

# **Venus Trine Saturn**

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If this isn't love, what is?

It's been said before - logic has gone out the door, and only a feeling is present to guide. But is this guiding? Reason does not work here, appropriateness does not count. Only powerful forces pulling, sex and heart, working together, and sometimes opposed. The decision to surrender to the unknown, the dark, and the merging must be made soon.

It starts on a Thursday evening. I'm arriving in Florida from California to put on a weekend workshop. I'm met at the airport by Claire, the woman who is hosting the workshop, and her daughter. Her daughter? What's she doing here? Not being particularly outgoing, I always am suspicious of attention, thinking that people are trying to draw something from me.

The daughter does not make a visual impression on me. She's wearing baggy, boring jeans and an amazingly bland pullover that does not go with the jeans. Her hair is nondescript. I think that perhaps she could be attractive if she had a sense of style. But, I'm in the boondocks. This is not urban California.

The flight out was not completely unendurable, almost pleasant, and I'm in a pleasant mood. I start getting attention from the two woman, and I soon notice that it is supportive, not draining, so I'm encouraged to return the cordiality. We get my bag, get in the car, and head for the motel.

As we drive, we talk. The daughter is obviously on her best behavior. She's attentive, interested, polite, careful and restrained, asks questions, gets me talking about my music -

always a way to my heart. She respectfully jumped into the back seat to give me the front, and as we talk, she leans closer on the seatback, her arms draped over. She's moving closer.

They ask if I would like to go out to dinner, but I decline. I'm worn out from the trip and only want to get a shower and recharge on my own. At the motel, they come inside the lobby. We talk about where I could walk to get some food if I felt like it, and the daughter suggests ordering in, something I hadn't thought of. I get some menus from the front desk. I'm impressed by her resourcefulness.

I take some melatonin in an effort to adjust to the new time zone and to get to sleep, but it doesn't work. I have a bad night's sleep. The humidity is heavy, and air conditioning a necessity, and I can't get the temperature set right. It's too hot or too cold; I have too many blankets on the bed or too few. I'm up all night trying to adjust things. At about seven, I wake up from the few hours sleep that I'm finally able to get at the end of the night. And I'm having a tremendously sexual feeling.

The feeling seems to completely overpower me. It's strong, stronger than anything I've felt for quite a while. I lay in bed silently with it, erection hard. I'm feeling good, even euphoric. I allow the feeling to build. Soon, I realize that I want to go further. I take off my tee shirt and shorts. The motel bed has three pillows on it. I stick my cock between two pillows and

lay on them, fantasizing a vagina, and put the third pillow under my chest and head, arms around it.

It's fantastically sensual. The pillows around my cock grab it with perfect softness. I'm having intercourse. But I don't make any movements. Just pressing into the pillows, feeling them around me, is enough. In sexual bliss, I surrender to the experience. I drift inward. Then she appears, under me, around me, taking me.

I can't quite make out her face, but I sense her body clearly. I notice her thighs first. They are spread, welcoming me. They are soft and full, but not fat. They are warm and accepting. It's incredible the feeling I'm getting from her thighs. They speak to me with such tenderness.

I stop my mind, I open to the vision of her. I let the vision build, I open to feeling. She materializes more. I sense more of her body, her breasts, her shoulders. Her breasts are perfect, full and warm with love. I ask myself about the wisdom of engaging with this entity, for it has become clear that this is indeed an energetic presence. I decide that it is safe, and I let go into the experience.

We lay together for an hour. At some point, we change positions so that I'm behind her, and I hold her breasts, perfect and satisfying. The intensity is maintained the whole time, with me hard and held. The energy builds in my body, fills up my body, charges my entire body with the sexual force so that I'm completely energized. I consciously pull the energy up into the

third eye, I move further into space, into blissful, ecstatic sexual love.

I still do not recognize her, I sense only her energy - her complete receptiveness, her unconditional love, her unconditional presence, her softness, not just any softness, but a softness that is hers uniquely. She is someone.

I start to wind down. I lie there. I have not ejaculated. I perform some contractions and loosening up of lower body chakras to relieve any lingering congestion of the physical/psychic sexual force, and to bring it fully into my upper body. I feel no frustration. I have merged and parted, fulfilled.

It's now time to call Claire and make arrangements. We decide that we will meet for lunch, and then inspect the workshop meeting place. She picks me up. At lunch, she tells me that she has broken up with her partner of some years, and that she is now living alone. At some point, for some reason, the conversation turns to her daughter. In a way that seems fitting, I ask how old the daughter is. Twenty-seven, I'm told. I reply that I would have thought older, she seems mature.

"And you'll see her tonight; Lorrie's taking the workshop."

That's right, her name is Lorrie. And she's taking the workshop - I hadn't known that.

I spend the rest of the day in the motel room, rehearsing, doing yoga and de-stressing, and sitting out back of the motel

under some trees in the warm, humid Florida air. Claire picks me up again just before seven.

The Friday evening session seems to go well. I'm able to effectively deliver my prepared presentation, which takes only about a half hour, and which sets me up to move and direct the group for the rest of the weekend. The session ends around nine-thirty. I'm again asked to get a snack with Claire and Lorrie, mother and daughter. I accept. We go to a noisy place, and I order some junk in a moment of weakness and relief that the workshop has gotten off to a good start, and as recoil to the carefully selected food I've been eating for the last week to raise my energy. The conversation is polite, and for the first time, I start to notice Lorrie. She is more attractive now than last night, I'm not sure why. She's intelligent and can hold a decent conversation. As they drive me back to the motel, we agree that in the morning Lorrie will pick me up, ostensibly because it's on her way to the workshop.

Saturday morning, I'm not feeling good. Another bad sleep, probably compounded by the junk I ate last night. I'm annoyed with myself. Lorrie picks me up at the restaurant where I've breakfasted. Her car is an old, well-used, four-speed yellow Honda hatchback that is perfect for her. I see her in a new light. She starts to pull me out of my grumpiness. She is the Florida sunshine girl, sunglasses, dirty blond hair pulled back, sunroof open, gears shifting, white tee shirt waving in the wind, beautiful

face with radiant smile and perfect teeth, blasting down the highway with me as cargo. She mentions that she will drive me back later, and maybe I'd like to do something?

It's clear now. She's making a play for me. I can feel her wanting me - not necessarily sexually - even if she doesn't know it or understand it. It's the same feeling as in the airport, and in the restaurant: she's there for me, she wants me. So, this is what this weekend will be about. I reply that, yes I would like to do something later, maybe she can show me some of the local sights, and right there, we agree to collude in being together and an exploration of each other.

We arrive at the workshop and park. As we walk into the building, the wind blows against Lorrie's tee shirt, pressing it against her. I notice her breasts for the first time. I'm deeply moved.

The morning is subdued, with me doing some teaching, and participants responding to questions designed to make them think, and then sharing their responses in small groups and in the group as a whole. Nothing too emotional is happening yet; we are loosening up. I'm noticing Lorrie throughout.

In the afternoon, the first heavy emotional event takes place. We are to do a group rapid-breathing session, similar to the Rebirthing Breath. I ask how many have done this kind of breath before; one person out of twenty raises a hand. I explain carefully how to technically do the breath, how to keep a

connected breath, how to surrender to the process and let the wisdom of the body take over and what to expect, but even before that, I preface the instruction with a somber injunction:

“To do this breath correctly requires a dedicated and fierce warrior spirit. This will be the hardest thing you have even done; you must be prepared to push, with all your strength, against the force that will try to hold you back.” This force is perceived as the inertia of the body, but who knows what other forces of resistance align themselves with it and contribute to it.

