

Interwoven

Stories of the Itinerant Soul

by Don Weisgarber

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“All in the loom, and oh what patterns!”

Edgar Lee Masters

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Introduction

Our brief journey through this life is not without purpose, though many of us give little thought as to what that purpose might be. There are some, however, who are not content with just passing through but must know a reason why. All of us, seekers and non-seekers alike, are here for a reason; this is not just a random existence, and we have not found ourselves here because of some god's whim. Even if we never truly come to terms with our being on this earth, never find that ultimate answer, we are always on the look-out for hints as to why.

The stories in this book are samples of those hints. Not hints doled out by someone who has the answer, but little ideas—possibilities—suggested by a fellow seeker. Perhaps someone may find a connection to the little essays contained herein and use them in some small way to understand life. They provide no completion; they are birds come to the feeder, providing just a glimpse of what all of nature is like.

Though the essays are somewhat random acts of life, there is a theme that runs through all of them. We are not on this journey alone. It is our relationship with others that sets the tone of our life—it is the interaction that forces us, and allows us, to grow. And that growth is not just a personal one but is, more importantly, a spiritual one. If the incidents of these stories are looked at as an incentive to spiritual growth, then they have served their purpose.

The question may have arisen in the minds of some over the course of their lives, if we are here for spiritual growth, growth to what end? Why must we grow spiritually? If the spiritual life is not an end in itself, then the growth we secure, the good we do for others, the

suffering we overcome, must have a higher purpose. As I have heard said, we are not here because we have nothing better to do. We have not been given life simply to try to make it through to death without experiencing too much pain. We will have pain. We will suffer. But the significance of our life is not in how much we can endure. The significance of our spiritual growth lies in our answer to this question, “Have we become worthy of God?”

Our only goal, our only task, our ultimate reason for our life, is to reunite with our God. All that we have done in this life, or any other life, for good or for evil, brings us closer to, or drives us farther from, our Creator. We are creations of His and are destined someday to return to Him. Sadly—no, more than sadly—tragically, we have lost our way. Yet, He waits patiently for His errant children to return.

These are stories, then, about that return. Most of them were written for the Solar Newsletter, and the SOL Association for Research has been kind enough to return the copyright to the author. Also, Solar Press has given permission to use certain quotes from their publications, including quotes from The Council. The Council, a gathering of souls in the heavenly realms who are in the final stage of their journey to reunion with God, have provided the spiritual insights that have inspired the stories here. The author is eternally indebted to them and to William LePar through whom they communicated to the material manifestation.

Directions

It was a quiet evening, warm with a gentle breeze. It had rained that afternoon and the earth smelled fresh. The stars just coming out glistened on the still wet leaves of the trees. The children were asleep and the wife was busy with some task in the kitchen. It was perfect for a solitary walk.

The path that leads through the woods opens into a little-used railroad track. With no briars to catch you or twigs to sting your face, a railroad is a very good place to stroll. In the starlight you can see quite far in two directions—where you were and where you are heading, so you really don’t have to walk very far at all. Without the distractions of landmarks, your mind is free to wander where it will. And, it is quite as easy to wander in time as in space as you watch the tracks receding into your childhood long ago. Turning, you can see the tracks converge in some distant future, perhaps without you.

It is at such times when you are stretching your senses a little bit, that you hear distant sounds. This night it is the faint barking of the neighbor’s farm dog. It is seldom that you hear just one dog bemoaning his fate; he is joined in his loneliness by others, often many miles apart. It is a troubling sound, these animals isolated by fence and chain who were made for companionship. A screen door slams and an owner shouts to stop the racket. But it is

elemental; it cannot be banned, and the howling chorus begins anew.

The howling of the dog is our own cry. We too are pack animals and isolation brings despair. We are separated by fields and chains that we call by different names. Ego, selfishness, bigotry. We isolate ourselves in materialism and pride. Our cry is an echo in the emptiness inside, an inside vaster than the night sky. How then do we end the elemental loneliness that we feel? It is only by giving that the emptiness can be made full. It is only in service to others that we can gain our own fulfillment. It is not a difficult concept; the more you give, the more you receive, full measure, brimming over.

