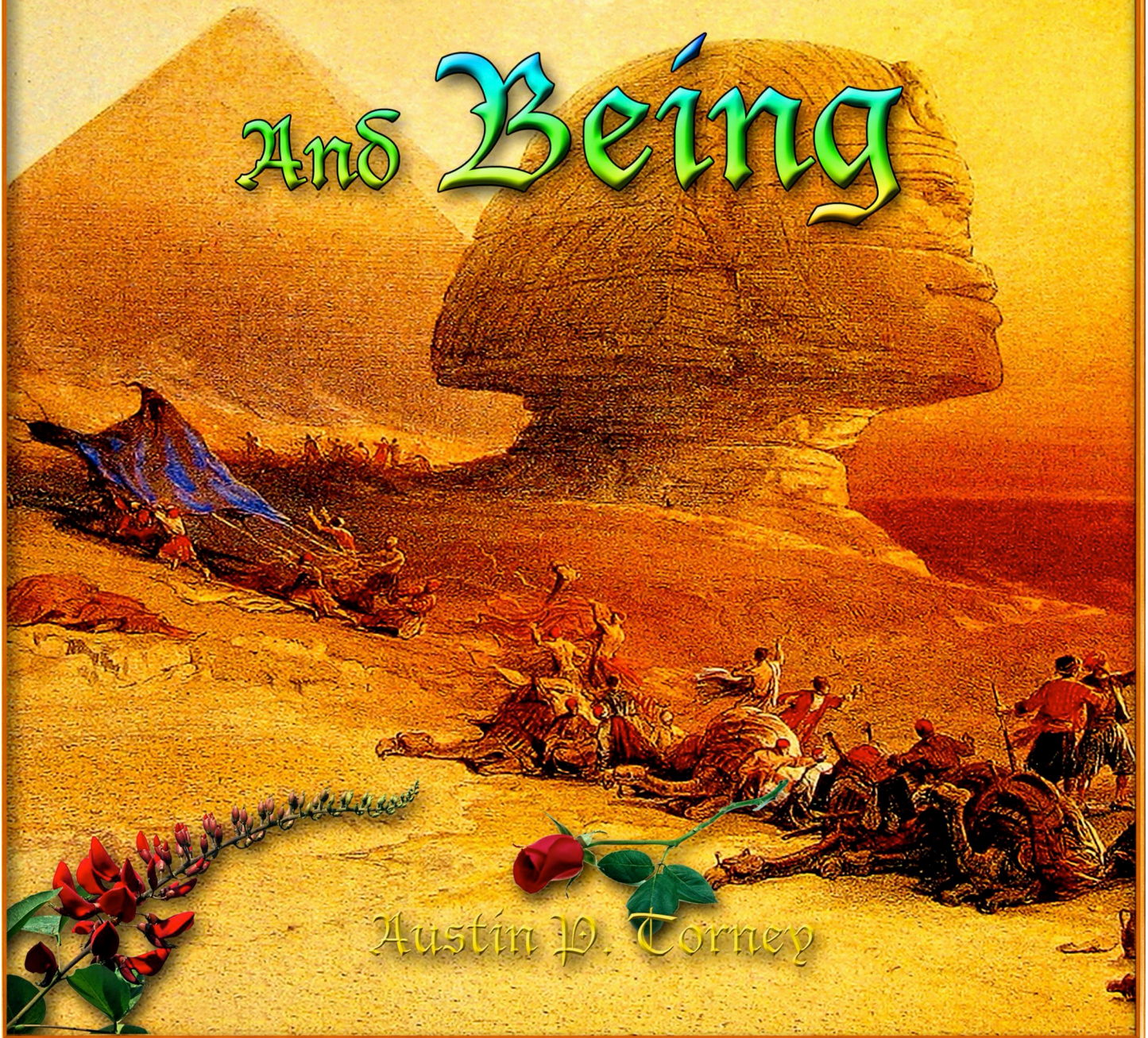


The Triumph  
of Life, Love,  
And Being



Austin W. Torney



# THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE, LOVE, AND BEING

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DeviantArt: Look under AustinTorney

## Preface

This manuscript was first written in prose, and then rendered in poetry, and then transformed back into prose. So it is that the characters often speak in rhyme. There are several books in this series.



The  
Triumph  
of  
Life, Love,  
and  
Being



Austin W. Torney



## Dedication

To Angelina,

*There is never a minute that I don't think of you, Angelina, dear. I am captivated by your spirit that is pure and good. I am pervaded by the liveliness that is your personality. I am drenched in the passion that gives me your presence everywhere. I want to be with you, near you, holding you, touching you, and talking to you through all your adventures, responsibilities, and troubles. You are a supernova, bursting with life and energy and exploding all around me, in me, and through me. Sparkles and tingles wash over me as your angelic soul inhabits mine. I am energized and alive with the love relationship that we have created. I bask in the sunshine of your caring, goodness, and giving. You are a woman for all seasons: domestic, maternal, friend, and lover. I fly with you above the clouds—we float on the serenity, depth, and passion of our love. Our wings of connectedness lift us higher and higher through the endless skies. Our love is boundless. We are the stars, eternity's love lamps—pulsars whirling about each other, entranced in the dance of love. Your love spreads to all living things; you exude caring and true love all around—your passion oozes onto and within me. You are life itself; you are love itself come from heaven to earth in the form of an angel. You lift me, stir me, brighten me—radiating through my mind, heart, soul, body, and spirit. You show me how life is to be lived; we have the super-ultimate relationship—thanks to you, sweetheart.*

Love,

Peter



# The Triumph of Life, Love, and Being

*By Austin Patrick Torney*



**An Exploration of the Joys of the Human Condition and the  
Astounding Secrets of the Universe and the Mind Through  
the Life of a Loving Couple Engaged in the Ultimate  
Relationship across the centuries and into the future.**



## —— THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE, LOVE, AND BEING ——

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### —— INTRODUCTION ——

*The significance of the golden braid of life, love, and being is unveiled through the consummate enjoyment of existence by Peter and Angelina. It spanned centuries of spiritual rebirths, for it was a love so strong that it could never die.*

*Escaping from a monastery-abbey that engulfed itself in the flames of ignorance, such as the one in the book ‘The Name of the Rose’, they, our ever returning couple, salvage a mysterious book of quatrains that guides them through the joys and follies of the human condition as they live out its words, for the proof of all writing is to live it. So close in thought that they need not even be named at first, our couple takes a picaresque journey through the first part of the book to solve the difficulties of life as they are encountered in their travels through the forested countryside. Subsequently, they evolve from their spirits to meet again a hundred years later, close to our time, to meet the challenges of the modern world, yet, as always, remain ever immersed in the lushness of life and love. They appear again, futuristically, in an enlightening glimpse, to tell us where the human race may be headed. Next, the mysterious book of quatrains is laid open for all to read. Furthermore, the secrets of the mind and the universe are revealed, as well as the lore and legends of nature.*

*Every vein in this book is loaded with ore, as Keats recommended to Shelley, and that’s how life should be—a constant celebration of all that is good and worthwhile. I leave it to others to instruct via tales of failure and tragedy. Seeing life as lived well is, I think, a more inspiring and memorable learning experience, for I always favor the positive approach. I write of universals—of those things that endure—of the magic of everyday experience, for the afterlife happens right now!*

*I am indebted to my fiancé, Angelina, for demonstrating, with me, in our relationship, that imagination and aspiration can indeed lead to realization, to Percy Shelley, for his romantic appreciations and his investigation of all living things, to John Updike, for his intricate observations of daily life, to Umberto Eco and Giovanni Baccaccio, for their monastical inspiration, to Hal Foster, for tales of knighthood, and especially to Omar Khayyàm, for his nowness of existence, and to the muses, for the inspiration to write my own quatrains, not to mention my own dreams of what life could be. You will sense my tributes to them all. Writings are the summation of all we read, know, live, and dream.*

*When I was young and unlearned, I ran breathless through meadows and forests, fast pursued by the stings of wind and rain. On and on I wandered, wild without rest,*



*searching for a haven from life's dull pain. The storms chased me till I could go no more; I stood helpless, backed up against a door, but, fell through it before any harm could reach me, cushioned by all of the dreams supporting me. I had found the library. It was a garden, half as old as time, in which poets and writers could live and write their words and rhyme—while the nightingale created the rose by moonlight magic from their thoughts sublime. The literary scenes unfolded before me, such as music often approaches and surrounds, and builds on the vibrance which in one is—to fill all that lives with beautiful sounds and visions. I brushed aside the webs of gossamer—life's rites and rituals, as came to life all that mankind should remember: my quick thoughts fell, condensing into dew, while living dreams unveiled more than I knew. I wandered down memory's path, aglow in the soft beauty that it hath. I saw Johnny Keats kissing Fanny Brawne, as he spoke more than words but less than song, and Byron, endowing form with fancy, and Wordsworth, penning his thoughts to Lucy, and Shelley, my favorite poet, plumbing the depths of mystery; I read them all—now they're a part of me. Deeper still I probed, looking in on it, and heard Mrs. Browning reading a sonnet. Poetically, I took them all in, even the shadowy Emily Dickenson. So there I rested, near Vassar Library, up against a tree, savoring the feeling of their poetry, in the garden where all the flowers used in Shakespeare's plays grew together in a living bouquet. And there before me, beneath the rose tree, Old Khayyàm, yet alive through his quatrains, wrote his verse, looking younger than I am, and lived the proof of his philosophy of life, the writing of which was but secondary. All this I remember, and much more, but I shall not write as I have before, for living and feeling must come first, and now I've a garden I won't ignore.*

*What of the actual writing process? It is much like nature: The sun fills the waking and breathing world with the fire of imagination. In poetry and romantic prose, the sun is the power behind the mind; the moon, planets, and stars are symbols, too—even the weather and the seasons. Sometimes, the intellectual beauty is bright, and the ideas gush from the eternal flame, or from the living of life—the only way to fully answer the question of “what is life”. Sometimes, inspiration fails when the shadows of clouds dim the clarity of thought; then we wait or regroup. Eventually, however, quenchless, boundless, ever bright and burning, the mind's light searches every dark cavern, probing and imagining, its beam alighting upon the earth or high atop cloud mist, and melts, with heat, energy, and desire, the fog of lone reason and pure passion—burning it away and so dissolving it with the love of life, earth, mankind, and star—from which comes adventure, friendship, delight, joy, success, triumph, and lasting gladness throughout the sun's journey into the night, when stars shine on mind, for suns they also are! I so much felt that I was actually there in the book when I was writing it that I forgot it was just a story.*

*The moon fills the sleeping and breathing world with the icy coolness of chaste reason unaffected by deep burning passions, although sunlit to glow in a wan light. However, reason, unsteady as the variant moon, often does not rise in the night to guide us, but deserts us in our darkest times; we are alone on a black cloud-bound night! Darkness drains our lives away, sometimes, and sickness consumes the spirit; the mantle is heavy lead and life's last glow seems upon us; our eyes are as craters gone dim. Death's ebon form seeks us out and covers us with his cloak. “Come away with me,” we hear, as he cools our burning brow; “I offer you quiet peace.” But then a sudden strength comes upon us, in our waning crescent wisp. In night's cold shadow we say, “Un-hold the soul, Moon Reaper, we shall fully shine once more!” Such are the cycles of human emotions.*



*Else the moon hides in the bright light of day, or is lost behind an overcast sky, but, moonless nights take us beyond reason when the stars excite us with their lights. Yes, inspiration returns with the stars—a thousand ideas beckon from afar—thoughts wink like lightning bugs on the pastures of consciousness; as starlight, they stab the darkness of naught, until star-like Venus rises near dawn. The goddess of romantic love and passion, she captures us within emotion’s swell, while comets flash and confuse the wild sky. Do we make decisions intellectually or emotionally? Venus will talk to the moon about that in our story.*

*Yet, soft and warm, the night caresses us in its own way, with its gentle darkness and quiet stillness. We beg her to yield her dearest secrets, to reveal the full truth of what lies behind, as Shelley inquired. Much we already know from twilight dreams, and from universal poems unveiling truth and beauty, but, we ask, within our deepest soul, to know the mysteries of the universe, to find the causes, the significance, and the ways to live and love, think and feel. Above us, fires burn the stars away; below us, the Earth turns under our feet; within us, unworded dreams haunt the soul; around us, night pours blackness on the ground. So, we ask from the rulers of the night, not immortality, nor youth, nor birth, as Shelley says, but only that we retain some cosmic presence within us, joining in its rhythm and resonance, to live knowingly. Now we sense the sweep across our heartstrings, for we’re undistracted by day’s bright noise. NOW, in a moment of awe, we appreciate the love and goodness that can be. Such is the intent of this book, the awakening of a wonder that grants the urge to enjoy life. After reading this book of life, I would hope that the reader would run right out and live it.*

*Rising slowly from the cold dark hollows where the night airs fell and soundly slept, the restless wind left her secret bower, and, gaining strength, lovingly surrounded and caressed the willow trees, which wavered and swooned in her wake, as she, that ever curious spirit, flew by in a cool breeze from the west on her undulating wings, and spread the incense of the morning to nature’s world of growing and living things: She woke the flowers from their slumber by drinking from them their blanket of dew, then told the tales of the joyous forest to the birds, who soon carried them aloft, thence into my ears—the songs of streams flowing freely, and stories of a glowing sky that promised many sunny hours to come in the dreams of those who felt her passing, and, so, sleep was washed from languid eyes as they sensed that new dawn arriving—as if some transparent veil had lifted—when she gently stirred the embers of the last watch-fire and whispered softly to them that the stars had gone and day had begun. We sense anew the adventure of life. We enjoy it since we know it and love it. We do not merely live life, mind you—we are life!*

*Such, intellectual beauty returns, borne on birds’ wings as song into the dawn. Imagination now soars past a day, and into the season of spring’s fast growth; the shade is deep and cool, like the ghost of winter passing—gone but still remembered in the cool nights of spring. To be alive is the pinnacle of billions of years of evolution. We are the Cosmos. Our view of life is changed forever more. Where we are after our death is the same place we don’t exist before our birth.*

*The summer returns now, from spring’s only kiss, causing the rose to bloom and mark its start, and its rising tides fill up the free spaces in our winter spirits, as we roam at ease, drink the sweets in every flower, and feel the balm in every breeze; for, we must thread the lovely web of life about us, drinking up deep droughts of life’s delight. Life through consciousness is all there is.*





To future  
columns  
we stretch  
our present  
row,

By a  
life-line  
of  
tenuously  
spun vow.

Oh, how  
soon the  
weighted  
web begins  
to fall—

The only  
real time  
under our  
feet  
is NOW.



# The Monastical Village



## — Chapter 1 — The Monastical Village

I am Brother Peter, a monk to be, working in the monastery's sanctorium, where I study philosophy books, and perform the illumination and illustrating for the new books, as it is also a scriptorium.

There is a convent next to the abbey, where the nuns begin the books, styling the verse, then send them over to the monastery for detailing and illustration. I deal mostly with Sister Angelina. We've never met in this entire and holy arena.

She sends me the books with the instructions enclosed therein. We work tirelessly on these books of philosophy, which daily travel back and forth, freely, between the monastery and the nunnery, and as such we often secretly read them for their content—and thereby learn of new ideas and the universal extent.



We soon begin to discuss the books and their philosophical hooks, through more personal notes and letters to each others nooks. I am surprised when it first happens, for I find her personal note, right away; it floats and falls out of the book I am illustrating, as if it had been sent on wings to me. Obviously it is from my friend sent, the holy nun somewhere in the convent.



It says, *“I have a long list of books I want to read. I will probably never get to the end of their leads. I usually read several books at the same time, and since I still maintain my monastic habit line, there’s nothing better to do at night, so I read them, reclined.”*

So, I send a reply, of my fate, “I too have been reading all the books, to date, given to me to copy and illuminate. Some are from the forbidden section of the library, and I’m not supposed to read them, entirely, but I do. I am learning a lot, through my peepers; much is being withheld by our keepers.”

Her next note reads simply: “Time flies like a bird.”

“True,” I write, “so very right; the wings of time are black and white, for one is the day and one is the night. This is a philosophy from a book of quatrains that I am presently illuminating, with gold-



en rain.” Such, we begin getting to know each others looks, through the notes that we conceal in the books.

She now writes: *“I was delirious to hear of what you thunk; I thought my note might go to a wrong monk, but I hoped that it would be sent to you. I can’t believe that it worked out that way, too!”*

And so I reply, as if under a star, “I was thinking about you last night, afar, and about how wonderful your personal notes are. It really made me feel so good to hear from you. Life is much more enjoyable now. Thank you, too.”

*“I am really happy that you are enjoying life. We live only once, so I believe in getting the best out of life.”*

“I was as delirious as you were on high when I received your reply. It gave me energy! I was walking on air for the rest of the day, and I still am! You made my day!”

*“I am glad that my note made your day. After all, if we combine a lot of days, it comes out to a whole life, in all its ways.”*

“Your vision of life’s celebrative rhyme is one that’s very similar to mine.”

*“There is this wonderful love song; it’s in French, but the music is beautiful, which will help you enjoy life. If only they would let me sing!”*

“Thank you so much for your attention to me. I don’t really know just what magic was freed that prompted you to write those wonderful parts, but I feel an excitement all the way into my heart. I’ll listen to my intuition in these everyday actions lit. I’m not going to question it; I’ll just enjoy it.”

*“I would love to keep the friendship with you. I don’t know about you, but I very rarely feel this sort of chemistry!”*

“We will make good friends, as one: me as a saintly monk and you as a holy nun! Now, that is funny.”

*“I got your last note and was hysterical reading it. I don’t know how you would be as a saint, but I will qualify for a nun very soon.”*

“I like your idea about combining days into a whole life. Indeed, life can be had and found in every single act. Minutes, hours, days... They all flow and blend together into the moving whole. Nothing is really separately told. Please keep your philosophies coming. I love them. I will try to live them, becoming!”



*“I’ve been rereading our notes; we write as if we are in love, so I get the impression that we are in love. Of course, perhaps it’s only platonic love, but there seems some indication of some other kind of interest. Ignore me here, I am fantasizing a little. If only we could meet each other, hidden, but that is quite forbidden.”*

“I enjoy your fantasizing very much. Of course we are in love. Each time we write a note we make love. It’s an unusual love because we never touch, hear, or even see the other. And so it’s a very pure love, a love of heart, mind, and spirit. Naturally, it’s hard to separate out the body, since nature didn’t really mean it to be so, as I’ve come to realize, from my reads.”

*“COME TO ME!”*

“Lord save us both from damnation! What am I to do?”

*“You already know.”*



“I can hear the Pachelbel Cannon playing, as the background anthem; it is the greatest hit of the 17th century, a tune that may never be outdone, verily. It flows and resonates in time, with the sounds of spirit, mine, for I am feeling so peaceful, all around, so much that I can hear the haunting sounds of my inner chorus playing, and



now my favorite song of dance, love, emotion, adventure, and romance. Oh, God help me!”

*“Help thyself.”*

“We shall soon make a life from the days. The monastery is connected to the nunnery’s ways by a door that has been locked for centuries. I can feel the spirit of you, dearest Sister Angelina, on the other side as I illustrate your lingua.”

*“Let us, then, much quicker, slip our letters under the door, putting them under the loose stone on the floor.”*

“I wish we could speak to each other near the door, but there is a code of silence, a part of the monastic lore.”

*“Our inner selves may somehow whisper to each other, through it, directly knit.”*

“I sense your disembodied spirit drifting into the monastery; you seem to be with me, here, and even as I work, so sunnily.”



*“You transcend the walls of the nunnery; I feel your presence here; it is a very comforting feeling, bared.”*



This evening, I lift my wine glass, in supper's ray, and look at it in kind of a symbolic way, and remember what I learned in a book this day. I am the wine glass, its cheer, filled fairly full with my human nature. Who would punish me for using my given nature in a good and loving way, for being human! It's as if my glass is precariously tipped, in time, yet I must somehow not ever spill the wine! Why restrain the very nature's gift that I have been born and blessed with?

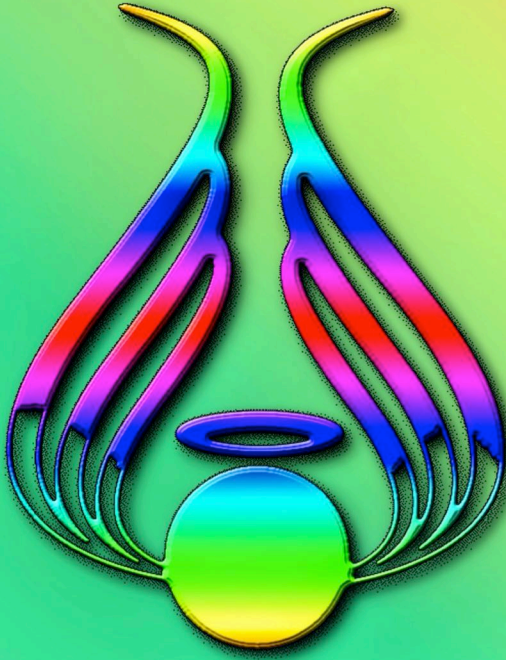
I ponder awhile, of all the rest, as daydreams begin to pierce the mess—the noise of consciousness. I still think somewhat like a monk, but I am progressing past all that bunk... I am searching, analyzing, feeling, racing fast, perhaps coming close to being truly human at last, finally reaching the only conclusion that is philosophically reachable: I am my own golden chalice to life's dripping blood! I will drink life's bountiful wine—the flood! Oh, what a 'wicked' thought of love! Shall I repent my thought? Oh, but how can I repent, when roses bloom in loving hearts? Perhaps it would be best if I give love to the parts."

*"Receive this note from my swelling tide, with a picture of a key in a lock, on my side. 'Tis a good time..."*





# The Secret Door



## — Chapter 2 — The Secret Door

So, I take my note as usual, and place it under the locked door. As I look through the keyhole, I see that there is a key in the lock on the other side. How shall I get in? *Try the door, fool!* I turn the handle but the door won't open. How can I get the key over to my side, so I can unlock the door? Should I even be trying to open the door to the nuns' convent?

What am I doing? Settle down, think, and think some more. I think other thoughts, first. Why should the monks be separated from the nuns? All are people, first and foremost, with the same natural and biological urges for companionship that all normal human beings have. Nature makes men and women both. It is as though the existence of one makes necessary the other! How can a mountain exist without a valley? How can day and night be separated, yet not kiss



at twilight when they meet? How can the Yin exist without the Yang? How can men exist, apart, from women? How can one exist without the other? It's love, it's love that makes for completeness between a man and a woman. Monastical segregation's wall doesn't seem to follow natural law. Perhaps it is just another invention of talk by those who continue to blindly walk the beaten path of traditional morality with many a weary footstep, chained to regimentation's nest. It is time to start thinking for myself. Ah, the forbidden readings' shelf is a dangerous thing indeed.



I understand how to do it now, but the paper of my note is too small, so I remove an old illustrated newspaper from the nearby shelf and slip it under the door; yes; I poke a pen through the key-hole until the key falls out and onto my newspaper. I carefully slide the paper back under the door. Now I have the key, right here on the floor! My hand trembles as I turn the key in the lock. The lock



creaks and groans with noises that sound to be so loud as to give me away, but that is only my imagination, yet my ears still hurt with every grind of the turn of that ancient lock. Bits of rust stream out of the lock, starting a small pile on the floor. I pray that the key does not break off inside the lock, and so I turn it ever so cautiously. At last, the door opens, and I am into the nunnery. The lights are off in the corridor, for no one is ever expected to use it. I can tell that she is nearby, since the scent in the air is similar to the perfume that she puts in her letters.



“Brother Peter?” she whispers.

“Yes, I am over here.”

“It is so dark that we can not see each other. It’s a crypt, Let us gently close and touch.”

“I have your cloth; be still, to embrace and hold, invisible in the dark, a spiritual holding bold.”

We embrace, warmly.

“It is so,” she relates. “Physical time and space are fading away, into a mystical experience. We now float in the dark, snuggling into



each other's being, blending in ways that seem to completely transcend the physical.”

“It is as if we both occupy the same same physical space. Mind, heart, soul, and body are all of a oneness. We drift in the blackness, floating through the universe, suspended only by our love. There is no past; no future; there is only now.”

“This is such an incredible wholeness.”

“It's the anticipation of imagination.”

“Come, there's a light beam over there.”

“I'm with you.”



“I'm opening my habit to take you in; embrace me, lovingly, longingly.”

“I feel the unlimited power of the universe around me.”

“I feel that I hold the entire universe within me.”

“It is the melding of the loving.”

“Oh, dear, ages have gone by; I must return or be missed, she muses. “I'll walk with you back to the door.”

Yet, we stop, for our good-night kiss.



“My spirit has escaped from its eternal tomb and seeks out yours.”

“I am happy that it has found me and touched me. Farewell, for now; I, too, must go back to the monastery tonight, but, one day...”

“Farewell, my saintly monk; please come to see me again.”

“Goodnight, my holy nun; please write me the time.

I walk back. I return through the door to the monastery, and smile to myself because I now know that love is reason enough for all that we do. At repast, I drink my wine, eat my food, breathe deep, and enjoy the experience of being alive in every way, for I have been given the key.



(Watchful eyes)

*“I am reading ‘One Thousand Years of Solitude’ now. When I finish, I’ll share my thoughts about it with you.”*

“You are becoming quite a source of inspiration to me, a wellspring of ideas.”

