

MYSTIQUE OF LOVE

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WHY NOW?

This e-book is about an intense period of my life. I never thought my life would head in this unique direction. While I was in the midst of it, it seemed like I was swallowed by some earthquake and constantly jostled around by its intense tremors.

It has been a few years since, and I find myself having some spare time during the Covid lockdown to pen my thoughts and piece my writing together into this e-book. It is a loose chronicle of those times and also includes my backstory, what I was seeking for, what moved me passionately and whose doorstep it brought me to. Although the incidents mentioned here are from my past (which is all we can recall, really), its effects are felt in every aspect of my day-to-day living. I could not imagine what an incredible impact one person could have on another in such a powerful and wonderful way. The person I am referring to is Dr. Sabyasachi Guha. His friends fondly address him as Guha or G.

One may ask, "Why write now about what happened in the past?"

I have a few reasons from my perspective:

- It is a unique story
- It is closely connected to a wonderful friend, G, who seems to create a strong impact on people wherever he goes. Perhaps if you are lucky, your paths may cross
- There are so many charlatans peddling 'spirituality' in the market place...I felt compelled to write about my first-hand experience to highlight that there is a whole different power that a human body possesses. It is capable of addressing and perhaps resolving some core issues and conflicts within us so we can function more efficiently and in a balanced manner.

MYSTIQUE OF LOVE

INTRODUCTION

In search of Enlightenment...I discovered something else...

I used every ounce of my imaginative faculties to dream of what an enlightened state would be. I pursued it with singular passion and drive but unfortunately it took me nowhere. Frustrated, saddened, yet with a never-say-die, desperate attitude I landed at the door of Sabyasachi Guha. He went about trashing one citadel after another of my imagined peaks and highs. As my wonderful goals came tumbling down I crashed and burned with nowhere to turn. From these burnt ashes of my pile of dreams emerged something that was very unexpected, potent, vibrant and life-abiding. My life as I knew it, had changed forever. Each day continues to be filled with new surprises, wonderment, and simplicity. I wonder how we get so convoluted and myopic that something so simple and natural can't get our attention anymore!

In my interactions with Sabyasachi Guha, who I refer to as G, I observed how a simple person can be fully capable of perceiving the complexities and the intricacies of life and its functioning. We have been brainwashed to believe that to be simple is to be gullible, unintelligent and low performing. In fact to perceive things AS IS needs much deeper order and functioning. To be simple requires an extraordinary amount of talent and focus. Simplicity is a prerequisite to see things as they are!

MYSTIQUE OF LOVE

PROLOGUE

On August 21st, 2020 G texted me:
G: Mystique of Love

Me: What is that?

G: It is the title of your book.

Me: YESSSSSSSSSS!!!! 14 Letters!!! Like my name and phone number!!! (Those close to G will understand the inside joke of the number 7 and its multiples).

G: Is it? Oh yeah! That's a coincidence!

A beautiful discussion ensued between us thereafter which is reflected in some of the content below.

When I refer to “Mystique of Love”, it is not a romantic tale. It is a story of immense labor pain. It expresses the helplessness of a mother’s condition as she goes through hell and/or is in the midst of an ocean of pleasure. Her system develops a choiceless focus on this new energy that is developing within. She has no choice but to focus on the growth of this emerging life within and do whatever it takes to nurture it. This growth is in the realm of the unknown and there is no expression for it. Nothing that I have ever read or heard could come remotely close to explaining this physical phenomenon or the growth. The system innately recognizes the source of it and the supporting structure it needs to provide an optimal and nurturing environment for this energy to grow and ultimately thrive. The system gravitates towards this supporting structure/person in the most natural manner by releasing a profusion of chemicals.

In my case, my system found the source and the supporting structure to be G. The inexplicable flow of chemicals from me seemed to effortlessly hone in on him. The tug of various chemicals alternatively highlighted the nightmarish physical pain that seemed unending and the sheer ecstasy that was like the

ultimate pain balm. Perhaps these brief moments of acausal joy and ecstasy are what seekers term as “bliss” but I certainly didn’t find anything eternal or unending about it. Since the primary focus was on the growing energy within, the secondary focus was on G. Night and day, day after day, I relentlessly stalked and sought his presence, his voice, his face, his audience, whatever was possible. There would be times where it felt like I fell into a bottomless abyss of despair if I couldn’t be with him or see him or hear him for a few seconds. I thought this was love. The kind of love that the poets and writers sought but could only imagine. Wrong! Then I thought it was one-sided love flowing from him to me as he was the perfect man. Wrong again!! Both of them could be construed as, “Mistake of Love” - mistake on my part labelling the hitherto unfamiliar and intense emotions and actions as love. It simply boiled down to this: the energy that was growing within me found its food for sustenance from G. He could provide this from any part of the world, night or day, in sickness or in prime health. This nourishment had to come from him and no substitutes or replacements worked; not that there were any available for me on this planet. Fortunately, my ideas of love and hate and everything in between, were completely immaterial and irrelevant to this unfolding process. The body had enough innate intelligence to seek what it needed and was often quite relentless about it. It shushed my world of useless ideas and thoughts quite effectively for its own good.

One of the delightful side effects of the so-called “Mistake of Love” was that along the way, I got to experience it in many different colors - love for a parent, love for a friend, love for a master/guru, love for someone very child-like and last but not the least - love for an intimate lover. I vaguely recall these have been categorized and catalogued somewhere in the Hindu literature. However, here they sprang forth very naturally and beautifully in me. One phase ended leading to the next, one more beautiful than the other, completely enveloping and drowning me in it. Each of these dunks colored me completely in its hue and the only constant in it was G leading me in and out of it. To me, he epitomized every kind of love but later he completely debunked them all. I felt it was my system that somehow wanted or needed to experience each chapter fully before closing it firmly. All of this took place in my mental landscape of course and sometimes the actions followed from it. As G often quoted U.G. Krishnamurti,

“Attraction is the action!”; it seemed like if the system was attracted, it could generate the appropriate action as well.

In this journey, from “Mistake of Love” to “Mystique of Love”, the person that I was, started crumbling and devolving quite rapidly. Everything that represented me or belonged to me seemed to take a massive hit. It came from every direction. The changes weren’t merely physical but on the mental, emotional and relationship landscapes as well. I was completely at the mercy of the cocktail of chemicals concocted and dispersed by my system. It felt as if I had to hang on to G for my dear life! He was at the receiving end of my volatile emotional ups and downs that at times bordered on raving lunacy. Each and every time he did whatever was needed and appropriate for that time. Nothing more, nothing less; with either a scientist’s precision in a science lab or a butcher hacking, whacking and chopping the meat! He did temper it with a lot of patience and kindness because he knew I was fairly helpless, clueless and physically hurting a lot. Although he dropped a lot of hints about what was happening to me and within me, I was too busy trying to come up for air in the swiftly swirling whirlpool of my existence for anything to really click in my head at that time. Would it have helped if it had clicked? I don’t know. I did not realize for a long time that everything in my life was taking a backseat and the only thing that took priority was the survival, growth and the subsequent blossoming of this new energy. During this entire process, the intelligence of the body sought G repeatedly for his helping hand, in a way using him as a means to an end. If there is anything called love in this process it is the maternal one that has one-pointed focus on this new emerging energy. It does not allow any societal rules, mores, values and acceptance to stand in its way. Eventually all of it is destroyed in its blazing fire including the one with the “maternal love”!

During this phase a lot of the communication between G and me was through the voluminous exchange of texts. Since I don’t delete any of the texts from and to him, they became a chronicle of my day to day upheavals and G’s and my take on them. This detailed exchange became the primary source and an integral part of this book.

