and its powers of dark when the energies and their boundaries have not been integrated into the personality. The myth of beauty being presented shows its attraction to the unconscious, and how lover energies are structured by the desire for beauty. Being unconscious, she is in the same condition as her child, and to wake is to born again, divine.

There are other facets to the swoon of beauty. She, finally, acts in her own self-interest, and instead of obeying in order to complete the tasks, she disobeys her inner voices, the voices of her unconscious, differentiating herself completely from the Aphrodite and the forces she represents in her war on Psyche's beauty. And it is well to recall that it is her beauty, not love, that mesmerizes and draws out the waters of life, that causes her to fall in love with her own inner workings, with the drawing out of unknown forces to image her journey where she does not know where she is going, as we do not know. And this is a myth of beauty that has no mirrors to reflect on doubleness although there are a host of mirroring images. As the Wendell Berry poem shows, soul's reflections on soul has a rhythm of union and merging that divinity usually has as an attribute.

If we treat beauty as a compass point or a navigation system gleaned as short hand for deeper effects that cannot be expressed so succinctly and all-encompassing with as much depth, Psyche makes a choice again for death and murder of her child by choosing to open the box of beauty. She, consciously, with hope aforethought, that she would possess the divine beauty that would outshine the divine beauty of Aphrodite. She pays for her disobedience, as this is a theme running through Western Civilization, and uses her powers she has acquired in the first three tasks to complete the fourth task, the task of wholeness, to use the underworld insights sorting, reasoning, cunning, and small dozes and how blind, crippled, and real killing were her lacks. No more; she once more enters the unknown world where no mythological figures before her had ever ventured; a new archetypal energy, independent, free (potentially), reasoning, and intuitive with inner partnership with her archetypal energies and Inner Presence that will be an independent thrust and power and energy that would have to be reckoned with. This independent being or thing, soul, Jung took to be the guiding light upon which the future of humankind depended upon for its survival. Psyche's aim is not survival, which is repeatedly emphasized, it is reunion with Eros, wholeness as an expression of who she, as a beauty, always was and whose realization the myth chronicles as to who she truly deeply was: at the bottom of soul is the home of divine

beauty.

Psyche disobeyed Eros, disobeyed Aphrodite, disobeyed her soul guides or inner voices (using her newly found conscious tools to analyze and judge the situation and possible outcomes): Eros, love, beauty. She was not Eros, Love, Beauty: she was an independent and even though she was in lover territory she used her warrior powers to keep her discrimination alive so that her active imagination with her guides were engaged but not obsequiously followed: she had her own position and defended it and took the offensive when she decided to do so. Her second conscious disobedience she had to take in order to prove her worthy as she was thrown back on herself.

She traveled prepared into the underworld; getting out of it proved the hard part, at least, in terms of surviving psychologically intact: the price of an open mind as opposed to a closed mind poignantly posed to her with her swoon, better dead than a slave to the goddess of love. Her desires ravage her has been the usual interpretation of the myth; her war of beauty with the goddess of love presents one whose desires for lost love fire her into impious and unrelenting challenges. All the desires of beauty overwhelm the imagination. As if dead. No Self. The myth makes clear that Psyche cannot go any further on her own, even with her guides, for what she had so often imagined has come to pass: she is dead, as if dead, which in the psyche are the same thing, for soul loves the dead, and psyche experiences of death occurs many times during life. From an underworld perspective, she is where she needs to be in her experience and understanding of the dark forces of eros, love, beauty, the Self, the unconscious and consciousness. Her black dress she wore at the beginning of her adventures, she wears in her mind. She absorbs the dark beauties of divine Persephone. She needs to assimilate the immensity of the dark powers of the unconscious so as to live with the Inner Presence; sleep, dreaming is one way in order for the night beauties to be present and made awake and aware to the conscious mind for reflection and living out of the dream in a way that makes the unseen dream, second skin, visible but unseen, lived so it has consequences with no light, only invisible energy pumping the heart into the third eye, up the chakras.

The very thing you are in your inmost being, beauty, without being aware that you are the expression of divine love's energies, is the very thing that starts you on the soul's journey. It is the very thing that trips you up, that you do not understand, that you are not conscious of, because as you express it you cannot see it as the sight by which the eye sees cannot see itself: becoming unconscious of the unconscious, archetypal depression, yet potentially creative, for it is there to wake you up although you do not know how to ask it to do so. You sleep, your depression equals inflation: you act out what is living you without glass to protect the ego from invasion and occupation.

As Dogen, the Zen master, has written, spiritual practice is not striving for enlightenment, it is the expression of enlightenment: you express the very thing you are in the inner most core of your being. By living out of energies living you you can become conscious of those energies, dialogue, do active imagination, and be in commune and differentiation from them. Only by understanding how soul cooks you to be food for spiritual beings and the imaginal lives living you can you learn from soul how to cook in return for it is a reciprocal or communal gift uroboros into

an ever widening circular descent up the mountain and ascent down the valley.

XIII.

“WE LEAVE THE UNDERWORLD”

We leave the underworld, we enter the upperworld, the supernatural world, where the released imagined desires fire the plot of the myth and the compression of the myth moves us rapidly to its climax. We, the mythologist and metamorphosist, now enter another new landscape and territory in what is a return to the royal realm, where the lover and warrior and magician energies that have driven the plot of the myth, change to the magical and kingly energies, of the kinship family to the larger kinship of the gods and goddesses. Condensation predominates and is apropos of a myth that opens with divine archetypal war over beauty between a goddess and young mortal, psyche, and ends with reconciliation through a new goddess who knows secrets that other divines do not know: the secret of beauty, the possession of Persephone, Queen of the Underworld, the secret of her growing birth, and the secret of Eros: silence is the secret. Silence, isolation, self-examination, times alone, sorting feelings and fears and readying to do battle, seeing the battlefield and how to best maneuver, and what concentrated life will it take to defeat your archetypal foe, not enemy, which in this myth is Aphrodite, Goddess of Love. The secret of silence harbors incubation and hanging by a thread under a branch blown by the wind until the inner self-transformation of the cocoon from moth to butterfly is ready to burst out of the chrysalis and be a creature and beauty of the sun and containing the sun. The secret of the silence of the heart, which has no voice, where love and all of its lusts and desires and joys and ecstasies and terrors and tragedies incubate and give birth, hopefully, to joy and the necessary experiences of the wounds and healings that make the larynx of the heart's love to sing it in love poems and dirges, erotic poetry and epiphanic songs and grief liturgies and loss laments, odes of the heart awakened out of its sleep by love that has the ability to put it back to sleep so ferocious are the forces that give battle.

Psyche had to leave the royal family of queen and king, had to leave her natural mother behind, for she is inexperienced in the ways of power or granting boons or giving blessings, an attribute of mature queens and kings. Her first experience with marriage and love proves that it cannot stand the light of day, so immature is Eros and so silencing into oblivion is his control cloak of darkness that his cruelties and demands would be difficult to tolerate for anyone and for a hope that love would evolve into tenderness and compassion and empathy. Yet it is Psyche who is the instrument of consciousness, which is an accurate portrayal, as in some myths Eros is the awakener and Aphrodite's epithets sometimes have her bearing a light. Psyche encompasses all three in this myth. Dark Eros takes his revenge on Psyche's sister: psyche knows what it is to cause death. Psyche does not receive refuge, comfort or aid from Hera or Demeter, mothers, as Psyche in her throbbing adventures with love and blood differentiates from them, even though she is with child. Her war with Aphrodite, a mother-in-law from hell, requires complete separation from the archetype of love and its unconscious, swooning, energies in order to see oneself clearly. Who comes to her aid: Pan, god of lusts and desires, that is the natural animal world that exist

hidden in the human heart or back of the mind, where eros lives, and Persephone, another daughter, like Psyche, who gives her a gift of the box of beauty that she should not compromise with the motherly forces of life, with the dark forces of life that would subjugate the child to the family and the male tyrannies.

Both Psyche and Eros must free themselves from not only maternal controls but from familial and societal and cultural mandates in order to freely give themselves and transform in ways that express who they really are. They must spend time in the desert of love and desires that is relentless, whipsawing, unforgiving and requires doing battle with the archetypal energy. The swoon is the symbol that the lover energy of Aphrodite no longer is the predominant power. The dress of black that she wore when she began at the cliff she now has internal experience of as the dark forces play with light. The dark powers of the unconscious reveals and exposes the flaws and faults of the conscious light powers of the mind, reflecting the balancing nature of the psyche, just as Psyche exposed with light dark Eros, the naked unconscious fingers dancing the fleshy mind. She was punished, and now she will be rewarded, by energies beyond her own ego's reach. She returns to the royal realm ready for what these energies have that can carry her into a different adventure of life.

Where are we? Psyche lies unconscious: sleeping the sleep of the dead or the sleep of death which is the companion of life, as we have seen throughout Psyche's adventures. We are in a myth that primarily explores psyche's workings and skills as well as how desire like Pan's pipes are background, doing a spiritual depth dive into the roots of divine food and energies for the ego and archetypal self, what she actually lives through and experiences and the engulfing depression that accompany every turn in her journey. We have been through many archetypal battles and impossible spiritual tasks for soul, whose long history is one who has immortality instead of needing to earn it, giving the ingredients for metamorphosis for not just transformation by outside causes but from internal psychic and spiritual and heart sculptured events. Psyche transformed and Eros, divine love, transforms as well, by psyche for psyche in order to be psyche for the sake giving the world no longer the dark Eros of myth that I have so often emphasized, but a new, self-transformed Eros by desires into love, into empathy and the compassion to act for another, another without hope of return. Archetypal gifts create the condition for the metamorphosis of life. For life itself must be transformed, given the nature of the human heart, mind, and psyche in order to live it for the gift it has given you: years to accomplish and gift what you have lived to discover and enlarge the conditions of all beings and compassion for all beings.

We are in the condition where what we have been unconscious to, just like Psyche, becomes light from dark, appears and is reality, becomes visible from invisibility, human to goddesses, mortal to what psyche takes to be immortality. The sleep of death is the metaphor of being in the land of the dead, assuming we know what death is like, at least from the psychic point of view, being unaware that that is not our condition on earth, that is not our heart and soul, that we are larger than the body. We truly are unconscious to the land of the life, as well, but we must experience an as-if death in life in order to experience life in death, and living, for psyche is death and rebirth, continuous self-transformation if we would realize it and become the soul's

companion to her journey deeper in the life earth has generated.

This unconsciousness that we are viewing, just as Psyche peered into the box of the underworld ointment of beauty that keeps us tethered to the underworld experience of death and rebirth, of being the darkest place we can imagine on earth and reentering the daylight of sun field day on earth, is our opening to our own metamorphosis for we also have been given tasks, along with Psyche, to do and the myth has done them with our psyche, and now we are readying to enter the archetypal self-transformation that soul can be initiated into by the archetypal divine energies, and a culture whose multiple images of divine images without excessive sanctity and sacredness gives resilience and depth and insight into interior energies that propel us, which are really not interior since the psyche is not interior to our being, as the mind is the means by which energy transforms image and just a part of larger psychic energetic and archetypal world.

Psyche is beauty; psyche loves beauty, it loves it beauteous workings and mechanisms. Ego and consciousness are not a part of this beauty work. The Archetypal Self loves beauty so much it can be drawn out by the poet that lives in every psyche and can be incorporated into the ego and consciousness as love of beauty. While there are other means of drawing out the Self for the beginnings of its own self-transformation, our myth explores the secrets of beauty in drawing out the Archetypal Selves that are the Greek pantheon of gods and goddesses that can also be viewed as the totality of the Archetypal Self. Love, however, is not beautiful though it desires beauty.(Paz) This myth is an exploration into how unlovely, undesirable, ugly love can be and the reconciliation of myth and reality, of appearance and reality, of beauty and lust, of love and loss of love, ecstasies and climaxes and agonies of grief through the prism of the larger energies at work in the human psyche.