Everyone is lying on the floor, with pillows and blankets. They are to do the breath for one hour. I turn on soft, blurry, repetitive music that will be suitable for non-directive exploration of the subconscious landscape, and they begin. I pace the group, showing them the fast rate of breath required to get the process moving. Some people launch right into it; some start very slowly, apparently unable to bring much air at all into their chests because of muscular contraction and holding.

I notice Lorrie. She is looking strong. I see immediately that she has good control of her body. She is able to relax her body as a whole, and work it where it needs to be worked, where the breath is coming in. I have told the group to breathe into that part of the torso that seems to need it, as guided by the wisdom of the body, but to initially breathe into the chest until they feel guided. She is already breathing into the deep abdomen. She is deep into the breath right from the start.

I don't spend any more time noticing Lorrie than any one else in the room; this is a powerful, sacred experience for which I am fully present. I watch everyone, I move about and touch everyone on the ankles as I see they need to be supported, grounded, or just brought back to the process. Still, when I see Lorrie, *I* am touched. She is strong. Her strength awes me. She has surrendered to spontaneous guidance. Her arms are straight up in the air, weaving, her legs are weaving. Her face is showing pain, as are most faces in the room - the mask is starting to fall.

As the mask drops, when it is no longer possible to maintain it because of the shear pain that is occurring, we become real. I see this realness on many faces in the group. Faces in pain, faces real. Pain is emerging from the subconscious, triggered by the breath. My connection to the group deepens. Many of them *are* warriors. They have heard me, they trust me, they are doing what I have told them to do. I realize that it's in their pain that I can relate to them. In their pain, with pain on their faces, with tears and whimpers and screams, I can relate to them, even love them. Otherwise, the mask repels me.

But of all these faces in pain, Lorrie reaches me most. First, because of her face. The pain, the realness, the anguish, coming up with the intensity of the process, showing on her face, touches me deeply. Her face is beautiful, absolutely beautiful in its pain, in its strength. My heart opens, my tears come, my pain is present also.

And then, there is the body. Lorrie's body. The body that I have not seen until now. She's lying there, in a white, loose tee shirt and tight khaki slacks. As she rolls around I see her from all angles. I connect to this body; this is my perfect body; this is the body I have dreamt of. The heart, her heart, my heart that I have seen in Lorrie's face connects to the sex of her body. I have found it.

The group makes it through the hour, miraculously. I have been announcing the time elapsed, every ten minutes, as well as coaching them. Most have experienced the plateauing that occurs at a certain point, where the pain changes, released, into that blissful floating, out in space, in altered-state and time. We go on to a free-form processing session for a half-hour. People curl up on the floor, with blankets, deep into themselves. I sit processing also. I have connected to my pain, my tears, my love, my sexual self, Lorrie.

We are near the end of the day. We sit as a group, and share what has happened. Many people had highly emotional experiences, with suppressed feelings and split-off personalities emerging. The sharing is emotional and teary. We finish the day playfully by singing to each other, so that every person is serenaded by the whole group for 30 seconds. People are lifted and ready to break from the group until we meet again tomorrow morning.

Lorrie and I find each other. We both seem anxious to leave. Me, because I want to spend the evening with Lorrie and

not with Claire, who asked me earlier if I might want to have dinner with her, which would probably include Lorrie, but I just want to be with Lorrie alone. Perhaps Lorrie has a similar thought. Just before we get out the door, I notice Claire appearing across the hall. She sees me, but we do not speak. Lorrie and I bolt.

We leave the building as a couple, walk to her car as a couple, get in as if we have done this for years. It's crossed my mind that it's probably best for me to conserve my energy and not indulge in a highly-charged social exchange, especially since my energy is already low with the stress of traveling, the jet lag, two bad night's sleep, and the strain of running the workshop, but I just can't pass this by. We get onto the road, still without a destination. It's almost sundown, and Lorrie suggests that there are restaurants on the beach with a view of the sunset that might be good. I agree.

As we drive, I move into a deeper experience of her. We're talking, about the workshop, about trivial and important things, but for me, what's really happening is that I'm being driven by Lorrie. I'm not in charge, she is. She's taken over, with my consent. And she's totally and competently into it. She's taking me, she's leading, she's doing the thinking, she's caring for me, and us. I let go totally, trusting, surrendering to her guidance. I don't need to be in charge now, to be responsible for us, for the

immediate moment of negotiating and transporting our physical selves around on the planet. It's wonderful. I'm being held.

We get to the restaurant at the beach, but it's packed with people wanting to get in. I'm not in the mood for another crowd, so I suggest that we forget about food here, but perhaps just take in the sunset, which is in progress. We are on the west coast of Florida, and the sun is gloriously going down over the water. We sit for fifteen minutes in the yellow Honda, talking, watching, and then motor up once again. After another false restaurant attempt, we finally settle on the place where we will dine. As we are walking from the car, I venture to tell her what I saw in her during the breathwork - the realness of her pain, the beauty in her face, but I'm still shy about completely revealing the impression she has made on me.

The conversation is mostly biographical. She's had a troubled, rebellious childhood, got into drugs and alcohol early, was sent to a special performing arts prep school. She had no use for college, tried taking a few courses and found them completely boring. She prefers reading on her own, studying what she is interested in. I tell her that I generally agree about the uselessness of college in its typical present state, that I'm not sure if it would do anything for her. She's got a sense of maturity, presence, and intelligence that does not develop in college. I tell her that rarely do I get involved with women who are college graduates. The two or three important women in my life did not

bother with college, but were getting other kinds of early training in the arts or dance.

The college system usually produces mainstream, conformist, non-creative men and women who lack real resourcefulness and originality. If I escaped such a fate, it was only because I realized the huge emotional repressive hole in my development that formal education had left me with, and I determinedly engaged in a radical left-turn in the seventies into non-mainstream counterculture and the art and music world in order to consciously develop that ignored part of myself. Moreover, the education I received - at a top, Ivy League engineering school - I felt in no way prepared me to actually practice that profession, which I did for two years, and was simply an unbelievable experience of intellectual tyranny, where I was forced to basically memorize and regurgitate technical facts and analytical systems, where the concept of learning by having my interest stimulated and guided was never even thought of.

Lorrie explains that the last five years of her life have been a complete turnaround. She has been working on herself vigorously, getting into all kinds of metaphysical approaches. Obviously, it's been successful. She mentions that my book has been very helpful to her, which she found a few years ago. I suddenly realize that, of course, she's star-struck. Yes, my book was meaningful to her; yes, I'm someone who's larger than life, a fantasy. It's a huge adventure for her to be with me, to receive my attention, perhaps my wisdom, to be fixed by me, perhaps even

to awaken my interest in her as an ego-boost and then push me away, triumphant. But she's a fantasy to me, also. The face, the heart, the pain, the body. We are two fantasies, exploring.

At a certain point, Lorrie finds a way to ask my age.

"You're about, what, late thirties, early forties?"