“Mystique of Love” is my attempt to give a peek into my life and some of its significant highlights. Meeting G infused me with new life and a new rhythm. Just when I felt that I had no more

questions to ask (other than the practical ones) and nothing more to seek other than his enjoyable company, something was triggered within me. I can never say what exactly it was but it felt like a huge physical upheaval, like an earthquake. The after-tremors of this quake could be felt for years and they continue to date. When I asked G, “When does all this pain and twisting and turning end?” he responded, “Never! It is extremely dynamic and it goes on for as long as you live! Your life is no longer your own, my dear!”

PART ONE

TRIP TO CHICAGO - JAN 2015

CHAPTER 1

Unexpected Trip to Chicago

G called me on January 12, 2015 and talked about traveling to Chicago via my city. He asked me if I was going to be free to meet him and possibly join Julie and him on a road trip to Chicago. There were a couple of other friends that wanted to join him but he wasn't sure at the time as to who all would be able to. I was very excited at the thought of meeting him. Then he also invited me to join the group going to Chicago. He said, "Think it over and let me know. It's ok if you cannot make it". I really wanted to go but wasn't sure about how things would work out at home and my job.

A close friend of mine, Monica, knew of G and had also met him in 2012, encouraged me to go. She said, "What are you wondering about, just go! An opportunity like this won't come again. Just tell G that you are going and if some problem comes up at the last minute you can always cancel. Anyway it is a road trip and you have nothing to lose." After some internal debate I decided to go on this trip. I called G and let him know that I would very much like to join him and we discussed travel arrangements. I told my family that I would be joining some friends in Chicago and I also took a day off at work.

The next couple of days, I scurried around to make reservations at the local Hampton Inn and in Chicago for all of us. I tried to figure what they might like to eat for lunch and dinner, and then focused on finishing up my work and chores at home. The excitement created tremendous adrenaline pumping through my system. The hours and days flew by in a blur as I eagerly waited for them to arrive.

In hindsight, it was the best decision I ever made and I cringe at the thought that this trip almost didn't happen. January 16th, 2015 was the most unusual and significant day of my life. Of course I didn't know it then but the things that unraveled after that evening changed the course of my life very dramatically and in the most unexpected ways. But I am jumping ahead of the story right now.

1/15/2015

G, Julie and Nandini drove in on Thursday, January 15th. They made the road trip in the middle of harsh winter with very little advance planning. One of G's friends even asked him why he was going to this god-forsaken place in the dead of winter. It was a very spontaneous idea that G had and things fell in place effortlessly. For those few days, weather and road conditions were very co-operative.

As they were nearing the hotel where they were going to stay they called me and I rushed over to receive them with unbridled joy. After all of them were comfortably settled in their rooms, I was able to have a one-on-one discussion with G. I don't recall much about what was said but I could feel an overall sense of excitement to have him before me. Julie and G didn't want to eat dinner and since they were going to stay at the hotel, Nandini and I headed back to my place.

I had forgotten my phone in G's room. He called me on Nandini's phone and asked me if I needed it for the night and I said I would be fine without it and he could just communicate on Nandini's phone if he needed to let me know something. (Had the same thing happened a few months later I would have rushed back to his hotel, not so much for the phone, but to have an excuse to hang out with him for some more time and extend the evening). When we got home my husband said that he had tried to reach me a few times on the phone and I said that I had forgotten it in my friend's room. He remarked, "You take your phone even to the bathroom, how did you forget it behind?" When I mentioned this to G the next day he laughed.

1/16/2015

The next morning, Friday, January 16th, we met early morning and had breakfast together and some discussion. My friend Monica also joined us for an early lunch. Afterwards the four of us - G, Julie, Nandini and myself headed to Chicago. This was my first road trip with G in USA. He was talking a lot and very animatedly. This was also the first time I heard him talk so continuously. Half the things he said went over my head. I was content to be around him in the car and hear his voice.

Late afternoon we stopped off for some coffee at a local grocery store that had Starbucks. As we were waiting for coffee and drinks I found myself alone with G for a few minutes. We had an intense conversation that left me inexplicably agitated and disturbed. Chalking it up to over-excitement and very little sleep over the last few days I put it aside. After coffee, we headed towards the Expressway. We had another stop as we were near Lake Michigan and took some fantastic photographs with G. One of them was used in his Bengali book, *Utsarito Alo*. We continued the drive and G's talk in the car became more like a rant. I had always seen him so mild-mannered, gentlemanly and saying so little that all this talk from him was a bit much and seemed too intense. I kept wondering if the windows of the car would crack with his intensity. Julie assured me that it was a brand new car and we were ok.

We headed to Chicago's famous and iconic Drake Hotel where we would be staying. The hotel is set in the prestigious Gold Coast neighborhood very close to the Magnificent Mile. It is a gorgeous hotel that holds quite a bit of history.

After checking in at the Drake Hotel, we met up with Radhika who had flown in to Chicago from New Jersey earlier that afternoon. We had booked 3 rooms: one for G, one for Julie and the third one was going to be shared by Radhika, Nandini and myself just for that night. Nandini had made some alternate arrangements for the following days. The rooms were so huge and grand that having three people in the room was hardly an issue. We quickly dropped our bags, freshened up and rushed to G's room which was appropriately called the King's Room! A regal name, delightful ambience, a wonderful view of the cityscape from the window, it seemed like the stage was set.

CHAPTER 2

The Final Straw

All five of us - G, Julie, Nandini, Radhika and myself sat down in G's room. He was on fire and gave an intense talk and the same uncomfortable feeling that I had at Starbucks earlier in the day, started again in the pit of my stomach. Unbeknownst to me, I accidentally recorded thirty minutes of this conversation. I only discovered it a couple of months later. Strangely and fortuitously this was my first recording ever of G talking and it happened to be of the thirty most significant minutes of my life. It was like a gift from nature.

The following is the edited transcript of the 30-minute recording of the talk that G gave on the evening of January 16th, 2015. The italicized words describe what was happening to me at that time.

G: We have a sense of self and a sense of intention that is always very devious. On one hand you have a very good friend and on the other you are not really seeking a true scenario wherein the friend is doing well - better than you. You can't handle that. So on one hand you say friend but you really don't want his best. This is a very devious nature. We don't understand it. I tell my friend, "You know why you are excited when you hear that your friend is not well? Because there is a subtle demand inside you that wants to find him that way. When the friend is doing fantastic, well and very good, then there is a certain subtle amount of sorrow that descends in you (laughs). You don't jump in joy, "OMG my friend is so happy; but you jump when your friend is in a dire situation. It is not that you want to help. There is a subtle, funny sense of pleasure that is working there. It comes out of jealousy, competitiveness and other vices for the sense of intention. This is the reason that you can't stand your friend's true happiness unless it is really related to you. It is very funny. So you never discover yourself that deeply. Never! You don't want to. You are myopic about that sense. It was a very painful thing for me to discover many such things – how subtle this is. I learnt this maximum around UG. Although we were all good friends superficially with each other, on the inside I always wished that I should be the one that gets and not the other one. It's funny. The one thing that is standing in your way; you came to that man where that which is

standing in your way needs to be obliterated; yet for some reason you are completely governed by that, governed by that movement of that self. It is the sense of self that is doing these things. Somehow UG's energy would always pump it up and you would see two guys will be fighting over a girl like kids openly or fighting over him or wants his attention or one guy is wishing on the inside that the other guy shouldn't be there. I should be the only one there.

Me: What is it about UG's presence that enhances that?