We are unconscious to beauty's work, to what psyche does. The invisible work on invisible are being explored here, and perhaps for the first time in human history, it is put not inside of a mythic or actual hero or heroine but within the psyche of humans, personified, an inner and an outer spiritual and archetypal power in her own right, both simultaneously and in the right circumstances, synchronistically.

Let's look at the myth of Gilgamesh in order to see what Psyche has been asleep to. Gilgamesh has, with the ferryman of death, gone to the bottom of the sea, where Psyche could not go, and out of the depths plucked the Plant of Immortality. Larsen, in his The Mythic Imagination, spells out the territory or landscape we are in after the mighty, tumultuous and exhausting adventures of Gilgamesh, like those of an exhausted Psyche:

But the great strength and vigilance of even this hero has been exhausted. While he bathes in a stream for renewal, the serpent, who more than once has served as nemesis to heroes, creeps out of the water, attracted by the herb's fragrance, and eats it, thereby learning immortality's secret: death and rebirth, the sloughing of the skin, the art of perpetual self-transformation. It is said that Gilgamesh sat and wept bitterly. Thus humanity is still mortal, whereas the serpent transforms.

Psyche's vigilance has attained immortality's secret; she has experienced the self-transformations of the tasks and now she has experienced death. She has experienced what she always does and images: death and rebirth. What she was unconscious to was the "perpetual" nature of the self-transformation. Instead of a snake, Eros enters the ego's mortal realm, a natural beauty, in love, the product of the self-transformation wrought by the light of the lamp of Psyche. (The source of this image is a dream: I am looking through glass at a marble lobby from an apartment room. I see two snakes on the marble floor. I know not to let them in. This dream shows archetypal energies wanting to enter my room in order to run wild, without my control. I know I'm supposed to not let them in though I can draw from their energies. The dreammakers, or the unconscious or Self, if you will, set up a glass membrane between me and one of the images of Archetypal Self. The glass membrane of the unconscious let me be shown that it is a good thing not to let them in where you are until you are prepared to meet them and realize the energies and be able to direct their energies to purposes of the heart and soul. Perhaps, that is one reason why it is necessary to journey and go on treacherous psychic and spiritual adventures that try your madness with depth diseases whose companions you meet but cannot help while in the throes of depths though you can learn their madnesses and crazinesses to make you new eyes and ears and songs and be blessed to be gifted by them to tell their tales when they cannot; it becomes a privilege. In the above instance, I had a right attitude to the kundalini energy that can fry and unbalance one, a fever that given my now revealed to me frailties and weaknesses I am not sure I have the skills and resources and energies to sculpt and be sculpted by and into and through. Until I have a will and conscious relation with these forces, the glass membrane, dreamt in the sleep of death, gives me differentiation and subtle skills in order to breathe life where life will be breathed back to me in ways that I can engage and come into compassion with. I congratulate and thank the Inner Presence for not letting the snakes in, and I am, however, on the alert, awake to other intrusions and signs of maturity that would allow a nourishing and fulfilling kundalini energy experience, an experience I had over twenty years ago.) The entrance of the dark, downward, wounding, painful, lacerating Eros that we saw cloaked in the dark cloud of unknowing, so useful to divine energies to maneuver in the psyche, would have meant the end of the myth right here and death without rebirth to Psyche. If he truly loves Psyche, he must use that self-transformation to awaken Psyche to the immortal part of the soul where transformations and healings and divinities reside. When we talk of the eternal soul or immortal psyche, we are expressing the experience of our psyche for self-transformation that continues forever at the frontiers of human knowledge and limits. Eros would be the self-transformed god, as least in this myth, and his actions confirm the interpretation.

Eros wakes Psyche; he releases Psyche from the sleep of the archetype. She rises as an archetypal power in her own right. The myth suggests that during the critical phases of life of archetypal self-transformation, like the archetypal descent into the underworld, guides, boundary markers and helpers, developing a relation with one who has been there are required in order not to go unconscious, or not know in what psychic and spiritual landscape you now are in. Psyche goes from being at war with a goddess who wants to overawe by controlling, tyrannical,

oppressive, and uncontainable sacrifices to one of divine marriage. How is that to be smoothly accomplished without the loss of consciousness before the archetypal self-transformation into spiritual divinity without being inflated or identified with gods or archetypally depraved? The relation of Psyche and Eros gives a clue if we see Eros, as Paz has emphasized, as a *daemon* living between gods and mortals), a spiritual guide that knows the boundaries, issues, terrors, landscape, and demons and unleashed desires and escaped chaos that roams the land for one without a map. Eros can be the energy of love that can complete the self-transformation that Psyche cannot complete because it has the communication and uniting abilities as well as the capabilities of uniting light and dark. In other words, psyche's transformation into understanding its spiritual role in the making whole the relation between the individual and divine energies cannot be completed alone. It needs companions, friends, and guides in to even get this deeply and in so thoroughly treacherous territory whose landmarks themselves can threaten disaster for the unprepared soul.

Eros announces to all on Mount Olympus his devotion and loving care for Psyche. After imploring Zeus, Zeus blesses his union with Psyche; the divine marriage is lawful, Zeus declares. Many times in human history has the soul been declared to be immortal. Psyche in this myth is a mortal, and the myth explores how immortality is attained, and becomes divine. Immortality and divinity, eternal life and containing sacred goddess energies, are explored as two differing ideas, or ways of being in the world, or in the psyche's world of soulmaking. The metamorphosis of psyche as a series of layers, one inside of the other, of holes of initiation into deeper lands of psyche contrasts with the usual view that psyche is a series of concentric circles of descent or ascent. The descent of Psyche is the erotically creative act out of which the darkness rises with the ascent of the soul into the divine light. In this myth, divinity on earth, its transformations and psyche's as well as ours, is what is being explored using the useful psychological histories and epithets of the Greek gods and goddesses. How metamorphosis occurs in and through psyche and soulmaking and the events of an individual's quest for the expression of who she is resonates through this myth. Lucien becomes the golden ass, the animal and lives the life of an animal while inside of that tale Psyche becomes a goddess while inside of her tale she births and by her silence creates a divine child who is named Joy, the culmination of the suffering, agonies, griefs, unrelenting self collapses, suicidal attempts, loss of hope that create the layers that support the further internalization of psyche, digging more deeply into an interior, to the center, for inside of these tales, Eros, afflictive and wounding god is wounded by the very being he is, becomes no longer the cruel and dark god but love transforms the god with the attributes of the human as well as divinity.

The journey to the interior may be visualized as concentric circles, a labyrinth, and as seeds inside of food, as seeds for soul, as seeds for creativity, as seeds for spiritual and imaginal guides, and as seeds for archetypal energies and the Archetypal Self. All of these myths of how to view our experience of being in psyche, an evolutionary boundary breaker that will at some point in our lives take us on a descent down into our soul to come face to face with our original being as well as an ascent up to touch you with the grace out of the suffering with the honey of blessing that

sacredness archetypal energies can bring divinity into your breath, intimate and caring and so married you express it as it expresses you. In the Myth of Psyche and Eros, we have been inside of the seeds and been in landscapes of royalty, eroticism and desire and marriage of first love, lustful gods, cold goddesses, archetypal imaginations of initiation into the unknown, underworld, upperworld of the gods and goddesses. In order to survive, the myth says, psyche needs guides and boundary markers. Though psyche can do most of the grief and drudgery work of day to day life and interior spelunking, she needs eros, a life animating energizer as an ally to give her endurance and stamina for the soulmaking. And, as the myth makes clear, eros is light as well as dark, is kind as well as cruel, is life as well as death. Eros does not oppose Thanatos, as Psyche allies with Eros and Thanatos. The war psyche becomes immersed in because of who she is is a war waged on the battlefields of the heart for the soul of the world, which lives and breathes in each one of us as a psychic and spiritual phenomena: how do we live with the archetypal divine sacred energies that live through us and the Archetypal Self manifests, without sacrificing ourselves, without blowing ourselves up, without unthreading into madness and being lost forever there? As slaves to those divinities, it bolsters the tyrannical and, from a human point of view, immoral and unethical sway of sacred fire burning you as the dark self so that psyche is cutoff from energies that could nourish opposition to what has taken over the ego. Or, as allies, a sacred marriage, where the unconscious is part of the commune so that the ritual that is needed to keep the weavings woven bonds the pathed mountains and valleys where you converse and tell your tales to each other and argue and wrestle and join and get angry at each other and love each other and learn the other's life and histories so that you are the other and the other you, transformed by the experience. You are sacred, everything is sacred for you are the fire, without burning, lighting the land to increase the compassion and love and empathy and the expression of the cosmic, divine energies in humane and life giving and beautiful songs and ways and duties. You do not speak for any goddesses or gods as you cannot for that would be hubris and inflation no matter how humble and self-effacing you make yourself out to be; you are independent and the divinities are with their own world; the price of being in human psyche is to be in this infinity box in which you are in and can stand outside of, the myth says. The myth suggests these two possible ways of being in the world to me; of course, a good deal of myself is included in this interpretation and I would not have it any other way as the myth of psyche has evoked from my psyche its experiences of the world and soulmaking and spiritual experiences that either shrink you to a stump or enlarge you to the world tree (I've lived in both root systems).

XIV.

“WE LEAVE THE UNDERWORLD”

Psyche has a divine awakening, she is awake to the fact that she is a divine being when she began in the most animalistic of sexual experiences and murder and revenge and war that led her in her struggles with the love goddesses into what are depth experiences in the form of initiations into the human tribe: we are all of these beings and things in our souls and we live with them and if we are lucky we learn they are teaching experiences out of which to learn how not to act and be in the world, how to discern and sort and use cunning and skills of the brain in order to tell true love from false love, self slaughter from murder, be not again an instrument of revenge and never again in the love affections, and see war as animal, human, and goddess. From the marriage bed to divine marriage gives Psyche the gamut of passions and experiences. Divine awakening means that she stands on sacred ground, the world and everything on and in the earth are sacred, the incarnation of spiritual beingness. She takes her place among the pantheon of gods and goddesses of Mount Olympus and the underworld. Now the real work begins, using Zen as a guide; however, the myth ends here: meditation and spiritually practicing enlightenment breaks you through in *satori* to your original being, with the experience of *nirvana*. Nothing divine, nothing sacred; you are not enlightened though you believe you are. You must return to earth, daily life and practice *samsara*, until you can spontaneously express your and everything's impermanence and the lack of substance behind you and your psyche of the No-Self. I use the example from Zen because the myth is about this world, even the world of the Mount Olympus is about immortality and divine love's expression in this world, as the fissures of upperworld could be better seen as a imaginal, originally shamanic journey, that became eventually inhabited by sky goddesses and gods instead of earth gods and goddesses. Part of soul's journey is to suture these worlds together so their connecting networks can inform the ego of its real life and tasks. We are in the deep structures of the psyche.

Earth is a womb for the spiritual journey to be born again, awakened to who you are, before you enter the tomb of the earth, or when you are in psyche you travel to the land of the dead in order to find from the dark energies of earth what you cannot find from the light energies of the world.

Yet, this does not, as the myth does not, split light and dark, good from evil; this is not a Manichean world, it is a metamorphosed world that intertwines these humanly defined powers contending within and without the individual and society as it layers the depths of psyche into soul as if they were layers of skin moving ever deeper, like the chrysalis of the butterfly's perpetual being inside of the chrysalis of the butterfly until we are in the tao, where Chuang-tsu dreamt that he could not tell whether he was a human being being a butterfly or a butterfly being a human being. We have reached the imaginal heart of the myth because all of the foundations that the young Psyche was inculcated into by her family and society were overthrown or destroyed, which must occur if she is to mature and take in the lessons that experience builds foundations

from anew. Just as there has to be at a certain point a reconciliation of those two contending forces in the psyche, as the upperworld plays out, not as an unrealistic culmination to the myth, as some have contended, but rather to be psychologically astute to what occurs in psyche when the forces we have witnessed are unleashed and allowed to play out to the mythological touchstone of awakening to a new life and new birth, rebirth after death. Throughout the myth, Psyche was learning how to be the butterfly; awakened Psyche is now the butterfly being layered of divinity over her mortality, by the powers of her own being(miracle) she transformed herself layer upon layer as she hung on a thread in the hurricane until she from the inside out received the energies of eros to awaken as a butterfly. Psyche's dream is now the butterfly being the human, whose wings of immortality can metamorphose the creature she has transformed into being a body of the sun and moon, and the old dream of shamanic humankind is fulfilled, humans have grown wings and are able to fly without being an Icarus.

