

Bridge Across the River

**Communications from the life after death
by a young artist killed in the First World War**

In 4 Parts

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Content

March 25th through April 11th, 1917

March 25th, 1917

You ask me about the surrounding world here in Devachan, and whether it is mere appearance or reality:

The astral world is a world of mere appearance. This celestial world, however, consists of an entirely different material. What the inhabitant of Devachan sees is existent substance. For the novice, it is of positively overwhelming beauty, form and harmony. These things really exist; only they are not perceived by undeveloped, still-sleeping persons, despite the fact that they live in the midst of them. It is difficult to describe these surroundings to you. Let's say for example you see a moonscape out of which fantastical forms suddenly spring up before your eyes and, through your different reflexes, become fairy tale-like images. You see *more* than what is actually in front of you, because the appearance shows something else that lies much deeper. And this is also a positive world that actually exists, the changing shapes notwithstanding.

You ask me what goes on here in the way of developments. I believe we can go ahead and compare it with life and movements as they occur on earth. Except, of course, that what develops here are completely different things. For example here there are plants with tremendous life force that can be compared with the life of an animal on earth, but ensouled with the splendid purity of a plant. Their withering doesn't happen in so sad a way as on earth; rather, it is more an eternally alternating waking and sleeping. Beings at the level of the animals do not exist here; instead, there are other entities that are a kind of cross between an undeveloped human being with a twilit consciousness, and an individual plant with a well-developed sense of consciousness. That is approximately how you might be able to understand the matter. These are beings who are an enrichment to the Devachan sphere, because they enliven the world with their charming play and their modest and pleasing appearance. They are beings that never become human. They wither just as soundlessly as they have come into being, only to reappear, perhaps in a different color. They live their eternally recurring life in the same ever-cheerful and friendly way. They have no I-consciousness and no capacity to think as we do; nevertheless, they are our joy here. It is as if one had a friend in them, in the same way as on earth one has friends among the animals, for instance. Then there are yet other beings, ones that arise, grow and fade away in nature; like the lowest plants on earth they live without any urges or instincts, only for the protection of the many wonderful divine creations that delight our eye here in this world.

This is a general picture of the major portion of the living beings in our environment here.

I could tell you more details about their life and why they exist, but it has been enough for today.

March 26th, 1917

I feel how interested you are in my descriptions, which is why I want to go on giving you an account of this place. All things we see, experience, go through and sense here we take in a thousand times more strongly than any person in a physical garment ever could. The very objects and entities themselves that approach one, that one perceives, have an effect that is a thousand times stronger, so that one thinks back on one's earthly sensations toward objects almost with a smile.

Earthly human beings' entire environment is fully detached from them, the former have no access to them nor even, any real connection with anything that surrounds them. Consider, for example, the mountains, which now lie before you in all their grandeur and majesty, pleasing to your eyes. Do you really have a feeling of them? Can you connect so closely with

them that you take the soul of the mountains into yourselves? Can you communicate with them?

All this is distant from and inaccessible and mute to you. No, you have no life around you that receives you this way, in a way that you can enter into it completely and be at home everywhere inside it. The only reason you often feel lonely within nature is that you lack true, deep friendship for the things that surround you. But we have that here. We see around us the most beautiful creations, similar to your nature, and we understand what they say. Rushing, the emission of heavenly fragrance, singing – all this resounds to us as the language of these creations; we understand the delicate babbling of the waters, the glitter of the light-filled streams. Thus everything around us is alive, and we in turn live in everything. There is no loneliness here, only eternal harmony between us and the things around us.

Later.

I was telling you about the nature here... Now I want to tell you about the laws in this place.

All laws in the spiritual world are of an iron firmness, and seem hard to fulfill to the new arrivals here.

The first law is that of silence; the second is the law of obedience; the third, holding back one's own entity; the fourth is renunciation; the fifth: strengthening one's will toward the spiritual leaders. These commandments must be followed unconditionally. There is no pleasure unless one observes them. The new arrival who finds them too difficult renounces Devachanic bliss for the time being, until he achieves the firm will, the wish and the maturity for it.