G: What happens is that – it is like a cat when it is cornered, it becomes very aggressive. So it is with the sense of self also. When it is cornered, the energy inside your body is trying to put the sense of self where it belongs. Which means it (sense of self) is no longer the authority. But the sense of self is so habituated to being the boss and has a myopic understanding about itself that it is the boss, it runs the show, it is the controller, its liking, its happiness, is all that matters. Nothing to do with the system. Okay. There is some energy that is trying to provide fuel to the system to put where the sense of self should be - as an assisting mechanism and not the controlling mechanism. But when the struggle increases and becomes too much, then the sense of self senses fear. You won't believe what happens. It just goes crazy about sex, about buying things, thinking about its glory, it is all a part of the movement of the sense of self in a way to keep its dominance going including the energy that comes and empowers you. To stop that empowering energy you will even say that this is not godly energy. The sense of self will buy god, will buy everything to protect itself. You won't even know. It wants to keep its authority by hanging on to other things. Towards the end you become dependent on gods, images, the words that are trying to tell you about some pleasure movement, something that can keep the sense of self going. All our struggles arise from this movement.

The whole point is that there is an order inside the human being and when that order is exhibiting its powerful existence it also enhances the power that is necessary to protect itself. It is like this – I have an immune system that is always trying to maintain some number of bacteria in its place. If the number of bacteria is larger, then the body will get sick because it will be impossible for the immune system to keep it in check. The body is always trying to

maintain that number below a certain level. Now what I am talking about is the struggle with the information that is working in your head. For the information to work itself out by itself in your head, it needs energy for that movement. That energy is coming directly from the source in you that produces it from your breathing and food. This is the way the oxygen and the nutrition are distributed. To think, even to think, you need oxygen supply to your brain. So now what happens is – say somehow there is a radical change that is occurring in the system – the system now is a boosted immune system. The neurobiological circuitry has arranged itself in such an efficient manner that any thought that is not purposeful to itself which can create long term instability or which draws too much energy or goes in a direction which is detrimental to the mental health of the organism – it understands it and puts it in check. It does not allow it to grow. Similar to the immune system, it keeps a constant check. To boost the constant check and train the immune system you sometimes introduce a foreign bacteria like vaccination. Like that the system is constantly - as soon as it becomes sensitive it understands the nature of thought and its pleasure – either to self-aggrandize or a pleasure movement that is given to the body – somehow it tries to keep it in check. If you like to eat something that is not good for the body then it will create a peculiar allergy to itself. It will not be acceptable. The system will let you know that this food is not suitable. You will have an itching sensation in your ear or something or another. Same thing happens with the thoughts too. The body will identify them as not being congenial for the well-being of the system. If the system is somehow very smart and achieves that quality wherein it can keep the thinker in its place; it can never ever allow it to reverse the role again. It will never ever think that the thinker is the controller of this body leave alone controlling others. When that situation occurs, you now have a system where you don't know who the boss is. You obviously think that your thought induced pleasure, your will, whatever you want, whatever primary movements you have been brainwashed to believe you should have, your all pleasure, your all happiness everything that has been registered by the brain due to its demand is the most important thing. This reverse role, is trying to impose because it doesn't know who is commanding, it tries to put the command into wherever it is interacting. So if I am talking to you, you are defending your belief structure and faith and everything will obviously give a situation where you are imposing yourself on me through your thinking, your ideas, your mentation, and this

system because it came to know what is detrimental to itself is not going to buy it. The only way it can keep itself healthy is to give energy to the other so that, that system also gets a similar boost and keeps the other things at bay. It is the only way it can protect itself. For example if there is a bug that overtakes your body then its number is going to spill over and overtake the body. But if the bug is controlled by your immune system then I am set. So this situation is like that. What happens with people like UG is that if you are in that field of interaction you as you know yourself is being constantly hammered and cornered by the new leash of energy in your body that you don't understand.

Me: Yeah tell me about it. I was bouncing off the walls at 2:00 am this morning.

G: So what happens is that the sense of self creates a very peculiar, hopeless, depressing situation for itself. Depressing because it is not getting its usual satisfaction. Its satisfaction is in the reward movements. The mental satisfaction and happiness is nothing but information matching. I am good. I did very well. Everything that is in the field of information is just a matching sensation when I know that this information has been introduced inside you as a good happy sensation, it feels happy. Other way it is unhappy, just the opposite. So all the movements of good and bad are still a movement in the sense of self. So when it matches something it feels excited and happy. If it does not then it is sad and depressed. But it is all in the information field. It's just khabar – iske paas kya khabar hai jisse woh kush hoga? Aur kuch nahi hai. (Its just information, what does this person have that makes him happy? Nothing else)

Q: If the bug spills over like whatever she has gotten, that energy will never accept that because it is not good for its well-being. But how can it stop that?

G: It cannot. There is no way. So what happens is that the energy is too (*claps his hands fiercely at me and stares at me*) ...If energy is too much then what will happen then is that they will separate out.

Me: What does that mean?

G: That means the system will somehow convince itself that it is not a congenial situation to keep the show going.

Q: If your body has something and you put a foreign body in it and it gets reversed because of the foreign body, how can it not be addressed the same way?

G: It is addressing. This conflict now is translated by the information center as a bad situation. So somehow I have noticed so many different things. When this energy starts pouring out they feel energetic, then they don't know what action to take with that energy. It becomes jittery. The brain only knows few ways to release the energy. It doesn't know that if it doesn't do anything then that energy is the energy that is going to empower the body by a total – that is the radical transformation that is known to human being. It will radically begin to change the system if you don't do anything with it.

Me: So instead of trying to ask, “What to do with it? You just chill.

G: You just chill. It may be very uneasy. Very jittery (*I am saying yes, yes because I am really jittery at this point and wondering if he knows what is going on inside me*), it will be so energetic that you don't know what to do with yourself.

Me: I think we talked about this...(*both of us laugh*)

G: At that time if you are engaged with somebody and there is a fight you will be a monster because your body now has enormous energy. The best is to be non-confrontational. That is a technique by itself.

Me: So you just mind your business and go?

G: You say that anything that you do is a waste.

Me: I guess first you have to know that for yourself, right?

G: When you are confronting somebody, it is still in the field of sense of self.

Me: It is not as if you can plan.

G: NO you cannot. They are so smart, they are the tip (peak) of the body's intelligence because it is the latest circuitry - the new cortex. It is highly organized and very smart. That's what they used to say – it was a pet subject for J. Krishnamurti. Don't underestimate the part of the body's cream intelligence that is being utilized by the sense of self to keep itself going and be there.

Me: How sad is that? The best of me is being consumed by me.

G: No the best of you has completely forgotten that the best of you is supposed to help it and not kill it. The best of you is working against you. The capacity that we have created like pleasure - now to take care of the body the pleasure has taken over the body's need and has become the greatest enemy to the body.

Q: Now there is a field of energy that is actually addressing it so why can't it reverse?

G: It is trying its best. You are always falling back. It is like a circuitry you know. Like *nala n idhar hai na zameen ke upar* (like little rivulets all over the place) – like that you have created a lot of small, small paths. As soon as you put water, water will go through the known paths. The brain is also like that. The path that is there – the path that used to derive pleasure in you before by telling yourself what is good, by telling you how you should be happy, people should tell you that you are great, you should feel happy because you get enormous physical experiences that gives you a high – all these things, everything that you know that creates a sense of high inside you – it is the only on these known paths that the thoughts can run. There is word in neurobiology that when circuits were put together, the more they are put together the more efficiently they run and that is Revathi – the sound creates the whole I call it the firework of the neural network - ME. Because that is the one that responds to the system the best. I AM GOOD. I AM THAT. That is the highest response. Total foolishness!