I respond without hesitation, but within the nanosecond that it takes to open my mouth and for words to leave it, I have traveled light years of deliberation. Fear forms. Why? Because I don't want to lose this woman. Why would I lose her? Because, chronologically, I'm too old for her. I could lie, she wouldn't know the difference. I know I don't look or act anything like my age, thanks most likely to good Karma, genes, diet, a lot of yoga, and for the last twelve years, consciously conserving the sexual life force. I could teasingly avoid the question. Or, I could establish an openness and trust, even though this will be an issue to be resolved, by confronting and stating the truth, tacitly sharing my insecurity about my age, about getting involved with younger women without necessarily pointing it out. In the end, I tell the truth simply because I just cannot deceive her, I cannot begin a relationship based on falsity, because sharing the truth and my insecurity feels good, and because, at this stage, I'm testing if she is really here for me. Can she handle it?

"I'm fifty-seven," I speak, with coolness and confidence.

"You're what?" She's shocked. Her mouth drops open. She will need time to consider this.

I believe her reaction is real, although it crosses my mind that she is putting me on - flattering me, to get something. The question basically is, does she really mean it? She seems to be here, but is she real? Or is she just relating to the fantasy? This feeling will continue, popping up at various times, to be resolved as trust is or is not established, or perhaps it will not be resolved, but will remain part of my dualistic experience of her, part of the mystery to be embraced. Lorrie also has trust issues and needs, which are to come out later.

We finish dinner, the check arrives. Lorrie immediately grabs it and pulls out a credit card. I protest, being somewhat unclear about why I should pay it, whether it's because I'm the man, or because I was treated last night by Claire and her, but she's adamant. She's real, she's a pisser, she's not dependent, she's not waiting for me to make a move, she's taken over, at the exact right moment, when I needed to be reassured. There is no age difference, she's not intimidated. She wins my heart again. Again, she's holding me, she's there for me - beyond a doubt. Paying the check has been major.

My significant experience of Lorrie has been happening on the energetic level. This is the undercurrent below the surface of verbal exchange, where relationship takes place. Often, we are not aware of this level. We act from the mind, without deeper awareness of the body, where the feelings, emotions, and spirit are perceived. It is on the energetic level where I primarily sense her, and where I believe she senses me. What is sense is that she

is in tune and able to operate on this level; that she senses me on this level and will intelligently and careingly take action to maintain our harmony; that our inner relationship is one of tender, careful balance, where such words as integrity, care, and love might be used in trying to communicate what this feeling is like.

She drives me to my room, where I crash, absolutely exhausted. I sleep well, held.

Lorrie picks me up again on Sunday morning at the restaurant. I suggested last night that she might come fifteen minutes early and have a coffee with me. She does. I explain to her that asking her to join me early in the morning, especially with jet lag, is major intimacy for me - I'm not a morning person, I'm usually grumpy and irritable in the morning. I say this jestingly, even though it's true, but Lorrie is to later tell me that she was touched by this act and disclosure.

Sunday is to be an incredible day for everyone - a day to be remembered. The workshop peaks on Sunday morning, with two more intense segments, following and building on the previous intense breathwork session on Saturday afternoon. The morning starts slowly, with some more breath instruction and a gentle yoga session, where I emphasize using the postures to relax and "open" the feelings centers in the body - to get to suppressed feelings through the body. I pace the group carefully,

warming them up, loosening them up, centering them, and then, when they are ready, we move into the mountain.

The mountain posture is a standing pose, with arms held overhead, straight up into the air, no bending at the elbows, as if you are reaching up into the sky, receiving the power of the universe. The rest of the body is held with dignity, the feet are about shoulders' width apart, eyes closed, attention focused inward. I tell the group:

“Feel the power coming down into your body from the sky. Feel your connection to the earth, rooted. Allow your strength to build and allow yourself to accept it without fear.”

Everyone starts to feel their strength. They still do not know what is coming.

We continue to hold the mountain. I am performing the posture with the group. Some have already dropped their arms after two minutes. I urge them to keep their arms in the air, to bring in the power they need in order to accomplish this from the universe. Others are keeping with it. Everyone is moving to a new stage with the Mountain, from idealistic visions of self-empowerment to the reality of the body and pain. Pain is coming up fiercely - pain of the body in present time, and pain from the past, attaching to the present.

After five minutes, a heavy altered state is setting in. The mask is again lifted, this time by the reality of intense bodily strain. The subconscious jumps out. Anger is coming up - at me, for making them do this.

“Who are you angry at?” I ask them. “Feel the anger. Watch the anger. Breathe into it.”

I suggest that any spontaneous noises be allowed that may wish to occur. People start panting, moaning, whimpering, crying, going into spontaneous breathing patterns - the circular breath, the accelerated breath from yesterday. Several people are heavy into emotional release, with loud wailing. It's ten minutes now. Most people have been able keep their arms in the air the full time, enabled by the power of the group.

“Stop this fucking shit,” someone screams.

“Stop this fucking shit,” I scream back immediately without thinking. I later comprehend that my intuitive response has defused, validated, and supported the person, without being intimidated or accepting blame for their experience, without accepting that their outburst has been directed at me.

“I can't take it anymore.” Someone else screams.

“I can't take it anymore,” I reflect.

“Shut the fuck up,” from someone else.

“Shut the fuck up,” I mirror.

People are again plateauing, similar to yesterday, going past pain, finding the strength within to do what may be the hardest physical act they have ever done. Some people are giddy, laughing hysterically. Most are still with arms in the air. I am experiencing the pain with the group. I need to make sounds to release the pain, my breath accelerates and paces itself. Fifteen minutes.

Throughout the ordeal, I have been watching everyone carefully, although I have needed to close my eyes at times in order to focus within and generate the power to perform the exercise as well as lead the group. They have mostly kept eyes closed, as requested. My attention has by no means been preoccupied with Lorrie, but whenever I have noticed her, she has again touched me deeply. In contrast to her expressiveness of yesterday, she is in stillness. Her body has maintained a perfect Mountain pose, arms up, shoulders relaxed and dropped, body still, receiving from the universe in stillness. Her face is impassionate with eyes closed, calm, transcended and transfixed. She looks like a goddess. She has been able to move into the witness, as I have been teaching all weekend, and bring the stillness of the witness through into the body. She is a rock. I could not perform the exercise as well. I am awed by her strength.

I muse that it's likely she has been inspired to such high performance by me - she wants to look good for me, look strong for me. She is the student, in awe of the teacher; she idealizes me. And of course, I idealize her. She is the perfect student, the perfect warrior, she is strong, even stronger than me. As we project these idealizations onto each other, do we obscure the real person? Do we relate to fantasy and not reality? I believe that what is happening is so rare, so beautiful, so tender, that I dare not think of doing anything to question the experience. We have

been gifted by the gods. The experience will change as it needs. For now, Lorrie and I see eternity through each other.

After twenty-two minutes - a sacred number - of holding the Mountain, I instruct the group that they may release their arms when ready. A few people keep their arms in the air. Most have been able to stay with the exercise for the whole time, without dropping their arms. All are in an intense altered state. The shock of the straining has deeply jarred loose the ego-defensives; minds have been blown; the bare soul has been revealed. I instruct the group to take a half-hour for free-form inner processing: move, sit, lie, breathe, open to feelings as directed by inner guidance. Everyone is deeply connected, internally focused, in communion with essence.