Now I want to tell you something about the path of development of the Devachan inhabitants: here, too, there is an "eternally continuous turning with the development's wheel". But we also go through times when we stand still and simply enjoy.

We lack any and all sense of pain, but we can envelop ourselves in matter, through which we can feel pity, worry, and similar such feelings. But only if we want to. I only do so if I want to know how you are doing and living, and I can assess accordingly how far you have developed yourselves. Only for such reasons, thus obviously out of love, do we take on matter, which has become entirely foreign to us.

March 29th, 1917

... That is oftentimes the huge mistake, that people believe they can be helped in their spiritual development without doing anything themselves to contribute to it. Oh no, *everything* has to be impelled by *them*! We can only request, perhaps spur on, but we cannot help directly. That is why all I can ever do is keep telling and entreating you: be diligent!

The more a person concerns himself with the problems of the spiritual world, the more we are permitted to help him receive knowledge of it. You, for example, now know much more about these things than I did when I passed over into the world of the spirit, and this is why I am repeating it once more today: It has become so light around you because you are treading the right path!

Easter Saturday, April 7th, 1917

I know you waited for a greeting from me yesterday, the day of the observance of Christ's death. I wanted to come, but we had experienced too much here, so we had so much to be grateful for that we couldn't stop until the resounding faded as required by our law.

Is there anything more beautiful, more splendid than to serve our Lord Jesus Christ? I'm not sure you are aware of this; no, there's no way you can be, because you do not know Him the way He continues to live His life in the most exalted humility, the way He still conducts *everything* to humanity that He has attained through struggles, renunciations, and ever-new sacrifice.

He truly is *love*! And it is out of this strong impulse that he helps people.

This is also how it was with you. He came to console you, He laid the faith in your hearts before I was allowed to begin my work. He has not distanced Himself, as so many believe; no: in just these hard times *He* comes directly to humankind and helps it firmly implant faith like an iron tree whose leaves never fall.

Now I'd like to tell you how I know all this. Even though I do not stand in direct contact with Him, I do know exactly when He draws near humanity, because then I feel the mighty river of love that emerges there and thunders through those of us who understand with feelings that are moving in the very highest way, and with *gratitude*.

It is self-understood that this river can only be sensed by highly enough developed souls, so it was only after an ample period of time and to my utter astonishment that I discovered His Being as it drew you upward and helped you in your sorrows. This deed remains, and the first blessing for our love was planted in it. It began to grow, this magnificent blossom of faith, of understanding, and of the connection between you and me.

Now I would like to tell you how we here observe the celebration of the greatest event the world has ever seen.

The powers stored up from then are poured out over the beings belonging to earth development. The celebration is like a rejuvenation of these powers, which are re-ignited by the volitional thoughts of their original creator, the divine Redeemer, in order to bestow grace on the whole of humanity. Thus this event is truly always a new work of redemption that streams through you with its power, helping you. Of course now, just as in former times, this holy power has completely different effects on different people. It is an inner knowledge that surges through them, but which only gains access to their innermost being to the extent that they are ripe to open their inwardness to the inflowing of the divine source of grace.

So you see how the work of redemption always arises anew, how ever and again the Redeemer's divine help flows to you to lessen the thorns of the path on earth.

The great mystery of the redemption ascends ever anew from the inexhaustible font of love, from this holiest, most sublime love, which never fails and will go on bestowing its help until the redemption has been fulfilled and all of humanity has reached the consummation of its development.

You must understand now that it is no mere commemoration you should observe in these days; rather, you should open your gates with full consciousness of the grandeur of this occasion, so that you can truly take in the blessing and redemption, the help and grace given to you yet again in the highest love.

Open your hearts, and you will be able to take the blessing of the resurrected redemption deeply into yourselves, and the path I trod before you will seem easy and light-filled to you.

I greet you all.

We are united through love.

Your *Sigwart*