*“Have you read ‘Decameron’ by Giovanni Baccaccio? He’s a 12th century Italian writer. Most of his work is dedicated to the life of nuns and monks in monasteries. I read it when I was younger and more*



*innocent than I am now. I will reread it again to get into some of his earthy spirit.”*

*“I’ll make up a little illustrated book for you, using some words from our notes and some pictures of nuns and monks that I have.”*

*“Perhaps we can leave here together someday, somehow, but, these are only little dreams that I have, very far from reality, but I have to admit that I will not settle for less.”*



(A Candle Illuminates the Illumination)

The Sphinx is weathered and worn, yet it thinks,  
Crouching near an oasis, where camels drink...  
Let’s leave the deserted sands as a wish,  
And stop at the river to catch some fish.



# Out of the Flames



## — Chapter 3 — Out of the Flames

A monk runs in, yelling, “Fire, fire!”

I think, A voice! It shrieks and breaks the code of silence. Christ! A great tragedy! The monastical village, the library, the monastery, and the nunnery have somehow caught fire and are burning up!

The monk relates, “The fire started in the library when a candle fell onto some dry scrolls. Something about a scuffle to reach the forbidden books. Soon the entire library was engulfed in flames and was filled with terrible black smoke. The fire has since spread to the nunnery, and it’s well on its way toward the monastery. Everyone is panicking, and soon here, too, running every which way in the black smoke.”

“All but me.”

What?”



“I am used to finding my way in the dark... Oh, never mind; get out! Drag those who have succumbed.”

“You, too; it’s getting black in here. Bye.”



Ah, the velvet darkness that I love, from all of the times that I have visited my friend at night, the holy nun. I sink to the floor, and now I crawl along underneath the smoke. I find my way to the nunnery, and quickly unlock the connecting door, and head straight for her room, still in the dark, as always. I find her dazed but alive and carry her out of the nunnery and into our new life.

I tell her, “I managed to save one book from the library, my favorite, the one that I always like to work further on, the old ‘Book of Quatrains’.”

“Good. Here we all stand, outside, watching until all the buildings of the monastic village are reduced to glowing embers.”

“What will we do now?”

“Like a spark from the embers, we will rekindle ourselves from all that is remembered. We still have our inner lights. I am concentrat-



ing on them; they are growing bright. We are alive! We are free! We are renewed!”

“Well, it looks like your thousand years of solitude are over. We’ll have to live out in the world on our own; our yesterdays have truly been reduced to ashes; there’s nothing left of our life here.”

“There was no real life here. We have each other. Bring that book you saved.”



“It has an unreadable main title, but is subtitled ‘The Book of Quatrains’. Unfortunately, I was not able to save Aristotle’s greatest masterpiece, ‘Beyond Metaphysics’! It was the only copy in existence, and now it is lost to mankind forever.”

“This book will do. Is it a sin for us to continue to give love to each other?”

“Yes, in terms of our moral tradition and man-made law, the giving of love has become a sin, and, yet, we had once denied our human nature and all of the natural feelings that have welled up inside of us. And that is a crime of the natural!”

“Throughout all of history there have been many sins written into the rule books, some of them quite laughable.”



“In the monastery, I was studying many such religions and crazy cults. There are thousands of them. Start one today and you can have an immediate following tomorrow.”



“Lately, my mind has been opened through my studies of the natural sciences and the intuitive philosophies that we have been discussing.”

“Yes, it feels right to give love. But can you love the world and me as well?”

“I have found that the capacity for love is boundless. I love you, the earth, life, books, and our friends.”

“Live it! I feel that it’s right to give love.”

“Why hoard it!”

“That would be selfish. But what of these natural desires?”

“It’s difficult to suppress desire; it’s almost self-defeating, since it takes an even stronger desire to resist desire. Now I go with the natural flow, for when I try to go against the flow there is but suffering.”

“So, we’ll walk the road, then look back, in a while, at the last of it.”

We walk off into the forest.





“It’s time, she says. “Look back at the smoldering ruins of the Abbey and the Convent.”





We look back at the fire. “It’s gone.”  
“We said it in unison,” I note.  
“We’re used to sensing each others thoughts.”



“What is that flower you’re carrying?”  
“A rose. I don’t know where it came from!”  
“Perhaps it has bloomed from our love.”  
“I am your rose.”  
“Where does the rose bloom?”  
“In loving hearts.”  
“What else do you know about the rose?”  
“It’s considered the most beautiful of flowers. It is the ultimate representation of beauty in nature and life.  
She says, “Ah, let us continue on, through this fertile valley, yon, and onto the misty mountains, and beyond. We can get supplies along the way. For now, we have the book.”  
“I love this ancient book I took, sound, while the monastical village burned to the ground.”  
“It’s all that knows, and I carry but this single red rose.”



“We are the fugue, as the two movements, so let us softly hum the melody of the Pachelbel Canon, freely, each singing one of the fugal voices, for we now live as two-part harmony’s choices, as equal partners in life and love. We are, at once, free yet attached, though ranging, playful but serious, stable yet changing, thinkers yet doers, adventurous but not foolish, poetic as well as prosaic, and reasonable but passionate.”

“Yes, we’re free now!” she says, nudging me. “My God, it just sunk in fully.”

I kiss her softly on her cheek. “True, we’re free at last.”

“Take this smile of love that passes between our lips, for even though we were are now quite homeless, our life together is to become a celebration blest, so let’s happily walk on through the valley in the dark by the light of the setting moon.”

...

“Ah, false dawn has come and gone all too soon, and morning twilight now glows in the east.”

“A familiar nightingale sings in the breach, but just as quickly flies away, lo; whither and whence it goes, we cannot know.”





**— THE BEST WORLD —**

**EARTH'S A GARDEN,**

**AN OASIS IN SPACE,**

**A WORLD OF  
BOUNDLESS**

**BEAUTY & GRACE—**

**ONE COULD SEARCH**



**THE HEAVENS**



**FOR SUCH IN VAIN,**

**FINDING NO EQUAL,**



**ANY**



**TIME**



**OR ANY**

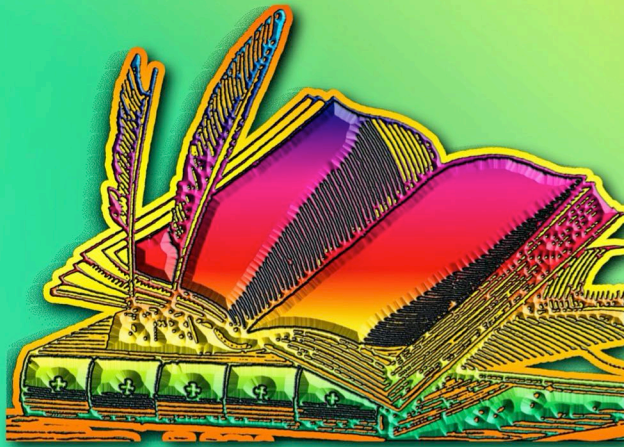


**PLACE.**

Austin Torrey © 1998



# The Verse



## — Chapter 4 — The Verse

I offer, “Now, for the verse, as first. Although day-tide has barely spoken, I, nonetheless, shall open our precious token, this mysterious book of poetry sealed with a waxen shield, this gem having been concealed for over ten centuries, in the secret chamber of the library of the old monastery’s remainder.”

“Open it as one would a tender lover.

“Lo, a small bottle is encased inside the front cover. Some of its spirit apparently escaped when the volume was undraped, for I’ve already been captivated by the Persia fumes.”

“As have I. It’s the perfume of ageless rhymes from the ancient looms of time.”

“This tome is written in some foreign language, in verses of thirteen syllables, in four-line stanzas.”





“It’s written in Persian, I’ve looked, having handled many of the foreign books, in my role as an editor in one of the abbey’s nooks.”



“It’s the library’s most valuable book, for I’ve illuminated and unhooked so many of the monastery’s great books. It was the only one I could save, but it’s the only book we’ll ever crave.

We watch the book moving, amazed.



“It’s coming to life, like a good husband in the presence of his wife.”

“I see. The words of the Persian poems are beginning to move about the page, as all over it they run, sometimes briefly changing into English ones.”

“Even entire verse-lines are dancing, as like a dervish whirling.”

“They are trying to settle, from their struggle, but the words yet again jump and juggle, although at first hanging back, but then ever surging forth, darting around through the verses’ course, within each stanza, trying to form a brighter source, in lines which still state, but in differing aspects, the original and pervading concepts.”

“’Tis as if this magical language transmogrification is attempting to preserve the entire relation of the original poetic scheme throughout the whole translation process, as devout, including literal meaning, rhythm, rhyme, melody, syllable, meter, and time; however, this



doesn't seem workative, and so it follows that something must give, and this could be the ration that is usually lost in translation."

"Perhaps. Oh, yes, look; out of that apparent desperation, uncaged, the Persian verses are jumping off of the page, and splashing into the bottle of perfume."

"Wherein they are redistilling themselves, subsumed and relumed."

"Yes, oh yes, for they are leaping back out and on to the blanked page, whereupon they are recondensing, restaging, and recomposing themselves, for our time, of this age, into Victorian style verse, forming new quatrains in which only the essence of the remains of the original concept of meaning maintains."

"The lines are now ten syllables, rather than thirteen, yet holding many more but still related meanings heretofore unseen, and the verses are still in groups of four per stanza, and the correct lines still rhyme, as per lingua, although some of the rhyming schemes don't appear to have quite the same means."

"Yes, for only some things unnecessary have been lost, and something very new has been added, the theme not tossed, something somehow much better told, although ever within the spirit of the old."

"What are you, old book?" she asks the book.

I add, "Are you alive? By you I shook.

The book answers, "I am the book of life, my pages rife with the antidotes of strife; I am a conscious dream, a living philosophy. I live forever through my words, wholly. On my pages you will find all of man's follies, joys, sorrows, wisdom, as well as all of his jollies. Read me and my ideas will come alive, demonstrating the happiest ways to survive! It is by experiencing my words that you shall know them, forwards. Yes, the arts may enrich human experience, but they're no substitutes for the living of it."

"What is your name, might I ask of the same?"

My name is but a question only, a mystery that you have to solve, namely, 'What is the name of the Rose?'

They look for a minute at the tome, deeply inhaling its perfume. The aroma cast a charm on them, granting them an indescribable joy that was quite beyond all sense and thought.

"Oh, that scent," she sighs.



“Book, you are Persia-fume.”

“The book is free now, too.”

## ( It was Persia-fume )

“It’s morning; the stars have taken flight. Night’s cup seemed empty, light, bottomless, heartless, and cold.”

“But the day is about to fill it with gold.”

“I already feel the touch of dawn, as its freshness washes over the lawn. It is a sweetness and a serenity, like a mist that drifts into a valley and fills it fresh, with moisture fully.

“I feel it, too, and so some refreshment is anticipated. I must reach up to this rose bush, unsated, to bend down the branch of Moses. Here, let us drink the dew from the roses, then stoop, very, to pick some strawberries.”



“What is the name of the rose,” I wonder?



“As I, too, was just going to say, upon that ponder.”

“On that we’ve been a silent as a cloud, until we each just spoke it aloud.”

“Yet I am without answer from the depths unplowed.”

We stroll into a flowery area.



“What a surprising forest of floral colors”, I say; “they are lush and soft, in bowers: lavender, crimson, and ever-during green, of flowers. The leaves of the previous autumn have made a multicolored carpet spun for our welcome.”

“Ideas cascade over the mind, the thoughts suddenly loosened, in time, through the inspiration from our exertion. A light rain is falling that excites our senses, calling, jogging our thoughts, unwalling.”

“Walking is good exercise, spurring thoughts, and I feel energized.”

“Yes, it gives back much more than it takes. Walking is as easy as falling forward makes!”

“Oh, yes; breathe deeply; relax about, let the thoughts flow up and out.”



“My thoughts are becoming clear. Alertness tingles in my senses, dear. Oh, I am becoming so wide awake. I love this world and everything it makes.”

“Breathe in all that’s good, freely, then breathe out all that’s bad, really.”

“I feel peace flowing into me, truly; it’s warm, wet and glad.”

“It’s spreading through your body and into your spirit, is it not, my lady?”

“Oh yes, oh yes, dear yes, my lad; this is the best life I’ve ever had!”

“It’s like an eager sap rising in the veins; we’re inspired by the warmth of the spring rain.”

“Because we’ve lived through winter’s chills, to see yet another round of daffodils!”

“Like sparks from the smoldering embers, tame, we rekindle our fires from nature’s undying flame.”



“Could it be that a rose is a rose is a rose?”

“No, for that answer would be much too easy to pose.”





# The Poetic Form



The verses beat the same, in measured chime;  
 Lines one/two set the stage, one/two/four rhyme.  
 Verse three's the pivot around which thought turns  
 Line four delivers the sting—just in time.



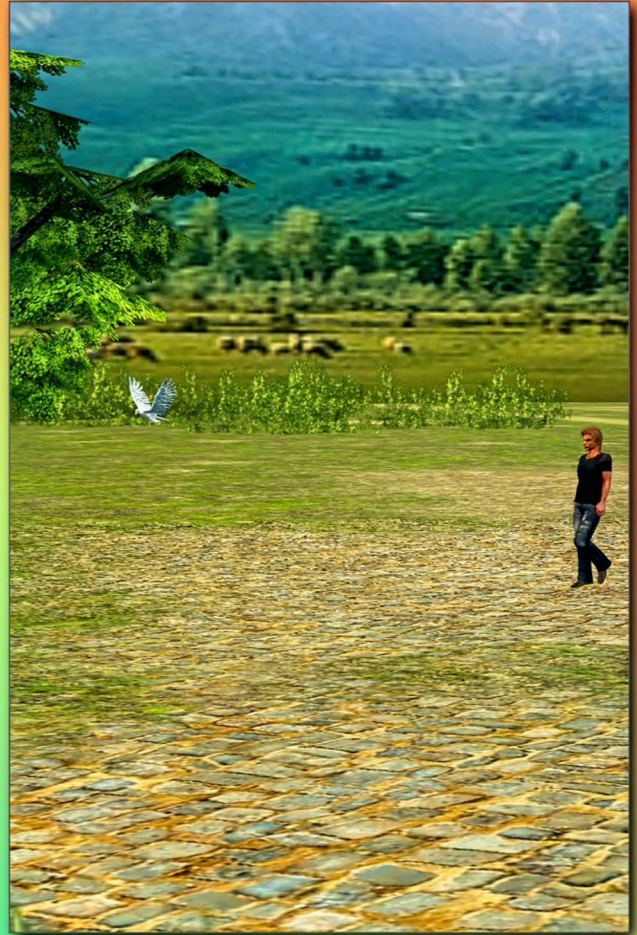
## The Quatrains of Austin Patrick Torrey



"What is the  
 name  
 of the rose?"



# Picaresque



## — Chapter 5 — Picaresque

“There’s a movement in the bushes,” she observes.

“A man is trapped in those rushes.”

“He is snared in a web of promises that weigh him down, by wishes, for he always puts things off the row, as one who ever waits for tomorrow.”

“Look at this page, man, a quatrain in my hand.”

“The web is collapsing, freeing the man.”

“There is writing on the ground under his feet, of words very sound: they read ‘NOW!’, in big letters round.”

“The revelation has hit him like an hourglass, one made of the heaviest welded brass, as a relief of realization washes over him fast. He is muttering to himself.”



The man exclaims, "There is only today! It's the only shelf! Why fret about other days that tweet, if today can be so very sweet?"

"Hear hear!"

**( NOW! )**

The man continues, "Stretching my present row to distant calendar columns so, by all my tenuously made vows is what created the complicated web of promises in the first place bred, a trap that has taken away all my 'nows'. 'Now' is the time! I'm sure. I must seize the moment's shore or lose its momentum forevermore!"

She notes, "The man is running off, seemingly weightless, flying aloft."

I declare, "We, the he and she, as the harmonic subjects of this new story, must yet wander ever onward, past the path of worry. Love is in the air, filling the voided space with glory."

"Never wait! It ever wrinkles the brow. The only real time under our feet is NOW!"

"These lovely moments rife, are giving me the time of my life! I savor each one, its treat, and then comes another, just as sweet."

...

She frowns, "Lo, the woods are growing dense, filling with mist and shadowed goods."

"What's that fuss, behind us?"

"An old witch has just sprung up, to our rear, she being the specter of fear, and of all that is worrisome here."

The witch asks, "What is your deepest fear?"

We don't answer.

The witch continues, "Do I ask of the air? Hell, death? Which shall it be? How about Heaven? Is that it? All three?"

"I banish you," I say, "for death is merely the natural end of all living things of nature's blend. What has no death has no life principle! My turn to live would never have come about, to ripple, if it were not for the deaths before, of people. As for Heavens and Hells, those are what we create within ourselves, as we can turn our souls outside



in, to create a Heaven or Hell from within. Hell surely arrives when we make our own difficulties, in life's wake, when we our common sense forsake. However, I do have one fear that's grown, although just one alone."



"What is that fear?, the witch pleads. "My hopes suddenly rise in pitch, but my form is ready to fade, due to your anxiety unmade."

Angelina cuts in, "I'll answer for him, as his partner, for I am his opposite twin and can think his thoughts. His one and only fear be-sought is that of not living well, as ought!"

I add, "So, with that answer furnished, witch, you, the specter of fear doth vanish, like the mist, cold, on the morning wind unrolled."

**(FEAR)**

We move on, as she says "Our fugal voices can now resume, to hum the two-part Pachelbel Canon's words, its soulful music sweep-



ing us onward, upward, inward, and outward, as our voices blend and part, weaving in and out, once they start.”

“When does the rose bloom?” I rue, seeking some general botanical clue to the book’s mysterious and questionable rule.

“The rose blossoms on the summer solstice even, arising from the only kiss that’s ever given to the arriving summer, from the vanishing spring, the kiss of which spring dies in giving, as they sing.”

She continues, adding, “I, a-Rose.”

We move on, noting a cemetery, and I say, “I love this song, but, ah, here’s a cemetery’s yawn, so cold and abrupt, for here is an empty grave, opened up.”

“Let’s jump right into it, to better read the marble’s script.”

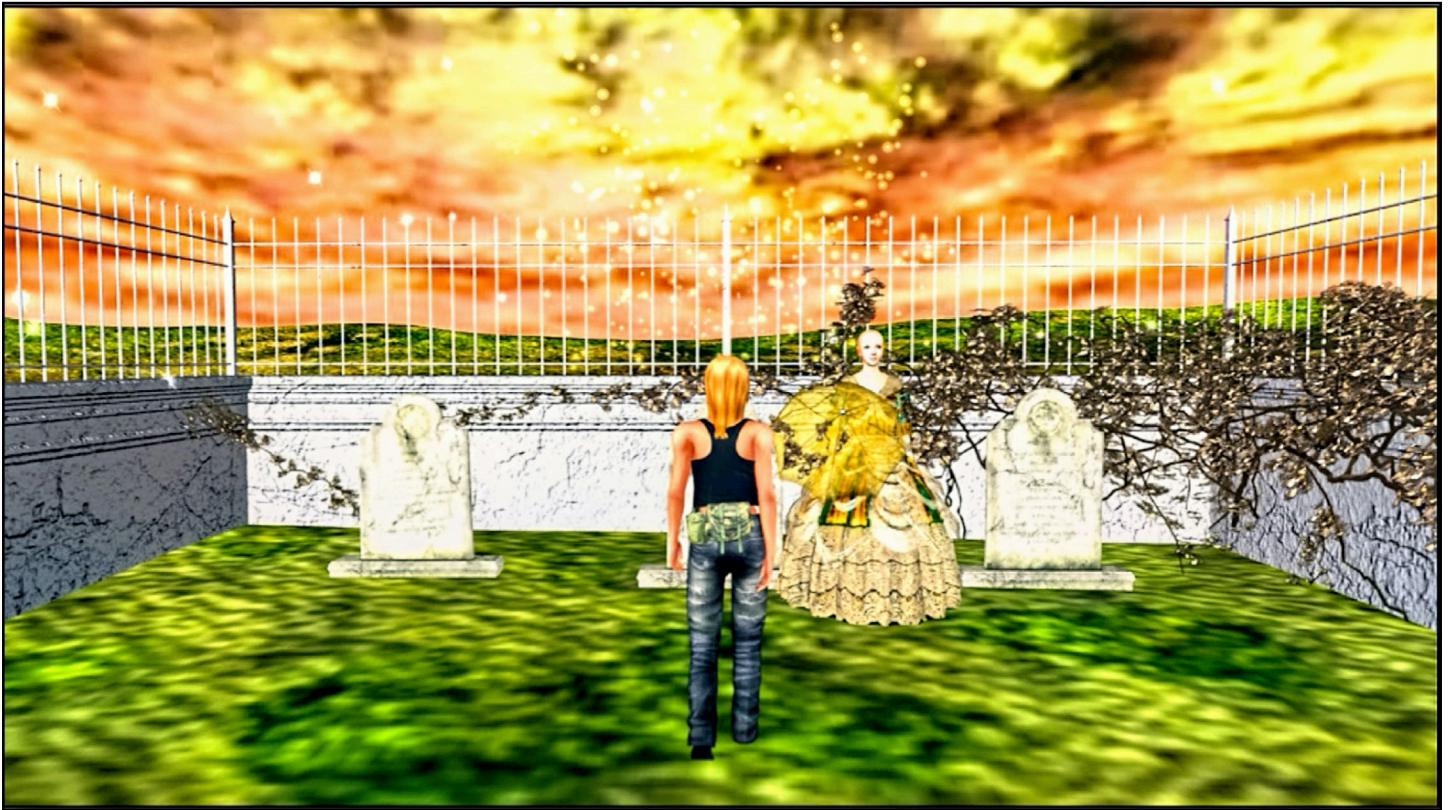
### **THE LAST REMEMBRANCE**

**EN-GRAVED IS “THE END” OF YOUR EARTHLY SIGH:  
SIX SIDES ’ROUND YOU: FIVE ARE DIRT, ONE IS SKY.  
SHOV’LING, DEATH TALKS TO YOU AT LAST AND SAYS:  
“WHAT WERE YOU DOING DURING ALL OF NIGH?”**





A little girl arrives, with a withered rose.  
Angelina hails. "Hi! A little girl with curls."



The little girl states, "Those who live must learn of death told, so that all the better they may breathe as old. Run along now, you two, with ease, before Death himself, quite a sight, arrives with his shovel's plight, for you are standing in a grave site. Which of you is ready for his scythe's tooth? Behold my rose as you go, for sooth, and take note of my eternal youth, for that which can never die must be forever young and spry!"

Angelina says, "Let's hurriedly continue on, to strive, a bit shaken, but feeling much more alive."

"One must be aware of death espied, in order to live life more fully, I surmise."

"How then shall we live?"

"Let us live each day as if it were our last."

"I can improve on that. Let us also live each day's sun as if our life had just begun!"

"May I look again at that living book of philosophy?"

"I hand it to you, softly."



We look at the book, she noting, “It has words with matching pictures in it!”

“Or perhaps it has pictures in it, served, with matching words, as the counter,” I counter.

The book replies, “I am neither, yet both, for the pictures drawn, and the words read, offer mutual support, joining together, each reflecting off of the other, thus building and spiraling in the mind’s arena into a more complete perception of the ideas. The words appeal, at first, to the logical kind, the intellectual part of the mind. The pictures appeal, at first, to the passionate, artistic, and sensual portion of the sensate. The two mind ‘images’ then merge into the wholeness of truth and beauty converged. The intellect can then ‘sense’ without the senses’ sect, while the senses can ‘intellectualize’ without the intellect.”

“It’s a rather thorough experience.

Enlightened, we give each other a hug and on continue.

I point, “A nightingale is flying by the plain. Look, it’s the bird exclaimed!”

“And someone is chasing it, in vain.”





“The wingéd creature just past was carrying an hourglass. The bird is evidently one of eternity’s livelier moments shunned, one that has resisted or escaped capture, un-won.”

“A man is running after it, winded, but the bird never lands; it just flies higher and higher, and then, finally, disappears altogether.”

The running man tells us, “That was my momentary bird of time, I say with rhyme. ‘Twas one of eternity’s moments as within my grasp. I had indeed seized it, however, I then lapsed, for I then decided to wait to view it at some later time, but, in that meanwhile, it flew away! The bird steals my time of day; now I am running after the moment and trying to recapture it, this instant. But the bird never lands; I’m spent!”

“Time flies! It’s gone to never-never land, an eraser!”

“The moment is lost, unknown! The bird is flown.”

( *TIME FLIES* )







# THE YEAR

**WINTER** storms the YEAR

In the **MONTH** of Bran-new-airy,

Then **FEB-BURIES** us in **SNOW**...

*March, Lady April! Spring!* —

Let's reign as we *May*

With sum(mer)maids

Named *June* and *Ju-lie*,

Until, after *A-gust* of

**HOI** withering wind,

The sunny **PIKE** burns out—

*'Cept embers, when*

Leaves **FALL** into **OCT-TOMB-BURR**—

Till—no leaves, no sunlight,

No sky, no warmth—**No-venber!**

Next de **RAIN**, de **sleet**, de **COLD-**

**De-cember,**

When all that we can do

Is but sweet **Remember.**

— P. Torney © 2000 —



# Onward



## — Chapter 6 — Onward

“Ho,” I say so, “another rosebush; inhale the fragrant rush!”

“The rose is the most beautiful of what nature does. Perhaps a rose does smell just as sweet by any other name or tweet, just as Shakespeare said, for it enters my head.”

“Could be, could be. Perhaps the rose’s name doesn’t really matter.”

“Maybe, maybe not.”

“From this high mountain, we might look back, atop, to catch one last glimpse of the flop, of the monastical village off in the distance, where it ran out of persistence.

“There it is, still smoldering.”

“I stare at it half fondly, as that’s where I met you warmly.”





“Here, now, a little stream, where the water runs the rocks over, all a gleam, as it tinkles around the stones, as seen. Water may conquer fire, but with a lot of steam, such a woman with a man.”