Me: I feel very stupid to say this. Right now, I don't know why but I have a very, very strong visual and desire of taking the biggest stick and whacking the heck out of you. I really don't know why, but it is such a strong visual that I can't get over it. *(G laughs. Although I am trying to sound funny – inside I was seething with jittery energy that just wanted to lash out at G. I*

looked around to see if anyone else was getting impacted the same way but they all looked fine and not unduly perturbed). I don't have the stick. I supposedly like you and that's why I am here. If there was no need to be civilized or a price to pay, then that is really what I want to do. (G is really cackling away).

G: Beat me up! No loss to humanity!

Me: I know I would not do it. I have enough control not to do it but I don't know why I even have that image. I am here totally voluntarily. *(G laughs even more)*

G: Sure go ahead and beat me up! *(still laughing like a mad man)*

Me: But that won't solve anything! Otherwise I would have tried that! *(laughter all around).*

(Although there is still laughter and conversation happening right at this instant, something inside me starts to crumble. There was such fury mixed with jittery energy built up to this point – fury because I was feeling very cornered like an animal ready to be killed. I felt I was physically suffocating and the only way was to lash out at him. I really wanted to beat the shit out of him with the biggest stick I could possibly wield. When I voiced this in a humorous way to mask the fury that I was feeling and he responded, "Go ahead and beat me up!", it just completely undid me. It was the final straw. Over the next 10 minutes while the conversation continued my breathing pattern began to change. It became labored and one can actually hear that in the recording. After about five minutes, cold shivers were running up and down my spine. This wasn't a case of feeling cold. I could actually feel extremely icy cold currents running up and down my back and I started shivering. G too seemed to be aware that something was happening and was watching me very keenly through the conversation. I really wanted to breakdown and cry at this time but some inhuman strength was making me sit there and continue asking questions with an air of nonchalance. At about this time my attention moved directly to G and away from what he was saying. What was happening? He is talking intensely but some funny business is happening within me. How can I feel all these heightened emotions all at once? There was also a primal fight or flight response but in an instant I was completely disarmed. This was replaced by a heightened sense of perception of things around

me that didn't go away. However this new perception seemed to be very honed on him and his effect on me. It was like we were the only two people in that room, for that matter on this planet, although others were there and talking).

G: No it won't solve anything for you and nothing will happen to me either. I will protect myself.

Me: Actually I am just saying what is in my head. I am not even saying – does it make sense...It is just a visual. (*G is still laughing away – goading me even more*)

G: I challenge her...See God has no power!

Me: Actually, I am finally there where I get that there is no god or some superpower. Took a while to get there.

G: Because I can get away by using all vulgar words to all images, all gods, goddesses, everything and I know nothing can touch me. NOTHING! Absolutely 100% sure! What will happen is when those words reach a particular head that is protecting their faith, they are all going to group together and kill me. It is only human.

Me: I remember the first few times when I met you, you used to say, “That b***** Saibaba or that b***** Kali; I would cringe and think, “Can you just not say that? I know he wants to beat that idea out of me but does he really have to use those swear words?” Now I shrug and go, “Whatever”.

G: We have created that problem.

Me: You know what, it is really great that you use it because when it really bothers a person a lot it forces them to really reconsider do I really want to be around this person. If the answer is no then they go away and if the answer is why or what, it tries to seek the next solution.

G: Also one reason why I say that is at least you throw that question to yourself – What is it that bothers me? If somebody tells me that UG (U.G.Krishnamurti) is a MF it just doesn't bother me at all. You won't believe it. I won't defend him. I don't defend anything. I don't defend any ideas. I will just show you systematically, what is it that you are trying to defend. How your

words are coming out? What is the whole idea of what you are trying to do? What is the fundamental motivation behind it? That is the most important aspect. Once you see that, our problem deep down is a much deeper, core problem and this core problem is actually something to do with our imaginary faculty. Out of that imaginary faculty we created something called will. Without will there is no thinking.

Me: Really? I thought thinking precedes will.

G: Nooo! It is together. It is the will that created a thinker and then it became automation now. Simultaneously they are creating together.

Q: Free will and will are the same?

G: There is no such thing as free will. What is free will?

Me: See I am not there, where I can just accept your word.

G: Don't do that.

Me: So that is why I want to know more, why?

G: It is like this, for example, if you do not try to understand what I am saying these words are going to go and not make any sense to you. It is your effort to understand what I am saying is when Revathi is wanting something. That is what is called will. Will is a function of thinker. I...if I don't complete the sentence there is no movement. It is going to grope for sometime and then vanish. I want...that I that wants is the generator of that will. Without this will there is no thinker. So if you put yourself in a total choiceless situation, then there is no I. Actually and factually. But this will is the one which has created all this information. This is not bad. See we human beings, we are in such a situation that we will have no choice but to grow those characteristics in the brain because the baby has no choice. It has to accept a stamp on him or her as his or her name. There is no choice. By the time this process of the will that is generated within oneself has become a torture to the system, that is the time they will begin to reflect if that is so. If that is not so then there is no need for botheration. Those tortured people, whose conflicts are somehow translated in a way that they feel tired or cornered or have some sense of dissatisfaction that is never

translated to appropriate action, that will go and try to solve the problem. Actually the problem is associated with our sense of self. It is the sense of self that has created a difference between two human beings. Two human beings are different but their capacities may also vary. But that is nothing compared to the difference created by the sense of self. It is an enormous difference that it creates, which is kind of false. It does not accept the uniqueness. It only accepts its specialty and greatness. That is the main problem. There is no other problem. How do I know this is the problem? I have no doubt about that. Absolutely no doubt about that! I also have no intention to convey this to somebody else that I have no doubt about it. It is not that I have a cocky confidence and I am going to convey this confidence to everybody to show that I am somebody. I have no ideas like that. I also have a very good idea that most of your problems are translated from that source. That your wants and whatever you brainwashed yourself to believe that somehow it is not in your hand, has nothing to do with the way your system is unfolding all the time. They are two different things and they are conflicting with each other. If you don't agree, I don't care. Take it or leave it. I don't mind anything. Whether you accept it or not doesn't bother me at all. But I know where this problem is in the sense that even though I make you understand that this is the problem, even accepting what I am saying is also not going to solve your problem. It is that bad a situation. You really constantly keep yourself in a corner where you as you know yourself...(speaking to me and sensing my extreme discomfort) you want to lie down? Go ahead.

Me: Its ok

G: Drink some water. Let us all have some water.

Everyone goes looking for water and we break up after that.

The recording stops here.

At this point my shivering became visibly more intense and G asked me if I wanted to lie down for some time. I felt too embarrassed to lie down on the bed in his room and too racked by shivers to go to my room. He asked me to drink some water and said let's go get some dinner.

Another strange thing happened that evening. The intense discussion triggered my menstrual flow which was a huge surprise for me. Typically my periods occur in a clockwork fashion every 28 days. Since my teens it has maintained this consistency. The only two times it was ever off schedule was when I was pregnant with my two kids. The day after I missed my period I knew I was pregnant both times. When I mentioned this to my gynecologist back then, she said it was impossible to know that so early. But I was in perfect tune with my body at least in that respect and I knew that I was expecting. I wondered if my body was going through some kind of severe stress to trigger all this. However my menstruation stopped later that night and it has never returned since. This heralded a huge change in my hormonal system. I would later discover that this wasn't the only system to be significantly impacted. The peri-menopause and the menopause phase that usually can last months and years for women lasted minutes for me. Such was the intensity of this man that evening!

I went to our room and freshened up. Then we all walked to the nearby Indian restaurant. G suggested that I have some warm soup for dinner and ordered some rasam for me. I was still feeling very edgy and the heightened perception that was triggered in the room continued to stay with me. It never actually went away but eventually got channeled in a different direction. I distinctly recall shivering through the entire dinner. After we got back to the room that I shared with Nandini and Radhika, I could not sleep a wink that night. Radhika and I spent most of the night talking and poor Nandini couldn't catch much sleep despite her best efforts. My nerves were so jangled and there was incredible and irrepressible energy coursing through my system. I was hyper-alert and hyper-sensitive. In the dead of the night I felt like doing cartwheels around the room and in the hotel lobby but thankfully common sense prevailed.

