

## INTRODUCTION: THE MOTHER LINEAGE

### *How I Discovered the Spirit World*

Without intending it or in any way deliberately looking for it, I found my daily life impinged upon by the spirit world, that would show up in my sleeping hours & routinely waken me into a bewildered state. This went on for many of my nights over at least a dozen years. I'd long thought I had some kind of psychic tension that manifested as disturbed dreams, that while sleeping confused outer neighborhood sounds with inner dreamscapes & prodded me sometimes into sleep-walking several times a night. I couldn't relate what happened to me in sleep to the rest of my life, which seemed ordinary enough & not especially anxious or worried.

Finally the obvious started to force the recognition on me that this was a very strange sleep pattern indeed. It led me to working with a hypnotherapist. I reasoned that if I could simply relax & rearrange the subconscious patterns emerging through sleep, I could finally return to "normal" after so many years. Through a lot of hard work with the hypnotherapist's aid, I eventually gained an ability to resist emerging from my bed in a deluded state. Though as we came to the end of our sessions together, she considered that maybe the problem I was having wasn't purely my own psychology, but intrusions from the spirit world. She gave me the phone number of Ruby Gibson, who was supposed to have the shamanic skills necessary for dealing with spirits. My life shifted significantly the morning I met Ruby & lied down on her therapeutic table.

Ruby, a native American healer with an extensive background in "bodywork" therapies, trauma & brain issues, & shamanic approaches, calls her brand of healing "somatic archaeology." It's "somatic" in that it works with the body & its subtle energies, & "archaeology" since in practice, as one digs ever deeper uncovering accreted layers of consciousness, another karmic complex emerges from beneath the previous one, with its own images, imprinted memories, jammed impulses, & artifacts of psychic tension. Ruby's gifts include a medium's ability to vividly see the spirit world & the movement or blockage of subtle energy in the body. Not the least of her gifts to others are the kindness & depth in her eyes.

Thus I embarked on a several year dig of my psyche that never failed to be fascinating, but still struggles persisted with nighttime spirits. Much of what the work revealed had to do with previous lives, but an important thread related to how I'd been born but given up for adoption. These were issues I had no normal way of touching, though I had lived the life of a serious meditator working with the Tibetan tradition of tantric Buddhism. They seemed to be rooted either in the first days of my life, or in the womb, or before.

Two events seemed, after a long build up, to shatter some impasse with my

consciousness: my mother died unexpectedly, & a month later, literally the day after I returned from burying her cremated remains, I was in a bicycle accident that nearly killed me.

### *The Dralas Appear*

I woke up in the same Intensive Care Unit as my mother had died in, for the first 45 minutes believing I was still watching her suffer there. I spent a week floating in an Oxycontin-soaked bardo. When I reemerged from the hospital with reassembled body & started re-assembling my life, I began to notice how many psychically-gifted women I knew beyond Ruby, & began to hear more & more about that dimension of my life that had been limited in my personal experience to nocturnal harassments. In this way I began meeting spirits of both my mothers—the recently deceased mother who adopted me, & the one I'd never met who'd birthed me. My adoptive mother's spirit appeared to many, including to a lady who happened to be in the room with her casket.

Ruby began to dislodge & exorcize some tenacious, malevolent spirits from my somatic body with the help of her wisdom guides working in concert with my own, what in my lineage of tantra, called Shambhala, is referred to as *drala*. Drala can be the energy of a locale, like a tree, a stream, a lake, or a mountain. It can be embodied by your ancestors. It can appear as the wisdom energy of great beings manifesting as deities or buddhas. It may well be, at its most essential level, simply the reflection of your own inherent wisdom & brilliant, pristine subtle energy.

I understood Ruby's dralas, what she called guides or help-ers, to be a cosmic mother lineage, & discovered my own to include lamas, or spiritual teachers, I was bound to, & even my now deceased adoptive parents. More of my dralas would show up all the time, as protectors or unexpected guides through some fraught psychic passage.

These experiences echoed things my Buddhist teacher, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, had said, pointing to their presence in phenomenal reality & their enthusiasm for sentient beings: "The dralas are dying to meet you."

Thus I grew familiar with this aspect of mind & reality. I recognized in the dralas the qualities of my own teacher: a tender, caring attitude that doesn't buy any bullshit, a surprising sense of humor, &, dwelling outside the sticky webs of the material world, an ability to see past, present, & future.