“Ah, yes. I spent many long days in that monastery, trying to unravel eternity’s deepest mysteries, but, alas, the only thing that I learned was that the secret of the universe is far beyond the sensibility of one’s existence. It is way beyond mere physics; indeed, it is called metaphysics! Yes, all was just a mere show of shadow, there, of dim and faint direction, though they all said they knew well of the ultimate and unknown perfection. For me, as I chased those flitting reflections they just as quickly fled away before me, at my slightest touch, each and every day.”

She smiles and holds me close, without pause, “The realization that it was a lost cause, my dear, was the knowledge of rubble which freed you from that philosophical struggle! Now, for you, life will no longer senseless be, for you are free, to enjoy the main reality, one that impinges on your rationality from the six common senses’ sense, the mind being the sixth sense, for it makes sense of the other five. No more chasing of faith’s phantasms live!”



“Yes, I’m free at last I cheer. Free to directly touch all that is real or seemingly here. No more will my thoughts attempt to make claims beyond the limits of the kempt, no more will I speculate on mere faith alone, no more reaching for those faint shadows, flown, of dim phantoms of reflections’ purity that are so many levels removed from reality. Now, and only now, sensibly, can I fully sense the one and only reality that penetrates into my rationality.”



“Yes. See the clear water, surely! Hear it rush along. Taste its purity. Feel its coolness. Smell the freshness. Life’s sensation is the main attraction! Ah, we’re back in touch with the world as known. Too long have we given up the time we’ve sown to excessive worry, hurry, and scurry blown.”

“Yes, I’m drinking-in the pleasures now! In the stream I see a face I know; it’s that of yesterday’s summer wanderer, my own, free again to shine on the world we own.”

“Let us roam at ease, savoring the balm in every breeze, drinking the sweets from the flowers, kissing under every tree, enjoying the earth’s favors, and meandering on, following the water’s flow, as it



leads us ever so, going with it, by not struggling against it, but becoming it.”

“Real-ize.”

( Real-ize )

She espies, “Another spectral vision appears before our sum, a brightness that shines much like the sun.

The vision shines its words, “I am Dame Fortune, Lady Luck shining upon your noon. In turn, I visit everyone who lives the state opportune. You two have turned your meeting into good fortune. You are lucky; others don’t see me when I come, or they ignore me, and some, they refuse to take a chance on me, not even one, for they are busy going nowhere before they become. Of course, then it is a while before again I come.”

“We bid you fond farewell and sweet return,” Angelina answers.

Lady Luck rebids, “I wish you well as you walk on, through this strange land, a place where all things are possible, but where all ideas have to be very well lived before they can ever be written.”

We walk on.

“Peter, I look at this red rose that I still carry. It’s for you. We’re married.”

“I will surround the blossom of your flower with my unselfish love.”

“My blossom unfolds over you, as does your own within me, too.”

“We’ll refold and enfold each other’s home.”

“I’ll enrapt you, like the words of a poem.”

“Let’s again open the tome, the mysterious book of poems.”

“What is the name of the rose? Oh, magic book that knows, can you not tell us now what’s true, after all that we’ve been through?”

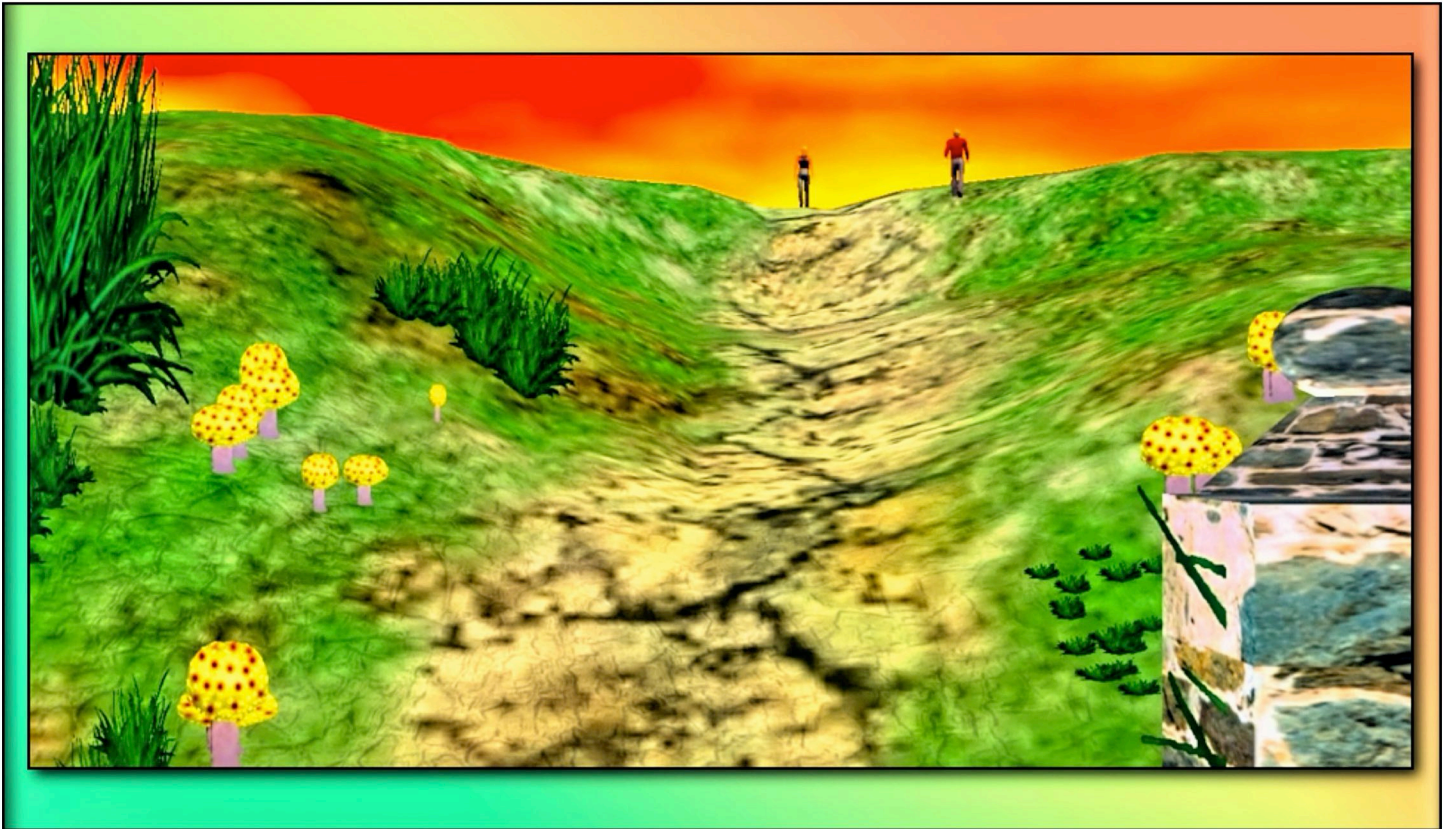
The book replies, quite alive, “There is much more to arrive. I shall answer you as time wears on. It all has to do with the life of the rose. So you shall see; it is of the thorn that grows.”

I answer, “I’m eager for the quest, to enter into our innermost bowers’ rest, of our of flowered spirits’ yin, savoring there all the flora within.



“I can now almost understand the flower, and much that our speechless memory has devoured, all that life’s drudgery has stolen and overpowered.”

We move on.



Angelina gestures, “Upon that hill, I see a lady, ill, sleeping in the middle of the path, so let us stop to look at what blight she hath, and to you, my she, my rosy partner, I say it free, that in my mind I see a flame that’s growing dim; it’s the depressed spirit of that drowsing woman.”

“Tell her, tell her! Bring life to her.”

“From me to your ear: I am Life, my dear. I lay you sleeping in your mother’s womb, and one day I’ll have to leave you all too soon, when you sleep in the earth’s silent tomb, yet now I find you, so newly abloom, but sleeping away the time, all a-weep, now, in between those longer and deeper sleeps. I am whispering a lovely dream for your cheer. Wake! Live! Life is a dream come true here. The rose abloom withers all too soon.”

Angelina lays the rose on the woman’s chest. “My rose, to your chest; we must now continue on our quest.”



“Oh, look back; the sleeper’s pose is now as sitting up and clutching the rose.”

“Her flame is growing, out of the sighs, for now she’s looking on the bright side.”

“The woman probably now gleans that she had a vivid dream, a phantasmic reality scene.”

“I always listen to my daydreams.”

“Yes, me too, it seems.”

On we go.

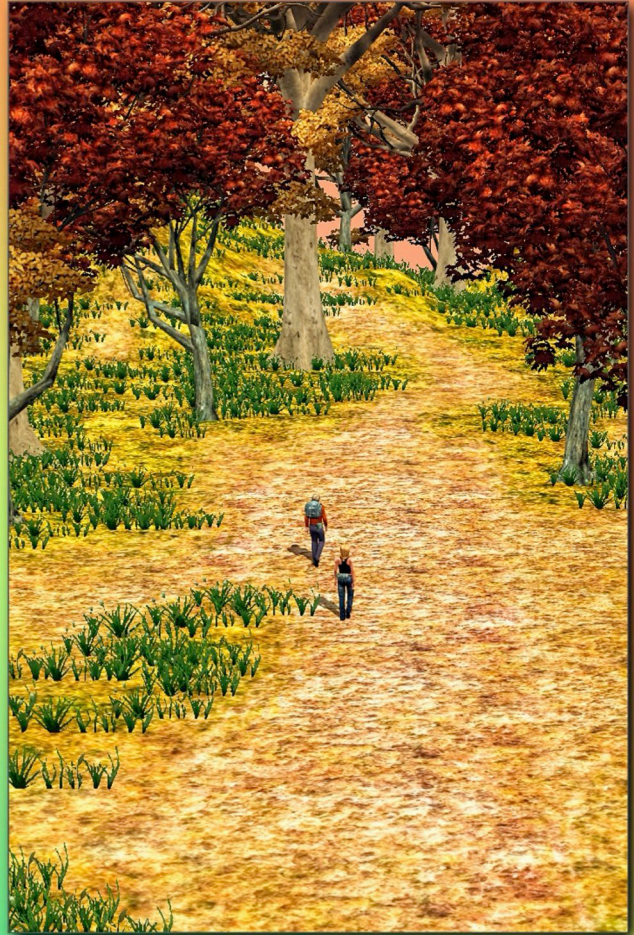


(Gathering supplies)

No more reaching for the faint shadows flown—  
Mind’s dim phantoms of reflections’ not known...  
Those wished visions of hopeful purity  
Many levels removed from reality.



# On With Words



## — Chapter 7 — On With Words

I figure, “Daydreams pierce the noise of consciousness, to tell us of that which is best for us.”

“Daydreams are full of thoughts promenading, on parade, before our own eye’s shading.”

“Wishes and fantasies cascade freely over the mind, directly presenting themselves to us, in kind, as our very own suggested roads to find.”

“Well, by merely aspiring to the goal’s net, one’s already halfway to the realization of it.”

“Yes, and all that we now have together, blest, was once a dream, no less, that was loved into being, from merely the seeing.”

“Because life grows from visions we contemplate, those that we symphonically orchestrate.”



“Yes, but one must act on those plans already made.”

“True, for, by dusk, the phantom shapes may fade.”

“Well, if beliefs are blown but of a halfhearted fife, then so will be one’s life.”

“Let our dreams, wishes, in the main, become one and the same!”

“Pay close attention to your desires, wishes, and ken. Deny not those dreams welling up from the soul’s den, for it is one’s duty to fulfill them.”

“It guarantees happiness, really, for then you know exactly what you require to be happy.”

“Come along, oh, I beam, sweet-dream!”

“We’re awakening, musing in a world of our making.”

## ( DREAMS )

I look off. “The Bird of Time flies by once again, but the bird chaser can never on it gain, for the bird lives in a perpetual ‘now’ (not then), a constant sunrise, in which, for sure, it ever flies forward, into the future. One wing is black and the other is white, in fact. As the bird flies overhead and around, a checkerboard pattern, as we’d found, forms all over the ground.”

“What can it mean?”

“I think I’m starting to catch on, and I’m proud.”

“Me, too. The wings of Time are black and white, for one is the day and one is the night, for fluttering ‘round the night flies the daylight.”

“We knew it well, and still! We are all players on the checkerboard’s till, of days and nights, as on a calendar, until...”

“...Until the game ends our persistence, and we’re put back in the box of nonexistence.”

“But, in the meanwhile, I thank Destiny’s Dame, for at least letting me play the game!”

“Of course, my dearest; we’ll make a game of that fuss which makes as much of us!”

“Let’s play!”

“I’m game, I say.”



“And so we travel on, as loves, ready to make our moves.

I say, amazed, “In the midst of this scenic meadow, I am surprised to see, oh, what looks like a large and living pen walking by, as so.”

“What are you, pen?”

“I’m now the artist’s stylus. I am finally freed from the pen!”



“How so?”

“I will no longer illustrate the written word. From now on I will draw whatever is seen and heard. Then writers and poets can re-describe my sketches with their wondrous words and jive!”

“I get it,” she says. “The proof of writing is in the living of it, especially one’s philosophical advice, as writ. Live it, feel it, and then write it.

“Now there is a living poem, who seems to be a companion of the artist’s pen.”

“What are you, poem?” she asks.

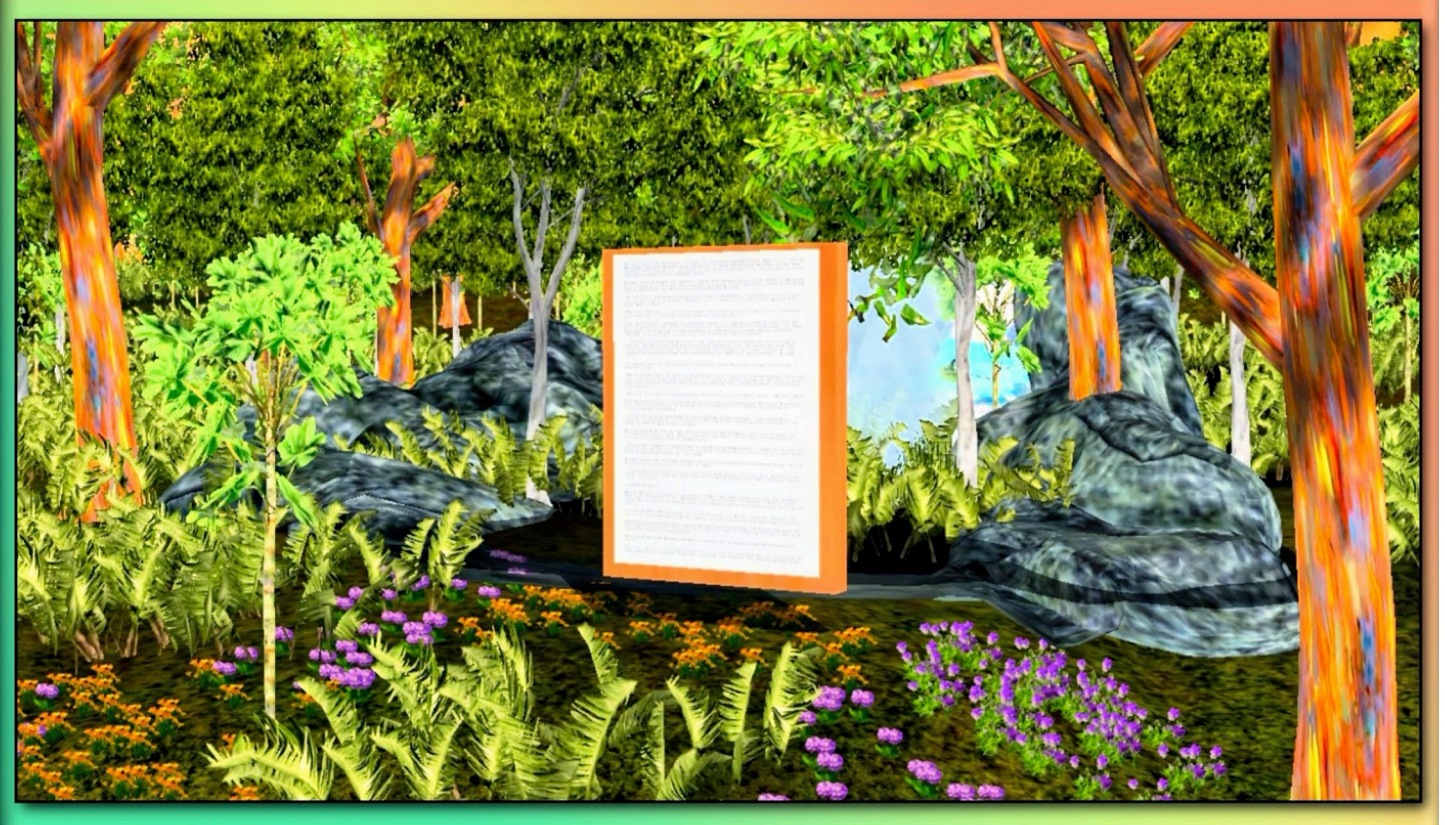
“I deal with ever enduring themes, those universal to everyones’ means. As you can see, I am structured, intense, rhythmic, melodic, and pure. I am a unified body of sensation, thoughts, and passions.



I translate all that is felt, suchly, although sometimes only very roughly.”

“Are you essence or existence?” I wonder.

“I am both; I am the form as well as the idea risen. I am an object that is born of precision, from one’s profoundest visions. I am the image of feeling in diction. I am, at once, all the remains, both the container and the contained.”



“You’re an expression of the inner mess that may be difficult to express,” she notes.

“I am truth, fleshed in living words attended. I express thoughts subtended, those that would otherwise go unapprehended. I lift the veil that separates mind from soul, and thereby show the proof of beauty told. I am life’s image drawn in the eternal truths of old.”

“You are immortal then,” I splice.

“Poetry makes immortal what is best in life, by freeing images from all the strife, those in our spirits that are deeply impressed, for, these vanishing notions I arrest, clothe them in words, the best, and then send them forth, fully dressed.”

“So how is it known if I’ve written a poem?” she questions.



“Well, use the highest powers of language and wit to translate the nature into poetic words, lit. The reader will translate the words back into spirit. If the reader’s soul responds, then a poem you’ve writ!”





I offer, “Let us write a poem about love, for that is the greatest thing known of, but it’s hard to get it to rhyme. Out of desperation, we have the following lines:”

### The Trouble with ‘Love’

*Only a few words rhyme with the above,  
Like the overflown ‘dove’, the heartless ‘shove’,  
And the ill-fitting ‘glove’. Alas, ‘love’s’ rhymes  
Remain unheard of, or aren’t well thought of.*

“Let us walk along the earth, feeling our words’ worth.”

## ( WORDS’ WORTH )

“A man is running,” I see. “Where are you going so fast, Quick Man, to run! You’re running down the trail, at a withering pace, and then trip and fail, ever trying to look afar.”

The quick man replies, “I want to see what’s up the road, down thar!”

“Down where?” We ask together, like the two fugal voices of the famous musical canon’s choices.

“Way, way down there, for the next trail blazes there!”

I say, “I see but the misty trails of haze in the distance as they all blend into a maze.”

“There’s a new road out there somewhere, I’ve got to hurry up and get there. I’m in a dither and I must go hither, thither, and whither.”

“And when you get there, too, then what will you do?” she asks.

“Why, I guess I’ll hurry up yonder, so I can get down the road even further.”

So I say, “Why don’t you stop and smell the roses’ brew? This rapid pace is withering you!”

She notes, “Ah, the inspiring revelation now hits the quick-walking guy, like a thunderbolt from the sky, so he sits down, no longer in a rushing mood, to cry.”



The quick man laments, “I am a fool’s errand thrown. All around me is the beauty sown, that this moment calls her very own, and I’ve been looking on past the known. I couldn’t see the forest for the trees. What sense does it make—jeeze—to live a life that has no time to please, to nest? Serenity will never find me, lest, I slow down, to smell, hear, feel, see, touch, bless, and as such savor life’s loving caress.”



I sign off, “We leave you with your sense, you having just said in your long slowed down sentence all that we would have said and meant, and so we’ll walk the morning away, marveling at its beautiful sway.”

( S l o w d o w n )

She happily observes, “The winds of May’s highs and lows are making love to the flowers that grow, moving them this way and that, to and fro, nurturing them so. Spring seedlings reach for the light of day, drinking deep droughts of the sunny bouquet.”

“The woods are bursting bright, with the joy of life’s delight.”

“Perhaps beauty’s pose is the name of the rose.”



“Could be. Look at these flowers along the trail side. Many fine flowers are beginning to slide from the ground that we share. There’s the tulip, the lily, and the rose, all growing together!”

“What does it mean so, when they all together grow?”

“Well, the tulip is a very dependable sign of spring; one can always count on what it brings; so, tulips have always stood for truth. The lily is often white, the proof, so it represents purity and goodness bright. As for the rose, it is the symbol of beauty’s might.”

“So, these three combined together—truth, goodness, beauty, there—are extremely meaningful when braided in length, for they make up love, giving it its strength.”

“We’ve grown our flowers with care.”

“Yes, and so the storms can never scatter them bare.”

“Love is not an easy thing to grow.”

“That’s good, because if love was so, then it wouldn’t be worth more than woe.”

“Raise a cheer, slap the hands to pledge, again refreshed to the edge, through the ancient book’s insight and knowledge.

**( Love = Truth + Beauty + Goodness )**

“I’ll wink at you very soon, putting on the rare perfume that we found encased in the book’s remains, called the Book of Quatrains. The name of the scent is printed on the bottle and is called ‘Omar’s Enchantment’, that’s all.”

“It’s delightful. I must savor what it supposes. It smells like a mix of incense, wine, and roses. Oh, my, it’s stimulating my inner spirit; it composes.”

“It’s sublime.”

“It also has hints of sandalwood, jasmine, lotus, and saffron fine.”

“It’s some sort of an elixir of wine.”

“It says on the label that the ‘fume’ therein has escaped from an interment within, and that it shall forever take the passerby unaware. Oh, I’m already affected by it! Let’s stop here.”

“Yes. Let’s have lunch; it’s free; there are ripe apples on the trees.”

“And there is clear water amidst the stream’s reeds.”



# All That Lies Between



— Chapter 8 —  
**All That Lies Between**

“Oftentimes, back in the monastery bred, when the wine in my glass was as red as the blood of Christ that he bled, I longed for the clear water fed from the wayside stream instead.”

“Let’s stop at a cliff high along the riverside, and push some leaves around and aside to make a cushion on which we can ride. Here we’ll eat lunch and hold each other close. The sun is warm on the skin but not a roast, for the water is trading light breezes with the coast. I’ll pull out a loaf of bread first, a bottle of wine, and then the book of verse.”

“What page are we on, this day, by the way?”

“It says, today, that this is Heaven on Earth in every way!”

“That’s our page!”



“Let us be intimately close, without words, and rest in each other’s arms afterwards.”

“Ah, the fainting embers of yesterday; off in the distance I see one last wisp of smoke upon the horizon. That’s all that’s left of the monastical village.”



“All things arise, and then all things go where they went, for life is transitory, volatile, and impermanent.”

“Flow and change are basic features of life; in fact, they are life.”

“Pain begins when one resists the flow that is inherent in the pattern of our changing row.”

“Yes. Empires come and go; Sultan after Sultan rises to the throne, but, after they’re gone and briefly known, the summer still blooms with the rose, and still the water in the river flows.”

“It is all that lies between: energy’s dispersion, from the beginning to the end, it seems.”

“It is a beauty and a brilliance flashing up in its destructance, for, everything isn’t here to stay its ‘best’; it’s merely here to die in its sublimeness.”



“Like slow fires making their brands, it breeds; yet, ever consumes and moves on, as more it feeds, then spreads forth anew, this un-purposed dispersion, an inexorable emergence with little reversion, ever becoming of its glorious excursions through the change that patient time restrains, and feasting upon the glorious decayed remains, in its progressive march through losses for gains.”

“The deepest structure of change is but decay; although, it’s not the quantity of energy’s say that causes decay, but the quality, for it strays.”

“Energy that is localized is potent to effect change, and, in the course of causing change, it ranges, spreading, and becomes chaotically distributed losing its quality but never of its quantity rid.”

“The key to all this, as we will see, is that it goes through stages wee, and so it doesn’t disperse all at once, as might one’s paycheck inside of a month.”

“This harnessed decay results not only for civilizations, but for all the events going fore in the world and the universe beyond, it accounting for all discernible change, of all that ever gets so rearranged; for, the quality of all this energy kinged declines, the universe unwinding, as a spring.”

“Chaos may temporarily recede, quality building up for a need, as when cathedrals are built, or forms, and when symphonies are performed; but, these are but local deceits, born of our own conceits; for, deeper in the world of kinds the spring inescapably unwinds, driving its energy away, as ALL is being driven by decay.”

“The quality of energy meant is of its dispersal’s extent. when it is totally precipitate, it destroys; but when its gait is geared through chains of events it can produce civilization’s tenants.”

“Ultimately, energy naturally, spontaneously, and chaotically disperses, causing change, irreversibly.”

“It is all of the necessitated restraint, for it ever takes time the scene to paint, as such as in the unfolding of a leaf, the endurances for any stepping feat, as of the emergence of consciousness and the paused ends of energy’s restlessness, as of the controlled consequence of collapse, rather than one that’s wholly precipitous.”



“So, now all is known, of our heres and nows within this parentheses of the eternal bough, as well as the why and how of it all has come, and of our universe’s end, but, that others become.”

“Out of energy’s dispersion and decay of quality...”

“...Comes the emergence of growth and complexity.”

“Energy goes through its paces, and so it was that I dreamt a lot during the winter moon, when I was wrapped, thought bound, in a cocoon.”

“Me too. My imagination and memory were king!”