CHAPTER 3

A Seed Of Change Was Sown

1/17/2015

The next morning we all trooped in for an early morning conversation and G asked me how the night was. When he heard that I was up all night he asked if by any chance I was running down the hotel hallway laughing hysterically? I thought his question was very strange and assured him that I was very much in the room and not running anywhere and my roommates vouched for that too. I asked him what he meant by asking that question and he said that during the night he had a vision that I had flipped and was running down the hallway laughing like a mad person. He said that he even got up and opened his room door to check but nothing was out of place. I asked him what he meant by “flipped” and he said, “gone crazy”. I said as far as I knew I wasn’t crazy yet but I felt very revved up.

Perhaps it was this dream flash of his that made him keep a close eye on me over the next few years as I reached the brink of insanity many times. This was a known and familiar path for him but for me I didn’t even know what had hit me the night before.

It was very clear to me that something new had been triggered. I could not stop staring at G. Whatever he did, even simple things, I could not take my eyes off him. It hadn’t been like this before yesterday. I had been fascinated with him before but this intense eye-balling had certainly not been there. It felt as if we were the only two people on this planet and looking at him was my only occupation and preoccupation. Many times I didn’t even know I was doing it until he pointed out to me. He said that my jaw had dropped and I was looking at him with such ardor and no one else had ever done that before. I don’t know about him but this was super weird for me. I had no desire or mental ideation to hold him or for that matter anyone else in any exalted position. I felt I was infused with some new kind of energy and alertness that I had never experienced before. My entire focus of attention and existence very naturally fell onto G.

Later in the day, Kamal, a close friend of G's whom I had met a few years prior, joined us and we all explored the city of Chicago. We went up the Willis Tower and checked out other landmark buildings and moved around the city. Somehow my attention was riveted on G and he seemed to be aware of it too. He would smile each time he caught my eye and ask, "What is it? What is it?" I found myself either shrugging my shoulders or not knowing what to say.

That evening G referred to an anonymous letter that was written in the late eighties about UG. It shows up in the UG website in the book "No Way Out" in Chapter 11. He asked Julie to read it aloud and asked us to guess who the author might have been. Different names were discussed and all were vetoed. Finally I asked G what his guess was. He felt that it was written by UG himself. He said the clarity of the words in that letter was so good and every word so intelligently chosen – no one other than him could have written that. I asked him why would UG write an anonymous letter about himself. G said that perhaps it was because UG wanted people to have a flavor of what he was about. Or maybe there was some other reason. It was pure speculation what it might be but he seemed sure that it was written by UG and Julie concurred. There was a time between the years 2002-2007 that I devoured every single word written about UG in various websites. For the moment, however, the man before me consumed all my attention and I couldn't drum up sufficient interest in the letter.

We then headed to the same Indian restaurant close by that we had gone the day before. As we ordered food, I found tears falling from my eyes. They started flowing like a river. I felt bad and embarrassed that I was crying like this without any reason and Julie kept grasping my hand to console me. G was quiet and looked intensely at me. I kept apologizing for crying but the damn tears would not stop. I couldn't think of a single reason that started the water works but I felt as if I was shedding tears of a lifetime. I said I didn't know why I was crying like this and G leaned over and whispered, "Maybe something touched you deep in your core". I didn't know what to say to that, but eventually the tears died down and we ate our dinner quietly. I had rasam again.

We disbanded for the evening and back in the room I was still wide awake. This was very unusual for me because I need my beauty sleep every night and can usually fall asleep as soon as I hit the

sack. Events of the day clearly registered in my memory and I felt myself naturally thinking about G every minute.

1/18/2015

The next morning was bright, sunny, and a cold Sunday. We were six of us – G, Julie, Radhika, Nandini, Kamal, and myself. G was generally chatting and then out of the blue he turned towards me and asked me to talk about myself. Feeling surprised I asked him what he wanted me to say. He said, “Tell everything, right from your childhood, to all your spiritual pursuits, when you came here, everything...anything”.

I started haltingly and it slowly gained momentum. Through tears, laughter and with much emotion I uninterruptedly laid out my life story for more than an hour. My attention was primarily focused on G and he just stared at me the entire time with rapt attention. He had not heard about many events in my life before. Most of it was about my desperate and pathetic search for enlightenment. After I finished telling my story he remarked animatedly, “Oh my god, I just could not look away from you or stop listening!”

After that all of us had a sumptuous breakfast and it was time for me to be dropped off at the train station so I could head home all alone. G carried my bag and walked as far as he was allowed to at the train station. As I was saying goodbye he said, “Please read that UG letter again in the train and call me”. He repeated that instruction again as he noticed that I was not paying much attention. My thoughts were more on the fact that I was going away from him and the three-decade old letter didn't mean much to me at that time. I said ok and went to board my train. As I sat in the train I thought maybe I will catch up on my sleep but surprisingly there was no trace of any sleepiness despite not having slept the two nights before. I still felt all my senses on hyper-alert and my perception continued to be heightened. I was thinking of the events of the last 2-3 days when suddenly my phone buzzed and got me out of my reverie. It was G and he asked how I was doing. I said I was fine and he asked me if I had read the letter and what I thought of it. Feeling surprised at his persistence I said I hadn't read it but would immediately and then get back to him. I read the write up and was very surprised at how well written it was. I called him and said that I had read it and that it was good. He said to read it again with more care and then to call him back

for further discussion. Now I found this really strange. Normally I would be the one calling him repeatedly and he would be the one responding as and when he chose. But now it seemed like he was encouraging me to call him and was actually interested in hearing my viewpoint about something. This was a huge shift. Eager to have a reason to call back I re-read it again with nothing new really registering. He talked very animatedly and seemed to be happy to have a longish conversation. He asked how I was doing and this was the second time in two hours. I was very touched by his concern and said I was doing great. Then he said read the letter one more time – this was the third time he was asking me during this train ride. I told him to fill me in on what it is that he thought I was missing since I didn't seem to be getting it right. He said there was nothing to get – just read for time pass. None of this seemed like casual time pass to me but hey if he was inviting me to call and talk to him, I certainly wasn't going to question the gift horse.

He kept in touch with me via phone calls and text until I reached home. He seemed relieved to hear that I had made it safely home.

The following day I resumed work.

A couple of years later I concluded that the letter and the discussion were just ploys for G to keep tabs on how I was doing. Although I didn't know it then, he was aware that something had kick-started in me and my world was about to change in a very drastic way and that I was quite clueless about it. Another plausible explanation might be to an insight into G himself. I didn't know much about him at that time, so this letter also gave the hang of what he could be about. Clearly I was one of the dunderheads for whom this letter was written. I never asked this question of him because I knew he would never answer directly. At best he might say, "I don't know what you are talking about, I am not UG!"

PART TWO

MY LIFE PRE-CHICAGO TRIP

CHAPTER 4

My Back Story

This was the life story o that I told G and friends on morning of January 18th, 2015.