Mythologically, closure of the myth requires reconciliation of the unfettered passions, desires, loves, wars, murders, revenges, sufferings, dead so that they are not contagious to the psyche being imagined through the myth. Being in lust and ending in divine love, being in the animal in Psyche and Eros and ending in the godly part of the soul, being an outcast to accepted society to being accepted despite its destructive and fearful conscious powers, being passion aroused to love's compassion awakened and calming, erotic sexual darkness gives vent to the imagination to the imagination giving vent to the underworld's secret beauty in the realm of the gods, being in cruelties of the archetypal realm to being in the absorbing and blessing qualities of archetypal waters, raising the container of water from the primordial springs of life to being in the container yourself, sparks of nature to the glow of numinosity: these mythological activated and attracting and potentially destructive and contaminating forces that can take over a naive soul who does not know trauma and invasions as real possibilities need to be cordoned and contained within the mythological boundaries of the story so that the imaginal lives of those whose tales were told can be safely lived and imagined and told around the fire that burns inside every soul without acting out or enacting the evil and good, without consciously awakened and aware focus and attention to moral and ethical concerns.

Divine marriage comes with a long mythological history as well as a long alchemical one and future. These unions and mergers of light and dark, feminine and masculine, sun and moon produce a divine child, Joy. Out of the suffering, the myth shows that the animation of soul(Greek word: psychosis for "soul animation") journey toward individuation and wholeness infused by Eros. Soul is not without issue, it is not the monster; soul became filled with joy in its journey of suffering and grief and loss creating a new world filled with new beauty out of immortal parts of it that transforms itself and finds such beauty in the creativity. Eros is not the monster as he breathes new life into an unconscious Psyche, made unconscious by the wars of desire, and their Joy is their transformed relationship as Psyche never denied Eros but embraced her passions. The monstrosity was the marriage of Hades and Persephone in which she was swallowed for beauty's ointment, hid the unseen evil that can ravage an individual and a land. Consciousness can be put to sleep by the uncontrolled lust and eros and compulsive nature of the passions. These mysteries

are explored by the Jungian psychoanalyst Nathan Schwartz-Salant in The Mystery of Human Relationship. In the myth, the fires of passions and desires as well as the varieties of love are exposed and looked at; they are not denied by the myth, rather they are taken as one more experience in the pantheon of life to be lived to its fullest and most imaginatively that you take whole, dark and light, good and evil, learning as you go in life using as a compass the guides that if related in an companionable way are insightful and good guides. Know your guides! And the inside of every image is a seed, in which the unconscious, and Self, can be planted, harvested, cooked, and eaten as we are in the process of having the same planting, harvesting, cooking, and eating being done to our idealistic selves until the field lies fallow.

The Jungian analyst, Schwartz-Salant, investigates the mad parts of sane people through the “spirit of alchemy” that “respects both the destructive and transformative powers of madness” and the passions. He quotes Andre Green’s work, On Private Madness:

Madness, which is a component of the human being, is linked to the vicissitudes of primordial Eros, which are in constant conflict with the destructive instincts. When Eros prevails, it is because the passions which inhabit it become bound, and psychosis is averted. But when the destructive instincts triumph over Eros, the unbinding process is stronger than binding, and psychosis wins through...

Looking at this interpretation from the point of view of the myth and with the eyes of the unconscious that we hopefully have acquired in the process of being initiated to the archetypal realms of the self and to the experience of a creation myth, the Archetype of Psyche, eros is creative and destructive, binding and disintegrating, light and dark, bound and unbound passion: it is its own “destructive instincts”, as the ancients so powerfully attest to. (Swartz-Salant, *ibid*, p. 36.) James Hillman has emphasized the dissolving, collapsing nature of eros; that is, the psychopathology of our psyche that we see from the ego’s point of view is there because the soul’s animation and life and encounters with the Self draw out primordial eros. From eros’ point of view, it is there because it is needed by soul; it is called, it answers the call, it gives what it enacts to please the asker and it is able to be in activity without being observed and seen. It gives what it is until imaged, languaged, dialogued with in order to make light what was dark, make conscious what was unconscious. Bound or unbound Eros does not know; bound and unbound Eros does know: Eros enacts what it is unless exposed to other energies; the soulmaking of Psyche gives internal structure and boundaries but only when psyche knows how to make boundaries and draw maps and listen to guides, so soft is the wind of the movement of tidal waves.

There are three awakenings in the myth and they point to reciprocity. The light of consciousness of Psyche pulls Eros like a moth to light and he reacts against the initial exposure but the alchemical transformation has been initiated by soul’s exploratory lamp along with the knife of discrimination and reasoning.

Eros awakens Psyche from sleep of archetypal beauty swallowing her lamp in darkness, drugging her into unconsciousness. Her transformation into becoming divine has been completed

and she has awakened to the metamorphosis of the birth of perpetual self-transformation with the coming of her divine child. Thirdly, the sleep of daylight has been exposed as that with which one cannot see light for the light, see the conscious operating in the light of consciousness as it leads to sun blindness and one cannot see dark for the dark, see the unconscious operating the dark of the unconsciousness. Like the initiatory tasks into the human tribe's divine aspects, reciprocity is key to understanding the circulation of the waters, the different experiences of the three waters; the circulation of death and rebirth; animal to human to god; union to death to reunion in an alchemical flow. Consciousness must alert the unconscious to its needs to transform and be aware of one's nature of the limited human being to handle unlimited energy and numinosity as well as the archetypal energies of the unconscious to alarm the consciousness to its daylight permanence and stability and need for individuation and spiritual tasks. Both of them must learn to live in communal exchanges that are a true two way intercom through the thin membrane. The Self must be made aware that its smallest things are important to ego and its resonating support and interaction can bring it out in expression into the daylight world, not just being at war manifesting dark erotic and eruptive and archetypal energies. The Ego must be aware that it is, as Jung said, not the ruler in its own home, as it is not even its own home, but it must learn to make it its home by learning flexibility, resilience, and dialogue. Spiritual practice involves clearing the decks of ego in order to send the signals you want to send to the Inner Self or the unconscious, as the ego will be sent dreams, messengers, daemons, spiritual guides, demons, and furies, and consuming passions based on what compensation or opposition to what it sees in the two way mirror screen that separates them, as if it were a membrane, and allows mutual mirroring and doubling in a myth being played in the theater inside of you. Divinity is the metaphor for the metamorphosis experience that brings higher union between Psyche and Eros, reconciling what cannot be merged or gotten rid of or denied or made unconscious about or blinded to consciousness so each is two in one making three.

The Myth of Psyche and Eros has its background in the myth of Isis in which the author was initiated. The myth, thus, does not partake of the common themes of Christianity, Gnosticism, and, according to Swartz-Salant, patriarchal religions in general that "directed towards a spirit in the upper realm as known in ascent mysticism." The myth, like the spirit of alchemy and its transformations, are usually opposed by these religious thought systems because they worked for "reentering the life and realm of the chthonic spirit which it experiences as arising from below." Chthonic spirit refers to the underworld, instead of the Greek gods of Mt. Olympus, and usually refer to archaic, implying regressive tendencies of the worship of the Great Mother, as if backwards in time means regressive, for the original meaning of religion is to look back. Ancient archaic spirits might be more levitating for the ego than progressive tools of regressive prevention.

Swartz-Salant continues in the same vein:

Throughout the centuries, the impulse in patriarchal Western cultural has been to ascend and transcend, whereas the deficiency in the culture involves a lack from

below--from underneath--from realms considered more base, primitive, and unformed. In these chthonic realms, a hitherto unknown, unintegrated, and unformed aspect of humanity lies waiting for a consciousness that is its equal.

The myth presents a Psyche who is that equal, who has the capacity and courage and audacity to defy virtually every established taboo and societal norm and conscious tool of control over psychic and spiritual young in order to mature, be metamorphosed into becoming divine. What she is not at the beginning of the myth in order to become who she really is. She defies fate, will not be tamed into a destiny; Psyche is a new archetype of individuation and awakening not out of hubris but out of loss of love and the search for her own love not the love demanded of her by a divinity in love with her own beauty. Jung knew this Psyche better than anyone. Here is Swartz-Salant, once more:

Jung's understanding of the unconscious as a teleological entity, perpetually seeking to balance and harmonize the unfolding of incarnated life, is truly moving. And if one accepts Jung's proposition that alchemy holds the solution through compensation to the patriarchal suppression of the feminine and the denial of the chthonic masculine..

(IBID, P. 148)

From another angle, Marion Woodman in The Maiden King: The Reunion of Masculine and Feminine brings us up to date on how “love” has tried from time immemorial to murder the unconscious, in the form of its images, so humungous and all-potent is its branching arms of psyche, and to blame the suicide on the excess of desire, lust, chaos of unbounded energy, the dragon. The cry is to be free of the beast when it is the beast that is freeing when approached and lived aright and in the communal ritual structure of the psyche. She writes of what psyche faces today; a similar “petrification” perfumes the air of our myth as well:

The old petrifying mother is like a great lizard lounging in the depths of the unconscious. She wants nothing to change. If the feisty ego attempts to accomplish anything, one flash of her tongue disposes of the childish rebel. Her consort, the rigid authoritarian father, passes the laws that maintain her inertia. Together they rule us with an iron fist in a velvet glove. Mother becomes Mother Church, Mother Welfare State, Mother University, the beloved Alma Mater, defended by Father, who becomes Father Hierarchy, Father Law, Father Status Quo.. The effort of centuries to kill the dragon has ended in the worship of mother in concrete materialism. The sons and daughters of patriarchy are, in fact, motherbound.

Transcendence is not incarnation and obscures the nature of Psyche's divinity. It is from

within the divine, as her child in darkness feeds to be born inside of her, as if she were a new spiritual world of unknown potential, that grows in the myth, as a subtle or spiritual body, that no one in the middleworld speaks out from or recognizes the images. Yet we are pregnant to it every minute of every day, that one cannot or will not acknowledge. It thrives and exists in everyday life in everything you do though it is not the accepted divinities of the society or culture that psyche inhabits. Spiritual inspiration aspires out of the holes in the psychic world to give feet and height to the grandiosity and electricity coursing through our being and not from the airy ungrounded slicing of earth from sky. Overcoming does not show divinity is lived in; it is lived in by struggling, wrestling, and relating.

Let's look back to the verse at the very beginning of the myth that foretold of the "winged serpent" or "dragon-bred" mate to Psyche that hints at the background pipe songs, as well as the invisible chorus that sang in the banquet halls of the castle of Eros, that moves our passions through the myth. The theme of the winged and serpent runs throughout the myth, especially given that we are led on the surface to see Eros as descended from the dragon who lives in the dark enshrouded lair, the "Invisible Lover." For the myth is a hymn to themes of invisibilities, of how things manifest out of the unconscious, how the Archetypal Self, the dragon, becomes constellated and relates in the youthful psyche, as Eros, and how the dragons guard the "River of Wailing" in the Stygian depths drawn out by beauty, falling in love with beauty, and seeing beauty even in death (this is the reality where the painter opens his "oh", realizing he is being painted or the heart palpitations of the poem being written by the vision "shaking" the heart into the poet's pen, "gasping for air, in love with every felt mound of earth").