“Now the mind can rest, while the senses reign and sing, for spring’s returned and our winter dreams take wing!”

“I had a dream last night, which granted that I was living on another planet... I was out walking at night with a child, nigh, examining the lights of the night sky, explaining the names of the stars, when, suddenly, the Earth blew up, quite afar; oh, it thoroughly exploded, in blazes solar, or perhaps even nuclear. The child then said to me, clear, ‘Look! Oh, look, mon pere! Look at the pretty shooting star!’”

“Such is the relative importance and worth of the Earth in the scheme of those which burst.”

“How insightful we are becoming trained, since reading this Book of Quatrains!”





## — Chapter 9 — The Desert

She notes a change in the landscape, “As the water of life, we flow thoughtfully onward along the trail, ironically now coming out into an arid region’s tail, ever hoping to find a fine village someday, one that we might call home and away.”

“But, for now, we have come upon a Sphinx that is weathered and worn, yet it thinks, crouching next to an oasis, where camels drink.”



The Sphinx relates, “My name is ‘Aquavita’; I’m now retired. I am all that remains of a once great empire. Look around and see that nothing is left in place; read what is engraved on my nameplate.”

“It reads:” she begins.

I continue, “Time on its stream brings all sweet things to us; time is the drink that quenches human thirst. Water of life: we drink time, it drinks us! Time on its stream bears all sweet things from us.”

“Look at the imprints in the rocks.”



“These are fossils that, too, can be read, I having studied the natural sciences’ rock bed, when secretly perusing the library’s forbidden books, while illustrating them in my sanctorium nook. The fossils are hundreds of millions of years old.”

“That’s sounds like a long time you’ve told.”

“Long enough for death to have chosen the life path of many a species, some frozen.”

“And here we stand, fore, on the shoulders of all who have come before: we are the present smile of eternity, wrought from eons of hardship’s fraternity.”

“We’re alive; it’s all ours! No retreat. Nature has made it so! It’s quite a treat!”

“I won’t waste it, as mild. for how could I ever live, so wild, by any other style but to smile!

“So now we can move on, happy with reveling smiles, here, in the present moment, atop the miraculous pile of those who came before, thankful for all their wiles.”

“We’re here! It is now! All is sent. There is no time like the present! Ah, the magic book opens.”





The book speaks, “And there’s no present like the time spent. Revise your calendars! Invest in today’s conversion, for the future contains a severe interest penalty’s reversion—when the certainty of the moment is held mortgage for the imagined Deeds of Futurity’s way; the calendar contains only today. The days are no longer numbered the old way! Strike off dead yesterday’s ‘done’ and unborn tomorrow’s sun. Now is the time of your present comprehension. Now is when you have reality’s attention. All else is not here, and is just a mention. The past exists only in your memoration, the future only in your imagination. All creation takes place in the present station.”

I note, “The book is now silent; it has finished its enlightenment.”

“What then is tomorrow?”

“Look to the eastern horizon; see, it has but a dim glow on. Tomorrow is just a faint gleam from afar; but, what is yesterday’s par?”

“I see the smoke and haze, westerly. Ah, yesterday is but a cold ash of thee.”

“Here’s a wide log; let us sit on it to rest a while, humming the Pachelbel Canon, mild, adding words to it from a poem that we know, thereby creating a song, music through and thru! It goes something like: Then, where and when will we touch again...”

“Why do people take to songs so heartily?”

“Because songs can touch one’s spirit truly, so very deeply and thoroughly.”

“But how? Why?”

“There are wordless rhythms in what we call the soul. Poetry, in a rather approximate way, I am told, attempts to translate the soul’s rhythms into words. Melody, on the other hand, being already wordless, plays directly on the heart’s strings. A song, being a poem set to music, sings, and thus causes heart and soul to ring and blend into one grand and glorious experience.”

“Yes, and it all seems to flow so smoothly.”

“Music, like life, consists of the ‘what how’ of what I would call a ‘smoothly rolling now’.”

“I feel that I know your meaning, but, please explain the further seaming seeming.”



“Well, the total effect of music comes from, I’m sure, the smooth transition through past, present, and future, this, thanks to a correspondence rationed, in memory, sensation, and imagination. Memory recalls the past few musical tones that have come just before the ‘now’ that we own; sensation lives ever in this ‘now’ as known, and therefore it savors the present tones; imagination looks to the future rounds, anticipating the coming sounds.”

“Ah, I get it. The delight is such as is known, that none of the three could produce alone!”

“Yes, and similarly, there is an award: for each one of life’s moment’s words contains eternal reward, since both past and the future are smoothly rolled up thereinward.”

“We live in the paradisaal ‘now’, at last, wherein each moment is eternally vast.”

“What’s this? A sign giving directions to nowhere’s time?” I note and ask.

## NEVER LAND

TAKE THE ROAD OF “EVENTUALLY” TOWARD “SOMEDAY”,  
TURN BACK AT THE FORK OF “MAYBE” AND “PERHAPS”,  
PASS THE WINDING PATH WHERE “IT COULD HAVE BEEN”—  
THEN YOU’VE ARRIVED IN THE LAND OF “NEVER”!

“Next to the sign, just above the ground, there is a disembodied frown,” she finds.

So I inquire, “What are you, frown, substance or vision?”

“I am Regret, having lived twice, for once I was a being full of life. The child in me was warm, playful, and bold—then vanished, ere I knew, leaving me cold. Only the regret remains, getting very old.”

“What happened?” She asks.

“Well, in my youth, which I remember dearly, when I heard the sounds of life so clearly, my hopes were very much alive, sincerely, and my dreams readily became reality, but, then, quite imperceptibly, I got sidetracked, having been swept up, alas, into the mainstream of the mindless mass. I gave up the good things in life, and



began suffering all kinds of strife, from useless endeavors and pursuits, and then got involved in disputes, not even having time to write or read, to boot. Before I was even aware of it so rife, the echoes of the sounds of my earlier life that I'd once heard clear and plain as life's call had disappeared completely, all, and, ultimately, I'll never forget it, all that was left was the frown of regret."

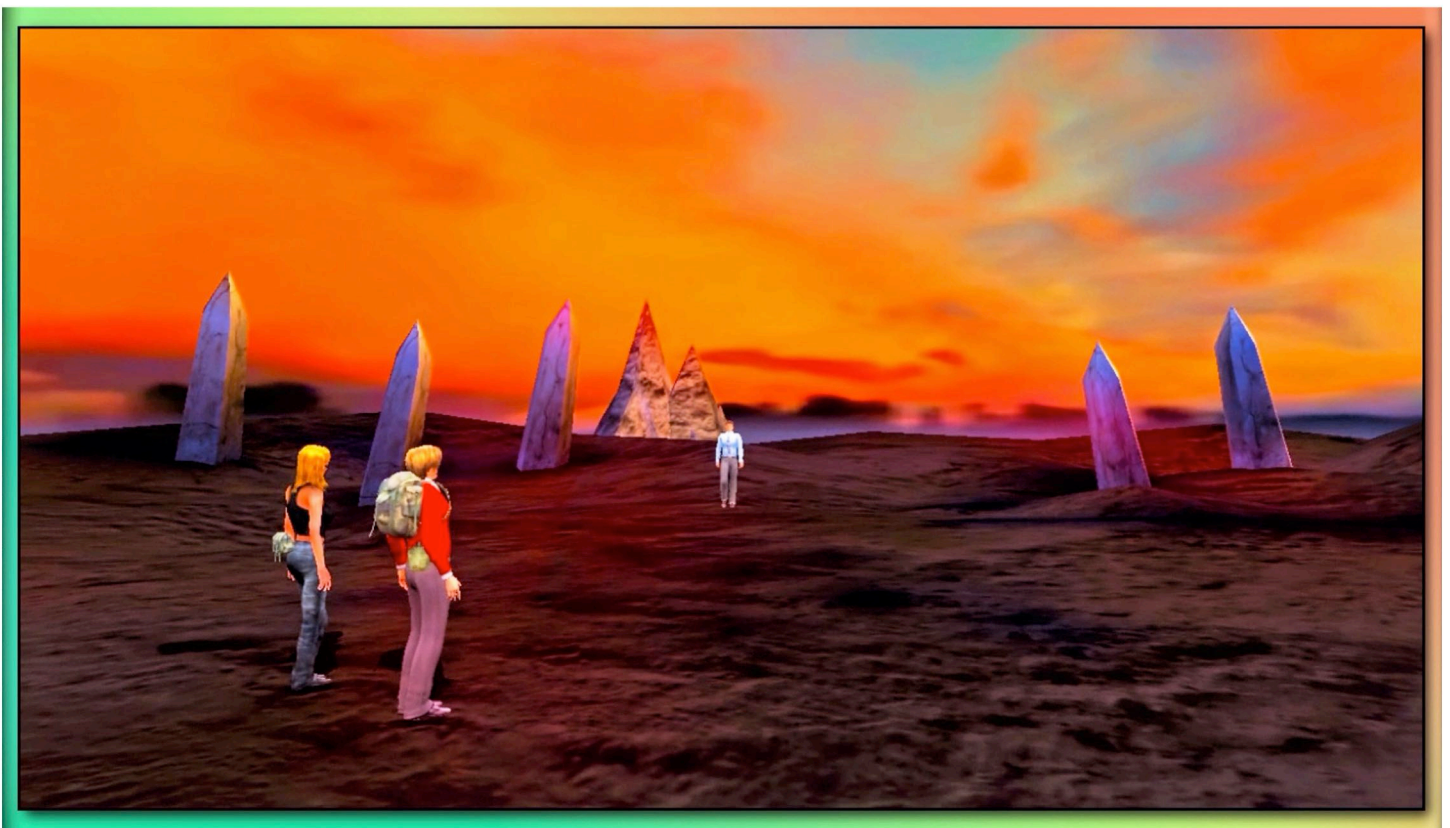
We look at each other in all seriousness, as I say, "Never wait; death disposes of joys put off too late!"

"Life's familiarity often prevents one, bit by bit, from marveling at it and enjoying it."

"To live the sum, one must realize life's meaning come, and then some."

( RE GET REGRET )

We walk on, more aware now and then, soon encountering a young man walking toward us.





“He looks just like you,” Angelina says to me, “though he’s much younger.”

“Ho, it is me! It is my younger self, so eager.”

“How do you know this, sage?”

“Because, once, when I was his age, I met my older self, one of adage, although I didn’t believe anything that he told me at that time being. I was stubborn; I just wouldn’t give my ear, even though he knew my name, my nature, my history, and my future.”

“Well, then, here comes your younger self walking up to us, looking like a self-help elf.”

“Hello, my younger-self-same! Do you know my name?”

My younger self replies, “I know you not!”

“I told you; he doesn’t know me; rot.”

“Well, at least you’re older and wiser now than him.

“Hey,” she says, “now a very old man, thin, walks quite happily toward us. He looks like you, although he’s much older than you.”

“It is me, of course. He is my older self!”

“How do you know this, elf?”

“I just have a feeling how, for remember, I am wiser now. We’ll pass on the trail, and bow.”

My Older self says, “Hello, my younger-self-same! Do you know my name?”

“I know you well, yes, as myself, I know you very well, your name; you’re my older selfsame!”

I tell her, “He’s passing us again, and walking on, but in rejoice, for he knows me, and my voice! That’s good elf-help, I guess.

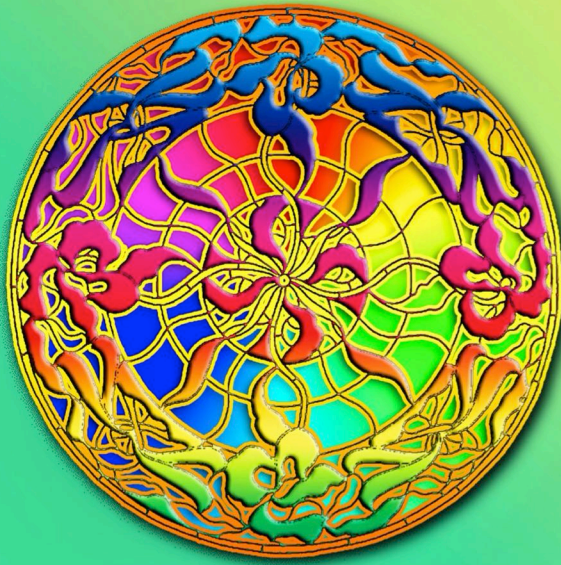
I note a flight, “Our now famous Bird of Time again flies overhead, in a straight line. There’s that same man of yore who had been chasing it before, but now he is just sitting on the floor.”

The bird chaser explains, “I’ve been thinking faster. Should I live today, no lull? Or should I mull, perhaps until tomorrow’s well is full? Maybe I’ll sit here and ponder its say, although, perhaps, I might live today.”

Angelina leans over to the bird chaser. “And so I whisper and wink: Even today is too late, even to sit and think, for the wise just lived yesterday to the brink!”



# Roaming the Wondrous Earth



## — Chapter 10 — Roaming the Wondrous Earth

“Ah, let us gladly leave the desert sands as a forgotten wish, and stop at the stream to catch some fish, and, after eating them, give thanks, and relax on the riverbank. Here are kisses on your cheek, a few, I have such peace with you.”

“I am safe and warm with you, and completely at home, too.”

“I am in Heaven, so bright.”

“I wonder what the mythical light of Heaven would be like?”

“Well, as a metaphysical question, zikes, I can’t really answer it, but, I can describe what some legends say it is and then I can talk about some things that we may know about. From the myths I’ve heard, true, Heaven is a place where you can have anything that you want to, where your every wish and dream comes true, where you’re always surrounded by love and lovelies, and where you can live



foreverly in a state of perpetual ecstasy... I realize that I'm nought describing it very well thought; I've almost made its plot rather decadent, have I not?"

"It's a fair but invented description, and if true it would be a glorious benediction. It may or not be so; there's no way we can know; however, while we're here on Earth, if we live in life's glory and worth, we can swim in the same pond; no need to wait for the dim promise of beyond, for those distant drums can't be heard. Well, enough of that for now, of the Word, but let's talk it through, afterward."



"Here's a romantic puzzle for fun; tell me, how much is one plus one?"

"Well, I know it could not be two because if the question was that easy, you wouldn't be asking it of me to do!"

"True. What do we two add up to?"

"Now I know. Before we met, we were each as one, isolated each in our vocation, and studies, with little fun; but now we're worth much more together, unalone, than we could ever be alone; we add up to even more than two lone, because we are each an input to the oth-



er's zone, sharing our minds, hearts, souls, and senses' giving, and that synergy accounts for the extra quantity of living! And it doesn't stop there, since, as we each improve, we can give that much more in return, to move, to the other, and to the world in turn! Then we'll add up to even more return!"

"It is proved, my dear, verily. Two people together are greater, surely, than one plus one alone, really!"

$$( 1 + 1 > 2 )$$

"In this life of mine, love never would have happened had I continued the way I was going. I never had time for life's beauty. I couldn't even read a verse, or so I thought, duly. I was too busy for friends or giving. You might say that life was lost in the living. Now I've simplified it; I've started anew; I've re-versed it!"

"And now, my partner, what more could we ask for? We have it all, and even more!"

"Yes, we have sunshine, breezes, love, adventure, water, the good earth, friendship; all of nature. All of the elements are there. Life is a mixture of earth, fire, water, and air!"

"Earth is a garden, an oasis in space, a world of boundless beauty and grace."

"One might search, in vain, the heavens' space for the equal of the Earth's place, but never find it anywhere or anyplace."

"You've discovered me at a good time, darling. I was once all caught up with technical whirlings, quite the stern classicist, sterling, drowning onward toward mechanical perfection. Then I swung too far in the other direction, becoming an opiate romanticist as my option, drowning in its amazement and stupefaction."

"Didn't we all?"

"Then I eventually learned that the path was not this way or that, but of a joined direction, one that combines romanticism and classicism."

"Ah, yes, all things are interrelated together, and thus must melt into one another. Nothing can really be isolated, as on a shelf, completely separated from anything else."



“True, the Yin is in the Yang and the Yang is in the Yin, ever turning and blending in a cyclical rotation, never ending. That’s a rounded life for you!”

“Most importantly, we are here now, for the kicks. Sometimes I visualize myself as old or sick, looking back at the better ticks, even telling myself that I’d make a pact: anything to have the good times back. Then I laugh and smile because of that pine, for I know that I’m pretending that line, since I am indeed young and fine!”

“And, I add, with a rhyme, You’ll never again live this life of thine!”

“So, we meander on, a pleasant ride, fancying that we are not alive, but then smiling because we thrive. Fresh and mild are the hours, borne like cleansing showers, and so we retrieve as ours all of the wingéd hours that time has devoured.”

“Ah, Angelina, the book opens to the page of breath and death.”

“Yes, for as we walk abreast, the peace of the forest is being shattered by the sound of people bickering and quarreling away in a much too common way. We approach the noise, but the people just stare at us, unpoised.”

Fighter 1 says, “Save your breath, too; don’t tell us what to do!”

Fighter 2 adds, “Don’t meddle. We’re having a fight; oh, brother!”

“That’s funny, and lame,” she judges, “for what you just said to me is just the same that I was going to say to you. Save your own breath, too, that breath which is between death and you; don’t expend it on fighting sprees; fighting saps your energy, and undoes love’s promise. Your breath is dear and precious, so enjoy all that life can give, ere comes death. Yelling drives people away; a few left. Soft and gentle voices, whispering even, brings them close. Tell them more, my dear, that’s pleasin’.”

“There are large worlds of life to live in. But, here you are, trapped in that tiny cell of arguments, resentments, and animosities, wasting all your breath therein. Stand back and realize life’s total space, and note that quarreling occupies but a small place in what can be accomplished by the human race.”

“So, if you’re not busy living, then I guess you’re busy dying. All the world’s riches cannot extend the power which drains the cup and withers the flower. What would be the price of wasted breath, purchased at the final hour, from the hand of death? Loving is what



this life is all about. To have it is to live it all out. Then why, oh why, do you not seek it out?

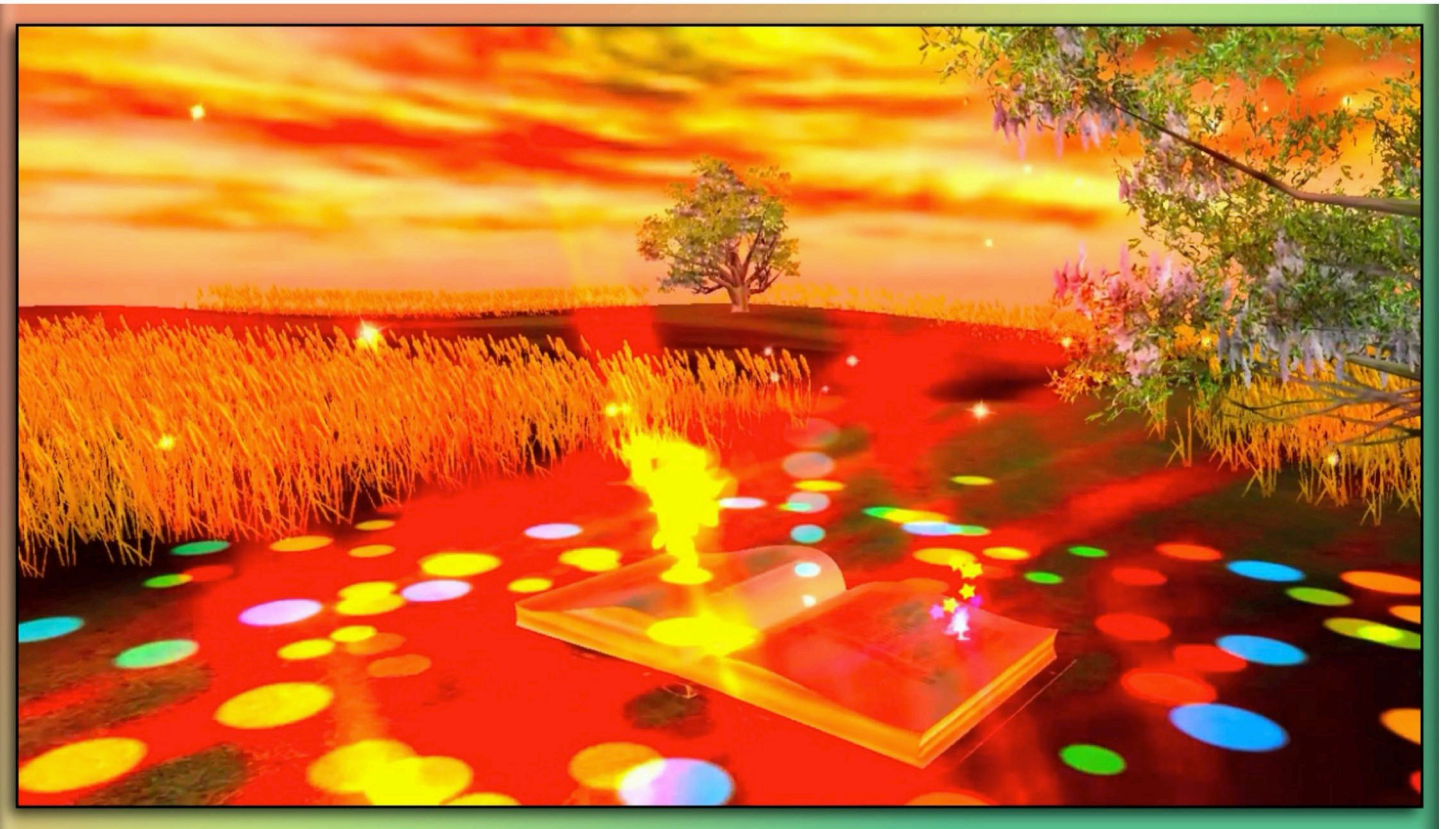
Fighter 1 relents, “Somehow, fighting doesn’t seem appropriate anymore, so we quarrelers will stop from doing it any more.”

“Let’s hope the complaint department remains closed,” I remark.

“Peter, let us love-intimates continue on, down the trail, now and then reading verses beyond the pale, from the mysterious book of lively tales.”

“Of what life and love are made of is the next page.”

“So we’ll amble along the path, ever singing, now pretty much ready for just about anything.”



“Peter, maybe we’re not ready. Here is yet another hapless person, one who seems to be searching for something yon. Curiously, he is riding on an ox and chasing butterflies, trying to connect the dots.”

The ox-rider cries, “Where are life and love? I’m a rider, looking all over the place for that refreshing cider.”

“Well, what are you looking for in particular?” I ask.

“I’m looking for life’s flight, as a dove, while trying to capture the butterfly of love.”



She answers, quite ready, “There’s nowhere else to look for life’s impact except in what you are doing now, in fact, right where you are at. You must experience the wonder vast and the mystery of life’s pact in every single act. Chasing intensely after life, romance—hot, or butterflies, is a lot like riding on an ox while looking for an ox. Life and romance are all around you, not nil. They’re right here! Relax, be still; then on you will alight the butterfly of love, for that’s the touch that romance is made of. As for life, it grows in the various cracks of day, from the seeds you plant along the rocky way. Like an artisan, mix your work and play, all the while nurturing all with love’s sway; then you can harvest life’s bouquet.

“Let us move on, feeling more lively, and so it is that we’ll taste the life that is sweet, without the sour, as we while away the hours, for our souls met in the bower, through love’s great power.

Angeline eyes the flowers, “Here are some roses; one speaks.”



“I am the rose and I am here, staying.”

I say, “We are surprised, beyond our noses, when speak the roses. So, rose, you’ve just arrived?”

“Yes. It is now and I am here.”

“Where did your sun come from?” she wonders.

“Once I was buried in the soil. It was my darkest hour, burning my oil, for the world around me was cold and lifeless. I was only a seed then, no less. Then, some spirit, which I can’t begin to decipher,



started me to bud, so, as a wild flower, I burst from the soil of toil, becoming radiant, alive, and so full of power, as you now see me! I prosper; even the weeds can not touch my flower!”

“What shall we call you?” She asks, perhaps in vain, hoping for a clue to the book’s questionable name. “What’s your nome de plume, your name?”

“It’s not that easy, the name giving, You must learn my name through living. I cannot just simply reveal it to your wishing!”

“I’m satisfied,” I say, “so let’s walk on, unbowed, living in the here and now, for there is nowhere, and no-when else, nor how.”