After the half-hour, we take a quick break, and then move into the third intensive segment of the weekend. The previous work has been inner-directed; we are now to connect. We sit in a tight circle, on chairs, and are to make contact with each other, one-to-one.

Contact is to be established through the eyes. There is to be no talking or sign language, just communing silently with each other. When each pair has completed its communication, which could take a few minutes or twenty minutes, they break from eye contact and scan the circle until they meet someone new. No one is to leave the circle. We are to sit for an hour, with soft space music in the background. I take part in the exercise.

The exercise is challenging for most people. People are typically terrified. But usually as they get into it, they find they can handle it. The exercise is particularly effective coming directly after the Mountain, with defenses blown away. The mask is dropped, the real person is seen, and the reflection of oneself is also seen. People also typically see hallucinations, distortions of the person that may or may not have any objective basis, chakras, auras. Vision onto the psychic planes has been activated. What's important is not so much the vision, but the feeling. What feeling does the other stir in you? Feelings are always to be regarded as real and valuable, including what we normally consider undesirable feelings such as anger, fear, loneliness, resentment, and are to be honored by sitting with them, experiencing them, but understanding that they do not need to be acted out, especially with negative or hostile feelings. Such enlightened treatment of feelings will eventually bring them into balance, and release any suppressed emotional energy.

I scan the group, along with everyone else. My experience is different with everyone. With some I feel nothing, with some I have stronger experiences, contacting a variety of emotional states: fear, joy, confusion, clarity. I seem to be able to see other's limitations - whether they are basically open on a feeling level, or whether they are still in the left brain. This is the case with several, who have been unable to significantly participate in the workshop. Or, perhaps, they have made some progress opening up, I would prefer to think, it's just not apparent.

After about a half-hour, Lorrie and I find each other. I've been with about six people. Getting to Lorrie is like opening a window to the fresh air. She is radiant. Her face, her face - it's in her face, she's radiating a beauty from the heart that takes my breath away. Tears come in my eyes, for the first time in the circle. She touches me as no one does. I sit there, tears streaming down my face, looking into the eyes of this goddess of femininity. She's the essence of the female. She's completely open in the heart, she's sending it to me, and I feel it deeply. I am again held, embraced, smiled upon, nurtured, loved, loved unconditionally, awakened. I surrender to her love, to this child, to my loneliness, to whatever projections I am so deeply into I can't see. And in that moment, I know my experience of her is real.

We move to other levels. I see her face as Egyptian, in its beauty, with its sharply defined angles. She has an Egyptian soul. I see her as an older woman. I see a few layers of aura. I go back to the heart. I rest in the love of her heart. I don't want to draw attention to what is happening between Lorrie and me by spending too much time with her, so I signal that we should part. I go back to the group, returning to earth from heaven.

When the hour is up, I tell the group to stand up and give someone a hug. Spontaneous hugs continue for about twenty minutes. I participate, of course, and in this small group, I'm able to get to everyone. These hugs, especially with some of the women, are deep body hugs with no holding back. They are what

hugs are supposed to be - a sharing and merging on the physical and energetic levels. I keep my eye out for Lorrie, but she always seems to be unavailable, and we do not hug. I'm somewhat troubled by this. I pass her in the hall, ten minutes later, when we have broken for lunch. We exchange some pleasantries, but she does not seem to be reflecting the intensity that I experienced in the circle with her. I finally suggest a hug, and she agrees, but there's no life to it. I'm confused and don't know what to think.

Towards the end of lunch, I'm in the room adjacent to the meeting space, fiddling with some tea. I hear someone playing on the piano in the meeting space. My first reaction is that we really don't need this noise, but then as I walk closer, I recognize that the playing is actually quite good. I enter the meeting room and I'm astounded to see Lorrie sitting, with her back to me, at the piano. I sit on a sofa in a corner of the large room, entranced and shocked at discovering another aspect of this many-leveled spirit of the sky. She plays only for a few more minutes, a quite complex piece, and then starts fooling around with others on the keyboard, with chopsticks and similar tunes. I'm entranced with discovering this aspect of Lorrie because my deep soul yearning is for a woman who is an artist, and here she is. Lorrie has also not even hinted that she played in our talks so far, which have included some talk about music, and I find this strange.

After lunch, the workshop winds down, allowing people to settle within themselves and integrate what has happened. We sit for a hour and share about the morning, about both the Mountain and the circle. After that, we do another quiet introspective group process about relationships. We end with an hour-long energetics polarity session, where small groups of four take turns sending healing energy to one person at a time. A short closing ceremony, and we are done. It's clear that the workshop has had major impact on many people. Almost everyone comes over afterwards to give me another hug and to thank me. I feel that the weekend went well.

Lorrie and I hit the road. We are glad to be together, I am glad the workshop is over - it demands a huge amount of energy from me - and we are ready to play. It's about four P.M., still plenty of day left, and my plane, incredibly fortuitously, doesn't leave until Monday morning. We head for the beach. Again, I'm thrilled to be driven, to be taken care of, to have someone else in charge. We small talk as we drive, both relaxed, establishing new grounds for relationship, outside of the workshop.

The strong Florida sun, low in the Western sky, shines in our eyes as we head for the beach. I remark that I wish I had sunglasses. Lorrie suggests that we stop and buy a pair. I tentatively agree, but I don't want to go out of our way or even go into any kind of large store or mall complex - I'm not in the mood to deal with the world. If we happen to pass a small place,

let's stop, I say. Lorrie agrees, and says brightly that we can share. She gives me her sunglasses. Again, I'm touched.

As we are riding, I suddenly remember her at the piano. I grab her arm.

"Lorrie, Lorrie.....Lorrie, what was that at the piano? You play beautifully. Why haven't you mentioned that you play?"

"Well, I didn't think it was important. I don't think I'm that good anyway."

"I don't know why you say that. I think you're very good, you're a better piano player than me. I think we should go back to your place and play some music together, you on piano and me on guitar," I say excitedly.

She takes the bait beautifully, agreeing, and I'm getting more excited. But, as we continue to talk about her music, I notice that she has a definite tendency to minimize herself.

"Lorrie, I'm sensing that you are not in full contact with this part of yourself. It seems that it should have come up that you play when we were talking about music; I think you need to reclaim this part of yourself."

I'm talking this way because it's a carryover from the workshop that we have just been through. I'm speaking bluntly, as a friend, not how a therapist would talk to a client. I would never make this kind of interpretive statement to a client. But, I'm not her therapist, I'm involved, and passionate about her, intoxicated by her, saying what's on my mind, and not seeing

things so objectively. After speaking, I wonder if I've been tactless and even irresponsible. She starts thinking about what I said, however, and agrees that there may be some truth to it. I'm later to ask her why she even played at all in the workshop break - was it for me? She has no definite answer.

We get to the beach, find a place to park. I roll up my pants; Lorrie's been wearing shorts all day, so we are set to walk in the surf of the Gulf. It's perfect. Late afternoon, temperature pleasant, sunny. We are to spend two hours on the beach, walking, talking, finding out about each other, deepening a connection. We keep sharing the sunglasses the whole time.

"What was the circle like for you?" I ask.

"Oh, the circle was fantastic. I had my deepest experience with you. I saw you as a little boy, and my heart went out to you. I could feel my heart opening and I was sending it to you. Why were you crying?"