This life of service, is it a life of great sacrifice and burden? Not necessarily. Not necessarily. You serve others and touch the god within:

“Every time that you give freely of yourself; every time you stoop over to help a little child; every time you think of an older person who is lonely and you try to fill that loneliness either with a kind word or a smile or a telephone call; every time that you say good morning to an individual; every time you tell your parents that you love them, every time that you tell your children that you love them, every time you do something kind for someone; every time you say to some one, ‘God bless you.’”

The Council

Of course, there is much more that you can do, if that is your desire. But truly it takes so little to break the chain, to transform the cries of loneliness to songs of happiness.

The First Meditation

I had been thinking about how to introduce my five-year-old son to meditation. He was certainly not a stranger to it; he had often seen me meditate. When he was younger and fearful of going to sleep alone, I would often sit at his bedside and meditate. This would provide some comfort to him, while giving me some time to myself. It all worked quite well, and still does, in spite of my admonishments of, “Now, if you can’t be quiet and go to sleep, I’ll just have to go to another room.” Soon he either tires of interrupting me, drives me out of the room with questions, or falls asleep. But now that he is a little older, I was wondering if he might be mature enough to learn to meditate himself. With this thought came a flood of questions. What could his young mind understand about meditating? Is he really old enough? And how do I approach the subject? (After all, as a parent I have learned you must be careful in how you introduce new ideas.)

The Council was recently asked at what age a child should be taught to meditate and they replied, “As early as possible and the simplest way for a very young child to introduce them to meditation would be to do it at the bedtime prayer, in that, in instructing the child to be thankful for its day. Also inform the child to sit quietly for a moment or two and just think about how wonderful the Divine Force is. With children sometimes it is easier to utilize

symbolism that is very traditional, and then as the child becomes older and can understand and comprehend, then you can broaden that symbolism to a more profound meaning.

“A very simple way with a very young child is that after they say their evening prayers or their bedtime prayers, just simply instruct them to keep their hands folded and head bowed for a minute or two in silence, and that is a simple introduction to meditation. And then as the child gets older, they can be instructed to attempt to relax or control their mental processes in that short period of time.”

A few surprises were in store for me one evening when I took my son to bed. I read him a story, listened to his prayers, kissed him goodnight, and sat down nearby to meditate. I was again thinking how I should approach...

“Dad, what do you do when you meditate?”

For all the pondering I had been doing, I wasn't really prepared to answer his question. Giving it my best try, however, I told him about a moment of silence, being closer to God, and thinking of something pleasant and relaxing, like a cool mountain lake or a meadow, or the ocean and the sound of its waves.

“I think I'll meditate about Jesus.”

I wasn't ready for that either. But I told him that would be a very good idea, and we sat together for a few moments in silence.

“Dad, can you meditate about your favorite TV show?”

A Day to Remember

It was going to be, as parents like to say, a challenge. For my six-year-old son, an adventure. We were going to walk the three miles to Grandma's house. And not just any three miles, but three miles of railroad track. If you've never walked a railroad, be assured it's not as easy as walking a sidewalk or a street. You have to walk the ties, or sleepers, that support the rails. They have depressions between them and are unevenly spaced so that you must constantly watch your footing. And the intervals between the ties never seem to fit your stride whether you are young (as in six years of age) or old (as in the father of a six-year-old.)

A short distance of walking while watching your feet is fine, but we had a long way ahead of us. It just so happens that the Y&A railway that runs a few hundred yards behind our house also runs a few hundred yards from Grandma's house, where I grew up. Of course, back then it wasn't the Y&A, but the B&O. It matured over the years into the Chessie System, then the Seaboard System, and then the CSX. When it was the B&O, it was in its heyday, with enormous steam engines thundering by, spewing great clouds of smoke that coated our house with soot; today it's just a shadow of its former self, but then aren't we all.

I knew we'd have no trouble with the sorry little things that now pass for trains. Distance was the key here—could size one feet make it the whole way and if not, then what? We had

no contingency plans. Our only strategy was to walk halfway, eat a picnic lunch, and then continue on. Our goal was single: Grandma's house or bust, with fun along the way.