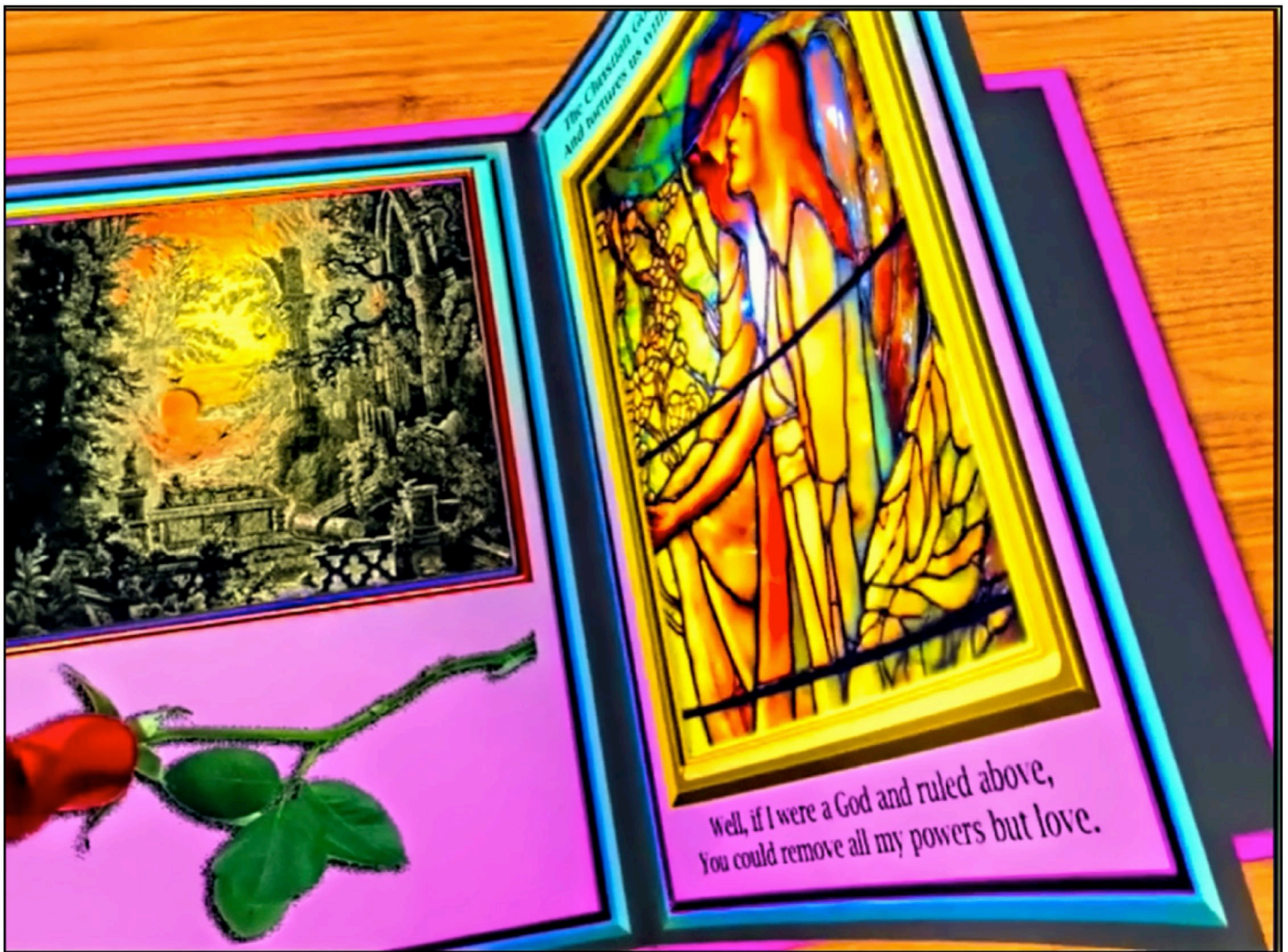
“What could be the name of the rose?”

“What’ could be the name of the rose.”

“What’ is the name of the rose?”

“Maybe, but that would be quite a funny name!”

“Unless it was some sort of a trick question plain.”









# The Depths of the Deep



— Chapter 11 —  
**The Depths of the Deep**

She looks to the night sky. “There’s Mars and Venus! Mars is the fourth planet from the sun’s anointing and Venus is the second one appointing.”

“What a pair they are, for Mars represents war and Venus represents love.”

“And here we are on the Earth, the third planet more, situated between those opposites of love and war.”

“Here on Earth we live in a perfect state of balance, although it is a state that’s rather delicate. We’re a blend of war and peace, passion and reason’s lease, sobriety and drunkenness, adventurousness and foolishness, violence and forgiveness. That is our life, no less! Oh, it’s such a tenuous state of awareness.”



“We must walk the tightrope, the test, balancing there, never-the-less, between the foolish and the reckless. It’s the point between up and down, the point between day and sundown, as that of half light dusk or dawn.”

“Indeed, the greatest blunder in this life done is to continually fear that you might make one.”

“Your passion is so reasonable in this state of awareness able.”

“And your reasoning is so passionate!”

“That reminds me of a poetic joke, from the poet Byron’s yoke, though I’ve extended it slightly, but, as you know, rightly, there is some truth behind all jokes, rightly:”

*Let us have wine, lovers, song, and laughter;  
Water, chastity, prayer the day after.  
Such, we’ll alternate the rest of our days—  
On the average, we’ll make hereafter!*

“It’s funny, but true, as a real golden mean.”

“By our nature we’re all a mixture had, of both the good and the bad.”

“Yes, there is a beast within us, live, but it helps us to survive. It is the reason that we dance and dream, the reason that we feel and live with zest. It makes us push and try and climb the crest. Without this beast within us named, life would be so boringly tame.”

“We’d be perfect angels.”

“But, we wouldn’t be us.”

“So, all’s right with the world’s quiz, just the way it is.”

“Let’s lay back on the land, looking at the night sky again. See there, the moon is in a conjunction with Venus.”

“I can hear them speaking. Listen.”

“I am the moon, representing cold chaste reason, with logic’s cool season, Venus, quench thy inner fire, fool, lest it destroy us and all the heaven’s rule.”

“I am Venus, goddess of love and passion, answering what is cool. I only know what I feel, not why, fool! So, I must be the one to rule!”

“Don’t confuse me with feelings.”



“And don’t confuse me with facts.”

“I guess we can’t always understand each other’s laws, I must finally admit, after a long pause, having reasoned it out, the cause. You have feelings I could never understand as real. I have reasons you could never feel. Let us try our best to temper each other’s flare and flair, and then let’s take it from there.”

“Otherwise, some of your decisions would be heartless, non-the-less.”



“And sometimes your actions will be illogical, answers me, the moonlit prodigal.”

“But I’ll still do What I feel is right, and sometimes you can tell me why, that fuss, although it may not always matter to us.”

“OK, we’ll try to work together. Peace to you of no plan. Perhaps I am beginning to understand this thing called feeling whole. Perhaps, emotions play a large role in making decisions told.”







# Love

This Chapter was not filmed for the movie



## — Chapter 12 — Love

Starlight stabs the utter darkness of night, causing new ideas to wink in our joined light, as sparkling thoughts from the eternal flame, as all the while the cosmos plays rhythm to our merged and singing souls unimprisoned. The night winds begin to blow the freeze, so the lovers nestle deeper into the leaves.

“Hold me, it’s getting cooler, the nips,” she says, when we were under our cloaks, using them for blankets.

I hold her snug, in the sack, my front against her back, spooning, not forking, until we are warm and soaking. She turns and kisses me.

“As long as love’s kisses can live,” she knows, “Neither age nor wear on our life will show.”



I sigh, growing younger still, for our love is very beautiful. “We are wealthier than the richest Sultan.”

“I pity the poor Sultan even with his status and power far, he’s not as free to live as we are.”

“Yes, we are poor but rich, free yet home, famous but unknown.”

“And the poor Sultan is stuck on his throne.”

“And we’re immersed in the glove of the boundless stream of love; whereas the rich Sultan has only them, his paid-for-love harem.”

“I’m realizing you now, whole, with my whole body, mind, heart, and soul.”

“They work well together, don’t they?”

“Of course, they were built togetherly, and so they weren’t meant to operate separately.”

“Love is reason enough for all that we do.”

“Through love, all things are possible and new.”

“Let us talk of love; let us say what it is and glory in it, love” she requests of.

“The truth of all truths is love.”

“What is the ultimate source of love?”

“Perhaps its source springs from Heaven above?”

Its rhythm resonates within us, in depths unheard of, plus, the rhyme of ‘above’ for ‘love’ is worn out, love.”

“Where is it of? Also, ‘of’ is a good rhyme for ‘love’.”

“Somewhere deep, beneath all our words and thoughts, it seeps, somewhere in our unsounded fathomless deeps, even that beneath which stirs the bonding hormones, sir.”

“What is love?”

“Love is giving, with no motive toward getting anything back returnward. There’s not even a hint of taking toward involved in giving love, because, for sure, taking is the opposite of giving pure.”

“Of course; I will graciously receive whatever is given to me, but I will never take it. I will never ask for it. I will never demand it. I will never enclose you in a cage. In fact, I will enhance your range so you can give an even better range of love to all those of the world’s change.”

“So true, even unearned.”

“Let us give kindness learned, to everyone in turn.”



“Yes, because if you keep your love, you will have nothing to speak of.”

“And if you give your love, you will have everything of!”

“Love is more than meant by words of sentiment; love is action sent.”

“Yes, one small and lovely action meant weighs much more on the scale, in cents, than an infinite number of sentiments!”

“Sharing and caring are the reasons for giving.”

“Love grows for friends and lovers when they let it flow freely to others, beyond any confines few. One wants their partner’s day to be fulfilled in every way, even if those pursuits take that partner away for a while.”

“Unconditional love can never bind; it bonds.”

“I give love to everyone, at any rate, in whatever way is appropriate.”

“There is a lot of love which can be given. Love never gets used up! It’s a boundless heaven.”

“I, too, have found it that the capacity for love is infinite. Arithmetic does not apply to love’s theory, for when love is divided amongst the many, it is not diminished in any way, but refreshed. Sure, the time spent is diminished, but not the love; one can still love fully! In fact, each love seems to outgrow the box, to exceed the entire lot. That’s the paradox!”

“There’s no good reason to ever withhold love. Why consign someone to cold oblivion’s shove by not sharing with them your love? Of course, some must do otherwise of, out of tradition and moral method wise, or from bonding and commitment tries.”

“Give all the love you can give, and then some, to live.”

“Yes, since the sum of love’s parts exceeds the whole cart, one can keep on giving and giving love, never the less of.”

“And, with a such many faceted life, one improves, quelling strife, and then one can give even more fun thereafter, as a more complete person.”

“Yes, life is more like a vast mosaic done than a focused beam of the sun. There are many parts of the collage of one.”



“That’s because few outside and lengthy pleasures are lent to our skies; we must therefore build the sun, a stained-glass window of small ones.”

“Yes, every piece of the puzzle, lover, is just as important as every other, for together they support each other and make up the entire picture, a masterpiece. It takes a lot of pieces to fit around all of a person’s sides. No one interest can match one on every side. Love, when divided, diminishes not.”

“A complete life sparkles like a diamond. Each facet of the diamond contributes its view of the world and thus adds to the lustrous effect of the swirl.”

“Friends and interests are, it truly seems, the shimmering glints and gleams of reality’s sparkling beams.”

“Each face of the diamond’s blazes enriches the view of the other faces.”

“All of the facets reflect off each other, combining and then building another, into the overall brilliance of life’s colors.”

“Which makes you a more rounded person.”

“Which in turn adds to the luster of your individual pursuits after.”

“Which therefore makes, fitting the bill, the diamond even brighter still, and so forth, and so on. It is a self-perpetuating bond, and of infinite growth beyond.”

“Reason and passion merge into love, too, when truth, goodness, and beauty new make their rendezvous.”

“Love is made up of truth, goodness, and beauty, the proof; all three are clearly seen within its roof.”

“They’re intertwined as the eternal triad, woven into the perfect romantic braid as its weft, warp, and wave made.”

“And yet they’re each different aspects of the same in ALL respects.”

“For example?”

“When a deep truth is intensely sown and stripped of all its clothes, then what is left is its beauty known.”

“Beauty is the reality of truth’s meaning. Would this be the name of the rose’s gleaming?”

“I don’t know, but beauty blooms, for sooth, as it were, like a rose from the soil of truth.”



“To know beauty, one must also know sorrow, thee, for if you’re alive enough to experience beauty, then you’re also vulnerable enough, wholly, to be exposed to its opposite twin of melancholy.”

“If we lived as figures in a painting few, then we would never have to face the death or sadness due.”

“That may not be so great as it seems, but less, for what is deathless is also lifeless.”

“Once I had a beautiful love with a person. It was painful when it ended, yon. My reason’s light began to depart. Blackness was rising in me, dark, beginning to snuff out my spark.”

“What did you do?”

“Well, I gave the feelings their due. I duly visited the shrine of sorrow. There I found, inseparable from truth, no less, the beauty that had given rise to my sadness. Upon realizing that row, rhythms soon rose from the depths of sorrow. I began to sing and celebrate the very song’s throw whose sweetness had broken my morrow.”

“So, the haze couldn’t derail the brightness that it veiled?”

“No, it couldn’t, even though a dark foggy sea had sunk and swelled all through me.”

“Your love, beauty, and joy so fine, flowed like rays of sunshine?”

“Yes, and burned the misty veil until warmth on me prevailed.”

“You’re a positive thinker one.”

“It showed where my love and caring had gone.”

“Love Equals Love Divided by Infinity.”

**( Love = Love / Infinity )**

Still awake, we look up into the night sky.

I begin to formulate a poetic theory of life on high. “Somewhere out there, among those ploys, deep in the vast darkroom of the endless void, is the eternal light from which we flashed into being, exhibiting all of our color and grace of seeing. Like a prismatic lens, from afar, we strain the white lights of the stars into the rainbows of our lives that are, as the poet Shelley has alluded to, as the bar.”

“And here we shine as such! A long way from the stars, us, born from stardust.”



“And all those stars burning out there, they are the fires of home, the where!”

“Some legends cry that the stars are goblets in the sky, placed there on high so we can taste Heaven’s drink when we die.”

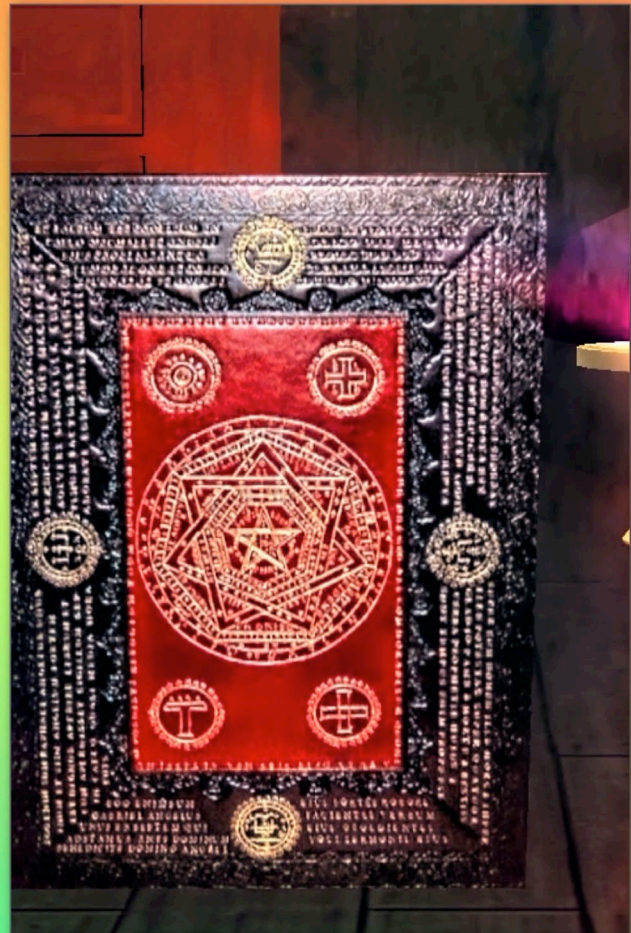
“We have many myths and legends of the sky, but, while we talk, hope, dream, and fly, the stars shine on, heedless of where we lie, long after we die.”





# The Quest for Understanding

This chapter was not filmed for the movie.



## — Chapter 13 — The Quest for Understanding

I look up at the stars and clouds and begin to wonder some more thoughts aloud. “The one metaphysical question that people have always asked is, ‘Where did it all come from, dear?’ However, there are no simple answers.”

“First, let us think of what we know, or even what we think that we know: either matter is eternal and it has always existed in some form or potential, persisted, or it somehow balances into being, out of nowhere. Both propositions are equally difficult to answer. All we can be expected to know is that we are here. As all else may be just conjecture, and is therefore before and beyond thought, being merely aforethought and afterthought.”



“But, people keep thinking about its delves, and sometimes they fool themselves into thinking that they have found the answer to the ultimate question of ‘why are we here?’”

“How do they do that?”

“Well, they beg the question’s pitch, by proposing a mysterious solution, which, though seemingly satisfying, at first, only introduces a much deeper question’s thirst that is much larger than, although similar to the first one, the original question.”

“For example?”

“Well, because the Earth is so complex and because the life process is not readily and completely understandable, they believe Earth and life have a Designer, some people.”

“The Earth couldn’t just simply be here, being, without any such Designer, meaning a Being?”



“Well, it could be, actually, as would be the norm. What I mean is that it could have been formed by natural laws from the eternal matter that you mentioned before the latter, but people still feel, or perhaps just strongly wish, here, that the Earth should have an origin from a Designer. After all, effects do seem to usually have causation,



do they not, although a Higher Being raises a similar question; for if life requires Life before it's due, then that would be true of God's Life, too."

"Well, either matter could have formed itself or it could have always have been on the shelf!"

Since life's complex, they say it must have origin—  
It couldn't have made itself or always have been!



The answer: God; but they've begged the question—  
God couldn't have made himself or always have been!



“True enough, but people feel, since gladdened, that this could never have happened, for they ‘reason’, of course, that all things must have a divine source. God is their solution, the beginning course.”





“They mean again a creative deity? A super being?”

“Yes, and the other good thing about their solution is that it gives them something to look forward on—a divine destiny in Heaven, a reward, something that is quite desirable, of course-ward.”

“That solution is a gigantic step to One, but an understandable one.”

“True, but people still have a tendency to assign divinity for what they do not understand completely. Thousands of years ago, they decided, the gods were to have resided on the highest mountain tops of Olympus’ rises.”

“Until people climbed those mountains, bare, seeing no gods up there.”

“Yes, and so then the gods were relegated to more distant and Heavenly realms, gated, such as the sun and the moon, but were not found there either, very soon. But, we’re getting off the subject’s rune.”

“Well, I may believe in laws and states by which the universe naturally operates, due to the interrelations of magnetic swirlings, electric, and atomic forces and such whirrings, but that’s not the God to which you’re referring.”

“Right, I’m referring to a conscious super being’s worth, the supposed creator of Heaven and Earth. You’re referring to the life principle’s list that is part and parcel of all that exists, the very force of existence itself that persists, a force that’s here eternally, although we ourselves may not be.”

“So, God created matter and energy and all that is?”

“So they say.”

“But where did God come from?”

“Well, either he always existed as something or he was created from nothing.”

“Or both, since it is said that he made himself.”

“But, of course, the dogma; so now we’re right back to the original dilemma.”

“Ah, they have begged the question!”

“Yes, they’ve ‘answered’ the question by proposing a much more difficult question.”



“True; to summarize the bet: they weren’t willing to accept that all the matter and energy of the universe could have formed itself or always have been first, so they said that God created it from some sod; but then they easily accepted the fact that God, who is way more complex than the universe, formed himself or always had been, in the lurch!”

“Right, the solution to the larger problem is exactly the solution that they refused to accept to the smaller problem in the first place’s constitution. A needless extra step was introduced, really, an extra complexity, unnecessarily.”

“However, after all this sum, we still don’t know where the universe came from.”

“True, all we really know for sure near cause is that we’re here and that there are laws and forces, and life principles which have and may continue to allow the universe to operate, a few, in the consistent and stable fashion that we can know and see in our ration.”

“Well, we’ll just have to listen to our own intuition.”

“It’s all we have to go on.”

“Is the super being, if there is one, a good, bad, or an indifferent one?”

“It is assumed that he is good, but there’s no reason he couldn’t be bad. But, again, it’s merely conjecture to ascribe human emotions lectured to a being who may well be above all that. Some religions say that he’s both bountiful and vengeful, that his love is conditional, that is, either we obey his laws’ tell, or he’ll punish and torture us in Hell. And that he destroys life by his will, as in the Great Flood still.”

“And that he allows the Devil to exist to tempt us?”

“Yes, maybe, as they say or invent, so we can earn our place in Heaven sent.”

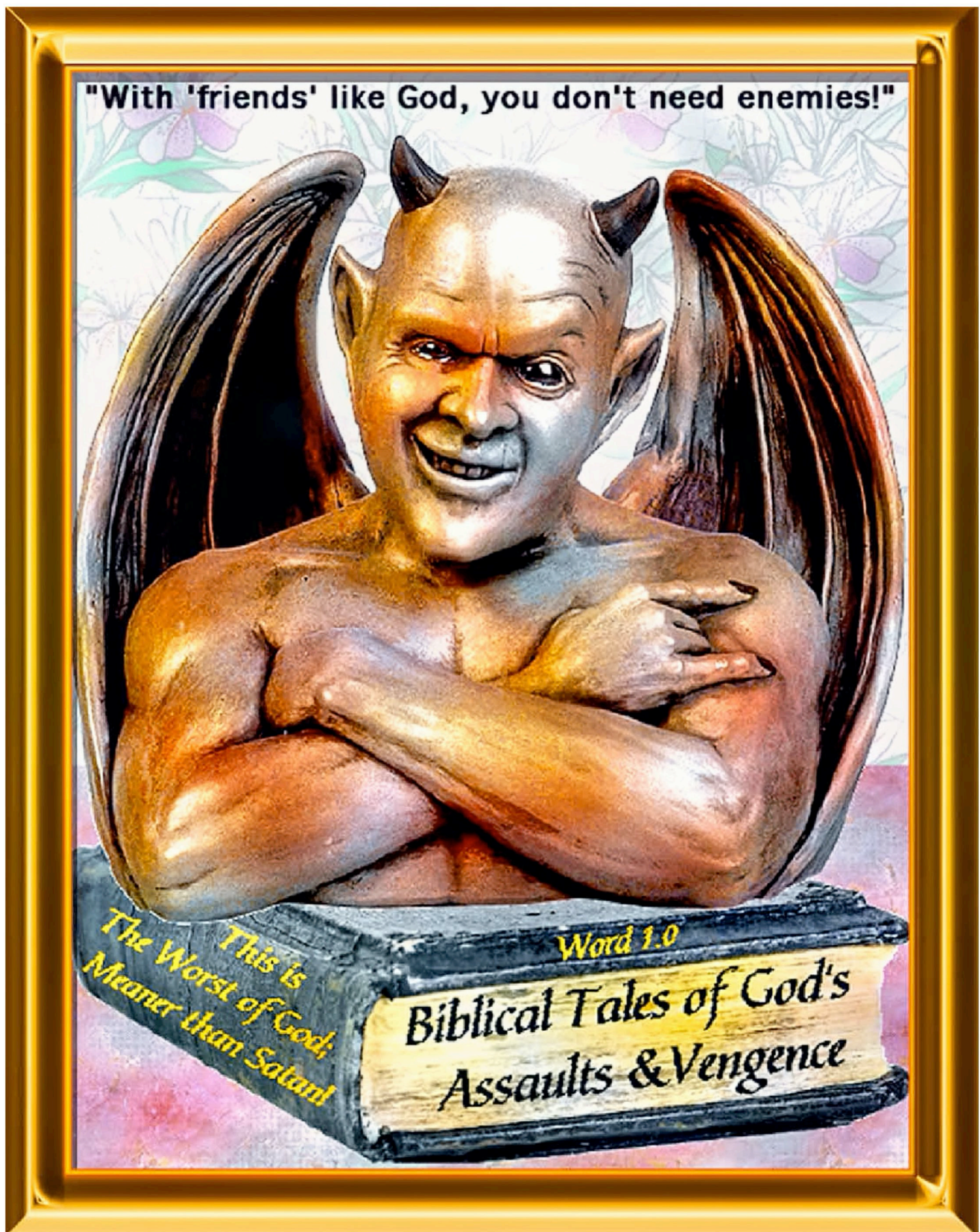
“You mean, or rather, some religions say that God shaped our human nature, and then introduced temptations to our nature, and then intends to punish us merely for being human?”

“So they say, of our acumen, although you’ve pointed out the absurdity of its doubt.”

“Anyway, the gods of all religions here don’t have the same character.”



“How do religions know any of this stuff anyway?”





“Well, the founders of many of the various religions claim to have had divine inspirations, through visions and visitations with God himself’s instantiations. Unfortunately, for them, God told them each something different, thus the existence of the Catholics, Lutherans, Moslems, Jews, and Mormons. There must be hundreds of religions, all claiming by divine inspiration that they and their myth region are the one and only true path to Heaven, and that all the others are false and should be dead, or so they heard from the voices in their heads.”

“Well, since they all contradict each other, zany, how do we know which is the right one, if any?”

“We don’t; it’s hard to sort it all out, the fuss. There’s Buddha, Mohammed, Jesus and so many other prophets among us, telling us of places like Hell, Heaven, purgatory, nirvana, etc., and other havens. These are all major differences in beliefs!”

“And some eastern ‘religions’ don’t even mention God’s shove. They’re based more on the idea of a life principle of love, it being deeply ingrained in all things, from below, not above.”

“And some western religions say and cry that God must be adored and glorified and bowed down to; it’s not fun. But again, this may just be one of man’s own emotional inventions from what he’s used to, as convention.”

“Well, if I were a God and ruled above, you could take away all of my powers but love!”