As Psyche warred with the archetype of love, Aphrodite, the loss of energy into the unconscious meant there was difficulty keeping engaged in the centralizing function of meaning, thus the depressions and suicides. At this stage, Eros, who gives Psyche to drink of nectar of the gods, provides the body in which to transform the lives of the Self into the passions of the Self displayed into the world, beauty, as an ally instead of a combatant with Psyche. (See Grant, Myths of the Greeks and Romans, pp. 357-369). The Self that emerges out of the myth adds to itself the union of soul and eternity of life, called love, as the released energy of the end of the war over love and beauty, indicated by the presence of Hermes, father of Eros, who brings Psyche to Mt. Olympus, as Psyche become immortal by drinking again the nectar of the gods and thus keeping Eros close to home. A new view of the Self and its relationships, image, guides, and landscapes comes into view and the process of individuation, one with grandiosity and an ego that can contain the energies that is Psyche without being the energies.

In this myth, Psyche marries the dragon she was in lust with (Pan's appearance). Her sisters go to their deaths desiring the dragon. This myth does not contain the unleashed ego adventures to kill the dragon. In the form of a fairy tale that is also a myth about lust, desire, love, and beauty, Psyche experiences all of these joyous and traumatic deep "wounds to the soul" that the society makes into sacred petrifications, into ferocious demons of rigidity, institutionalizing and divinizing life's mistakes portrayed by stories so that we are all as children put onto the procrustean bed and inculcated into prearranged ways of being. (The source of this sentence's idea

derives from a D.H. Lawrence poem, quoted by Robert Bly in *The Maiden King*, p. 26) We have one reason why the author called his novel, *Metamorphosis*, as part of a satiric comedy of society. In the soul of Psyche, the arrows that draw blood from her, lacerate the soul as well yet soul responds and relates to her: you enter my wounds, I'll enter yours, and this agony keeps the beauty loving Self's attention to giving psyche the garden needed to be in life. (See Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, on the variations on the themes of unseen lover, natural dialogues between animals and humans, and societal taboos regarding women and warnings against curiosity and to "keep their mouths shut", an image reinforced by the guide to Psyche telling her to go with two coins in her mouth into the underworld: pointing to importance of smell (as Heraclitus emphasized of this world) and silence, so use all of your senses concentrated not as a poet but as a visionary, as a seer of the unseen, discovering the dark by means of the dark.) (Grant, *Ibid*, pp. 362-366) Eros is, in this myth, dragon, *daemon*, and shamanic transformed young, old god: being in myth the serpent shedding its skin, from the inside out, from inside the silence and the invisibles, in a self-transforming process, communicating and interrelating humans and divinities, much like Hermes, until like the magic inherent in fairy tales, the metamorphosis of the initiation into divinity, like the shaman with the head of a bird, that relates to Isis and Osiris, awakens Psyche fully to her true self, drinking the waters of immortality, the process of which she has just experienced and lived through and makes it available to the imagination of everyone. Psyche searing knife of light wounds Eros, wounds Psyche, and the beginning reciprocity cycle of desire and love begin its revolutions as soul becomes bound to earth and into the scarring effect of wounds, each helping to stitch the others, with the added balm of healing divinities to calm and daily dry the festering infections and pus away into second skin.

Once more, Bly speaks to the dragon, the serpent of transformation that is so fearsome, ferocious, demonized, and hellized in western literature, as the dark self unleashed and untamed and devouring, if not killed, this "winged serpent", this original divinity whose energies we kill when young in accordance with the western spiritual practice, traumatizing our original divine energizing, refusing to transform ourselves, so painful is it, to transform the dragon, as the poet Rilke intuited, and as the Chinese, fly the dragon on the wings of creativity that lives in the deep dark core of human beings to which we bring the eros of life into the songs of poetry, speaking our original being, a new born baby as ugly and bloody as a dragon, out of which the jewels we seek we are and we have forgotten. Beauty is the eye that can discern true evil and how to befriend the soul and learn to be befriended by it and to awake to the Self and awake the Self to us in a reciprocal boat. Bly opens "St. George, The Dragon, and the Virgin": "The spiny Dragon/Who lives in the rat-/Filled caves is losing." He deepens into the child in us:

...Each of us

Has been this marsh

Dragon on his back.

He is Joseph, Grandel,

*What we have forgotten,
The great spirit
The alchemists knew of,
Without whom is nothing.*

Growing up, blood red born from this slaughter filled battlefield, coming full circle, with the kingly virtue learned at divinities' knees, Bly blesses:

*I wrote this to bless
The swamp monster
And the marsh hag
Who bore him.*

Psyche could bless Eros and his mother, Aphrodite, for they were the instrument of her transformations and enlivenings. She would be in the royal energies and leave behind being the plaything of the archetypal energies, being one herself whose transformed dragon and world soul, *anima mundi*, Aphrodite never measured up to, gives Psyche a newly forged divinity grown out of the earth and earth beings who have a core of being within psyche and without psyche, out of which she can ask the question and measure whether what she does for the human beings justifies their existence in the cosmos. Though she would bless them and be born anew out of the experience, she would not voluntarily begin on this journey on her own nor would she want to repeat it. Nevertheless, what she went through defines Psyche; Psyche must learn to take those powers upon herself: learn the lesson of blessing. The hardest part for Psyche would be to bless the rabid and vengeful and inflicting and hateful goddess of love run amok and wild with untrammelled powers and to live with the blessing and leave it with Aphrodite to let her do with it what she will and to take the blessing with her and never be what she blessed but the honey, the beauty, that transfigures evil, if that evil can be transfigured, an insight that all of the darkness that psyche can gather into a single concentrated laser focus beading the beaming light of remorseless, unrelenting, ever working and analyzing and sorting consciousness, of wheat from the chaff, and defining evil and exposing it to the light of day and opposing it. Even if we expose it and find it in our heart, our gods or goddesses, consciousness or unconsciousness, soul, or Self. And when you tell yourself that that would never be true, reality is that that truth is a lie and what lives you you haven't seen through.

More of Bly the poet and mythologist will help guide us through the thickets of myths' meanderings that a poet, like a bird seeking a worm, catches sight of out of the corner of his eye, and glues his imagination to his food in the rhythms of song. In The Maiden King, Bly quotes Sean Kane in his work, "Wisdom of the Mythtellers", to define how myth works:

The definition of myth I follow is pre-agricultural. Myth means a dialogue between

human beings and spirit-beings of the Earth, engaged in by the mythtellers of hunter-gatherer societies for the better part of perhaps 100,000 years, and still going on in some places.... That language is told in stories typically have a top and a bottom level. The top level gives the human side of the picture; the bottom level (often with some irony) gives the Earth's view, and the whole myth, usually without meaning to, constitutes a dialogue. Exchange across this boundary between worlds is the central feature and the whole point of the myth.

The Myth of Psyche and Eros is about this boundary country between worlds and the dialogues and exchanges between it and other areas. It presents how this Earth and its myth, out of this Osiris-Isis-Demeter-Persephone mythology, informs the Psyche that has no libido, no Eros, no supposedly life giving forces when in fact it tells the humans who have power, to paraphrase Lawrence, that you've sanctified life's mistake, while the human view is that this unrelenting wounding and agonies is beyond the capacity of psyche. These batterings for curiosity's sake seem out of portion to the violation, just as the ending of a fairy tale is a happy one; Buddhists would call it the nature of the mind that causes the suffering and that it is an observant treatment of distorting psyche and the denial we live with when we live spiritually asleep. Soul responds for we are in the boundary area where soul, as personification of the deeper aspects of Psyche, and Self give its love and healing as it can to solve the great depression that threatens to kill the archetypally energized Psyche. Other resources of energies exist, the myth presents, and can salvage soul and have overlooked enormous imaginative and spiritual networks and powers. Bly quotes William Blake, the English revolutionary visionary poet, who thought mythologically, on Ezekiel's eating of dung and laying for very extensive times on his sides: the desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite. (Ibid, p.71)

Apuleius attempts the same startling awakening to an unknown presence who incarnates spiritual food for the repulsed and curious and unfathomed meditation on the Silence, and of a so frightfully awakened explorer. Psyche enters the underworld with two coins in her mouth, the society's food, which she exchanges for passage, leaving behind in exchange her former identity for when she opens the infinity box that is the beauty box she perceives the infinity of who she is which happens when psyche looks at herself, and tends to mirror herself in what she is looking at, so that light conceals light, psyche becomes unconscious of her own workings, unable to be without projections out the archetypal energies, caught in the mirror like glue of the light. So, the imaginal darkness that is Eros, like yin-yang, sutures the wounds that separated the pair, making a higher union, by ungluing the stuck consciousness in the unconsciousness, freeing Psyche from the self-made prison that did not have the archetypal energy to free herself until she opened the beauty box. She never was alone; she just did not realize it--the treasure was too much for her but she attained it and tutored though she was for the second crucial time curiosity, as it was then called, got the better of her. Today, we would call this her journey into soul's and Self's territory for individuation, the foliation of her vision quest.

Bly continues his insights into myth that can reflect light into our explorations.

Myths say that we are not the only beings in the universe with intentions and hurt feelings. If, as Pythagoras said, 'Everything is intelligent,' that means we have to walk with care. If we can't remain awake when the Divine comes, then we have already opened negotiations with the Goddess on the mythic plane, but disastrously. Probably that is exactly the reckless way each of us opened negotiations with the mythical plane when we were teenagers. We'll have to pay for it sooner or later.

(IBID, P. 72)

Apuleius' Psyche is young and in the initial throes of rejection of the cultural archetypal images and energies by way of war with the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite, and unconsciously marries her son, and only the self-transformation of Eros, the Inner Self, that after difficulties shows that it, with its allies, are a more powerful force than the love Aphrodite represents. But only after the ambushes in an arroyo in the middle of the cloudbursts of floodwaters. What does it tell us? That Psyche's introduction to true divinity comes from within after much spiritual and agonistic struggles and losses of love and the need to grow sources of nourishment and food, and the myth ends on the highlight of why it was told. But Psyche will have other encounters, wars, dialogues, and sacrifices, and loves and traumas and staggering losses before the divine ecstasies of soul and the Self are truly king and queen, alchemical sun and moon in union.

Myths are psyche's food, whose ingredients the soul devours for nourishment, seeking ever more of the human infinity to understand what it is doing where it is at and what it wants to do.

From the moment of revelation, we are deep within the wound of the soul as the transfer of archetypal symbol of Eros as one who reveals, as light bringer, bringer of light out of the darkness and wind united on the first night, out of the Egg with wings giving the union of forms, and of Psyche, wounding both herself and Eros, the Shining One in the cave who no one is to look upon, becomes the goddesses who is the light bringer out of the darkness, who is the co participant in bringing out of the depth of night, love and its dark quivers that shake the human tree. Her adventures show her in the darkness of Eros learning his epithets through experiencing them. (See J. Marvin Spiegelman, Jungian Psychology and the Passions of the Soul, pp. 129-132) The second moment of revelation occurs not in the conscious psyche as the first one did; it occurs in her sleeping death of beauty in the unconscious. She contains the secret of the divine child within her, and the beauty box she opened revealed what beauty stood for: divinities in the unconscious in the form the Archetypal Self, as well as the presence of the absent Eros. Eros awoke her with the sweet nectar of the grandiose grandeured self, as well as a Self as large as the world, as large as the world soul, that was represented by Aphrodite. Psyche opened herself, and only in her unconscious, in the Archetypal Self, could the goddess energies, the divine energies fully like love arrows shot by an Archetypal Eros, reveal her divinity to her so that the numinosity of her cosmic being would not burn her up and be turned to ash but shine like a fire bright into the light bringers

of the world that they may have light and be seen by what they see.