Buddha Influence:

When I was in fifth grade, in my history class, I was introduced to the topic on influential Indian leaders. Amongst them were Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. I was quite fascinated by Gautama's story. Here was a handsome young prince, doted on by his parents, loved by his kinsmen, inheritor of a kingdom, with a beautiful young wife and brand new baby boy – and he left it all in search of something. That search led him to his Enlightenment. This was the first time I had come across this word. Years later when he returned to his kingdom for a visit and saw his wife and son and subjects, he had no desire to resume his old life. What he had discovered for himself seemed to make him very self content. This story just blew my mind as a young fifth grader. I remember being introduced to this chapter on a Friday afternoon and during the whole weekend the story just churned in my head. What was it that he found that was so great? What did this enlightenment mean? I thought perhaps the word meant – a holy man or a wise man. So Monday morning back at school I told two of my friends how the events in my life were going to unravel up to the age of 30 as if i was looking through a crystal ball. What made me say that all those years ago I have no clue but it seemed like all of it came true. Perhaps the memory retrieval process works in ways that are selective. I don't know. I distinctly remember saying that my first born would be a boy and I would name him Rahul after Buddha's son Rahula. Both my friends who listened to my crazy rant, laughed and asked me, "Why – are you going to marry someone like Buddha?" I said, "No I AM going to be the Buddha". They almost fell off the classroom benches laughing and said that I had lost my mind. Feeling utterly humiliated I buried my life plan deeply into the recesses of my memory. I never thought about it again until decades later. After that day both those friends didn't want anything to do with me and the friendships died an instant death.

Transition to Adulthood:

Sometimes the old has to make way for the new. I met a group of girls who became thick friends and I really connected with them. We forged a strong friendship and it continues to this day despite us being in different continents, without internet for few decades, etc.

I subsequently did well in my academics, moved to USA, got married early, bought a nice house and cars, had kids and then an excellent job in a large international company. I was good at multi-tasking and did well in all aspects of my life. I was living the so-called American dream.

Death Of A Dear Friend:

In the year 2000 a close friend of mine died suddenly of cancer and it was heartbreaking. I was very close to her and knew her through school and college. She passed away after a lot of suffering and I had a rough time handling it. She was one of the nicest people I ever knew and didn't have one mean bone in her body, was strong and fit, and everything about her was perfect. Why did she have to die so young and that too in such a painful way? What was the point of living a good life then? I was always taught that good things happen to nice people that do good to others, Law of Karma, etc. Where was that justice here? Rumbblings of dissatisfaction began. Why did I have to do good and be good if there was no guarantee for happiness? Why do corrupt, inept and mean people have lots of wealth and the poor, sad and hardworking people live out their lives working like pack mules? The established framework of ideas didn't work for me. They were pat answers that people quoted but had no depth or understanding either for them or for me. Was her death in vain? Am I going to die like that?

Devastating Accident:

In the following year, in August 2001, I was involved in a bad road accident. I was driving with a friend on a clear, sunny day at the permitted 75 miles per hour on the expressway. My van was nicked in the rear by some speeding vehicle sending it careening towards the 4 feet tall solid wall of concrete median and hitting it at high speed. All the air bags blew up and fortunately both of us

were wearing seat belts. The impact was so strong that the front of the van on the driver's side came crushing into my body. It forced the van to spin around and head towards the oncoming traffic where the vehicles were going 75-80 miles per hour. I tried to steer the vehicle out of the way but my steering wheel was disconnected from the chassis and nothing could be done. The airbags that had inflated were meant for single impact and had started deflating. My rudderless van was heading into traffic and I could see an 18-wheeler truck-trailer coming straight at us. "Oh My God" I thought and time slowed down and moved as if in slow-motion. I couldn't get out of the way and neither could the truck as all the three lanes of the expressway were packed with traffic. The impact happened at almost 130-135 miles per hour. I could actually see the driver's eyes bulge out just before impact. The front of car which was already bashed in on the driver's side was now completely crushed in the front and we spun round and round on the expressway careening crazily. The car stopped to the side of the road in a small ditch. A few more yards and it would have been a deep and final plunge off the road but luckily that didn't happen. Both of us seemed ok. I was badly pinned and couldn't open the driver's side door. Fire trucks, ambulances, cop cars all joined the melee along with roadside onlookers. I think I was pulled out by "jaws of death" (special vehicle for this purpose) The expressway was shut down. I was amazed that neither one of us had any major injuries. We had seat belt burns across the chest and minor scratches on the legs. My knees had borne the brunt of two impacts, both fairly severe. The ambulance drove us to the nearby hospital.

I was lucky to survive the accident. I felt that I had received a new lease on life and that perhaps this opportunity was given to me by the universe for some special reason. What reason I did not know but whatever it was I would give it my all or die trying. Maybe it was the effect of narcotics they gave me at the hospital for pain management or PTSD hitting me - I was making grandiose resolutions. Right after my accident I began having strange visions. I couldn't figure them out and due to my association with the spiritual organization they took on a "mystical" reasoning and glow.

First, I had to get my knees in order and get back on my feet again. I underwent physiotherapy, diligently followed all the recommended exercises, did all the pranayams as sincerely as I

could and meditated like there was no tomorrow. I gave a 100% to whatever I did and then some. Over the years my knees improved significantly but they continue to trouble me. I can walk fine and also manage an occasional jog but it took years to get to that point.

Rough Patch Continues:

In November, 2001 I was hit by another traumatic event in my personal family life. I did not see it coming at all and was completely blindsided. My confidence was severely shaken. I was hurt and confused and did not know which way to turn. Where were the gods and the godmen when I needed them?

Barely had I recovered from these two setbacks when I was hit with a third one in January 2002. My 54-year old Mom who I just talked to the day before passed away quite suddenly and unexpectedly. I was devastated and traumatized. She went exactly the way she wanted: without any pain for herself and placing no burden on anybody else, cooking the family meal right up until she passed away. I was quite close to her and it hit me real hard. Oddly, all her life my Mom kept saying she would pass away at age 54 just like her Dad (my grandpa) did. Was she prophetic or did she have some strange will power? What happens after death? I had lots of questions but no answers.

I was desperately looking for a silver lining.

CHAPTER 5

In Search Of “Enlightenment”

First Experience With A Spiritual Organization:

I was suffering from terrible allergies. Spring and Fall were particularly brutal. My eyes would itch and burn, skin would peel off my face, throat would be highly irritated and scratchy and I would be sneezing all the time. I couldn't sleep well and was fairly dysfunctional because of it. Allergy medications made me sleepy and sluggish and I couldn't drive whilst on it. I tried different things to bring some relief but nothing worked. In April 2001, a friend mentioned about a spiritual organization, that she was part of that promoted health benefits of yoga and I was interested. During the class pranayama, meditation and Hatha yoga (Raja yoga) were prescribed as a sure fire path to enlightenment. That word “enlightenment” came back into my life again. It was only at this time that I looked back at my life until then and realized that everything I had said to those two classmates in fifth grade about how my life events would unravel, all came true. I had completely forgotten about it all these years. This spiritual organization put forth the goal and methods to achieve it.

I experienced some personal benefits in my health as the allergies that had plagued me for years went away in one evening and 98% of them have not come back to date. I was simply “wowed”. It is as if I got a fresh lease on life. My allergies were almost gone and doing these practices helped me feel healthy and vital.

I took all their classes and performed whatever they prescribed with utter sincerity and diligence. They fueled the idea of becoming enlightened as the ultimate life goal. After being with them for two and half years I was no closer to salvation than when I started. Their path of *Asathoma Sadhgamaya* - from unreal to real - seemed to be geared toward looking for recruits to spread the word of the organization and make it grow. I had no problem with their goals but I was really looking for something on a more personal level.

Around this time in 2004, another friend introduced me to a gentleman who she was thoroughly impressed with. She kept

saying there was something so divine about him. Her husband thought she had gone crazy and asked me to talk to her. When I did talk to her I was impressed with the beautiful glow her face acquired when she talked about “Mike”. The name sounded very western but he was from Andhra Pradesh, India. He happened to adopt the western name to fit in the workplace in the Information Technology world in California. Before long, I attended one of Mike’s classes. They were full of powerpoint slides and made for a very boring class. However there was something to this guy that piqued my interest. It was not in his words or demeanor but at the same time I could not pinpoint what it was. He was able to fan tremendous amount of emotions without even trying. I felt guilty at not exhibiting “loyalty” to the first organization. I didn’t have to worry about it for too long as both of them left me dissatisfied and burnt out. One good thing that came out of the “Mike” business was that it knocked me off the first spiritual organization bandwagon and secondly the idea of “loyalty” as a virtue lost its value and sheen for me.