“That’s very ingenious and generous of you, ‘God’, but, of course, love means generosity’s sod; we have no use for an unloving God”

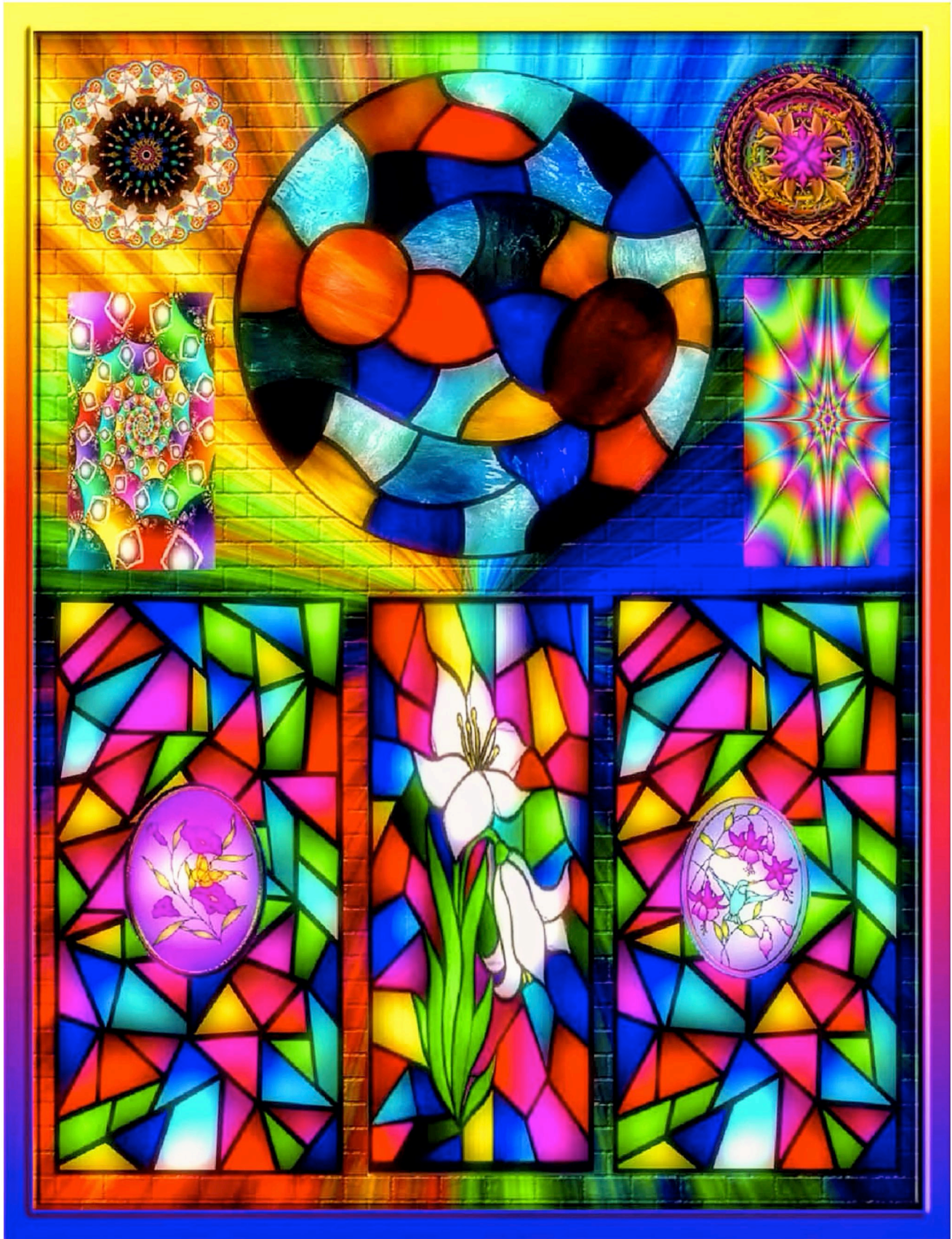
“And then there are the Polynesians, the Indonesians, and the Melanesians. They have elaborate superstitions and beliefs in good and evil spirits riven, and how to obtain a higher place in Heaven.”

“Which isn’t really too different, say, from most religions of today.”

“True, but doesn’t the end—the gleams—somehow justify the means, for most religions advocate goodness. Jesus preached that we should give love, blessed, and kindness to our fellows and all the rest, just like the Buddha taught, and the Son. And the Virgin Mary was a good person, though some religions don’t believe in her or her son.”



“Yes, those are good policies for anyone to follow, anytime, regardless of religion or belief that’s hollow. I live them. You live them. It’s pleasant. Jesus was good, but his father wasn’t.”





“Religion is good for certain borderline people; it can nudge them toward the steeple, to the way of being good people. Unfortunately, it can also blind them, brainwash them, and bias them.”

“How so?”

“Well, when one believes in something very deeply, one tends to become intolerant of those with other beliefs, even good ones, because allowance of other beliefs seems to lessen the credibility of one’s own belief.”

“Then so it is that Moslem children, so sure, learn at a young age to dislike the yore of the Jewish people and their culture.”

“Yes, that’s part of it, for, it’s the differences between cultures that starts battles, and there have been plenty of religious differences that have started wars and clashes.”

“Such as the Protestants vs. the Catholics in Ireland, the Sikhs vs. the Hindus in India’s land, the Jewish persecution, the Wars of the Crusades, the Shiites vs. the Sunnis in Persia, the rage.”

“So, like anything else, religions are neither good nor bad themselves, but that human selves only make them so themselves.”

“One is free to believe as one chooses, from the list, but there will always be some know-it-all evangelist trying to convince us otherwise, the blessed fist.”

“Maybe we should put all the evangelists, preachers, solicitors, and their gists into one room and let them all talk amidst.”

“At first, each would be convinced of their fight, that beyond a doubt that they were right.”

“Yes, they would spit and spat, but soon they’d all see that the others were convinced, also, at that, then perhaps they might realize that their beliefs were arbitrary—being dependent mostly on their parents’ religion or region of birth, and realize that they, if born elsewhere else first or under other circumstances, might espouse different beliefs, of the random chances.”

“Well, my dear, you’ve come a long way for a nun.”

“As you, for a monk, have come.”

“I made Myth-takes.”

( Myth-takes )



“We are here and now.”

“So, perhaps Heaven’s promise is bereft, but I’m not at all distressed. I can’t know all the secrets—just me, so I’ve dismissed the dream of immortality, although I certainly wouldn’t mind having it. For now, I live life with gratitude, the best fit, and accept whatever is left of It.”

“Me too. I’ve said my good-byes to faith’s dream of forever skies. I am, of course, much too philosophical to be bitter. Like you, I am resigned to its flitters. I, too, accept, with hunger and joy and pleasure, what is left of the dream, whatever.”

“People like to wish and dream afar and believe that they are more than they are, that they deserve a divine destination, that they are special among all creation. It’s only natural to desire something good, although it’s greedy, perhaps, and not good.”

“Of course, but the ultimate humility would be to know that there may be no divine destiny, that we are all just fancy electrochemical organisms, and very much a part of the natural organic world-isms.”

“All I know is that we’re an expression of some life principle or life-force done, that comes from some mysterious source giving. This I can know because we are indeed living. Whether the force is conscious or not, perforce, or what it’s like, I do not know, of course. All I can do now is flow with that force.”

“Me, too, for when I go against the flow, there is only pain and suffering to go. Instincts, intuition, and natural urges must exist for a reason. So, I listen to their words.”

“Rather than struggling against the way things are, one must become the way things are, giving oneself to the moving whole, as we are, and flowing with it, often very far.”

“Well, here we are, living a loving relationship.”

“Back in the monastery, I thought a lot about our developing relationship’s plot. Once, I stayed up all night, thinking it free, but getting nowhere. Then it suddenly came to me, and I found serenity and delight; I’d discovered that only the heart’s light can know what’s right.”

“Men and women cannot exist in isolation, for the nature of one makes necessary the other one. One cannot have the valley without the mountain. Lo, when men and women join in love, there is



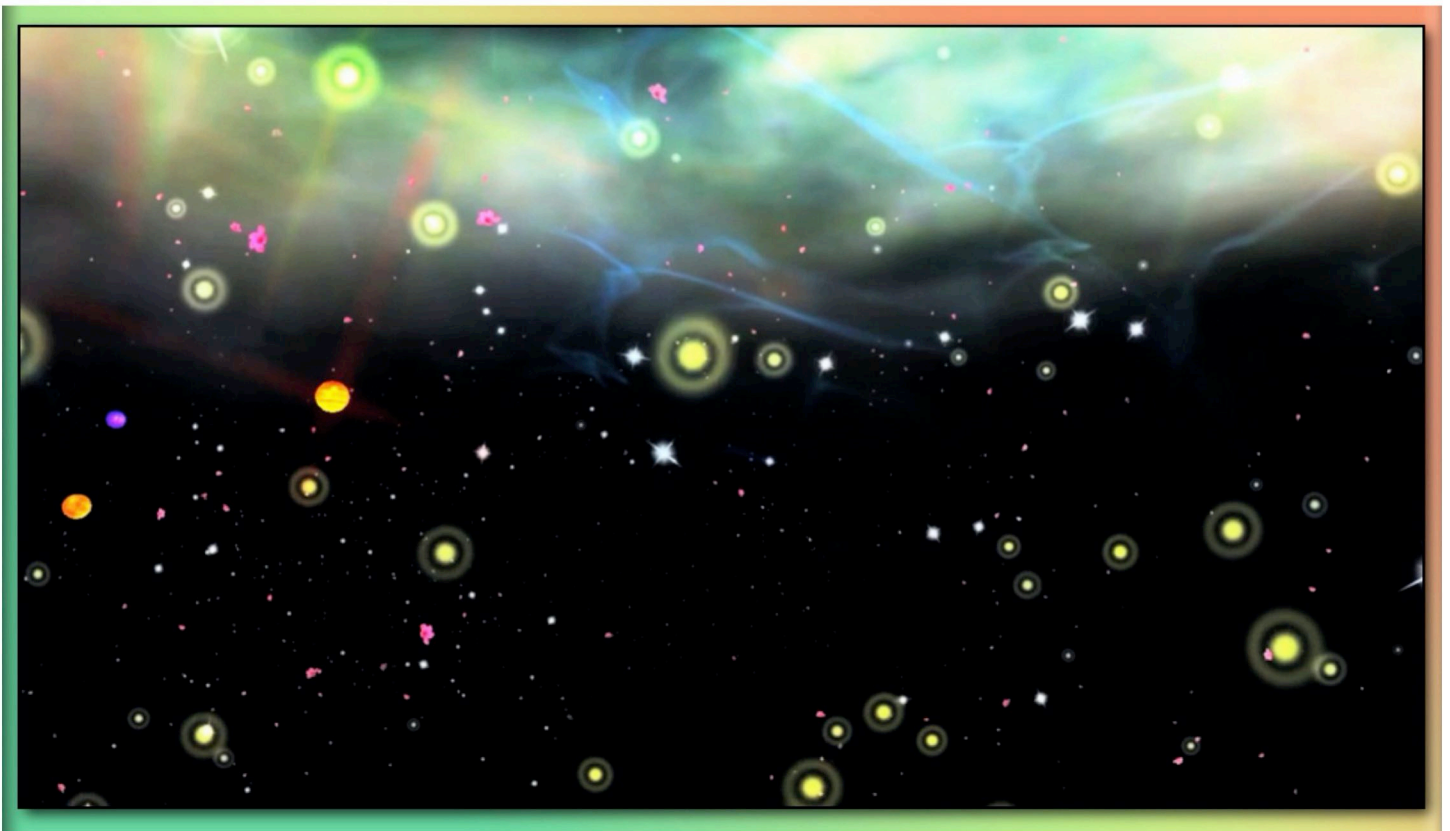
wholeness again, below and above. So, the laws of celibacy are artificial scripture, for they very much go against nature.”

“Follow your natural urges. It’s not natural to suppress a natural urge.”

“Yes, it takes a strong desire to overcome desire. It’s a paradoxical and self defeating desire.”

“Come to me!”

First we touch, then embrace and hold, freeing, then begin to merge, snuggling into each other’s being, blending in ways that have no name, completely transcending the physical plane, as if we could both occupy the same spaceness. Mind, heart, soul, and body are all of a oneness. We drift in the blackness, floating through the universe above, suspended by our love. There is no past, no future; there is only NOW, for sure.



“Where does the rose bloom?” she asks.

“In loving hearts,” I answer.

“Which roses last the longest?” she asks.

“Roses last when they grow steadily and slowly, for, if their growth is too quick to pass, then they will wither very fast.”



She opens her cloak to take me in, warmly, and we embrace lovingly, longingly, and thoroughly. We feel the unlimited power of the universe. She feels that she holds the entire cosmos within her. We are weightless, warm, and together, drifting up through the forest weather. There are no reference points, no hedges, no walls, borders, or rough edges. We became one as we float heavenward, drifting through the clouds afterward.

“You have enclosed my universe,” she says.

“Yet it is still a boundless verse.”

“You have filled the universe that I enclose, as us.”

“I will fill that emptiness with my fullness.”

“I will empty your fullness with my emptiness.”

“What ‘is not’ is equally as great as what ‘is’.”

“We are equal partners in life and love’s loan.”

“The monk and the nun cannot live by bread alone.”

“Celibacy is a crime against nature. One might as well stop eating, or not breathing air, or shun any other such natural function’s rapture.”

“When opposites are of a balance, the edges of all things dissolve and distance; time and space become as one; all dimensions are transcended, done.”

“Yes, everything melts into everything, yet remains as itself to sing.”

“All is of a piece, yet, all is interconnected and related.”

“Yes, all things are interrelated effects; opposites are merely different aspects of the same phenomenon: a tear and a smile, light and dark, man and woman.”

“As equal partners, in any instance, men and women may achieve a perfect balance.”

“The tide of love supports us and carries us along with it.”

“We are carried together down the mountain stream to rejoin the sea, for therein lies the completed dream. Life is a diamond, a rainbow of many colors.”

“Human beings need each other, especially in nunneries and monasteries.”



“Body and spirit cannot be separated, for they are integral parts of the humans related; they must operate in tandem to make the being human.”

They are inseparable, unlike water and oil. It is as the flower’s toil, drawing life’s spirit from the soil.”

“A man and a woman are drawn together by the same urge that’s between root and flower, leaf and soil, breath and wind, bud and scent, sun and water, star and planet.”

“Man and woman cannot exist alone; the nature of one requires the other one. When they join in love, wholeness is done.”

“Like the Yang and the Yon, the man is in the woman and the woman is in the man.”

“From the hardness of the world’s sallies, a man comes to the valley of the soft mountains to be overcome by woman.”

“She is the roundness of Earth and moon, warm with promise, ever in bloom.”

“The valley and the mountain still each make the other possible; they are opposites, but just in name, since they are really one and the same.”

“My words to you are a faint echo of what my heart truly feels as so.”

“What ‘is’ and what ‘is not’ combine to make wholeness.”

“Love is lived by lovers. They come together, like mountain and valley, rain and river, air and mist, Earth and moon, forever.”

“Yes, they go with the flow, as told, and give themselves to the moving whole.”

“Male and female are each the opposite twin of the other.”

“They are; just as we are each other’s satellite.”

“Yes, we are like twin planets, right, linked and traveling together through space’s night.”

“I am thy co-planet, as like Shelley writes, thy constant satellite, thy paramour of day and night. Around you, above you, below you, alight, and ever within your sight, as I whirl about you in loving delight!”

“My heavenly love, I am your pearl. In a magnetic dance I twirl and whirl, attracted to you—the sun’s liveliest world. Around you like a necklace I’m aswirl. Wear me as thy crystalline gem imperaled.”

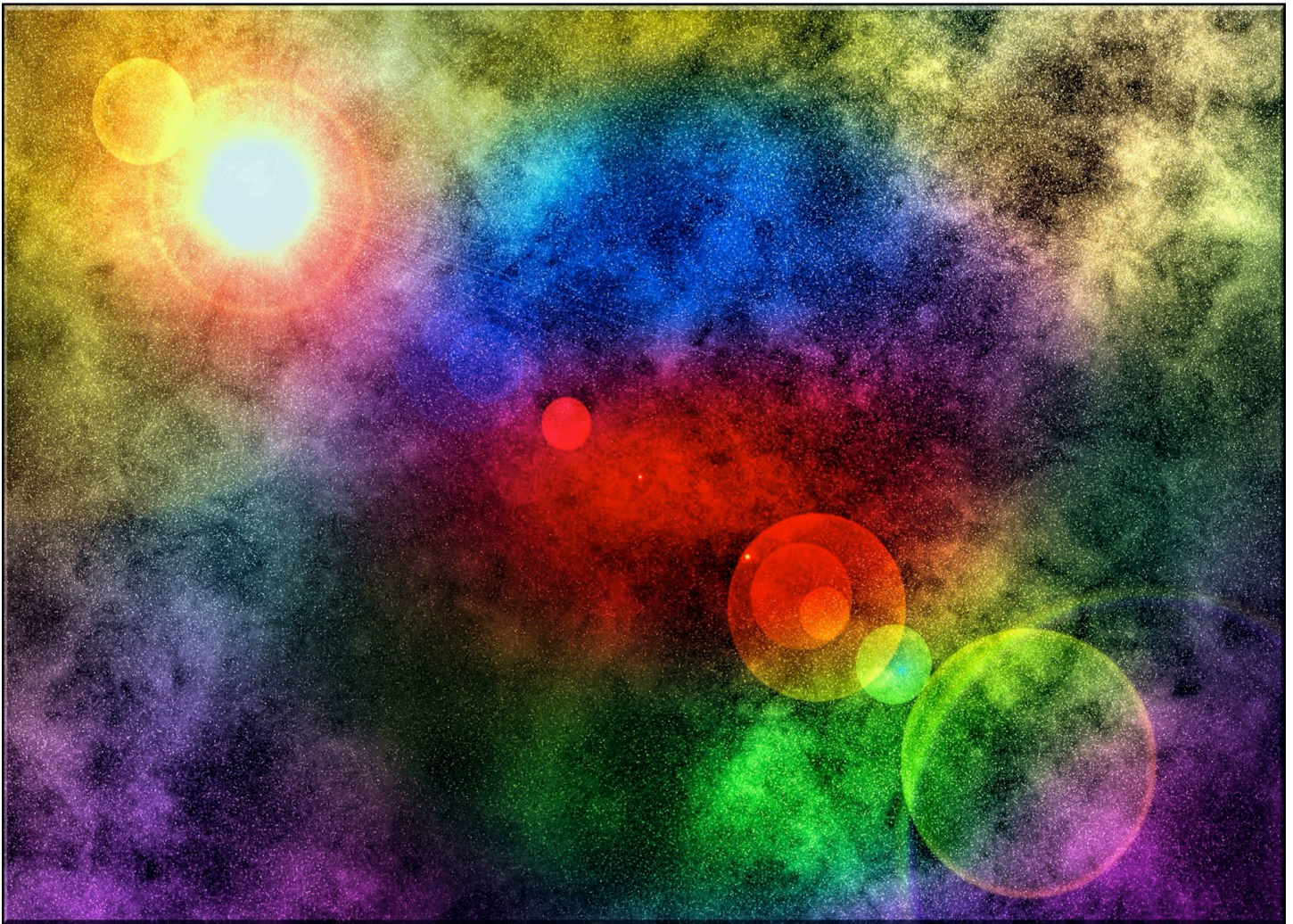


“I am always with you, blessed. Wherever thou must goest, ‘Round and ‘round Apollo, I must turn and whirl, hurry and follow, meeting meteors and dust, high and low, traveling far and wide through space not hollow.”

“You are my heart light. Thy magnetic beam, like Cupid’s arrow’s flight, injects life and love into my heart for my tomorrow. Ever I shine with this light I borrow.”

“We are involved. As twin planets, our orbits must convolve, a made-up word, allowable. Into each other our tidal motions must dissolve. Around a common center we revolve, gazing on each other from every side. It’s the focus from which our love evolves.”

“Yes, as twin planets, each other’s way we pave, through space, with the push-pulse of our gravitating waves. We’re captured by a romantic attraction, saved, but not as each other’s slave, for to the sun’s light our orbits are concave. This is unconditional love we’ve made.”





“Your love echoes in the heart and soul of us. I align my path with your magnetic lines of flux. I'm your constant paramour, all the time, your world pours life and love on mine. On mine! Oh, it echoes. Dearest twin, I must be thine, must be thine, be thine...”



“Your love echoes and reverberates in me. A romantic beam emanates from thee, attracting me, holding me, caressing me, kissing me. Your tidal love washes freely over me, linking you and me for eternity.”

“I feel the warmth tonight. I am basking in your reflected light. Oh, I'm so bright, so very bright in your sight. In the love and light of your spirit bright, I need not ever face the endless night.”

“The vibrations of your electromagnetic grounds travel without a sound. They come from all directions, to surround, while your affection touches me, all around. Now I'm close to you in orbit; I'm love-bound!”



“We’ll bathe in love’s radiance, cleansing ourselves.”

“Round and ‘round each other’s selves, as twin planets, we dance, entranced in the whirl of our romance.”

“Although we’re as different as midnight and noon, we’re drawn close by the forces of sun and moon. As lovers we merge in a sweet eclipse, when world meets world as a kiss on our lips.”

“While your shadow of love covers me, I’m full, oh so full, in the shade of thee.”

“Our worlds overlap; this union is ‘us’ to be. The ‘you’ is in me and the ‘me’ is in thee!”

“Thy heart hast touched my own; no, ‘tis more I love thee!”

“Yes, much more art thou loved; the ‘me’ is now in thee.”

“Thou art the soul of my soul and mine is of thine, see.”

“Nay, ‘tis more than that: thou art me and I am thee.”

“It’s an eclipse, a kiss.”



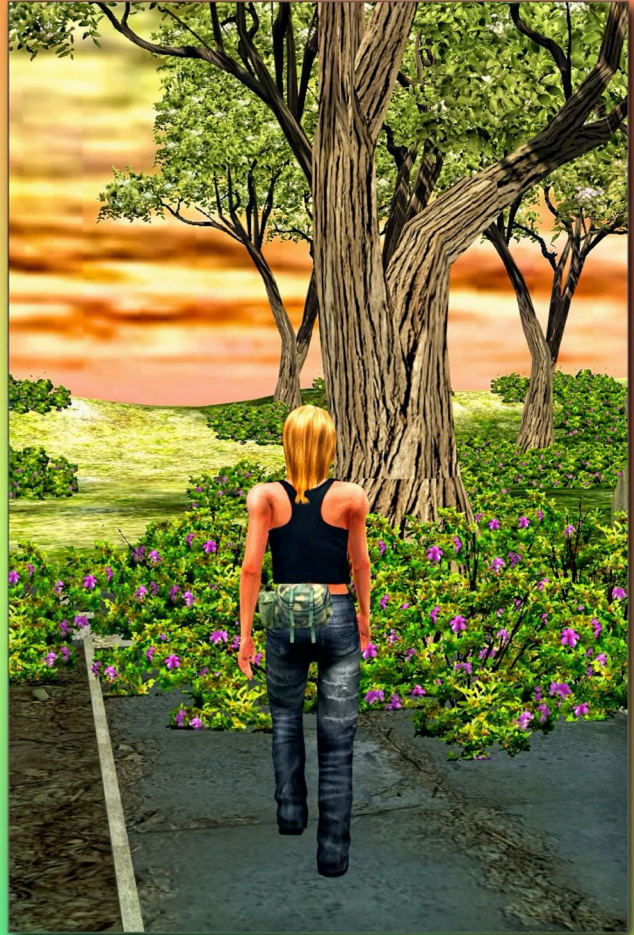
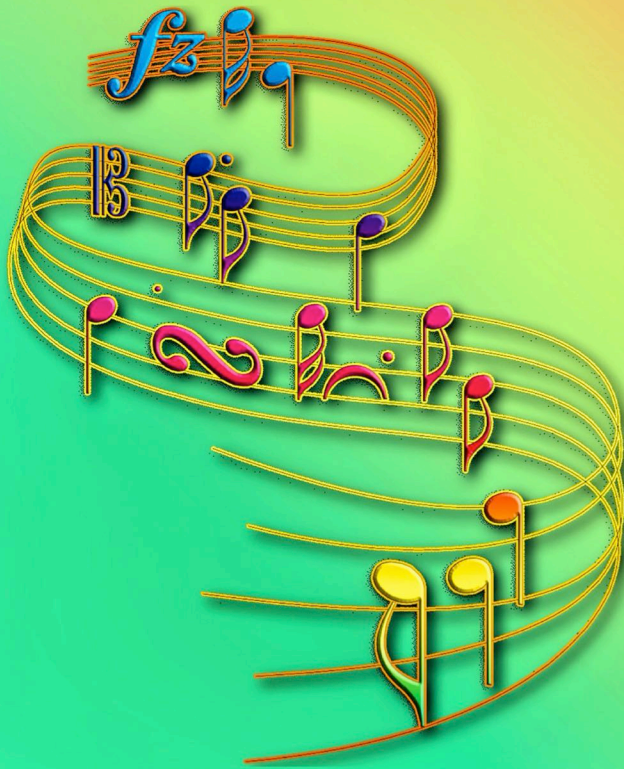
( Eclipse — A Kiss )







# On and On



## — Chapter 14 — On and On

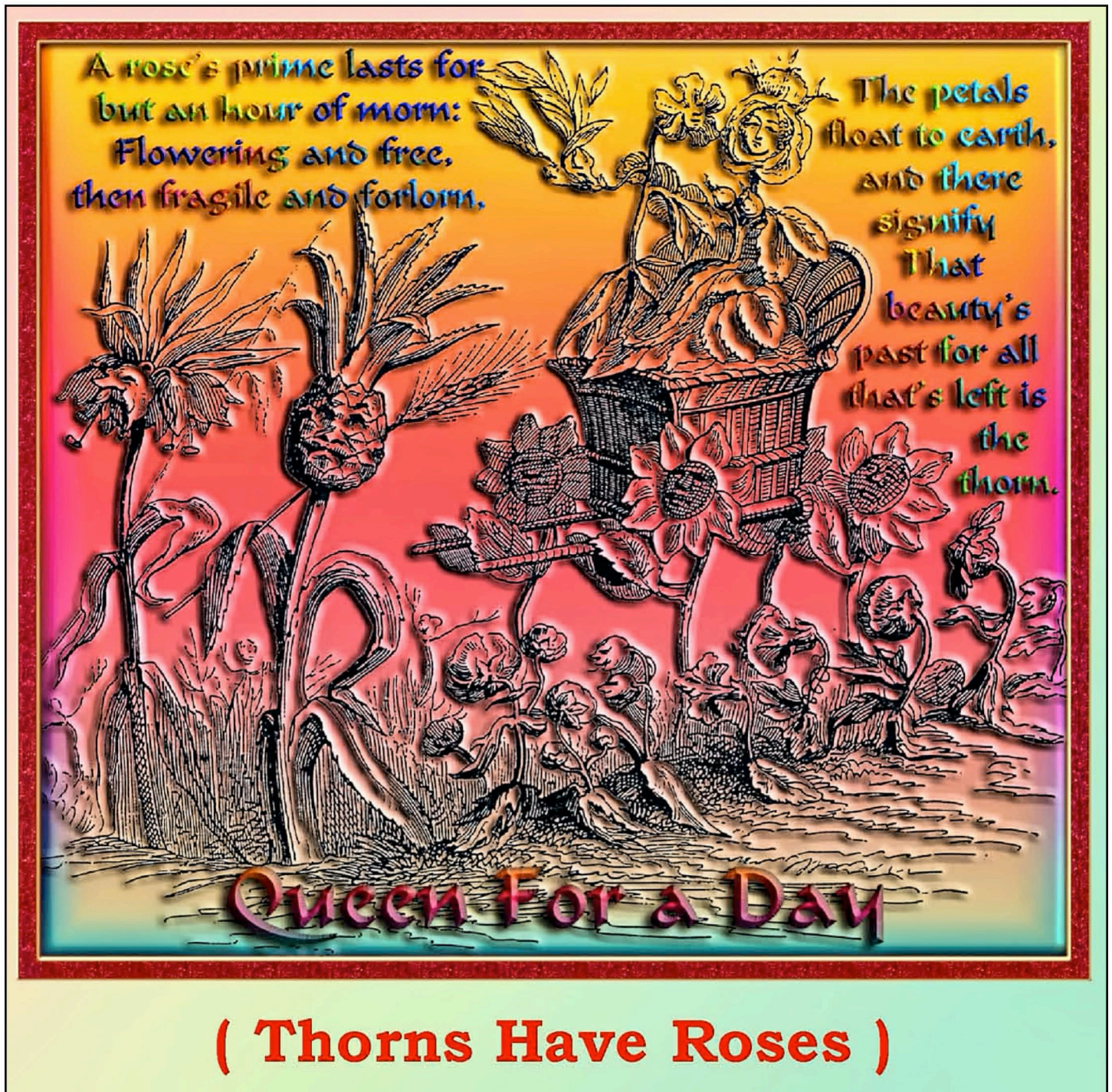
“We awake early the day’s hour, Angelina, dear, and again drink the dew from the flowers here. You pick a new rose to carry. We think we hear the rose laughing and that we can even see it smiling. The rose speaks, of what is so.”