Death is the Great Awakener. The ointment opens Psyche to immortality, as it comes from the unconscious and it infuses her. She is open to messages from the unconscious as to eternity of life. At the same time, in the unconscious, death's dread, embedded in the underworld experience, gives the Inner Self a smell that it never had before, the smell of mortality or the foreverness of death, of rotting flesh and figures of unrelieved, drowning souls. The intertwining staffs of mortality and immortality, like the directed energies of the snakes on the staff of the swift fledged and winged messenger of the gods, Hermes, brings out of the earth underworld, death soul, energized into life's beauty flowing in eros in the middleworld, and into the divine beauty of the union of sun and moon, of mortality and immortality, life and death. Von Franz states in her book, Alchemy:

When the Greeks fell in love they were modest enough not to say, 'I have fallen in love,' but expressed it more accurately by saying: 'The god of love shot an arrow at me.' And that is how it really happens--one suddenly has a painful sting which one has not made oneself, one finds oneself being shot at. So one can therefore speak of the archetype of the god of love. If you go into the history of Eros you will find that he is a variation of Hermes; the Eros of antiquity is similar to Hermes Kyllenios. In olden times when he was a fertility god of Boetia he was represented exactly like the priapic Hermes statues. You can therefore say that the Greeks meant a variation of the god Hermes. It is a symbol of the Self, or of the totality, which makes the projection.

I think that is correct. If I find myself in a projection situation, that is an arrangement by the Self.

Only when you can see from the goddesses' point of view can you begin to take in, no matter how slowly the years of silent conversations and secret writings, to paraphrase the poet, David Whyte, the world and views and experiences and images of the Divine Self, as you teach each other and learn the reciprocal world that is psyche. It is not a view from a mountain that abstracts love by cutting it up into its foes; it is an intimate discourse in the most familiar and sculpting of vision and eros that binds and builds a way through the membrane and keeps the separate identities. Marion Woodman expresses the opening experience, which is what Apuleius is showing us in the myth:

In dreams of descent, the setting may be a jungle, through which the dreamer has to cut his way, leaf by huge leaf, with no idea where he is going. He passes black hole

after black hole. Eventually, his clothes torn, his body bleeding and exhausted, he arrives at a river. He rejoices, but then he sees a jungle on the other side. He knows he can go no farther. Then he notices a path just like his own through the forest on the other side. Someone who knows far more than he. Someone who greatly loves him is working very hard on the other side. All he has to do is build the connecting bridge.

After many descents and archetypal descents, the years of bridge building complete, you realize that you must go to the “other side”, you must risk everything and all that you are and trust what you’ve built through and into, go either with guides or lost, willing to leave yourself behind, and live on the other side and begin to be in “eros”, in love, in song, in joy, trauma, in argument, in dialogue with what you find there. You may die; you may never return, stay within so beautiful the concourse and intercourse of love and sirens songs so swelling the call. You have found the first earth that had always lived in you and the soul had been entreating you to come and build a nesting home. A bird sings on a branch is you before the experience; after, you are the song and gives the rhythms its rhythms. What began as an impersonal expression of the unconscious, i.e. the dragon or serpents, energizes and takes its sustenance outside of you and becomes the inner companion that can be called daemon, genius, gods and goddesses, and divine.(See Von Franz, Alchemy, at p. 243. She writes of the impersonal nature of dragons as the spirit of the unconscious and its “demand to be pictures in order to assimilate the experience.”)

The inner companion, guardian spirits, daemons, genii, and souls, Von Franz traces from Apuleius’ initiation into Egyptian mysteries of the daemons, not gods, of Osiris and Isis, son-husband, like Eros and Aphrodite, son-lover, into the Hermetic philosophy of late antiquity and into alchemy. “In Egypt,” Von Franz writes, “the immortal nucleus of the soul was also called the Ba-soul.” This soul, one of many psyches for the Greeks as well as others, had the image of “a bird with a human head.” Shamanic traces of loss of soul in Psyche’s loss of hope, giving up life, suicide attempts, crippling her initiative, feeling of emptiness, as Von Franz would phrase it, ending in the midst of pointless living in loss of love of life.(Cousineau, Soul, P. 87, quoting Von Franz.) The inner personality of the human becomes immortal through Osiris after death, Von Franz says, is the equivalent to the “stone” of alchemy of the resurrected body. Thoth-Hermes-Mercurius moves with the earth goddess in the pagan world, leaving traces in the mystics and psychic world of which Jung drew together the threads.

For purposes of our tracing out the interior of our myth, Von Franz, in Alchemy, brings into sharp focus the volumes that are scattered around the events of the fairy tale with a happy ending. She extensively quotes Apuleius description of Socrates’ daemon as a

‘private patron and individual guide, an observer of what takes place in the inner person, guardian of one’s welfare, he who knows one most intimately, one’s most alert and constant observer, individual judge, irrefutable and inescapable witness, who frowns on evil and exalts what is good. ...the one who can see to the bottom of

uncertain situations and give warning in desperate situations, can protect us in dangerous situations, and can come to our rescue when we are in need.' He can intervene 'now through a dream and now through a sign (synchronistic event), or even step in by appearing personally in order to fend off evil, to reinforce the good, to lift up the soul in defeat, to steady our inconstancy, to lighten our darkness, to direct what is favorable toward us and to compensate what is evil.' ...I know of scarcely any account from antiquity that gives a better description of the experiences of the Self than this short summary of Apuleius.

As in the case of the other daimons, this daimon, which embodies the individual's larger, more comprehensive personality, was in late antiquity also like a mountain the bulk of which lay in the trans- personal realm of the psyche, extending only a small tip into the human being's personal sphere.

Apuleius, according to the von Franz, shows how Socrates embodies “the immortal ethical guardian and inner friend” and a second genii “sensual desire and covetousness and is evaluated negatively.”(Ibid, p. 148) Both Psyche and Eros show signs of both influences and the confluence of the ants, reeds, eagle, and tower.

Integrating into the daimon quality is the earth goddess that Von Franz contrasts with the “cosmic Hermes” with “many more dark, even quite sinister, unfathomable aspects are emphasized along with the light aspects.” She is talking as if we were with Psyche inside of our tale of a myth.

“...this feminine goddess All-Nature also possesses cunning, cruelty, wickedness, unfathomable depths of passion and uncanny gloom of death, the smell of corpses and putrefaction in equal measure with the potentiality of new life and rebirth. In practical reality every woman experiences the dark side of this power in herself when her erotic jealousy is aroused, when her children want to leave her, when she as a widow, abandoned, has to fight her own way alone through life. Then the tigress in her surfaces, the whimpering bitch, the intrigue-spinning goddess of fate, and no woman can become conscious of her large, greater self without having lived these aspects of the goddess within herself. Soul takes these aspects for food and nourishment.

Psyche kills prominent shadow figures, her two sisters, in her life but that does not do the necessary integration work. Humility before the power of the shadow she must learn. Her own animus she encounters in Eros in the light in the bedroom and though a husk of his former epithets and fighting dominance by his mother he still overwhelms Psyche. Von Franz states that in contrast to these two encounters that when “personification of the Self begin to appear, the ego is then confronted with the necessity of sacrificing itself; *it can never integrate the Self* but can only

bow before it and try to relate to it in the right way.” Remaining fully conscious, Psyche’s failures of the ego to act and create brings signs of the Self into her ken and workings of her creative soul to complete the divine tasks, as low and mundane though they appear, which is the form in which the spiritual and the Self many times appear. Her attempts at suicide bring her “encounter with the Self...a deep and far-reaching change in the conscious attitude.” Von Franz explains that

It is not for nothing that the above-described inner daimon is called, among other names, the ‘Angel of Metanoia’:” he brings with him a withdrawal from the play of Maya, of the world’s illusion, an absolute retreat from the world. ...Insight into the nature, the essence, of the Self is purchased only at a price of great suffering that wipes out the worldly prejudices and preoccupations of the ego, thereby forcing it into a change of attitude. Every deep disappointment or disillusionment is, in this sense, a step forward along the way of individuation, if it is accepted with insight and not with resignation or bitterness.

Psyche’s has lived and survived in the boundary lands with a great amount of total rejection, in taboo territory, of liminal experiences, of loss of soul and encounters with the creatures of the boundary world in which soul gives breath to when crisis is the spiritual and soulful crisis of one’s life as the desires she is aflame with burns the light of love in her eyes. Psyche’s swoon symbolizes the surrender of her ego to the Self, her being waked by the newly aroused Eros gives her divinity the symbol of a new life, a change of attitude, at the sight of beauty of the inner divinity that lives inside the soul of which the soul is a mirror and a window as well as a maker of each, who touches you to wake you to dream awake the mirror and the window and the making of them. Her retreat from the illusions of the world become represented by her swallowing, as she could not with coins in her mouth except with difficulty in the underworld, taking in the divine nourishment and food that gives eternal life from where she can look from a less burning way the ways of desire, lust, love, life, and death so that the reflection that she has been shown how to do and experienced can allow her to grow, throw away the resignation with and bitterness toward the goddess of love and the cultural taboos and arrows vicious with malice against her. The coins in her mouth, like the dog she feeds, is her pure animality, vicious and teeth baring, the food of the ever talking politician or general on the political battlefields, that she must give away and exchange it for useful silence.

Now, she has accomplished a major step on her individuation. Psyche now knows what it is to be like psyche, like soul, how make soul, do soul work; she knows the power of eros and how to create and solve issues without eros. Her losses in love, grief, agony, suffering, beatings have ingrained in her the need to get distance from consuming desires as well as spiritual strivings. She now has the grandiosity and stamina to withstand the next adventure being a psyche who has enough power to have archetypal energy magnetize around it and out of it and through it and live it and image it without being fried into suicide.

Soul and image go hand in hand although their relation have differing consequences. In the

middleworld where we live our everyday lives, soul gives image after image to the imagination to tell the story it wants to have enact into you. Soul in dreams gives image from soul's point of view. So many images we are deaf, dumb, and blind to they become clouds, one minute here, next minute gone. We do not bend close to earth and listen to soul's whispers to us so that we can begin to see life from the angle of soul. Only with much suffering do we make the return journey of soul. In the underworld, soul had no image; invisible looked to find invisibles. There appears to be places in the psyche where images or language cannot get to, where soul's loves and attention getting advice to wake us up to death and our eternal calling comes in forms other than image, and silence is one form, if the poets are any guides. This area is the territory the shaman went to in order to bring back parts of the soul that was lost due to trauma, tragedy, childhood, and other psyche frights. In the upperworld, soul and image merge. Their union is the reconciliation of opposites and marriage in the divine or sacred world where the energies that could not be integrated or could not be reconciled have suture, the healing blessing of the balm of the transformed soul who looks inward and the arrow piercing the heart is pulled ever so slowly, inch by inch, through ritual and remorse and giving up revenge, as the very contradictions that were killing you slide out of you until you realize that the very thing you lost you never had and what has found you blessed with gifts. You've learned that Jung wrote from his experience and you've relived a part of it. You are reborn into a world full of gifts over which you have no discernible control or powers but they influence all that you do and everything that you become.