"Because I could feel your love," I say carefully. "You moved me like nobody else did. I could feel your heart energy coming to me, and it was overwhelming. It was beautiful."

"Did you see anything else in me?" she asks.

"I saw you as Egyptian, and I saw you as an older woman. Your face had a definite Egyptian look to it. I think you've had an Egyptian life, and probably," I say slowly, "We knew each other there."

"That's amazing, John. I've always had a strong interest in Egypt, and I've even got a collection of Egyptian art. I think

you're right, and I think I knew you then. I feel like I've known you forever. Maybe we were husband and wife. Maybe we were pharaoh and wife."

This last sentence is intended to be whimsical and I don't buy into it, but I'm struck by the seriousness of the discovery. I just try to feel the connection more deeply.

These realizations are coming to us now because we are both opened up. Chakras are open, the psychic vision is open, sensitivity is heightened unbelievably, from the workshop. My taking part in the workshop on Sunday is enough to put me into the same place as those taking it, and Lorrie and I are seeing each other with our expanded vision. This vision is exactly like a psychedelic experience, and the workshop had become on Sunday an incredible acid trip that was still building for us two. The feeling was exactly like psychedelic trips that I had taken in the seventies. Awareness is heightened so that you see energy fields around people, you can sense people's essence deeply, you have the power to allow yourself to be taken into a deep subjective, energetic experience, with another person or within yourself, as well as the power to step back and objectify experiences - to look at them rationally, see the connections between happenings, see hidden links and motives. Food tastes incredibly better, beauty is perceived, experienced, and appreciated. Love can be found, if the planets are right, and Lorrie and I are finding each other. We are daring to tell each other about our feelings for each other. After sharing about the

past link, we have moved to a new level of intimacy and trust. We are talking about relationships.

“Sometimes I think it’s right to be able to get something from your partner that you have trouble finding in yourself. Like, suppose I were to find power in a man that made me feel complete. Wouldn’t that be valuable?” she says.

I think about what she has said. She seems to be questioning if this possibility could ever be part of an enlightened relationship.

“Lorrie, that’s what co-dependence is - two people finding parts of themselves in others that they can’t find within themselves - becoming whole by becoming enmeshed with another person. It leads to fear, possessiveness, and resentment - it’s why relationships break up.”

I continue, “But, I also believe that two people can help each other to grow, by knowing what they need, and sharing their strengths. I’m getting strong heart energy from you. I need to be healed here. I’ve always been with women who are closed in the heart, I’ve realized over the last few years, and when I feel your heart, it heals me, awakens me - it’s so radically new and exciting for me. You’re helping me. And maybe there’s something I can give to you, maybe it will have something to do with power. If I can help you find it within yourself, not keep you dependent, then I’m activating you. We’re in supportive, mutually healing relationship. Were not using each other to connect to our undeveloped or lost parts, we’re consciously helping each other

develop those parts. It doesn't matter that we are not perfect, that we are still working on ourselves - the relationship is fulfilling just because we are helping each other. And there are other ways we can help each other. It's the kind of relationship that I never have been able to find, Lorrie, but that I hunger for."

Lorrie appreciates my thoughts and my frankness. We are moving into deeper water, revealing more, opening more. We get to talking astrology. I ask her about her chart. She's a Scorpio sun, Taurus Moon; signs that I resonate well with, except that for her, they are in opposition, and may be the source of some inner conflict. I mention that I'm a heavy Capricorn with Sun, Venus, and Mercury, and Virgo Moon.

"You know, Capricorn is the sign I've always been attracted to. All my boyfriends have been Capricorn."

"You mean you like grumpy, serious, Capricorn energy?" I'm amazed that this beautiful, bright sunshine girl could be attracted to Capricorn darkness. I mull this over for a minute.

"I can see a possibility. With your Sun and Moon in opposition, when a person with Capricorn Sun is in your life it creates harmonious aspects in your chart - a sextile and trine - to those two planets, and eases up on the stress you might experience. The trick would be, again, to not get dependent."

I stop on the beach to sketch a zodiac in the sand. I draw her Sun and Moon opposition, and show her where the Capricorn planets would be placed, representing another

person's effect on her. She appears to be delighted with the romance of the gesture.

Planets in signs besides Capricorn also have the same technical potential to relieve stress for Lorrie, but later when I look at her chart, I see other factors that show why she's drawn to that sign. She's got Capricorn rising, which indicates high compatibility with a man with Capricorn Sun. In fact, her Ascendant conjuncts my Sun, a very powerful indication of attraction. In addition, in her chart, Venus, the planet of love, trines Saturn, a harmonious influence that she would be led to express as a love relationship with a Capricorn - the planet Saturn rules Capricorn - and even as a love relationship with a person radically different in age, either younger or older.

We keep walking, talking, sharing sunglasses. We sit for ten minutes in silence, recharging. All the time I'm thrilled to be with her. It's getting late, and we decide to do something about food.

I suggest that we drive back to my motel before dinner, so I can get out of my sandy clothes and grab a quick shower. She waits in the car. It takes me no more than ten minutes, and when I get back to the parking lot, something happens. She's not there.

I look at the space where the car was parked. It's not there. I look around to the front of the building - she's not there. I'm in shock. All the incredible closeness that I'm riding so high

on crashes. I think that perhaps she's just running some errand, but it strikes me as wishful thinking. Lorrie has bailed. She needed to get away, she couldn't bring herself to face me, and she drove off. I'm still on the acid trip, still hyper-sensitive, still open on the psychic planes, and I'm hit hard. I turn to walk to the elevator to go back to my room. I wonder if I will call her - she has given me her number - I wonder if she will be there.

Just before I get into the elevator, I happen to glance into the parking lot once more, and I see the back of the yellow Honda, sticking out from its place between other, larger cars that have been hiding it. She hasn't moved the car. It's been sitting there, waiting for me - I just didn't remember correctly where it was parked. I get into the car. Lorrie is sitting quietly and patiently.

"I've been sitting here, feeling ALL my feelings," she smiles.

"Lorrie, something just happened. I can't believe what happened. I just put myself through major agony."

I explain. It becomes clear that I had recreated an experience of abandonment, straight from the suppressed subconscious. Whether this experience pertains to her personally, is not yet clear. But there is no doubt that, with the doors of perception open, the subconscious has called.

"Isn't it incredible," I muse, "Absolutely incredible?"

She's in agreement. She's empathetic. She's here for me, again.

We go to dinner. We small talk for a bit. I get some more personal history. Lorrie breaks into one of her metaphysical pep-talks to herself.

“I know I’ve been through a lot, and I know that I just have to have faith in myself, and that keeping in the light will pull me through. I’m learning so much, and it all means something, it’s all to help me grow, everything is for the good, and I’m so happy,” etc.

I groan. She’s been launching into this kind of New Age pitter-pat every so often, and it’s basically starting to get to me. I notice that Lorrie is composed of at least two major personalities, one part an authentic wisdom, insight, and presence that has and will continue to astound me, and another part pure woo-woo.

“Lorrie, I’ve got to be honest with you.” My passion is making me talk without thinking. “When you go off on these rants, it leaves me completely cold. I can’t relate to you. To me, these are just empty words that have nothing to do with being in the here and now, and that even take you out of the here and now. I want to know how you are feeling, deep inside, how you are doing, what’s happening with you, not some idealistic mish-mash that you think is how you are supposed to feel.”