“I am the rose that blows laughing into the world’s bows, until my tassels tear again, when I throw my petals on the garden. Cherish me, for I represent the strife, the fragility and impermanence of life. I live in my prime but for just a while. First, I’m flowering and free, a child, but then I am fragile, and finally, forlorn. When my beauty is past, my petals float, torn, to earth, and all that’s left is the thorn! But, while I live I am full of power, the queen of all the flowers!”

“Like the rose, we will grow old one day, sir. And then throw our treasure back to earth.”



“Thorns Have Roses.”



“When I was young, I wildly embraced many causes, including monkhood, and searched for all the ‘because’s’, but I haven’t any regret, for I enjoyed my life as such yet, when I was young and wet.”

“Yes, me too, for every age has its own charm and lore, much like the different lights of evening, noon, and morn. There are always new worlds to explore, and each year seems to get better, more.”

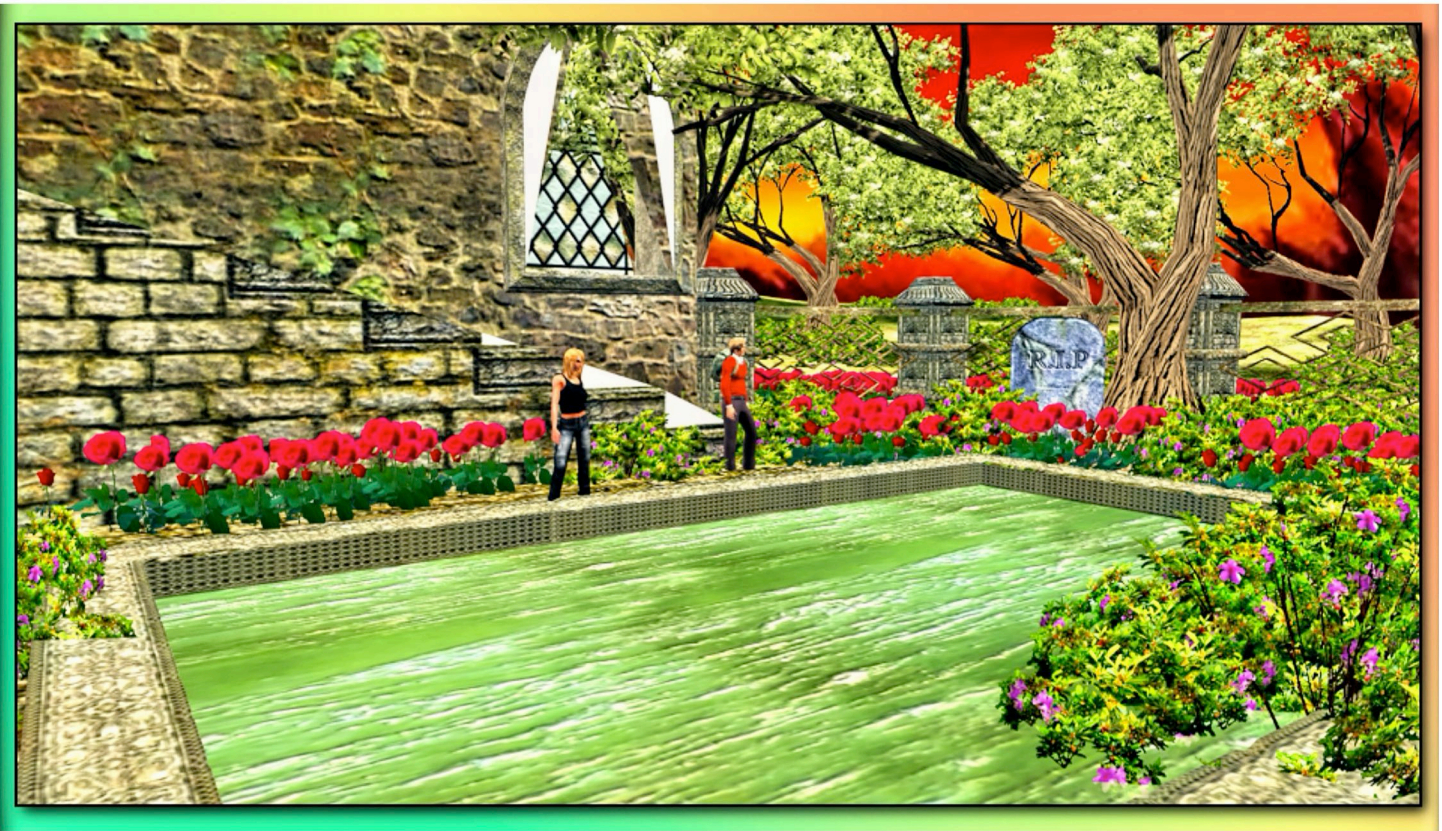


“Yes, just when you think you’ve done it all, you rise up to the next level, tall, building on what’s been done before, and then do everything better even more.”

“As for feeling old, it is only a state of mind there, I must say, as I playfully toy with your hair.”

“Keep playing; here’s what I am told: The day one stops being playful and bold is the day that one begins to get old.

She sees, “Here we find the remains of a ghost town, my angel, and another cemetery’s lawn, where we see a man sitting next to a grave and stone.”



“What are you doing, man?” I ask.

“I’m waiting for this dead and buried man to come back from death’s land and tell me what it’s like on the other side. I’ve been waiting here ten years now.”

“What have you learned from where he lies?” she wonders.

“Nothing. I fear that perhaps ideas may die when the mind turns to dust and flies, that there can be no unique breath and enduring



identity after death, without the brain and its memory's worth, just as there wouldn't be any before birth."

"It could very well be that death is mindless, and quite senseless."

"Well, if no one comes back to tell me it about, I will just have to die to find it all out."



"We will all die someday, my child, so you might as well live your life in the meanwhile. Remember, your warm body full of bloom is worth ten thousand lying in the tomb. Live while you're still full of life's tune. By these verses let your lamp of life relume!"

"The man thinks a while, to find... currents flash signals through his living mind, as chemicals decode the impulses in kind."

The man sits, "We're all a part of nature, so to nature we must return."

"He's gone off in another direction, but I can still hear his diction."

The man adds, "I sprang from the soil, born to live and die. Then I beheld life's font and drank it dry. I may not live forever, yon, but my words and deeds will live on. As for me, I must go back, whence I came by; I must return to earth and die."

"Everyone dies, but not everyone lives."





We walk on.

“I know where purgatory is, the answer to the quiz,” she claims.

“Where is it?”

“It’s on the planet Venus, horrid, because that’s where sulfur’s acid rains down from the skies that pour it.”

“Must be. I know where Hell is done.”

“Where? Wait, I know. It’s got to be in the sun!”

“Of course, there’s no place hotter than that one.”

“And we know where Heaven is, don’t we?”

“Yes we do; it’s so lovely, even though it is the world’s best kept secret; Earth is its name! Now out it’s let!”

“Let us stroll ever onward, feeling rather Heavenly. We’re sleeping our worth, and eating from our lover, the Earth, sensing all of its charms, treasures, joys, and mirth.”

I note, “It begins to rain, by chance, and, way off in the distance, I can hear people cursing at the rain.”

“I never curse the rain, in vain, for without water there would be no life the same.”

“The universe has our well-being at stake, here, in the general sense, in the long run, dear.”



“But not in the specific sense, because, it’s plain, one’s home could float away if there’s too much rain. Then the worms will come out again.”

“Worms are wonderful too, all of them, but even though so, some people hate them.”

“They aerate over 400 million tons of soil per day. If it weren’t for the worms’ toiling each day, there would not have been the swirl of plant growth that now sustains the world. No worms, no life uncurled!”

“So, we’re all in this together: you, me, and the worms.”

“Yes, there seems to be a subtle, interlinked complexity to life.”

“The Earth is the best of all possible worlds of life!”

“Yes, all is right with the world, by good chance, even though it may not seem so, at first glance, what with the calamities of nature and so forth, but it couldn’t really work any other way, for, it’s hard to argue with the balance that works.”

“Right, the food chain works, the climate works, everything works!”

“My blood runs warm, like the fire of the sun at noon.”

“My spirit is swept by the swelling moon!”

“Water is in me.”

“The air flows through me.”

“Earth’s rhythm is always playing our tune to be!”

“Earth, air, fire, and water; that’s life’s recipe!”

“How is it that everything works on Earth if it is so rare?”

“Well, think of it this way, fair: if it didn’t work then we wouldn’t be here to even think about its thrall, so, it’s not so very remarkable after all!”

“I propose a toast, to life, seeing as we’re here! I raise myself up. I am the cup.”

“Then, as my chalice I lift you up!”

“And take of me a sup!”

“I drink deep the wine that satisfies love’s thirst.”

“Before the winds of change dry you up first!”

“And here’s another toast: Drink the lifeblood of the grapes you’ve sown, before pressing time squeezes out what’s grown.”

“And the closing poem: Do toast with thy chalice that all be known; to life’s red wine I give all that I own!”





“We’ll walk away the day, making an early camp to stay, so we can warm again together that way.”





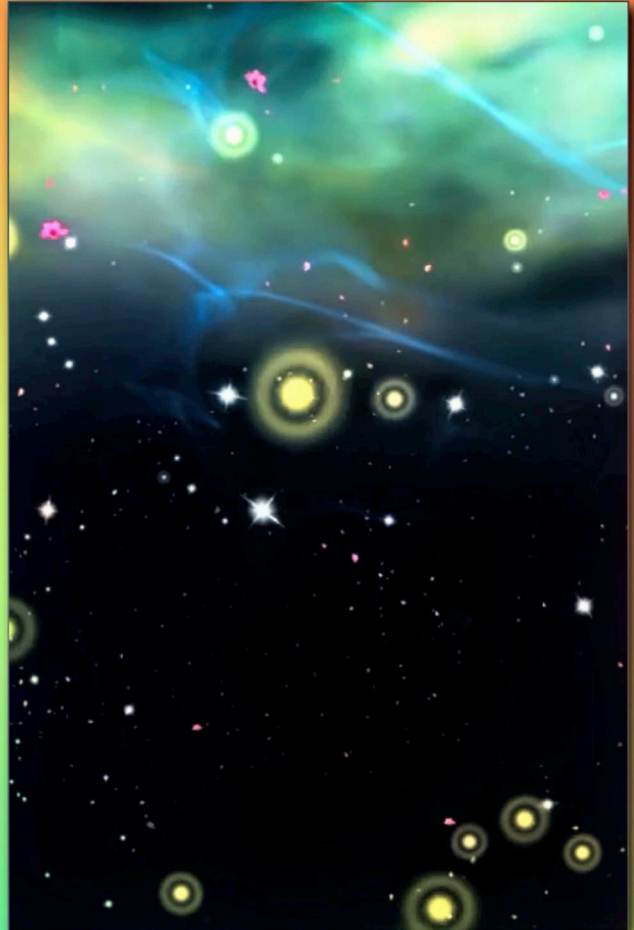
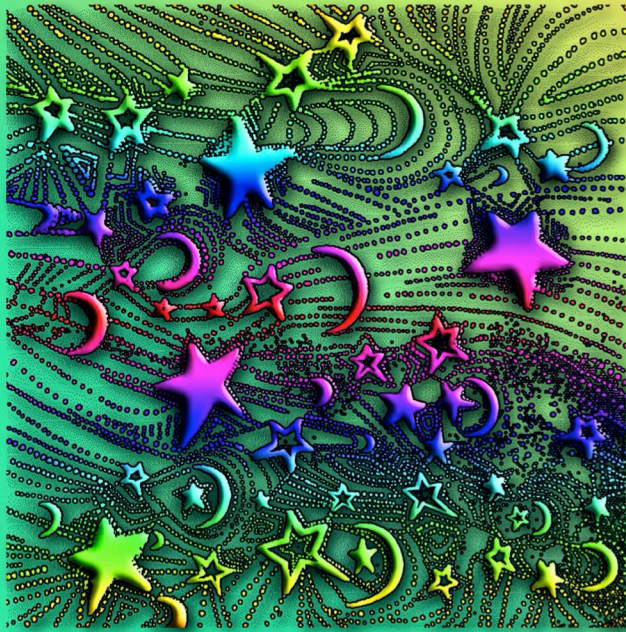


GLINTS & GLEAMS  
OF  
REALITY'S SPARKLE.

(Friends)



# The Night Sky



## — Chapter 15 — The Night Sky

She looks to the night sky. “The stars now come out of their jars. I like to talk about the stars.”

“Lie down on your back, for some quoting. Let’s pretend that we’re floating through deep space; it noting.”

“Once we were, us.”

“When we were stardust.”

“Time, death, and stardust, those three were our birthright, duly. Death chose the wise from the silly, the useful from the useless, the pointed from the pointless. Death sifted the best from the rest.”

“But it took a long of time of yore, since death was the only evaluator. It took eons and ages of time’s acumen for us to evolve from stardust into humans.”



“Time, death, and stardust’s path: they write our epitaph as well as our birthright past: when our time expires, of the cleft, death will come, our life bereft, and only our dust will be left.”

“From time and death and dust we came, and to this, that, and thus we must return, via the same.”

“Born from stardust, nourished by sunlight, I fill my cup with wonders of delight.”

“Life is a treasure, a radiant gem, a light that we’ll never see again.”

“Your words show me all the more of the worth of our love. Hold me, love me, be one with me, hand in glove.”

“Let’s merge yours and mine into ours of.”

“As we embrace under the stars, endless flames burn in the sky’s spires, as we snuggle our inner fires. When I see the stars, their poetic verse, then I know that all is right with the universe.”

“They are eternity’s running lights; look, they shine, even through the blackest plight of the fathomless night!”

“It’s as if good has conquered evil, right, for darkness can’t even quench the smallest light, as even a mere candle can vanquish night!”

“They say that twin genii split day and night, along with wrong and right.”

“The candle lights the darkness and fills it bright!”

“Starlight is the origin of our being.”

“A star is the soul of the universe’s seeing.”

“The sun is our Earth’s soul and life star.”

“We are sparks from the stars on high, afar. We glow bright for a while, then flicker and die, as the par.”

“Our light shines now, so bright, reluming the flames in the black of night.”

“We are magic lanterns shining here; our spirits are the lights in there.”

“From what bright star came the gleam in your eyes?”

“From what distant sun came your smile, light-wise?”

Their hearts, and Blake, answer for us. Soon we’re ready to sleep again.

“Embrace me, starlight!”



“Hold me, stardust!”

“Goodnight. Sleep well. Say a prayer of sleep for us.”

“Each night my genie comes to fill my urn, pouring sleep into me, until day’s return. I dream of the beauty of night’s urn and the bounty of day’s return. As the day follows night for all eterne, fulfillment follows all for which I yearn.”

“As we drift off to sleep, voices fill the blackness of the deep. It is some sort of celestial debate to meet:”

“I’m the darkest, says the Shadow to the Night.”

“No, says Midnight, compared to me you’re bright.”

“You floodlights! says Starless Space, Stop your fight!”

“The darkest plight is the lack of love’s delight.”

## ( Love-Lights )

“After a good night’s sleep, it seems, we awake, like dewdrops, all a gleam, fresh with the delight of some remembered dream.”

“We are the creative principle, aren’t we?”

“Yes, it is embodied in us at length. We live by our intuitive strength.”

“And this intuition thing, ‘it’ seems to know something, which, I suppose, as a definition, is why they call it intuition.”

“It is the light within. It is a life principle.”

“It’s an inner creative source, I know.”

“So, I’ll live from my intuitive wisdom knit, and sometimes act spontaneously on it, rather than get labored down and ring with too much conventional reasoning.”

“Yes, and this is my idea of how creativity binds from the unity of the heart, soul, senses, and mind: the wonders of life bring love to the heart’s peak, and cause it to take flight, so to speak, as all the while the soul whispers unimaged things to one through its own language-sings, which makes them of unimaginableness, but they are ever in the subconscious; and all this, if one lets its ‘whences’, streams, dually, into one’s senses and into the intellect, merging



there, a buoy, taking one to a point quite beyond joy, for that's when imagination freely enlightens the mind's rationalization. This is what I call creative unification."

"Follow the water to where your mind leads you."

"Do what your senses tell you."

"Sail on the wind of your soul."

"Flow where your heart takes your role."

"In us the cosmos has achieved consciousness!"

"We're the Cosmos itself, no less! We're the conscious form of it."

"We are the universe come alive."

"We are magic lanterns shining."

"From the light that's never dying!"

"We are the triumph of life, love, and being!"

"We are the smile of being's elation, the joy of the universe's creation. In us the Cosmos has come alive. It has reached conscious life from its primordial matter and vibes."

"We have arrived! We are life from stardust!"

"And we live but for one of eternity's heartbeats."

"We owe all that we are to time, death, and star heat. Truly from the stars cometh our help to beat."

"Stars are the creators of matter, mind; this is why they shine."

"Death is the evaluator, the chooser, but it takes time."

"Billions of years of mindless time."

"We have waited to catch light and life a while, the rapture from Heaven's smile."

"Oh! what a joy to be alive."

"Yes, now we are alive, and our minds interpret this reality into the many colors of the phenomenal, worldly."

"Our lives, like a prism, really, strain the white radiance of eternity, like Shelley said in his poetry."

"While we are here, in this dell, we can drink a glass of water from the well, we can enjoy the breeze that wends, and we can sing and laugh and love with our friends."

"We can enjoy everything and everyone."

"I will live for truth, beauty, and goodness—love."

"Yes, for their own sake. Love, for its own sake of."

"The stars are eternity's love lamps."



“They represent our good deeds entrenched, which even the death of night cannot quench.”

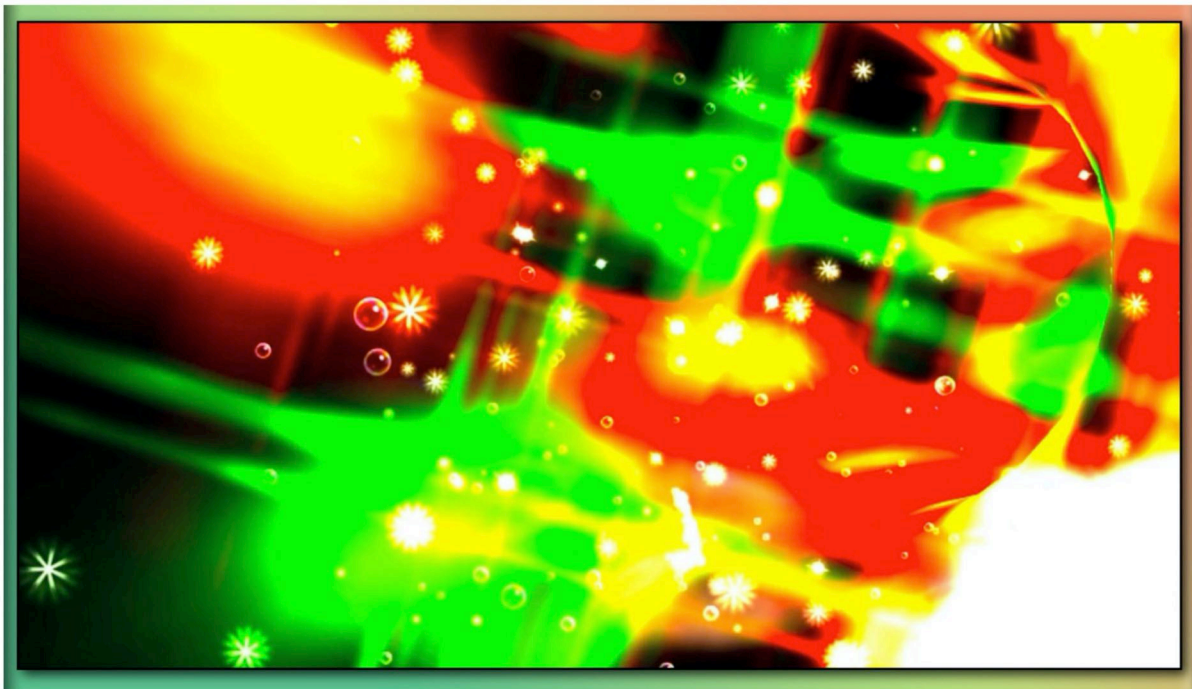
“My star’s light is the origin of my being, the source of my matter, energy, everything.”

“Permanent, reassuring, unquenchable: it’s my speechless soul, my self-winding mainspring.”

“Energy and matter are interrelated: the void pulsates in an endless sequence, for a field is present throughout space immense, out of which the particles must condense, occurring where the field is extremely intense.”

“Atoms are energy bundles placed.”

“They are knots in the fabric of space. Yet, matter defines the structure of space.”



“Again the Yin is in the Yang, and vice versa!”

“I have a theory: perhaps from out of nothing came the paired pluses and minuses of energy. The positive energy becomes matter, while the negative matter becomes gravity, negative because it takes a force, a positive energy, to hold objects apart which are attracted by the negative force of gravity. So, when recombined, all energies still add up to nothing!”

“That’s ingenious. So, then, from nothing was written our account! And back to nothing we’ll still have to amount!”



“Ah, but in between those two parentheses’ bount, the pluses rain on us from Heaven’s fount!”

( **PLUS** and **MINUS** = **ZERO** )

We’re the flesh to the backbones of the stars,  
Those ghosts of the suns that no longer are—  
They having transformed their energy’s ways  
To base atoms, plus more—supernovae.



We’re the flesh to the backbones of the stars,  
Those ghosts of the suns that no longer are—  
They having transformed their energy’s ways  
To base atoms, plus more—supernovae.



# Omar



— Chapter 16 —  
Omar

“We walk along as the next day flushes, and come to a grove of rose bushes, in a peaceful setting, those blushes, and over in the corner of the garden I see a grave marker, there-over, one that is almost completely covered by the fallen rose blossoms, all over.”

“What does it say, ma’am?”

“It says, ‘Here Omar Khayyàm Lies; the flower that once has blown forever dies.’”

“He may be the one who inspired the book of philosophies sired.”

“It says that he has gone to where no one knows, that he is buried far beneath the winter snows.”

“I bend down a tulip’s smile, pouring its cup of dew onto the grave’s pile.”

“Why?”



“I’m turning the cup so that dewdrops will slip into the ground and perhaps reach his thirsty lips, for this is what he asked people to do in his quips.”

“Can he sprout anew, as what grows? Arising, like an autumnal rose, in some sort of second spring’s pose?”

“I don’t think so; zounds! But his spirit has escaped from the ground and has touched us each, all around, and his words have echoed, sound, on down through the centuries round.”

“Then Omar does live again, I suppose; He lives in the hearts of his friends! He, a-rose!”

“His poetic splendor lives beyond the grave. He’s immortal; he’s saved.”

“The mourners are arriving, the Procession Of The Moments Live:”

“They all come: sad Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, blinded by grief, and led only by their tears and sorrow. Hail, cheer, and farewell, they say to Old Khayyâm, You took from death all that life could borrow!”

“What else was said about Omar?”