So now I was back to square one. Didn’t know where to move or what to do? Actually I was worse off. Now I had more ideas and more questions muddying up my head. It devolved into serious existential crisis for me. I began to question my life’s goal, how to live, etc. I continued working and my home life was going along fine, but inside there was a tremendous thirst born out of deep discontent and sadness. Isn’t there one genuine guy out there that can lay it down straight for me?

CHAPTER 6

U. G. Krishnamurti

Each morning I would enter my work place, check for urgent messages and then google the words “enlightened masters” and see what popped up. Needless to say it opened a huge can of worms. The spiritual market place is rich with many, many self-proclaimed enlightened ones, each with the perfect formula on how to get there. Eventually they all proved to be useless to me. I was looking for one live person that could help me or guide me in this search. I scoured lot of them, made cold calls, messaged, etc. Each sounded more pathetic than the other but that didn’t stop my momentum. It was almost like a challenge - if I am looking this hard then there has to be someone out there.

One of the names that I came across very early on in 2002 was that of U.G.Krishnamurti and a website that was dedicated to him *well.com/jct*. I was really blown away as I kept reading about him. He said some radical things that seemed to challenge my status quo. He bashed anything and everything but did not offer anything in return. There was no ideology, method, teaching or instruction. I wondered where he found this tremendous confidence to deny everybody and everything. What did he have or find that allowed him to so authoritatively state that there was nothing to find and nothing to enlightenment, nothing to get, etc.?

There was something about the way he talked that made logical sense but at the same time he was bashing ideas and dreams that I cherished and held close to my heart. This created an enormous disturbance within me triggering headaches and depressive moods. When I stepped away from reading about him for a couple of months my headaches went away and my mood improved. Then like an addict I would go back to reading his words. It would trigger another cycle of headaches and bad moods and again I would withdraw. This repetitive cycle went on for a few years. This did not happen when I read about other people. It only happened when I read about UG because he was the only one that denied anything called enlightenment. I also liked his words that said, “Don’t take my word for it, find out for yourself!” So I told myself that I would keep at it until I found this out for myself – whatever ‘this’ was. I wanted my conclusion to be my discovery

and not someone else's hand-me-down. This was the best takeaway I got reading about UG.

UG of course dismissed the very idea of enlightenment and the possibility of anyone getting a fictitious state. Yet he seemed to me to exhibit the very traits that I felt were a hallmark of an "enlightened person". It wasn't enough that I read about him. I also wanted to meet him. He seemed so genuine and authentic. He wasn't worried about what people said or thought about him. He said his piece and it was just too bad if someone didn't like it. He certainly wasn't pandering to his audience, that much I got. I tried sending emails to the website but I didn't get any response.

When I first started reading about UG in 2002, I was still with the first spiritual organization. One particular incident sticks out in my memory. This happened in 2003. I had just read about UG being in Sivananda ashram and catching the Yoga Master devouring pickles behind the closed doors. UG was so disgusted with this hypocritical behavior that he walked away from the organization. That same evening I had a one-on-one meeting with the head of the spiritual organization that I was part of. In those days it was a very coveted appointment. Now of course you have to cough up huge sums of money to get that 'privilege'. Anyway when I went in for the appointment I was asked to wait in the living room for the 'Master'. As I was waiting I was reminded how lucky I was to get this appointment for free. As I was talking to the attendant I got a fishy smell from the kitchen. I asked what was going on. The attendant walked towards the kitchen and asked me to stay back in the living room. Curiosity overtook me and I followed. I saw some fish being stir-fried. I said, "I thought the Master was a vegetarian". I was informed that the Master was very much a vegetarian but his brain had gone through tremendous stress with some transformation and needed 'special' brain food. Fried fish and special brain food sounded really fishy to me. Having read the UG-Sivananda-pickles episode just that morning it seemed like a deja-vu with different set of characters! I certainly had no problem with someone eating fish as some of my own family members did eat meat. But to have someone proclaim to one and all about the need to give up meat to be a yogi and touting about himself being a vegetarian and then discovering that he did this behind the scenes was quite eye-opening. If he had said openly I eat all kinds of meat and everything that moves I would have had no issue with it.

My search was not for someone with a particular set of food habits. The incident left a ‘fishy’ stink in my brain for sure.

Same thing happened with this Mike guy as well. He talked about bringing peace and harmony into the world but seemed daggers drawn with his family all the time. The following year he went off to India and I think he ended up doing some prison time as well due to some disagreements with his family. So that chapter ended in 2005. None could withstand against the backdrop of UG reading. At this time I also saw the negative and ugly side of the first organization when they realized that I no longer wanted to be part of them. I was sincere in my search for enlightenment but extremely naïve. Both experiences left me frustrated and burnt out.

Through all this and in the next subsequent years I would read UG avidly and I tried to get in touch with someone who could tell me how to meet him. UG’s words, “there is conflict between what they say and what they do” struck a very strong chord within me in the light of my own recent experiences. At least UG wasn’t selling an idea or a how-to technology. As I mentioned earlier, reading about UG was not easy for me and I had no doubt that reading about him was having a strong effect. I also knew why - It seemed like he was squashing my dreams and ideals and the perfect goal of enlightenment and that seemed unpalatable to me.

I had first heard of *naadi* astrology while reading about UG and so tried to find one and see where to go with this. The readings sounded great but they were not going to solve my immediate existential crisis. I didn’t particularly care for what the next or the following years would bring forth as per *naadi* astrology. I wanted to know about NOW.

My internet browsing and ‘spiritual’ reading were not restricted to UG. I read about all so called spiritual or enlightened masters that were alive. I would try to see what was the key they held that allowed them to experience those states that they talked about. I was only interested in the live ones because I felt perhaps I could talk to them and glean some information that would be helpful to me. Every morning I would start reading about them and the rest of the day I would intersperse my work and play with this reading. If someone caught my interest I would invariably send an email or call them if their contact information was provided. Either they

didn't respond or if they did, something didn't feel right and I would cross their names off my list. Soon I started exploring the dead ones too, both Western and Eastern. While their stories were very interesting and engaging I felt they did nothing for me. I wasn't looking for the "upliftment of my petty mind"...I wanted that so-called "enlightened state" and I wanted it bad! I was getting seriously desperate.

All these so called spiritualists came and went – the only one that stuck around was UG. Since UG discarded everything there was nothing in what he said that I could discard. But those headaches and mood-downers were just terrible. Yet I kept at it in short bursts from 2002-2007. Around Feb 2007, I had just read the most recent updates of UG and went through my worst bout ever of headaches and sadness. So I decided that I am not getting any closer to meeting this guy despite trying so hard, let's forget about him. So I did not look at his website for the next few months.

Then towards the end of June 2007 when I was at work, something made me peruse UG's website again. I was stunned to find out that he had passed away in March. I was absolutely devastated and cried like anything. My boss passed by my desk and looking at my condition asked me what happened. I said that I had just found out that someone I knew had passed away. I didn't elaborate further and my boss told me to take a break and go home. Through streaming tears I drove home and cried the whole afternoon, evening and night. The one genuine person who I finally could trust despite not having met him had passed away! I realized that I had never cried like this for anyone including my own mother who I was extremely close to and who had passed away quite suddenly a few years ago. What made me experience this complete devastation over the death of an old man that I had never met? No answers came – just endless tears and frustration.