I immediately question the wisdom of what just jumped out of me. Who am I to tell her what to think? I have no idea where she is or what she needs. She’s said that she’s come a

long way in the last few years, from spiritual impoverishment, and this kind of support may be important for her. I'm not allowing her to be where she is and to grow from there. It's the first either of us has directly questioned the other. She takes it quite well, understands what I'm saying, and again, I'm impressed with her.

"I think you're right, John. I use that kind of talk to avoid really seeing myself as I am. You've taught me that seeing myself, and feeling what's really there is how to heal. I just forget sometimes. And I appreciate you calling me on it. That's what friends do for each other."

My heart throbs. "Lorrie, I'm so glad you can take it that way. You know, I'm in the position of having the knowledge and vision of a therapist, but with you, we're relating as friends. It's easy for that knowledge to slip out in ways that might not be helpful.

We get back to her music, and how that might fit in with any of this. She's trying to explain, to both of us, why she minimizes herself.

"It's somehow related to not being able to deal with all the work and dedication needed to make a success of it. When I see what's required, I run away. It's what I always do. It's what I learned from my mom. I get afraid, and I leave."

Not having learned anything from the previous 15 minutes, I again offer an interpretation.

“It’s possible that the fear arises because, the way an opposition works, like you have with Sun and Moon, is that when you emphasize the activities or energies associated with either one of the planets, you get the feeling that you’re abandoning the other side of yourself, and fear comes up. For example, the Moon represents music. When you go to your music, fear comes up because you are abandoning the part of yourself that relates to the Sun, which generally represents your masculine side, your strength, self-determination, and rational thinking. Your task is to integrate both sides so they support each other. You could accomplish this by processing the feelings that come up when they are not integrated, by processing this fear, for example, instead of running from it or hiding from it, or letting it prevent you from engaging in your music.”

Lorrie hears me. Dinner is over. She excuses herself to go to the rest room. While she’s gone, I get the check and take care of it. As she’s breezing back to the table, I get up and with a brief and decisive, “Vamos,” from me, we leave. She immediately comprehends what has happened. I’ve bounced back from my somnambulistic state of needing to be led - she has been driving, dealing with the restaurant staff, taking charge, watching out for us. I’ve bounced back, I’m doing that now, I paid the check without her needing to be involved, and she’s surrendered to me. We are clicking. I tell her that I’d like to go back to her place, and for her to hold me. With a playful, surprised look, she agrees. We drive to her apartment.

Of course, she's nervous about bringing me there. She's apologizing for the place, "my humble abode," she's not been expecting to have anyone there, it's a mess, and so on. Minimizing herself. The place is a small one bedroom apartment in a large complex, actually tastefully and warmly furnished, if perhaps a bit on the conservative side. There's a piece of Egyptian art, framed, on one wall.

We start with tea. I'm sitting on a stool on the other side of a counter from her, she's fooling with the tea stuff in the working area of the kitchen. I'm feeling good, replenished from dinner. She's feeling good. We are communicating primarily energetically. I'm telling her about something, but what I'm saying is that I'm glad to be here. She's responding, but what she's saying is that she's glad I'm here. I sense a deep receptivity. We're opening more to each other, moving deeper. And we're smiling.

I see in Lorrie the most beautiful smile. I see it coming from her heart, completely open and loving. And I'm smiling back. My Capricorn brittleness is softening. I'm loosening up my heart and smile like I haven't in years. I feel the harshness in my face softening, perhaps not completely successfully yet. I'm smiling into the face of the goddess. She becomes the essence of the female. I feel we are transcending human personalities, that I'm in touch, through her, with the eternal woman, and I'm feeling whole.

We share some ideas that are important to each of us. I tell her that I'm thinking of starting and promoting a type of meditative, quiet yoga aimed entirely at inner development - classical yoga - not yoga intended as a workout, which is almost all you see nowadays. I've become so fed up with going to various yoga classes and finding nothing but "power yoga" that I'm starting to think that's it's imperative that yoga for consciousness be made available, and it fits right in with the inner emotional development work that I'm offering the world now.

Lorrie playfully shows me an entrepreneurial project of hers that she's been developing. It's a line of greeting cards. I'm expecting a sentimental, New Age, let's-all-love-each-other kind of thing. The first one she shows me says on the cover,

"What I really need is a hug,"  
and when the card is opened,  
"But I'll settle for a blow-job."

I'm floored. I break out with a loud guffaw. I'm amused by the card, and absolutely delighted that she's got this kind of depth, both the gumption to start a business, and the contact with this raunchy, raw sense of humor of which I've seen no prior evidence.

We drink several kinds of tea. Just when I'm almost done with the first cup, Lorrie remembers that she has this super tea made from bark that I just have to try. She makes it for us. There

are little pieces of bark floating in my cup, but somehow not in hers, that I negotiate as I sip.

She's got a reasonable music set-up - a small electronic keyboard, an acoustic guitar. I motion that we move with our tea into the living room area, a few feet away, and I pick up the guitar. Lorrie has been letting me know that she would love to have me play guitar for her, and she's made me feel confident enough to attempt it. Songs come to me that I haven't played for over twenty years - folk songs, love songs that I've written - I haven't had any reason to play them. But here's the reason sitting across from me. She's beaming, sending love and admiration, listening, giving me the feeling that she would rather be no where else than here, that she's thrilled having me play for her. Inspired by her receptivity, I play and sing several songs, with mistakes and forgotten lyrics. It's wonderful.

Something is touched within me. Younger, I did a fair amount of performing as a singer-songwriter, but I never was able to fully connect to an audience - maybe no one does - and I turned my focus to studio work, making recordings and trying to market them as my approach to the music business. But here, playing for Lorrie, I see that if I could sing to her and completely connect to her, I might be able to resolve that conflict. Experiencing her as a fully accepting audience, and being able to open to her completely, is and could continue to be another major healing of the heart for me.

I put down the guitar, and move next to her on the sofa where she's sitting.

"Lorrie, I want to hold you," I state.

She's smiling and gives a short giggle. She leans into me, placing her head on my shoulder. I put my arms around her. It's been a long time since I've had contact with a woman, and it's fantastic. We sit quietly with eyes closed, feeling each other for the first time, resting with each other, blending and sharing personal essence with each other. I realize my breath has stopped. For me, it's a major coming together. Although we're not sexual, just being close to her fulfills me and the longing for her that has been developing so strongly - just resting with each other, holding each other, being there for each other, feeling the physical presence. My seeking to merge with her is satisfied. I tell her how important playing for her was for me.

"You know, Lorrie, It's always been an unfulfilled fantasy of mine to have a woman who I could play guitar for - someone who would just sit there and listen, who I felt really wanted to hear me and was pleased to be there, and enjoyed my music, but I've never had that. I can't believe how important it is to me that you do that for me - it's almost embarrassing to tell you about it."

"Why have you never had that? Your playing is certainly good enough," she inquires.

"I don't know. Maybe it has to do with getting involved with women who are closed down in the heart, like I mentioned

on the beach. Or maybe,” I flash to a deeper truth, ”It’s because I was closed in the heart, and that’s the experience that was mirrored to me, and the kind of person I attracted.”