“Well, on Omar’s last day on Earth’s set, he is sitting in the shade of a minaret. The Bird of Time lands near him, eats a few crumbs from his hand, so dim, then sings life’s last song to him. Omar just relaxes, not upset, savoring the glow of his last sunset. Then a shining shape, the Angel of Light, seeks out Omar, to bless him right, and the Angel says, in flight, ‘Omar, your clay must soon be repossessed; let us drink to your success’, and offers him a cup, and the rest. Omar takes it and smiles, blessed, ready to meet life’s last caress. Omar then lies down on the grass. A dark shape arrives, at the last. It is the Angel of Death, and to Omar it said, ‘Drink one last draught from your precious cup bred.’ Omar sips and smiles, then breathes his last breath. Ever since, and for centuries thereafter, in rest, Omar lies where the roses bloom, but then, like a ghost from the tomb, his lamp relumes, and his poetic spirit spreads, like perfume, injecting life and promise from Earth’s womb, spreading the words of the Rubâiyât’s fumes through all of this world’s gloom and doom, like the spores of a healthful mushroom.”

“To whom?”

“To those who would taste of life, I presume.”



“And so the desert simoom continues to blow across Omar’s grave-tomb, carrying forth his ancient Persian fumes. And every year the rose gardens for Omar sing, shedding their blossoms at the end of spring. Like the rose, in its dearth, Omar Khayyàm came hither from the earth, blossomed, bloomed, and showed his beauty, worth, charm, and color, in full flowered mirth, until to Earth his petals’ worth floated back down, to wither in the dirt. Omar, as a tulip, was like a cup, looking up to take his Heavenly sup, then to earth he was inverted, quite used up. The stars, the eyes of night, will often rise anew and look for him, but will never find him true, for he’s bid adieu.”

I note, “Ho, the dust now speaks to us:”

The dust says, “Tread softly on me, for I was once like you.”

She notes, “The Bird of Time lands next to us and beeks:”



“I am the moment, the Bird of Time. I am here. It is I that you seek. I am the one you want. You’ve found me anew. You’ve come for me and I am here with you.”





*Sad Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow—  
They all came, led by their tears and sorrow,  
To mourn old Khayyam: "Hail, cheer, and farewell!  
You took from death All that life could borrow."*



# The Name of the Rose



— Chapter 17 —  
**The Name of the Rose**

“Ah, Angelina, this night we lie peacefully together, again talking before we sleep together. I think we know now the entire story of the rose, I suppose.”

“I pick up my rose and brush it ever so slightly across your nose.”

“Why is the rose so red?”

“It’s the blood that the living earth has bled.”

“Tell me the life of the rose.”

“The rose of which you sing rises in the joyous spring as a sprout from the earth in a glorious birth, on the first day that summer blushes. It blossoms, as spring vanishes, from spring’s only kiss to summer. Then the summer rose blooms, near forever, and laughs with the mirth of a long season sent, somewhere between happiness and contentment. Golden autumn slowly creeps into the scene, and



then the autumnal rose withers, lean, its petals falling back from its toil to again enrich the soil. Then comes the winter seen, shutting the scene. That's the life of the rose that thrives. The flower that once has blown forever dies."

"What then, is the name of the rose?"



"We are the rose."

**FINIS**

Like sparks from the Monastery's embers,  
We'll rekindle from all we've remembered.  
Let's go on, through the fertile valley, yon,  
And onto the misty mountains beyond.



# Meta Times



## — Chapter 18 — Meta Times

“This is ex-Brother Peter, writing from a quiet balcony alcove, within Vassar library’s gold, where I am here oft mistaken, for a saintly Irish monk taken, since I usually sit in the warm light of a stained-glass window bright while illustrating and editing a long treatise of non fictional philosophizing called ‘The Triumph of Life, Love, and Being’.

“All is so peaceful within it, and, as I look up for a minute, I’m comforted by the stacks of old books, by the worn-out tapestries on hooks, and by the marble floor in the study court below, all so much reminding me of the monastery. Memories cover me like a warm blanket, as it all comes flooding back for me to thank it. I turn back to my work, but not before a smile from my partner across the table gives me the energy to continue on with the illustrations. Yes, my co-



author, ex-Sister Angelina, the one, sits quietly near me and is still being mistaken for a nun. We are working at a large table, on our book, in the glow of the window's prismatic colored look, bathing in the radiance of our saintliness brooked, in this sacred and blessed mood of the library nook. We're putting a few finishing illuminations of gold into our manuscript, for now that the story of old has been lived and proven, it deserves to be told, but it now has to be written, edited, and illustrated, bold. I ink in the leaves of gold while she checks the pages' folds, just like in the old days, which I shall explain shortly aways.

“The library is a peaceful relief from going out adventuring and romancing. Talking is expressly forbidden here, just as in the monastical village feared, so we whisper ever so softly and sweetly to each other, by and by. But, I am getting way ahead of myself, so let's pause and start at the beginning, even earlier. It's all coming back to me now. This is the story of how 'The Triumph of Life, Love, and Being' came to be, of how it was born in the labyrinth of the library's maze of passageways...”



(Vassar Library or the Monastery)



“...I approached Vassar library one day, fast, running on the blue-eyed flowered grass, passing under the wide, overhanging branch. Looming up ahead were the library towers, complete with the turrets and gargoyles. The walls were made of Italian stone, and there was a large stained-glass window. The library was built much in the tradition of some great monastery, or a castle position. It was a lot like Camelot in this way, too, but I thought my imagination could that outdo. I relaxed, letting my mind wander freely, as I entered the spacious, cathedral-like lobby. I saw the huge tapestries hanging high on the walls, those grand and glorious scenes of the past that called. Then I walked up the stone steps indented deep, as worn smooth by centuries of studious feet. There were stone railings, too, like altar rails, and many old pictures, plus balconies, worn trails, spiral staircases, and the almost secret alcoves.

“The nook was silent, blessed, and gracious, the perfect place to write, the lure contagious. The library has a hundred rooms, of all the ages, and fifty or more connecting passages; no one really knows how many mazes. Starting down one of the twisting ways and halls, I went through many levels of rooms and number calls, not noting where I had been, not looking back at all. I switched on the lights as I went, but didn’t realize that the glows and vents were automatically turning off behind me, after a minute or so, to save on electricity.

So, I continued along, between the stacks, and down the stairways, with even more racks, entering older sections of the library zones which didn’t quite line up with the newer ones. I was soon lost and completely disoriented! Then the library closed, and, to my surprise, all of the power went off inside, for it was the Easter holiday shut-down. I was trapped inside, in the dark, unknown.

“I wedged open a door that was automatically closing, but I didn’t panic, although I certainly allowed a few quick pulses. Looking around for clues, I saw a map on the wall, but it was too dark to read its call; however, when my eyes had become adapted, I could see the dim plots outlined, of the shapes of the rooms on the map. In the distance, I could hear the electronic clicks of the security locks slipping into place, as ticks in the treasure and the rare books rooms picked. Walking between the stacks, I guided myself along by tapping on the books with my handmade song. Coming to a moonlit



window, I opened it, with a shove, but it was much too high for me to jump out of. Looking out around at the exterior of the building, I tried to get an idea where I was, in relation to exiting.

“Picking up a book, I looked at its call number, to get a better idea of what section I might be under. The book was ‘Beyond Metaphysics’, by Aristotle. I’m sure that it contained the answers to all of life’s most difficult mysteries, since I knew, from my language studies’ thrall, that ‘meta’ already meant ‘beyond’; but alas, it was too dark to read the book upon, so I put it back, meaning to take it out when the library reopened its house. It must have been the most precious book to know, for it had been presumed lost centuries ago! Imagine going beyond what trek was already beyond physics! Oh, Aristotle, you magic mystic!

“It was not totally quiet in these surrounds. The library boiler’s vents were making gurgling sounds, at least that’s what I’d hoped the noises were, all around. Yet, there was also sort of a weird stillness. I wouldn’t say that I was scared, I confess, but there seemed to be a lot of creaking noises soft, as the library settled in for the week with the heat off. I went down what I thought might be a familiar stairway, but the door at the bottom was locked away. Looking through the door, I could see the rare book room. I went up two more levels, peering into another womb, and saw the main art gallery’s way, with its sculptures and jade jewels on display. I’d better not get caught in there, singing, with some alarm going on ringing, I thought, so I retraced my stepping, and went around constructing squared circles for awhile, unfortunately returning again and again to rooms that I had been to before.

“I had to find some of the more critical junctions. It was pitch black in the library’s interior sections, so I marked some of the intersections by putting some books on the floor; that way I’d know by tripping, toe-sore, if I was returning to rooms afore that I had visited before. Still, it was all rather frustrating. If only I had a candle demonstrating! But, of course, fire was forbidden in the library. I heard a novel noise and followed it; it was just a drinking fountain with a slight drip. At least I had water. Good! I wouldn’t die of thirst. There was a college recess coming up, and so the library had been, yup,



completely shut down for the next fortnight. I could be in here for a long time, cold, blind, hungry, and homeless.

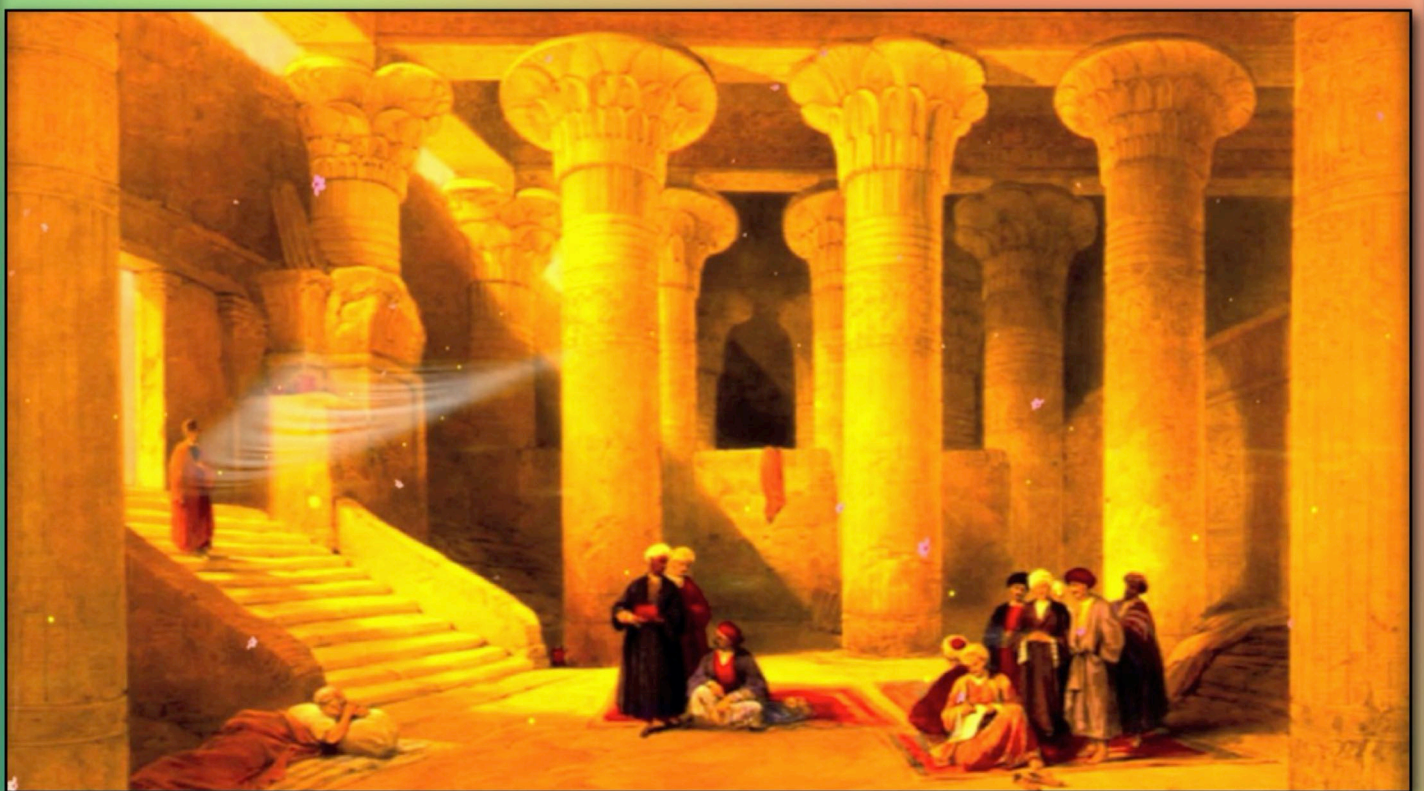
I sat down, sleepily, near an emergency light and rested against the books upright, one of which poked me in the back, so I took it out and chanced to read the title plaque as I was putting it down, not back in the rack: 'Letters between a Saintly Irish Monk and a Holy French Nun'. I opened it and read a few pages. As I fell asleep, that book was on my mind, and I began to dream of it...

...I 'woke up' in a scriptorium. I was a monk in a monastery's sanctorium, studying philosophy and illumination."



Pay attention to your leanings and ken—  
The daydreams welling up from your soul's den;  
You're the golden chalice to life's dript blood!  
Oh, drink deep life's bountiful wine—the flood!





Requests times a million through the eclipse  
Sent to the darkening moon from my lips  
To change God's absolutely perfect mind...  
God said, "All is as I've intended it!"



# Discussion



## — Chapter 19 — Discussion

I turn to ex Sister Angelina and smile, my dream come true, as we continue our work in Vassar library, editing and illustrating the book that we have lived and written. I hand her a large stack of papers containing comments and various corrections.

She begins, “Page 2. The paragraph about a book. The last sentence, ‘the arts enrich human experience, but they are no substitutes for the living of it’. You may be surprised, but I often think the same about the arts. Some people try to live through art. I have a friend like that, but it only happens when a person has no life inside and therefore is looking for a crutch to help living.”

“I agree. One has to get ‘out there’ and live through life, rather than, for example, just reading about it. Hemingway, for example, went out and both lived and wrote, thus turning a passive activity



such as writing into the reflection of a more active activity of living. The arts can enhance and improve on real life and vice versa. I would dry up without real life contact. I could never really live life entirely as a monk.”



“Page 5. The paragraph about a witch and the man, ‘what has no death has no life principle’. It’s very true, because life seems to consist of beginnings and ends. A wonderful thing in life is that everything always changes, things begin and end. And what helps us in living is the knowledge that bad will change into good. It will not always happen that way, but the unknown gives us an opportunity to hope so. So, when we are ‘on a bad road’ we hope ‘for death, the end’. Like when a person is very ill, we hope for his/her death no matter how selfish it might seem. Let me know if you disagree with me.”

“For example, the figures in a painting live forever in a perfect world, but know neither life nor death, neither happiness or sadness. ‘What has no death has no life principle.’ Given that change is necessary, and that indeed change is life itself, then a willingness to change seems to make life easier. Bad can change into good if one



wants enough for it to happen. When we're on a bad road, that's part of life, too, and such life can also be lived for all it's worth, bad as it is. Something bad just makes the next good thing seem even better. Still, there are times when life is not worth living, as you say. But, again, I think that the valleys only serve to make the mountainous heights more glorious. The alternative is to be fat, dumb, and happy, and quite lifeless."

"Page 10. The meeting with a pen. The pen refuses to illustrate the written word; in other words, what somebody already created. It's not a total expression of imagination for a pen, since it is using something that was already created by a writer or a poet. I feel here you are just describing somebody who is coming out of a closet with its own desire to create. Am I right?"

"Normally, words are written first and then the illustrations are selected or drawn to match. I do this in my books, too, but sometimes I pick the pictures first and then try to write words to match. This is not so easy, since one must pick a set of pictures that can work for a unified story, but when it works, it works great. Anyway, yes, the pen is now free to create, free of the burden of conventional story telling. Like Hemingway, the pen is going to create and live first, then let the writer's pencil tell about it. Ideally, living and creating soon become simultaneous."

"Page 12. A paragraph about a man who finally takes time to think about his life. I like this sentence, 'What sense does it make to live a life that has no time to live?'. I think it pertains a lot to many, many people who are creating responsibilities around themselves to keep busy. As a result they're still not happy and are not noticing how their life is passing by."

"People think that they have to do certain things. Rush, rush, rush. Busy, busy, busy. No time to think. No time to live. Not enough hours in the day to celebrate life. This is their epitaph:"

### **THEY WERE BORN; THEY WERE BUSY; THEY DIED**

"Page 14. 'Flow and change are basic features of life; in fact, they are life.' I think that Aristotle said that one can't step twice into the same waters."



“I didn’t know about Aristotle’s saying, but many writers like to make the analogy of time and change to the moving water of a river.”

“Page 16. A conversation about songs. ‘A song, being a poem set to music, causes heart and soul to converge into one grand experience.’ I agree with you. Sometimes a song with wonderful words and music can really turn the soul inside out.”

“Music is a natural high and can really bring forth deep emotion and profound feelings. I have the Pachelbel Cannon with words on it. It really gets to me.”

“Page 17. She said, ‘let us never wait; death disposes of joys put off too late!’ that’s my philosophy of life. I am just like you, I never wait. I live today, not tomorrow, because there might not be any tomorrow.”

“There is only now. This is one of the most difficult concepts for many people to incorporate into their lives. Some never do.”

“Page 19. Two [people] is [are] greater than one plus one!’ These are great words. I have the same feeling about marriage: two people developing themselves together and creating something big of their life which is one now.”

“Of course this is true in friendships as well as in marriages.”

“Page 20. ‘There are large worlds of life to live in.’ You are so correct! We can spend it in arguments, resentments and animosity like you say, or we can spend it admiring a rose.”

“Every day I see people boxing themselves in a corner with petty grievances, insecurities and small thinking. But life is just waiting to be lived in a much larger scope. They should stand back and look at the big picture, then plainly see that their quibbling occupies just a very small space and that they are several orders of magnitude removed from the potential of the human race.”

“The same page. ‘Spend time on actions, not on intentions.’ you have to forgive me, but this sounds like a cliché to me.”

“Yes, this is a cliché. Although clichés contain great thoughts, they have lost their meaning because they’re no longer heard word by word. So, one must reword clichés in such a way that they can become new again. Typically, great thoughts will be reinvented again and again. I try to turn clichés into real live demonstrations that will make more of an impact, but I goofed on this one you mentioned.



Somehow I should demonstrate that one action is worth many good intentions.”

“Page 22. ‘When will you do what you really want to do?’ this paragraph pertains to the subject of living life or observing life.”

“Start right now. How many people are going to do something ‘someday’.”

“Page 25. ‘Love is giving, without any motive toward getting anything back in return.’ I agree and disagree on this issue. On a philosophical plane, you are right. But in reality I don’t think it can always happen because human beings live on the ground, not high in the sky and therefore sooner or later have a need for feelings in return. Some might feel differently because some may already have a permanent feeling of love. So some do not need to ask for anything in return from any other friendships that they have. They could feel very differently if they were alone. You can object to this if you would like.”

“All I can say is that if love is not given freely and unconditionally, then, whether one realizes it or not, one has placed definite conditions on the giving of love. Next come demands, possession, imprisonment, cages, requirements—almost like a business investment. If you force or encourage someone to love you by conditions, then what have you really gained? How do you know that the love is real? One may feel special by insisting that the spouse stay home and not go out any more like she used to, but this is just an artificially created way of feeling special. However, not to worry; unconditional love has a way of coming back. And when it doesn’t, then it is, at least, a gift. I think the confusion here, mine included, has to do with the difference between needs and wants. Needs are those things universally required by all humans, such as food, shelter, clothing, and love. Wants are those extra things like toys. Naturally one may also give love out of a basic human need to receive love and be in love. I’m just saying that love should be gratefully received, not taken or manipulated by conditions and demands. So, the satisfaction of human needs is only natural. But love is only meaningful in the long run if it happens naturally. Love is giving and caring and sharing. I would still give love unconditionally even if wasn’t receiving any love. Although I would still look for love. Love is a great thing! Isn’t it



amazing that people don't spend much time seeking love or giving love?"

"Page 27. 'I gave the feelings their due. I visited the shrine of sorrow.' I like this idea about feelings that pass."

"Feelings pass, but mourning is sometimes necessary, although time heals."

"Page 30. 'Allowance of other beliefs seems to lessen the credibility of one's own belief'. At first I disagreed with this statement, but then I thought deeper and now I think that you are right. Your statement can also explain the fanatics who live in religion."

"Yes, the fanatics are not open to others' beliefs and are very intolerant. In beliefs based on faith, superstition, and old writings from divine vision, remember that only a hair breath separates belief from non belief. Those same people, if brought up in a different religion, would be just as fanatical therein. Catholics think that Jesus was of God. However, other religions don't. I knew a Methodist lady who wouldn't go to her daughter's wedding because she married a Catholic. Sounds silly to us, but it's serious to them. Everyone thinks they are right, but as we've seen, given all the various religions and their contradictions, most religions are not likely to be in the right."

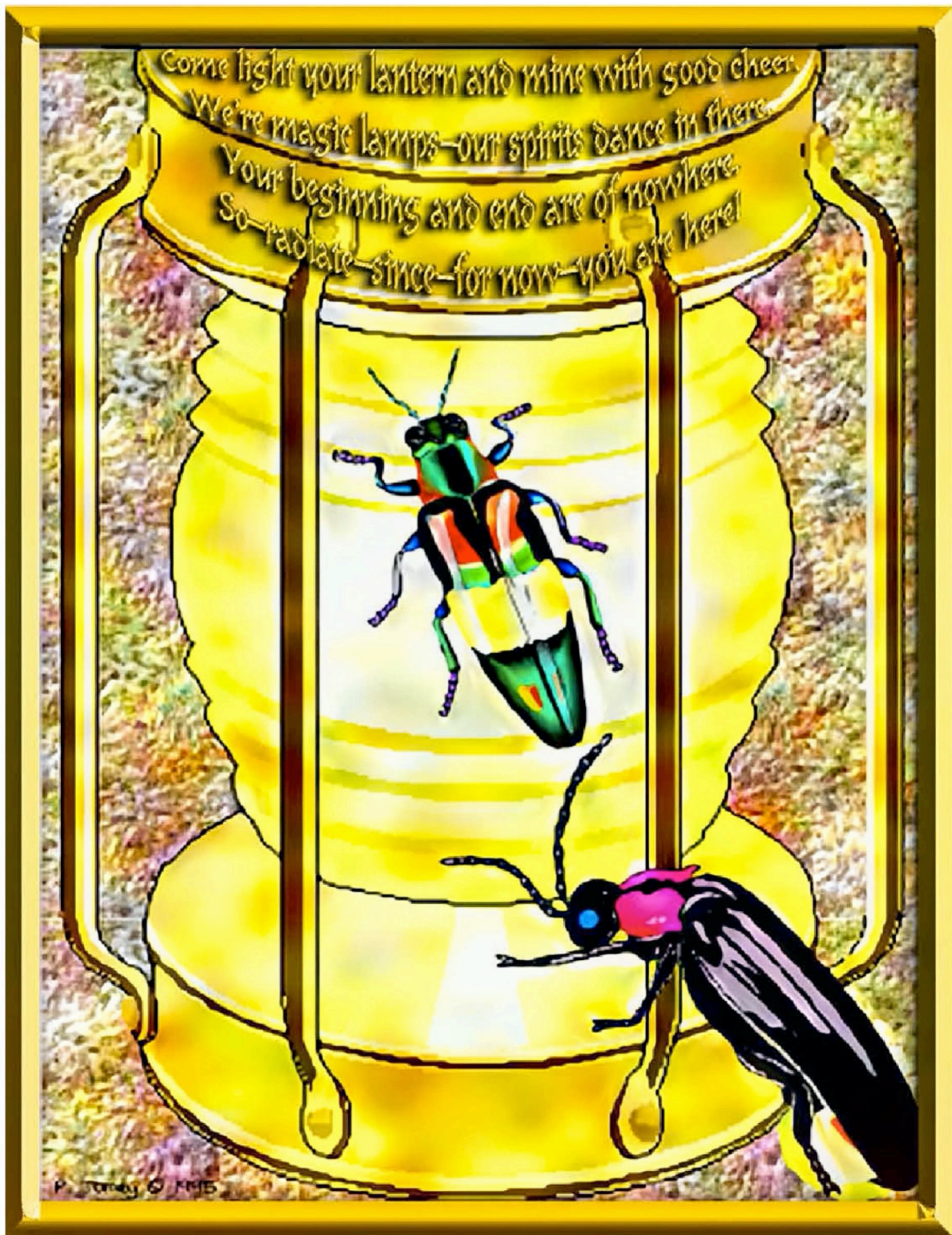
"All in all, I had a great time reading the work. Sometimes you repeat ideas, for example: living now and not waiting until later appears several times, but in general, it's very touching. I like the way you composed it: two people spending time together and at the same time they are meeting all these other people and objects."

"I repeat certain themes, in slightly different ways, so as to make a deeper impression. Most people, when presented with a thought, might realize then and there that it's a good idea, but then later go right back to the way they used to live, just out of habit. However, when they can see and read the same idea over and over again, a positive visualization begins to grow in their minds to obtain more of a foothold. It's not a simple matter to break a pattern of living we tend to get conditioned by the world, and, little by little, imperceptibly, a facade builds up around us until we become brainwashed. So, repetition is a way of unbrainwashing. The ideas I'm suggesting are not complex; they're just little common sense notions about the hu-



man condition that I've observed in myself and others. Philosophy can be enjoyable. The trick is to present it not as a lecture, but in an enjoyable way. I remain the monk who loves you."

"OK, monk, it's time to monkey. Get me out of this habit; this nun loves the feeling of wearing none."





# Grand-View

"I will have my freedom," said the artist's sword.

"No more will I illustrate the written word—  
I'll draw whatever I please, then, the writers  
Can describe my sketches with their fancy words."





# This Life Flies

The watch-fire fades, the final curtain falls,  
The dust within me to the earth recalls,  
No talk of me from thee beyond the veil;  
My Bird of Time has flown, this life is all.



[Look for the next book in the series, 'Ageless Times'.]