Psyche kept the secret of her child, and thus the child was divine; so, perhaps, the keeping the mysteries of Eleusis, where Isis/Persephone and Osiris/Pluto are made identical, means that the ritual that inducted you, as Apuleius was initiated, was one of whose end was immortality, one of whose requirements for immortality was that one kept the secret of the mysteries. The pain of death threatened by revelation told of the truth that speaking of the mysteries, end the mysteries for you, resulting in death and not immortality as your fate. The secret is inside of Psyche, what she grows, what she creates, how she struggles with her foes. Just as in the beauty box is the secret of the divine beauty given Psyche by Persephone. She carries it with the same hand with which she drew blood from Eros and drew the blood from herself, drawing the hot passions out of both of them, to flow out into the world like directed libido, as von Franz states. Repeating what I've emphasized, it is Psyche who initiates the love, the love of beauty, the love of Eros, not Eros. She opens the box that protected her from the numinous glow and power of divine beauty, overwhelming her as the passions of love, childbearing, and seeing into the essence of psyche, beauty, so that she could drink in the essence of being. (von Franz, *ibid*, pp. 14-16)

The beauty box represents psyche, a closed world the contents of which we can create myths out of our experiences and ideas to explore the nature of the reality that exists there, so mysterious, confounding, personifying the unconscious, the dark enclosed territory that is a secret to the body, the subtle body, of the wearer. Opening the beauty box in order to take from the goddesses their secrets is what we have been shown throughout the myth. The author of the tale has opened psyche up for us to peer into in order to see how soul making is done and what it says about the myth that is in the background of the tale as well as the interiority of one thing inside of

another, like the proverbial onion, a good image, as the tears flow from the opening of its layers with a knife gives off reminders that the beauty comes from the tales the unconscious whose waters replenish and nourish us, in joy and grief, and not from the experience. In addition, the spiritual struggles that Psyche goes through manifests the individual that she is out of the most ancient of traditions and soul journeying preparing her for the self-transformation that we see in the metamorphosis from mortal to divine, from human to goddess, which is the symbol of the expression of the essence of being, the inner divine beauty hidden inside of psyche, whose expression is the nectar of immortality she drinks. Have we entered into one of the secrets of life as it has become expressed in the psyche? Drink and food, like the myths that underlie the tale, cook and energize Psyche and permeate the myth.

Her swoon at opening the box is the end of projections, just as in death. We have been in the world of dark and light, world of shades and shadows and world of daylight, world of life and world of death, an in between country where humans and gods can commune and daimons give passion to life with eros waking soul to navigating through experiences and the Divine Self sending out messengers for catching the light. James Hillman, in his perceptive work, Anima, writes the following:

...in the conscious personality of the ego is where Jung locates our darkest spot. Sol, the alchemical image of ego consciousness, is it self a 'dark body,' 'light without and darkness within,' a 'relatively constant personification of the unconscious itself' in 'the source of {whose}light there is darkness enough for any amount of projections.

(SEE, ALSO, JUNG, CW 14, PARAGRAPH 129)

Because Hillman takes the Myth of Psyche and Eros as the myth of analysis, he discerns another key element of a secret myth in a tale where the storyteller ends up hanged, as well as a bloody death as hinted about in the Eleusian mysteries, in a novel where the human has been metamorphosed into an ass, an ass that may have treasure buried within it, root chakra, and at the end released in a novel by the goddess, Isis. The lowly parts, the dirt, the recycling, where the food comes out as shit to fertilize the ground has treasure in the uroboros earthen circles into deeper and deeper consciousness as we learn that on the ascent, in uroborian circular labyrinths we must bring with us the smelly, filthy, sticky, lugubrious parts of life in order to keep us laughing at the too serious parts of ourselves and the fantasy part of higher spiritual consciousness from overwhelming us and ballooning us away from the ground from which the spiritual search started. It is in the interior and in the depths and underworld where spiritual gold hidden in the shit can be found; in the air, without earth and suffering, the seeker never becomes the sought, which launches the reciprocal nature of the psyche. We are in a tale that shows the need to stay grounded, the need for the depressions and suicidal thoughts, the need to do down, to descend, the need to keep your silence and go into the underworld, and the need to listen to the guides that come to you and learn to trust the unconscious and the Inner Self, to learn to give up ego's control

so that it can absorb the shocks of full psychic spiritual tasks that archetypal energies bring into one or bring fire through the membrane of ego to burn to black-gray ash the hopes and dreams of childhood so that the roots out of which you inwardly grew have a chance to flower or to smoke to cloud the way of throwing away the skin and go without a path or a map to where as far as you know no one has returned or if they have your compass leads you down through other underbrush and forests and seas.

XV.

“NOW, WE ENTER THE CENTER OF THE MYTH”

Now, we enter the center of the myth: what is psyche and who is she as it is being expressed in the story? If we find a reasonable answer, who Eros is becomes clearer. That is, why desire, love, attraction, beauty explode so like one of earliest weapons humans manufactured, the bow and arrow, for hunting and killing, defense and offense, protection and aggression, internal projections in the world that is the soul: unleashed into the air, into soul, concentrated, focused, sharp energy through the body, marrying body and soul in the heart, opening the psyche to flowing out of the blood of love's wounds to reach and awaken from the smell of hot passion the daimons, guides, demons, gods and goddesses, countries, evils and goods that humans have lived in and imaged and been claimed by earth as worthy of being sponsored by one who wants speech and expression.

“To imagine in pairs and couples,” James Hillman explains, “is to think mythologically.” He continues that “[m]ythical thinking connects pairs into tandems rather than separating them into opposites....”

Tandems...like brothers or enemies or traders or lovers show endless varieties of styles.

Tandems favor intercourse--innumerable positions. Opposition is merely one of the many modes of being in a tandem.

(IBID, P. 173)

Conjunction of anima and animus engages our attention here, following Jung and Hillman, at least for our initial mapping.

Jung writes about the anima:

With the archetype of the anima we enter the realm of the gods...Everything the anima touches becomes numinous - unconditional, dangerous, taboo, magical.

(IBID, P. 133 AND JUNG, CW 9, I, PARAGRAPH 59)

This “real menace,...real darkness” describes Psyche of our myth, an energy in her own right with the cunning to wrest from Eros the powers of inflicting self-wounds and originating love in others as well as in oneself. She is the “connecting link with the world beyond and the eternal images, while...emotionality involves man in the chthonic world and its transitoriness.(CW 13, paragraph 457 quoted in Hillman, p. 152) We are in “multiple consciousness” that operates autonomously, Hillman elaborates, that “spirit will be constellated whenever we are in touch with soul” so that where “soul goes there goes spirit too.” Anima conjoins and appears with animus, together, as pairs as *coniunctio*. Dual consciousness that consciousness makes double trying to

explain the unconsciousness, and its multiple consciousnesses, with conscious images, symbols, to make the fluid soul more corporeal, trying in consciousness to make multiple a unity. The conjunction, according to Hillman,

illuminates imagination with intellect and refreshes intellect with fantasy. Ideas become psychological experiences, and experiences become psychological ideas. The job is to keep spirit and soul distinct (the spirit's demand) and to keep them attached (the demand of the soul.)

In our myth, Apuleius has spirit born and enlivened out of the soul. Spirit is the expression of soul, and the needs of the soul to be in an earth body that dies that soul's own immortal longings it makes creations of the spirit: the longing becomes the expression and the answer. (See Rumi's magnificent poem, "Love Dogs".)

Spirit appears to be Eros, and the needs to differentiate Psyche and Eros are apparent in the myth. The real spirit in this myth, however, is not Eros, it is Earth, out of which as an archetype, who depends on differentiation, not union, by way of the archetypal descent and loss of identity and the release of the inner kernel of who Psyche is to herself, pledged to herself, not her own worst enemy, but the secret of the box of beauty. Psyche is the invisible secret which the myth through visibilities and invisibilities is exploring and going into depths: this is why we are once more in the earth's myth, the myth of the dragon, the birth and war and negotiation of the inner garden planted and grown with psyche's growth between the smaller self and the Archetypal Self. In the inner country, it is out of the earth of the unconscious, out of the most ancient and youngest of a psyche that speaks to herself and images to herself, making out the invisible structure of the psyche a visible image and a spiritually enticing allure in language and art that brings out the underworld secrets that live in every psyche, a metaphor for a place where trauma and psychosis can be loosened through desolation and dissolution of the sun and moon magnets they attract to themselves. Traumas live off the taking of energies from other parts of the psyche and zapping one into compulsive obedience to its feeding. The Archetypal Self has the pungent energies to heal that glowering sun or moon by dissolving in the desolation the umbilical cord of untamed and ever rambling voracious hunger. Once the sun and moon of the trauma shrink sufficient to grant admittance and turning toward the divine energies, the gift of healing allows the larger alchemical transforming sun and moon to merge in the tentative landscape of poetry: out of the language created by the trauma is the poetry the soul uses to keep us aware that it's our gifts given to us from our internal cosmos that can heal us and become other and become worth the largeness and grandiosity and wisdom of the union of sun and moon.

Only soul has the capability, apparently, to make of Earth a spirit out which the myth and the larger, more ancient myth our myth is inside of, just as we continuously open and find ourselves once more on the insides of the something we had no awareness we were inside of, until like an onion or eggs inside of eggs we open and are born crying anew on each journey inward, never ending in the infinity box. Soul wants us lost, not found; soul wants spirit to nourish us and not

soul spirit. The Earth myth we are in brings the totality of the psyche to bear in the varieties of love without ego, who is tortured and has no solution but what the other parts of the psyche gives it. We are not in the ego in this myth; it is not a myth of the hero slaying the dragon. The myth is one of the how the dragon lives and transforms and becomes differentiated from yet the essential expression of the soul of Psyche so that beginning in the animality of despondency, terror, no escape, overwhelming power through the expression of that animality in the psyche so that it becomes experience in which good and evil and archetypal powers can be confronted and negotiated with and conversed with as well as resisted or merged with, depending on the circumstances. By the close of our tale, the divinity that soul had made out of the spirit of the Earth, the sacrifice of consciousness of animality has made sacred the divinity within psyche. Zeus' and Hermes' presence on Mt. Olympus brings the underworld up into the sacred mountain, that you bring the animal we are in our skin into the divine skin we must be awakened to, that we shed animal and grow a new animal-human-divine skin, so we we can be as large as the mountain and the waters at the top of the mountain, connected to the earth's underground springs that flow into the world of soul into psyche, mortal and immortal, that can give consciousness fire that tests the divine energies as they test the human.

Psyche and Eros becomes the anima-animus relation, in western and Jungian literature, especially the intriguing and seductive nature of the anima for Jungians that Hillman points out is not necessarily the only connection. Moreover, the myth presents the absence of Eros from the life of Psyche, and her suffering as a consequence. While this may be true, the fact that Psyche goes through this inner boundary country without Eros and through the underworld as well as completing the spiritual tasks that Aphrodite imposes upon her without Eros presents us with two alternative interpretations. One, is that, like Hermes, whose very absence and invisibility is proof of his presence, we can identify Eros with Hermes and this manner of looking at the influence of Eros which has been the major interpretation of this myth by westerners. The other alternative, and the one I think the myth itself is presenting most imaginatively and in the round is that Psyche has her own resources, energies, soul power and finding of soul loss and soul images, spiritual imaginings and heartworks that can create a world, a country, an imaginal landscape, a myth that explains ourselves to ourselves. We are in a world that, yes she is seeking lost eros, which is a condition in which soul makes more psyche, that is makes more earth out of the sea waters, more sure human footing for the walking, but it is without Eros that she makes her journey that comes through until the crucial moment of the loss of consciousness where she needs to be revived by her true lover, Eros. Each one is a independent being. Psyche has enough of her own eros to get through to the end. Or, she has enough life and death imaginal resources and insights to draw on to carry through the agonies of her suffering and losses and overwhelming nature of the traumas visited on her that the absence of Eros emphasizes the presence of these other lowly, unseen, unlooked for spiritual and soulful qualities of psyche that she can draw from in her soulwork.

Jung traces his evidence, experience, imaginings into the following statements where he treats the anima, the psyche in imaginal form, as the psyche is embodying soul, "as a personification of the unconscious" the figures of which are "spontaneous agents".(Jung, CW 13, paragraph 62 and

Hillman, *ibid.*, pp. 118-119.)

He writes in another context:

Together they [the anima and animus] form a divine pair, one of whom... is...rather like Hermes...while the other...wears the features of Aphrodite, Helen (Selene), Persephone, and Hecate. Both of them are un-conscious powers, 'gods' in fact....