After about fifteen minutes of silence, I suggest that we switch positions, and that she hold me. She sits on the sofa with her feet on the coffee table, and I lay on the sofa with my head on her chest, her arms around me. My back is pressing into her; I alternate positions so I’m on my side, facing her, my head still on her chest, nudging her breasts. We are quiet at first, still just sensing each other. I’m starting to get strong sexual feelings, and although it would be premature to act on them now, I allow myself a completely hard erection under my loose clothes. I don’t know if she’s aware of it or not, but I want her to be relaxed.

“You know, sex is not an issue here. We don’t have to have sex, I just want to be near you,” I say.

“Cool,” she brightly replies. I feel like I said the right thing.

The heightened psychic sensitivity that was stimulated by the workshop is still present in both of us, and is in fact being stimulated more by the contact we are now making as well as the entire evening. I’m feeling myself opening more on the psychic levels. We are not just here in a living room in Florida, but we are in some other dimension, where we sense ourselves more completely than usual - we are beyond normal time and space. It’s psychedelic. Strong feelings are coming up for me.

“Lorrie, being held by you is so beautiful. There’s something about the feeling I’m getting from you that is completely and unconditionally loving - you are here for me and will be no matter what, and I can feel it. It’s so beautiful. I don’t think I’ve ever experienced it before.”

“Yes, that’s the way I feel. I feel completely loving towards you, like I want to be there for you, and always will be.” Remarkable disclosures from two people who just met.

“And not only that,” I add,” but I’m not detecting any kind of trips that we’re putting on each other. Neither of us needs the other person to be a certain way, and we’re not dependently using or draining the other person’s energy. It feels like a relationship with integrity.”

I continue, ”It’s a kind of mothering feeling I’m getting. A mothering feeling in a good way - as if I’m connecting to a sense of unconditional love in a mother who is always here for me. It’s a healing feeling - I can feel it going to a painful part of me that needs it and healing some deep pain - some absence or longing that has always been with me.”

“It’s what I want to do for you. I feel it too.”

We lie there quietly, sensing what we have just spoken about. I surrender to being mothered by a girl not half my age. Can this be possible? A vision swiftly appears. I see.

“Lorrie, you were my mother in Egypt,” I say slowly and with emotion. Tears come.

“Oh yes, yes, I see it too. I was your mother. That’s why I saw you as a boy in the circle, and why I feel so much love for you. But something happened. I left you somehow. Something happened where I left you.” She’s distressed, her brow wrinkles.

We continue to lie together, my head on her breast, mother and child. I have left my present identity. I am a child in Egypt, held by my mother, the older woman I saw in the circle only that morning, weeks ago. Occasionally I lift my head to look into her face. I see her smile, her beauty, her intensity. I’m held. I put my head back on her breast. I feel in her body complete peacefulness, stillness and presence. She is not fidgeting to be somewhere else, or even thinking about something else. It’s utterly simple, she is simply here, with and for me. It’s the simplest and most beautiful thing.

All through this the sexual feelings have continued, but now they become more acute. I’m in heavy arousal. My sexual feelings for her are incredible. Her body is perfect. I want every sexual part of her, her mouth, her breasts, her ass, her cunt. I want to put my mouth, my tongue, my cock everywhere in her. And, she’s my mother. She’s got the body of my present-life mother as a young woman, especially her beautiful breasts. When I connect it all in my mind, it staggers me. It’s the most erotic thing I’ve ever experienced. I want her more than any woman ever. I want sex with my mother.

I open to the sexual currents in my body. I feel the longing and power in my lower centers. I circulate the energy to

the heart, the center where I experience her unconditional love, and back down to the lower centers. Love and sex, mother and helpless, innocent, child sexual longing and frustration come together to begin a deep healing of an archetypal wound that I recognize as a divine gift. I am blessed. Lorrie is the messenger from heaven, the messenger from my subconscious, the personification and projection of my lost erotic self, making me whole, healing me. I lie with her, in ecstasy.

I don't tell her too much of this - I'm too moved to talk about it in detail. I'm hoping she might sense it. I just give her a hint, speaking slowly and with feeling.

"Lorrie, I'm having tremendous sexual feelings for you - not that I'm suggesting we have to act on them - but it's very powerful. I'm deeply attracted to you sexually. Your body is absolutely perfect. You are my sexual fantasy." These are words I have not spoken before.

I continue, "And, we've already had sex, anyway. I see it now, my experience in the motel room on Friday - that was you. I recognize your presence. You came to me in your astral body. It's feels the same as now - it's your unconditional love, it was you, only then it was sexual." She's not familiar with how this could happen, so I explain.

"We all have several bodies that are aligned together in normal consciousness. We usually don't sense them individually, but under certain conditions, the bodies separate, and our consciousness may also shift to the other body. The

astral body is the next body up from the physical. When we sleep, we separate the astral from the physical - that's what sleep is. The astral body, driven by our desires, then usually roams the astral plane, having subjective experiences we recall as dreams. But the astral body can also function on the physical plane, and can visit other people. And other people can become aware of us in our astral body, visiting them. We may or may not be entirely aware of our astral body experiences, but even if we are not aware, we feel the experiences subconsciously. We formed a bond when you came to me in the motel, and we've both been acting on it, even if we are not completely aware of it."

Lorrie replies, "It sounds right. I formed a bond with you even when I was reading your book. I knew it was a deep attraction. I could feel it in your picture, and it seemed to be a personal attraction, as if I was certain I knew you. I feel like I've known you forever. If we had that one relationship in Egypt, we've probably had other close relationships in the past."

We continue to lie peacefully on the sofa, talking and in silence, old souls together, rejoined after the long exile from each other, and from ourselves.

At about one AM, I need to go to the bathroom. When I come back, Lorrie is up and moving in the kitchen. I go over to her and try to give her a standing hug. It feels the same as in the workshop, like she's not opening into it - like she's holding back

from full body contact. We linger in the kitchen for a while. Then she says,

“Maybe we should think about wrapping it up.”

I understand this to mean that she wants to take me back to my place. I start to sink. I knew this might be coming, but I thought it more likely that I'd stay there all night. I've even broached the idea that I might stay a day or two longer. Lorrie, however, is getting up at six in the morning. She's told me earlier that she has plans to visit her sister, who's in briefly from California, at her father's place, about three hours away. Monday is the only day she can take off to make the trip. Everyone has been planning on it. She wants to go. It probably would not work for me to stay on for a few more days, since she won't get back until late Monday night, then she works on Tuesday, and we both need to rest; her, from the weekend and the trip on Monday; me, from the complete exhaustion I'm feeling from traveling, putting on the workshop, and the intense experience with her. So, she's to drive me back to my motel now, and we are to say good-bye. I understand all this, but what I experience is: She's kicking me out.

I'm into loss. Extreme loss. I've been with the mother, the goddess, the sexual dream, the soul-mate, the woman that I might love, and she wants me to leave. Why? Why doesn't she just stay up all night? Why not let me sleep there with her, she knows I won't pressure her. How can she stand to separate? Isn't this important to her too? Doesn't she have any feelings?

She tells me that she wants us to be friends, to stay in touch, and to see where it will lead. I interpret this as pulling away. Aren't we more than friends? The incident in the parking lot earlier appears in my peripheral feeling-vision. Yes, it's she who has, and is leaving you, abandoning you - she said so herself. It's she who can't be trusted, who will hurt you.