It turned out that the trip was all we hoped it would be, and much more. As for my doubts about my son running out of gas midway, he wanted to run the final quarter-mile. (It was my fatherly duty, of course, to point out the danger of running on railroad tracks.) The best thing about it all was it was time spent together, exclusive time, time when a son has his father all to himself, and what's more, they are sharing an adventure. As for me, it was time spent with an eye to the future. A future time when "Grandma," my mother, will no longer be in the house at the other end of the tracks, and my son and I will talk, a little sadly, of our arrival at Grandma's house—her wide-eyed surprise as we recounted our feat. A time when my son will tell his child about a vague remembrance of "walking these tracks with my dad back when I was a little boy."

Now I think of all we would have missed—then and in the future telling—if, when approached I had said, "No, son, you're too little, you could never walk that far," if my expectations of what he could do, of what we could accomplish together, were not set high. There is an adventure that awaits us at every turn, in every aspect of our lives—as sons and daughters, as parents, as friends, as children of God. We need only say, "Yes," and we are on our way.

The Council offers these words of inspiration as we step out on our spiritual journey: "As we said earlier, it is not the wisdom, it is not the knowledge that you have, it is not what you have that will make you spiritual, but it is what you are willing to do with what you do have that will make you spiritual, that will make you godlike, that will make you fulfill yourself, to resume your rightful place in the creation of creation, to again return to your godly state so that you can once again experience that Divine energy, that Divine activity, so that this great Creator, this Father, this Infinite Light, can take you in his arms and hold you to His Bosom as a precious jewel, a wondrous gem, something of such great and such value that He could not be complete without it. This is your rightful place, this is what you are destined to, sooner or later, one way or another. You may fight your godliness all the way to receiving your crown, but it will be a battle in vain, for you are destined to be with that Divine Presence."

Yes, the spiritual aspects of our lives can be an adventure. We can accomplish much more than we think. With steady effort, discipline, and good intentions we can make spiritual progress. Our goal is simple and ultimate; reunion with God, yet there are so many joys along the way.

Your spiritual growth may be equal to the distance you must go. Set your goal for Grandma's house, and don't even think about not getting there. Your rewards are great if your heart is sincere. Be careful of your footing, though.

Narnia Comes to Our House

When I bought the books for my son, I thought that it would take all of his childhood years for us to read through them. Truly, I hoped to myself that we would be able to finish the series of seven books before he reached that point in life where “children’s books” were only for his little brother, and he no longer needed his dad to read to him. There is so much that can come between a father reading to his son besides the son’s growing up—school, friends, television, baseball, games. The list of life’s enticements is endless for an eight-year-old. For a father the list is shorter—work and sleep.

The series of books is called *The Chronicles of Narnia*, written by C.S. Lewis, and it is filled with all the things that can thrill the imagination of a child. Magic, enchanted lands and beings, warriors of good and evil, kings and princes, dwarfs, unicorns, flying horses, and children from our world who are magically drawn into that land by its ruler and lord, the great lion Aslan. But it is more than just an adventure; there is an underlying story, a level of symbolism that gives a much deeper meaning to the travails of the children who venture into Narnia. And I wondered, as I read to my son: Would he discover this secret, this truth that expands the enjoyment and appreciation of the simple story?

I knew that to explain the symbolism to him would destroy it. The discovery itself is the moment of enlightenment, the sense of a new horizon. It is the “Aha, I see” of poetry, and it can only be experienced by one’s self.

So on we read, night after night, voyaging to another world. Sometimes, during the day we would find the time for a chapter or two, and re-enter that land of the white witch and the golden lion. Once, when we discovered that two of the children had grown too old and were told they could never return to Narnia, we both broke into tears. Another time at a sad passage that affected me more than him, he asked me, “Dad, why is your voice so weird?” But it was a sadness not of sorrow, but beauty.

The stories that I thought might take five years to read took five months. It was a glorious and emotional time for me, and for my son there will be memories of a father who went with him hand in hand to a new world. But throughout our journey I continued to wonder, “Will he understand the significance, discover the meaning beyond the mere adventure?” As he lay in his bed listening to the last chapter of the last book, the world of Narnia was coming to an end. On the very last page of the last chapter he sat upright in bed, his eyes aglow, and exclaimed, “I know who Aslan is—it’s God!” and my child fell into his father’s arms once more.

If you should decide to read *The Chronicles of Narnia* to your son, or daughter, or grandchild, rest assured I haven’t given it all away. I will only hint at the wonderful ending of the series by quoting The Council:

“The time now is allowed for you and for all to step from this right into the House of the Lord, from the physical into Co-Creation with your Father.”