### *An Excavation of the Spirit through the Body*

Of course, none of this fits into the "neuro-nihilist" paradigm of XXIst century materialism, for which only the material world is real & the brain the sole source of consciousness. This was not the world I found myself journeying through, battling supernatural intrusions & uncovering fossilized moments of violence & bondage to long past relationships echoing from long ago lifetimes.

I did not have to go very far into the past to unfold the vital connections I had to my own mothers, adoptive & biological. The emotional intensity of mother & child seems indelible to any human life, regardless of what you may pass through or adapt as the narrative of your life-history. The mother who raised me had many struggles with herself, ones that left me at core feeling helpless & heartbroken. The process of her death confronted me with this agony, as well as the possibility of death as transformation not just loss. The mother who birthed me seemed like someone I had little choice but to shrug off. I never felt any insistent need to go find her, to somehow get an explanation or to sort something out. Neverthe-less, beyond birth & death, *she found me*.

You could argue that these phantoms of my mothers & my sequence of lifetimes were essentially psychological emanations, ways of discoursing with who I happened to be as some kind of case history. But who am I, after all? Where am I a fixed entity, a still point to which it all adheres? It seems instead a kaleidoscope of shifting karmic conditions, a river without a clear beginning or finale, only movement & inertial patterns & emotional detritus floating along for thousands of miles until it finally disintegrates. That "Who am I?" doesn't cohere purely as the obvious, conscious, physical person who rises to brush his teeth & head to work every day, but resonates through many dimensions, often completely unnoticed or rarely seen.

Sometimes, however, you might find them clamoring for your attention on the hypnogogic edge of sleep.

It seemed like it was the mother principle that ushered me into this kind of perception in the form of women who looked to my healing in various circumstances & functioned as translators of vision. They acted as informants on a world I was often too dull to see or feel, & directed me in ways that helped me evolve as a being. This I began to see was the spiritual "mother principle" in action—the very thing the Catholic Church worked so hard to eliminate from Europe as a threat (real or imagined) to its monotheism, literally killing millions of women it regarded as trafficking in unauthorized magic derived from unregulated magical sources. Scientific materialism has continued this aggression as an institutional, paradigmatic dismissiveness toward the intuitive, immaterial, & divine. In seizing the amazing power of the physical world, it has drained it of enchantment, shrinking it to the merely mechanical, something to be manipulated, owned, bought & sold. No longer sacral, Mother Earth got reduced to a whore in service of blind human predation.

Ruby guided me in an excavation of spirit through body. Sometimes she put me through very arduous, deep tissue massage, breaking down & realigning tightly bound structures of muscle, tendon, & bone. She led my breath into interior bodily textures that provoked energetic releases & upwellings of imagery & narrative. Wherever in the body subtle energy becomes entangled & stagnant, consciousness congeals into a stuck somatic pattern, often stamped with an old trauma like a violent death in another life or

frozen emotional energy from a difficult human relationship. Right here parasitic spirits come to dwell like spiders nestling themselves in the middle of their webs. The worst are removed only with considerable effort, a psychic surgery that relieves a tension in consciousness that otherwise tenaciously resists exposure & resolution.

The discord within ourselves reflects in our discord with the world. The egocentric & materialistic wall us in as they elide the sacred & visionary. In order to restore those lost facets to living reality, I at least have had to take this very personal journey into graveyards & grief, listening to the stories the Mothers speak.

### *An Autumn Bike Ride*

All of which began as an effort to simply sleep through the night. Years of combating apparitions & scavenging through my psyche yielded tales that seemed worth telling, that were their own peculiar lenses on life & death. My consciousness teemed with liminal glimmers & startling visages cut into the oneiric dark. I wrote them down as a poetic memoir that, while not strictly linear, intended to describe & contemplate events as I experienced them. Some of the stories here were stories told to me by gifted women, informants for “the other side.” They re-attuned my perception & opened fresh conduits for wisdom—or maybe *old* conduits, ones that hadn’t been used in quite a while, long buried in brush & neglect.

In some way these poems comprise a few bits strung together from a much, much longer story—not an account of struggling to awaken from disturbed sleep but the primal story of coming to from the sleep of birth & death.

Properly, where exactly should this account have started? Easily it could come from many lifetimes ago or even from lifetimes to come. It begins already in progress, on a bike ride in October.