I sink further. I mumble a few feeble things like, "Oh. I really don't want to go," and inside, I feel like I'm begging.

It's the same feeling that always comes up with a woman. I'm the man, I have to pursue them, seduce them, win them, outsmart them, beg them for their love and sex. Don't leave me, I'll beg you to stay here, to be here with me, to let me make love to you.

I move into humiliation. She's humiliating me by making me grovel in my neediness, she's playing with me, using me, me the writer, the workshop leader, she just wants to tease me, bait me, make me want her, and make me suffer because she hates men. Jesus fucking Christ, what the fuck is going on?"

In shock, I walk out with Lorrie to her car. She drives me, again, for the last time. When we get there, we park for a minute. Lorrie tells me something. In my shock, I'm again entranced with her. Her face has changed in the car, in the dim light, and she has become someone else. I'm not sure if it's the old woman I saw in the circle, but it might be. She goes on talking to me, it seems for five minutes without stopping. She addressing my feelings, she knows how I feel. I'm not present enough to

even notice or ask about her feelings. She's taken over again, trying to support me, to get through to me. At the end of her monologue, I can just make out,

“And if I've been an important part of your healing, helping you to heal these feelings that are coming up in you now, I'm very honored. And I need to tell you that, on a certain level, I love you.”

I don't hear it. We get out of the car, embrace briefly, and so poignantly, we kiss lightly and quickly on the lips, for the first time. The kiss awakens me. I've forgotten how much a kiss can communicate. It says, not one person saying something to another, but two people agreeing,

“There's beauty, there's pain, we love each other, and we need to say good-bye now.”

I leave her and quickly walk to my room, completely devastated.

5:30 AM, time for a reality check. I've had four hours sleep. I need to make an early flight, and Claire has volunteered to get me to the airport. She's not there at the time we agreed, which puts me into a panic. I call for a cab, but then she shows up, twenty minutes late. As we are driving she casually mentions that she's not happy with some of the financial aspects of the agreement we reached weeks ago about co-producing the workshop. She wants to re-negotiate that now. I'm still hypersensitive, still acid-tripping, seeing through everyone with my x-

ray psychic vision. It's obvious to me that she's acting out her resentment about losing me to Lorrie; she knows we've been together. She was planning on dinner with me on Saturday, even though I had not committed to it, and was hurt when Lorrie and I bolted without speaking to her. I wonder what kind of competition has been going on between these women for me, why she brought Lorrie to the airport originally to meet me, why she set it up, and what my connection is to her - it must be significant since Lorrie and I have such a history, and she's been an avid supporter of my work for years. I evade her questions, and tell her we will work it out.

The airport is complete chaos, packed with people. It's difficult for me to be in such an environment. The flight leaves late, and I miss my connection in Phoenix. I sit there for three hours until the next flight. There's not a second when Lorrie is not in my mind. Finally, I get onto the small prop plane to make the last jump to Encinitas, utterly exhausted. On the plane, my feelings work themselves into words. I take out the vomit bag in front of me and write on it, tears in my eyes. I email the words to Lorrie as soon as I get home:

17,000 feet over Arizona.

Who is she?

This young/old girl/woman spirit of Egypt.  
Who shakes me, holds me, smiles deeply -  
Awakens the smile in me so deeply.

Who brings love, who brings pain.

Who drives me in her yellow chariot,  
Takes me to the small ocean,  
And gives her sunglasses.

Who serves tea, writes obscene cryptographics,  
Receives my weak song with such radiance.  
Who says good-bye and tells me she loves me,

With a modifier.

Who changes every minute.

#### EPILOGUE

The next three months are to be spent on the phone. We talk,  
almost everyday, for at least two hours. I would arrange my

schedule so I would be finished with dinner at 7 p.m. – 10 p.m. her time – and one of us would call the other. Looking back, it seems remarkable that any two people could talk so much and still find worthwhile things to say. But because our conversation was usually about things important to us and not trivialities, and because we kept finding out more about each other and ourselves in relation, our feelings for each other were maintained.

Lorrie could be a wonderfully warm and wise conversationalist. Many times, I hung up the phone in awe of her wisdom and maturity. She was well-read, in the consciousness field, and while she still had a tendency to be drawn into what I would call ungrounded, New-Age, cliché thinking, with which I am generally appalled because it is oblivious of and even rejects, in the name of spirituality, the depth of the darkness that must be integrated on the path to self-realization, she could be genuinely present and caring.

When the time seemed right I broached the subject of getting together for a weekend, but Lorrie was reluctant to “rush into it.” We both felt that trying to maintain a relationship long-distance was unsatisfying, but often she appeared glad that we had no possibility of intimate contact, and I wondered if there was some difficulty with sex, remembering how she would pull back when I tried to hug her. For me, of course, as a heterosexual, available, monogamous male with no inhibitions once I felt a heart

connection to a woman, a relationship with no sex was difficult. Did it present the opportunity for getting to know each other well before jumping into bed, as she suggested, making sure that we were indeed suited for each other?

I didn't agree. I have always felt that a relationship didn't really begin until you were connecting on all levels; that you might spend years getting to know someone platonically, and think you knew them, only to find a completely new person when sex was introduced. I was anxious to be sexual; it was an essential part of the attraction I felt, and although I accepted her desire for time, it was an issue between us. At one point, I told her that we'd gone way past the point when we should be having sex, and that it's hurting us – we don't have an important means of bonding. Yet, the hours we spent communing were generally fulfilling rather than tortuous. We did have a link that I felt to be sustaining; we have said that we love each other; I still felt she was there for me, and me for her.

But as we got to know each other, our stress points started to become apparent. For me, it was the conflict between having my own space and being there for Lorrie as much as she seemed to need me. I need people, but I also need a lot of alone time, and there are days when I don't have the energy or inclination to engage in deep contact. Lorrie had a hard time accepting that there were times when I would not be available to her. For her,

the problem was that I was not warm enough, not supportive enough, not there enough. We had a few fights about this, always being able to apparently reconcile.

The end came suddenly and unexpectantly. We were bickering, and Lorrie did not return my phone call for a week, leaving a distressed message on my machine. I was not in the mood to talk, and did not call her back until the next day. She was angry that I did not get back to her the same day – I should have sensed that she was upset and needed me. Then, seemingly out of the blue, she starts with “John, I’ve been thinking...”

She wants to break up. I’m shocked. It didn’t seem to me that things were that bad; I still sense tremendous attraction and potential. I get the feeling she’s being reactive, and wants to hurt me. But I don’t object. I just can’t try to talk her out of it – maybe that’s what she wants – but I’ve done that too many times in the past, with too many other women, and I’m tired of begging. I don’t point out that here she is again, leaving me – is it for the same reasons as in Egypt? I think I understand why she thinks she wants it; I don’t need to explore that any further. But to me, it just looks like she can’t take the stress of having her dark side revealed so clearly – her dependency, her demandingness, her attempts to manipulate – to someone who will not yield to those forces.

In shock, I try to find a way to maintain an air of calmness, but I'm not able to – my voice wavers. She's clear that she wants it to be a final break, a clean cut, with no loose ends, no attempt at continuing a friendship. We hang up, and although I have thought of her often in the year that has passed, even yearned for her, we have not spoken.