(JUNG, CW 9, II, PARAGRAPH 41 AND HILLMAN, *IBID.*)

In our myth, the divine pair are Psyche and Eros, and as we see the transformation of Psyche before our metamorphosis' eyes, while we have to imagine a twining metamorphosis being experienced by Eros: from lover as unconscious to conscious eros or of Psyche as Psyche goes from truth seeker unconsciously to unnerved truth seeker consciously despite the unconscious consequence of exploring the unconscious consciously. She was investigating herself, invisibly. At the beginning of Psyche's adventure she was dressed in funeral black; when she opens the beauty box, she sees the dress of psyche, its appearance, sinking into frightening descent through the nothingness of wind, though spirit it be, where there may be no reality behind the appearances. We are in the realm of Zen. What does she see: how Psyche and soul makes more psyche, making earth of blank places in the psychic world, beauty and the love of its own beauty, inner and outer, and its allures and magnetisms and archetypal energies that inspire the embodied with the glories, joys, fabulous magical nature of the freedoms and limits of beauty, a forming, a sculpture or, a image maker, a most fantastic imaginer generating the beauty it loves and discovering out of the spirit it encounters the loves it never imagined and must wrestle with.

Eros has been identified as representing life; in our myth, Psyche symbolizes life, differentiating love and life; while both of them together represent the union and the separation of love and life, joy and reflection, pleasure and distance, union and two in one. Out of the myth, Psyche in opening the beauty box peers into how reality is created and the differences of reality and appearance that are the clothes of the spirit. The unconscious power of Psyche we experience in the manifestation of and in the incarnation of her experiences throughout of the myth, which are the psychic images of soul imaging its pleasures and griefs to the imaginer.

"The entire relationship with the anima," Hillman reasons, "is placed into the mythologem of the heroic ego and his archetypal fight with the dragon." Psyche's fight is with archetype of love, in the form of Aphrodite; the dragon awakens Psyche as it awakens Eros and out of the biles of the Earth the gods and goddesses that incarnated the flesh of the spirit that soul needs as food and needs to be cooked to alchemize and, as it gradually, emerges as the Archetypal Self, giving Psyche the tools to be in the world in an animal, human, and divine way. She must lose her life, as her swoon represents, in order to save her life. Outwardly, she may look "simple" and be tabooed and hated and hunted and despised by love and its minions who she wars with to wrest her definition of these epithets not those given by the goddesses. Psyche inward war has enough support from life, love, death, imagination, heart and courage, and intrepid adventuring into the unknown and the realm of death to challenge Aphrodite and to wrest from her powers of those defining

moments of how love and eros and desire and joy are to be memorialized. Psyche is not in this mythologem; her archetypal powers express the dragon, making out of soul the spiritual creations that transform human into divine energies. It is more than a myth of initiation. It hints at a myth of the initiation into the Eleusian mysteries. It is a myth of how the mysteries become fully embodied out of the unconscious; it is the myth of the Earth made human and how humans wrestle with the limits of the world and psyche out of which they have evolved. Lastly, it is a myth of freedom, psychic freedom from archetypal domination by an unleashed goddess whose beauty represents the “monster” we see and the beauty only Psyche sees for only beauty can free beauty from the confines of divine tyranny. Psyche’s individuation into wholeness soul would describe as beauty; what we have been through the soul describes as beautiful. If we cannot so describe it tells us how far apart we are from the soul and its soulmaking that gives to our lives direction and infusion of the energies and images that can feed us along the way. Beauty is a defining wind we breath or invisible ointment for the pen that sings us out into the world.

The myth tells us that soul loves beauty, that the Archetypal Self can be drawn out by beauty of the Earth and its expressions and can be the lure that entices as desire and love are conjoined in beauty to have it enter the world and transform its understanding of the human realm while pulling the human into the divine world so as to dance new understanding of what we and soul are.

Butterfly is one translation for the ancient Greek word for psyche or soul. Jung writes of this “elusive and quick-moving,’ changeful of hue, “twinkling,’ something like a butterfly...which reels drunkenly from flower to flower and lives on honey and love.”(Jung, CW 9, paragraph 55 & 391 and Hillman, *ibid*, p. 24.) Chuang-tsu’s famous dream that he was a butterfly or that the butterfly in his dream was dreaming Chuang-tsu awakens us to the insubstantial and impermanent and grief causing psyche as we become led by the ever clouded and changing mind. Zen shows the need to quiet the mind; this myth is not about quieting the mind although its terrors and its underworld journey raise the issue of the possible insubstantial and impermanent world that in the next moment resolved, perhaps unconvincingly, though not unmythologically, by the soul becoming divine and, thus, immortal. The changeability of the psyche that modern stream of consciousness attempts to portray is reversed in the myth: the stream of consciousness that is fed by the deep waters of the deep psyche is showing how permanence is attained, at least mythologically, and in the tale in the myth in the myth. Immortality becomes a way to make sense of the changeability, elusiveness, invisibilities of the soul, of how psyche feeds on image, hovers over the beauty, is drawn to beauty and pollinates and spreads the seeds while eating and disseminating. It feeds on beauty, on the glue that is honey that merges ideas and thoughts and images and is drawn also by love and the allures and colors of the flowers and sinuous stamen. The myth explores not just the butterfly; it also delves into the butterfly at the flower, attending to the divinities of the time with food and the food of the gods and the surety that what is happening is held in psyche by being made memorable by beauty, trauma, suicide, taboo, exile. Answering these destructions of the known world by locking psyche into the known pathways of divinity of the times. In the ancient east, it is the fleeting nature of the butterfly; western tradition

emphasizes the “eternal moment”. In one tradition, there are no divinities to live with and be joyful that there are none; in the other tradition, there are divinities that exist in another world that only certain times in the past humans have directly communed with. Apuleius’ tale gives an alternative psychic rendering of how the psyche becomes divine; previously, soul was considered divine, living beyond the life of the individual. Psyche, with divine union with Eros, shows how the individual is a cosmos, taking more and more of it in with each disaster, failure, despair, realization of the despair of hope, and yet still having the inner mysteries that sustain the individual as well as the cosmos in ways that make silence and reality partners in finding in beauty and joy and metaphor that create psyche and living beings in this imaginal realm of humans.

XVI.

“THIS WORK ON THE MYTH OF PSYCHE AND EROS WAS EXCRUCIATING SOUL WORK”

This work on the Myth of Psyche and Eros was excruciating soul work: extracting losses and afflictions from the holes in my souls, empty spaces in my psyche where nothing reached until finally a bird was heard to sing, trauma that hooks you to the ladder of pyramidal pain and anguish, stone by laborious stone, drawing up into the secret chambers where the lusts and lasciviousness and murders and suicides and apocalyptic visions of seductive death house themselves, as the trauma gives many demonics an entry point, paranoias of a hero whose myth can never be lived out imaginally because of the denial of such reality by such reality, mergers with any random person or thing or woods out which the voices of song were thought to speak and now a technique for metamorphosis analysis. These namings are just a few of the decades long season that first brought me to the Myth of Psyche and Eros. This mythic tale I mythically retell in order to make visible the psyche and soul that I inhabit and live through that I may imaginally inspirit the lives of the total psyche that speaks to me and to which I converse: soul, heart, Inner Friend, etc. During my first visit, I recognized my condition, myself, my soul's terrors and loves and desires for me until it finally spoke to me in one of the lowest, desperate moments of my suicidal life. From my psyche, my unconscious being my enemy, the long journey began to being in conversation and dialogue with the beings that live through me who I have taken responsibility for because it is a gift the cosmos has given to us.

This second visit I have used what I have learned in the involuntary archetypal descent. I was trained as an historian, as a scholar, while dreaming of being a playwright-poet-philosopher. Shaken into whimpering gelatin and concrete blocks, into a curse out of my own mouth, slobbering frightened ghost of a human who was thinning into invisibility for no matter whether I had food, if I had the money, or ate once a day, I was emaciating bodily what my shrunken soul kept screaming at me to wake up to. I lost all objectivity, the needs for objectivity, and the belief in objectivity. I entered Jung's world of psyche and synchronicity, and I, who had died many times, did not die, but I had to die so many times so stubborn was I in order to save myself. I know I did not save myself as it was the ego who drowned and who, like Psyche, could not transform nor had the tools to light the dark that suffused the long night that I lived within. The inner country explored by the myth is familiar territory and, as before, I felt “myself disintegrating, torn apart and put together, reborn in a new form.” (See Schwartz-Salant, [The Mystery of Human Relationship](#), p. 27, quoting the historian of alchemy on how the alchemist identified with the processes he was creating, assuming the unity of man and nature with concentration of the total body, psyche, and spirit. Also, Jack Lindsey, [The Origins of Alchemy in Graeco-Roman Egypt](#).) Like Osiris in the Isis myth, like Persephone with Hades, like the shaman in the initiatory dream and trance work, like the alchemist in relation to Mercurius, Psyche and Eros in the myth and myself in going inside the psyche of the workings of soul and soulmaking as present in the interior of the

tale in the myth in the metamorphosis of a lively comedic and tragic and dramatic and fully invigorated with the eros of psyche and out of the myths of psyche up against the impossible tasks for spiritual life that wake one up that if you do not willing go along with the journey to make conscious, make light what you are in your deepest cosmos of being even if it cost you unconsciousness or your life, you will be dragged willy-nilly through the shit dirt roads that you make by being dragged by the blind man and donkey and you are the lost wood that never warms with burning. Being deaf, dumb, and blind when each of these cannot be discerned by consciousness requires the archetypal descent, hopefully you have a guide, a familiar who knows the ways and explains to you the despairs, depressions, dissolutions, drownings that you encounter and what to do. Do not speak. Give over to the experience you walk in and as Antonio Machado, the Spanish poet, has written, you make the path by walking.

In other words, I stand as exposed as Psyche was on the cliffs: what you read is my experience of the myth, my living in the imagination of Psyche and Eros, soul and spirit, heart and cosmic inner self. The tale I tell is as heated and in union with the layers of the myth so that I and the myth are not separable. I know of no other way to grow psychic healing out of the depths where dwells the dragon and the goddesses that incarnates the earth that supports and gives blood life to transcendence of divine imaginings. What is presented, here, is not a study; rather, it is an organic grown out of the substance that I found in the myth and that the myth found in me, conjoining like light and dark, good and evil, all the initiations I've terror filled through and the one's I've missed and spewed general anxiety into the environment like I were a forever trapped dog with no escape and only rage at the terror as response. Schwartz-Salant states in his discussions of how the alchemists used "death experiences" as metaphors for fundamental changes through the "most essential aspect of initiation is the role of the darker emotions, of the experiences of terror, dread, and deep anxiety of the three-headed dog of mind, body, and spirit." Chaos, as a part of the experience of the cosmos, must be taken in along with the others, although the emotional chaos we live with and do so much to ignore and to bring fear to us we can in a disciplined way breath in as cold, underworld air. Only beauty and its greenery, an aspect of Aphrodite, and love and its erotic and agape and related union quality has enough light and power to contain the terrors and horrors. Psyche went through these initiations without Eros. She had to find within herself enough natural resources to complete her tasks without the aid of Eros. Yet Eros is always in the background, ready to revive Psyche when she becomes exhausted from her ordeal that transformed the world she lived in from the dark lair of the dragon to the sunlight of Mt. Olympus and the divinity of Psyche, as well as the birth of joy, pleasure plus so much more, out of the experience and tribulations suffered. Yes, it is not a study; it is an experience that is being imagined and shown on stage.

Psyche begins in impermanence, in chaos of exile and ends in permanence, in a seemingly stable divine world. Psyche's spiritual journey is one of torture, attempted suicides, murder, degradation, humiliation, disgrace, spit upon experiences, each one building solid earth from one who lived on the cliff to one whose consciousness fell off the cliff into the unconscious by the view of the divine beauty, allowing Eros to awaken her, reinvigorate her into a sacred, lasting forever

and not just for the moment, as a member of a human family. In other words, Psyche creates earth for herself; what today we would call the making of a stable inner psychic structure that could function outside the normal boundaries of the ego yet feed it and cherish it so that it was like the hand, an efficient and effective instrument that became wounded when Psyche pricked herself with the arrow. Psyche finds herself in a nourishing inner environment though the outer environment is hostile--this larger cosmos gave her resources her world would not or could not.

What is being shown in the myth: how the house is built, what materials you use, the blueprints, the foundation, and the erection of the structure, and the roof. But first the house built by family and society must be destroyed and you made an internal exile, forced to begin an, at first, unwanted spiritual journey, thrust out of hearth and home, out of your own soul, to wander alone, bereft, torn apart in the desert of your mind, subject to the lashings of the gods and goddesses. Fortunately, for Psyche in the myth, Eros connections with soul and its related abilities to embody soul into the open flesh wounds of the individual gives a nurturing hand as does the earth goddess religions that support the myth. The transformed human being came about, according to Schwartz-Salant, "through the success of the ritual." The initiation rites of puberty as well as those of mystery religions of antiquity, he continues,

The initiates knew and experienced another reality, different from any- thing they had ever previously believed to be possible, let alone exist. That other reality then guided and directed them. Their emotional life changed, and they served new-found ideals. To themselves and to those who once knew them, they were not who they had been previously: they had under- gone a qualitative change.Generally, mysteries were initiation rituals of a voluntary, personal and secret character that aimed at a change of mind, body, and soul through the experience of the sacred."

The alchemists took up these "ordeals of initiation." When one follows the myth closely one recognizes the similarities to the initiations in the ancient mystery religions, which are really rituals of psychic death and rebirth, destruction and renewal, dissolution and regeneration, despair and depression as food and cooking. That is, they are rituals repeating the experiences of the psyche and making permanent, or immortal, to the soul by bringing the numinosity, the glow, memorably into the light of the imagination so that it would reach to the change muscle of the body, the heart. Here is the scholar of Ancient Mystery Cults, Walter Burkert, explaining the virtue of ritual:

From the perspective of the participant, the change of status affects his relation to a god or goddess...a new change of mind through experience of the sacred. Experience remains fluid; in con- trast to typical initiations that bring about an irrevocable change, ancient mysteries, or at least parts of their ritual, could be repeated.

As I've said this is not a study; it is an organic, an experience (of turning inward), and, now, a ritual. Here, we have a clue as to why this is not a myth of madness or psychosis on the part of Psyche. We are in the ordinary, normal though telescoped workings of Psyche and her relations with Eros. "Experience remains fluid," by way of ritual and initiatory experiences so that they are not frozen into trauma, independent complexes the inside of which is an archetypal form, a god or goddess, of energies of numinous glowing, flowing power over which the individual has little or no control when unconscious of those affects. The rituals of the tale with its repetitions and returns and echoes and awe drawing arrows out of the heart: of goddesses, winds, glowing pearls, guides, small creatures, tasks, coins and cakes, and walking to the cliff of suicide (that we cannot complete the journey, die along the way, bones and never identified and kill the future and joy and pleasure). There is a rhythm to these ritualistic repetitions and the recurrence of light and dark, green(Aphrodite) and wind(Hermes or Eros) and dragon/snake/serpent/inner god or goddesses symbol and water(unconscious). The solidified divine cosmic core allows freedom in the interior, in ego who has like a grasshopper jumped to better ground and can go where it is cherished for it is not frozen in fear in one dark spot. Healing flows and the concrete and magnetic traumas and complexes that independently rule over one without consciousness or insight from you, as Psyche's battle with Aphrodite in part shows. You sacrifice the solidity of the animal that is you into the fluidity of living inside of cosmic energy that are not identified with but in constant tensions and confrontations and negotiations with each other. The ego becomes a ball able to absorb the shock and arrows, able to bounce even when stuck and run through, has resilience and fluidity because though it experiences the coldness of the underworld it knows how not to freeze and be in competition with the bouncing, joyful nature of reality that it realizes. As Burkert says, you can repeat the process of change, repeat the rituals that further makes more and more of life sacred, allows the personality to open up and take more and more of the cosmos into the personality and psyche.

We have besides the old wife's tale, the teller hung at the end, telling us the myth of Psyche and Eros, and the mysteries and the tales and revelations of the myth, was politically dangerous. And the tale is inside Lucien being turned into a golden ass, the smell of the comedy invading but like onion skin protecting from releasing the pungency and noxious qualities of what the myth could activate in ourselves if left to roam directly and freely. Psyche is a golden beast of burden whose shit and urine are not just shadow work but the substances out of which we create the solid earth. In the underworld, it is smell that hits soul horribly hadically awake; it is smell that alerts us to waste and death and its continuing recycling and pungency and urgency in our life, constantly arousing the question of our brief, temporary, impermanent, insubstantial, glorious, miraculous, immortal, unborn and undead questions that are always there ready to, like the grasshopper, surprise us in the heat with new experiences and leaving them as excess baggage for the journey. Surrounding the onion skin is the initiation into the cult of Isis by the author. Each of these frames, each of these skins (animal, human, divine), each of these metamorphoses(human into ass, animal into human, soul into human, human into divine, soul into goddess) would today be called creating a container in psychotherapeutic circles. Here, we are being shown how psyche can layer itself,

treat itself as layered and protect itself on her own and learn to do it on her own and how to protect from spiritual invasions that could overthrow her and how she can insulate herself from plaguing the world with her worldwide anxieties, and with terrors unknowingly infecting others. She can with a metaphoric sense of smell and ritual make the circles of the skins and earths to teach herself how to create such a psychic structure and how to smell the hidden grief and tears that she wants to reach out to without being contagion with the contamination of havoc or be cooked into chaos by others.

EXIT

“BEAUTY AND ITS ALLURES”

Beauty and its allures, its guises, its appearance and reality, are at the heart of this myth. Beauty is the province of poets and artists: how many colors do butterflies come in, caterpillar walking on the grass? From human appearance to spiritual depth in wisdom, from Platonic iconic beauty to underworld box of beauty of the Queen of the Underworld, from animal beauty to divine beauty, from the beauties of the sexual flesh to the giving up of the beauties for the beauties of beauties that inhabit one in moments of ecstasy in fully enlivened joy. And never forget, the last beauty, the beauty of death, the most ravishing ravager to bone, and one looks for the inner beauty of the one loved and adored, and dissolved--and it is inside one. How make this ephemeral beauty that gives wings to my heart and a nest for my sorrow immortality to live forever: one answer is love, the one pyramid to the soul that humans have built that has a chance to wake the earth world up enough for it to want to memorialize forever the beauty of love and its sensuous and sinuous and effervescent forms and non-forms. Or are we in a fantasy, and the beauty is to give all of this worldly, sexual, sensuous pleasures up and clear the mind of its butterflies and the tyrannies of the passions and desires for an awake and spontaneous mind that sees that mountains and rivers are mountains and rivers when you began, they are not mountain and rivers when you are the journey, and when you arrive back to where you were in your daily and original mind, nothing sacred, nothing permanent, all changing, once again rivers and mountains are rivers and mountains.

I reply to Dante Alighieri's Eros who "is a nonhuman force of devastating power, polymorphous and Protean in its shape-shifting complexity." (Cobb, *Archetypal Imagination*, p. 174.) Upon meeting his beloved Beatrice once again in the streets he dreamt a "marvelous vision" that evening:

In my room I seemed to see a cloud the color of fire and in the cloud, a Lord of Terrible Aspect[Eros], filling me with fear and awe, yet appearing astonishingly joyous in himself. He said many things, of which I understood only a few, among them were the words: Ego dominus tuus (I am your master). In his arms there seemed to be a naked person, asleep, lightly wrapped in a crimson cloth.... Regarding her intently, I saw that it was she who had earlier that day bestowed her greeting on me. In one hand he seemed to be holding something burning, and he seemed to say, Vide cor tuum (Behold your heart). After a time, he seemed to wake the sleeping one, and he forced her to eat the glowing heart in his hand. She did so unwillingly. Within moments his happiness turned to bitter grief, and weeping, he gathered the figure in his arms and together

they rose into the sky.

(COBB, IBID, PP. 181-182)

The following sonnet wakes soul to eros that begins a circle of beauty when Dante begins the song cycle at the circumference and circles inward, spinning ever inward:

*To every soul that's seized by Love
and every Noble heart to whom these
words
are dedicated in Love's name:
Greetings! And may you post me back a
poem.*

We now are in the fullness of our being all of these beings alive, thriving, thrilling, in thralldom of soul's poetry ready to honor the dedication by answering his call, our call, the call of our soul to Eros, our call that psyche is a poet and an artist above all and out of the mists of its darkness, in the depths where eros lives and breathes and attaches his epithets the creative imagination sculpts out of nothing the everything, as Dante goes on in

*The hours of the night in which stars
shine
had already in their course traversed
a third
when suddenly Love stood before me.
His essence, terrifying to remember;
though
in himself he seemed ecstatic, at
least to me.
In his hand he held my heart, and
in his arms he held
My Lady, lightly wrapped and
sleeping.*

We learn the origin of tears, why soul fears water so much, for they are the drink the gods, like

the rains from the clouds, gave to us for the suffering that cannot be borne by the psyche in which we find we are being lived through and out of in hopes of clearing the heart soil to grow again. Here is the final stanza of Dante's sonnet:

*Then he woke her, oblivious of her
fear,
giving her my burning heart to eat:
whereupon I saw him turn and leave
me, weeping.*

In my dream at my lowest ebb, without eros, and in a suicidal psyche where I ate my heart for I only knew bitterness and wanted bitterness and revenge appeared the most beautiful dark skinned and dark haired erotic beauty dressed in royal purple standing within a white gazebo. I was awe struck and in love with, could not do anything but think of her. I did not know how the anima worked at the time nor knew the need to be more objective. Yet, in the active imagination following the dream, we flew into the near east where I saw the thousands of seashells of my ego spread out among the sands that I needed to pick up and put back together again one at a time and not to be concerned for the pearl at the bottom of the sea or the gems or gold as they were not my goals. It was the lowly, the half shells that appeared to be insignificant in themselves, that were not symbols, were not representative of anything but were the essence of the healing of the ego. I was to put my own ego back together again; learn how to heal, become a healer by going to where in my being the healer was and would teach me the tasks I needed to do: impossible, spiritual, mindful, meditating, soulful, imaginative, psychological, and totally at odds with my education and my upbringing.

I return a poem, dedicated to Dante, to all those who love psyche and its beauty and its desires of love and meanderings among the erotics of the dance of creative joy. I open wide and what comes out are these

Scribblings and More Scribblings

*Send me your scribblings, I'll send you mine.
So difficult to go through paper to the other side.
I've claimed love as my companion, as you are.
Can I take those bells I hear for "attention"?
Exhaustion with you is a year's journey
of creaking bones and foreplay on spiritual xylophones
so deep is your music I record in song.*

*You keep your word, come when called; I am derelict.
So lost, no island I'm on, I must be on land sea.
You say let go, drop down, be loose, fly with geese.
If I take your advice I'll be landing in corn
today, and always today with you, our con-
versation never ends, the distance never matters
as your whispers transport me to Ithaca
in a poem by Cavafy, as you love Dante
and his beloved. How many poets*

*are we that we go on the road of dust and dirt
kicked up by your breath and my terrors?
Our love never loses its lostness
on the roads. You throw away the map.
I've no other companion to see me through.
You slap me on the back and say welcome.
In the territory, go lost or go not at all
and, in the beginning, you will go where I*

*and you are one and two and three and four
and so many more. This paper is our leaf:
you one side, I the other, joined by life
and the cycles of death and rebirth that roots us
into the land I give you as you give me hope
that our scribbles on each side mirror our
doubling twice that we may wave to the wind
as it passes our home that it may not be lost.*

Exit from the myth that it may live its life and give life to its myth. Fini. Close the book. Let soul take it into its care, and we be free and safe and no one comes to harm.

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