Out of that utter devastation – a name popped up in my head quite suddenly. The name was Guha and the rest of my story is pretty much all about him!

CHAPTER 7

Finding Guha

Back in mid-2007 very little was written about Guha. In fact the only place that I could recall where his name showed up was when I read Mr. Chandrashekar's "Stopped in the Tracks - Series 2". His "Stopped in the Tracks - Series 3" was not out yet. But somewhere there is a mention that Guha was desperately trying to reach UG and UG was not making himself available. I don't know if the mention was for Julie or Guha but in my head it registered as Guha. I felt, here is a man that desperately was trying to reach UG. He also wanted to quit his job and was prone to depression. In my sorrow-befuddled head it translated as - such desperation could either lead to madness or perhaps he found something for himself. I connected it my own desperation and now felt that I must reach out to Guha.

Then began the craziest of searches for the man named Guha. I relentlessly searched night and day for this person. I would google his name and go down the list of all the Guhas. I didn't know which country he was in at present or where he worked or lived. I searched for him in yellow pages, people in Bengal (lots and lots of Sabyasachis and Guhas there), I even contacted the office of a costume designer and it took me nowhere. I called many people with the first name of Sabyasachi or last name of Guha. All cold calls stayed cold. Every waking moment was spent trying to figure out how to reach Guha. Such was my state. I even looked up names of his wife and children to see if something would show up. Nothing that could help me track him down ever did.

Then in the second week of September, while still searching for Guha intensely in the internet, I came across a newspaper clipping in New Jersey community news that carried a review of the Bharatanatyam dance of Shilpa Guha. I knew this had to be the daughter of *The Sabyasachi Guha*. This was my first lead in almost two months. But no contact address for the Guhas was mentioned. However I was able to find the reviewer's phone number. I called her and asked for the Guhas – either Sabyasachi or Lakshmi. She said that she knew the family but could not give

out their private information. I left my name and phone number with her and asked her to pass it on to them and have them contact me about some super urgent matter if they would. A year later Lakshmi did confirm that she got that message but since she didn't recognize my name she didn't follow up. So that lead didn't go anywhere.

I was able to find out that Guha had worked at Rutgers University and I contacted the department of Physics. Based on who he published research papers with I was able to contact someone from his department. When I talked to this colleague I was delighted to find out that he worked in the same office area as Guha. But then I discovered that Guha had recently resigned from the University. Seeing my hope flicker away I asked him if by any chance he could give me Guha's phone number as I needed to reach him urgently. He said he could not hand out personal information like that. However if Sabya (Guha was called Sabya at work) called the office for any reason then he would pass on my name and number. I doubt very much Guha ever called him back. This was another dead end.

I continued to scour websites related to UG to see if I could glean anything about Guha or who might know his whereabouts. From somewhere the phone number of Julie Clarke Thayer popped up. I immediately called her and said that I had read about UG for years. She said that's wonderful. I couldn't wait to get to my next question which was, "Do you know a person called Sabyasachi Guha?" She said that of course she did. At this time I didn't realize that these two were best friends and lived within ten minutes of drive time of each other. I asked her if she could help me reach him and she said absolutely she could. I just started crying. Julie, still raw from the recent death of UG also started crying on the phone. Then she said that Guha was in India and gave me his email id to reach him. She also gave me his wife, Lakshmi's phone number if I wanted to know more about UG as she had also been close to him. I immediately called Lakshmi up and said hello and promptly burst into tears. I knew I was being a nut case but I couldn't help it. Thankfully Lakshmi could see my genuine interest and spent a lot of time talking about UG. She too cried a little while talking about him. It was turning out to be quite a tears-fest. I asked her if it was okay for me to try to contact her husband Guha. She said it was fine and gave me the same email id that Julie had given me.

After two intense months of searching I was glad to get his email id and finally try to reach out to Guha. What would I ask, would he respond, how should I phrase it so I could hear back from him.....with these thoughts circling my head - I sent out my first email to Dr. Guha!

Hello Mr. Guha-

I found reference to your name while reading up on UGK. I need to communicate with you as soon as possible. Could you please email me back if you receive this email.

Thanks.

Revathi

I kept it very short because I didn't want to say something in my first email that might make him decide that it was not worthwhile calling me back.

Guha had promptly responded, but I only saw the email a couple of days later as I was traveling out of town.

Dear Revathi,

Please tell me what you would like to know. I will be glad to answer your questions, if I can.

Sincerely,

Sabyasachi Guha

I asked him for his phone number and if I could talk to him in person. I wanted to listen to the sound of his voice. He emailed me his number and I heard his voice for the first time. I stuttered and stammered in saying my hellos....didn't know whether to say Dr. or Mr. or address him by his first name or last name and so I said, "Hello Dr. Mr. Sabyasachi Guhaji". He immediately put me at ease and said, "Call me Guha, just Guha".

I was dying to hear from this man and now that I had him on the other side of the phone line, all coherent words and thoughts fled from my head. Then came the rainfall of tears...I told him to

please be patient with me as I was finding it difficult to talk. I don't know what he thought at the other end but said something like he was in the foothills of the Himalayas (Siliguri area) right now and moving around quite a bit. He said that normally he doesn't check his email when he is traveling like this but somehow he happened to check it and came across my letter. I was hearing him and knew that I had to say something soon or the phone conversation was going to end. Nothing came as words choked up and the conversation ended. He said I could always email him the questions and if and when he could, he would try to respond. For the last few months I had desperately tried to reach this man, all my energies had been focused on reaching him, but never once did I ask myself what would I say to him if I did reach him. Not once!

There were a few more email exchanges. I asked about UG and about Guha's experiences with him. He did not respond much. He just said if you want to hear about UG – Julie and Lakshmi could tell me what I wanted to know. He didn't want to talk about himself at all no matter how I posed the questions. He asked me what I wanted. I danced around using the word enlightenment as I was well aware of UG's antipathy to that term. I figured Guha wouldn't like it either but whether you call it one thing or another, you are still referring to a state. Guha said that since UG was dead and he didn't know of any state other than being in the state of New Jersey he couldn't tell me anything. He also said he didn't know how long he would be in India or where he would be. It seemed like he was living the life of a vagabond.

It seemed like anything I asked him hit a brick wall. He didn't seem to either want to answer or was very derisive of my question itself. On his own he was not forthcoming with any details either. So I would call Julie and Lakshmi. Both of them would talk about UG very affectionately and explained their own personal equations with him. I would also try to glean information about Guha and his interactions with UG. Julie sent me all her personal diaries and I read them very avidly. But Guha was very mum. He said that if I came to New Jersey or New York I could meet him.

Then in 2008 an unexpected opportunity presented itself. A distant relative of mine was hosting a family event in New York and sent an invitation to our family. I asked Guha if he would be available if I came to the city during that time. He said sure he would make himself available. Feeling thrilled at the possibility of meeting him

I called my distant relative and said that I could make it to their function with my daughter. I think this relative was quite surprised to hear from me (probably was still trying to figure out who I was) but masked it well. In all these years he had lived in this country I had never reached out to him and now I was actually showing up to this family event. Last minute flight tickets were unavailable. I thought maybe this trip would not happen but fortunately we found some bus tickets. Soon we were on our way to New York City (NYC).

6/23/2008

The family event was over the on June 22nd and I had made plans to meet Guha and Julie in New Jersey (NJ) a few days later as my uncle was going to drop me there. In between the filler time the plan was to go around and explore the city with my cousin. My only interest in this trip was to meet Guha and so I was really counting down the hours. Playing tourist with my cousin, I suddenly got a call from Julie and I excitedly exchanged hellos with Guha. Apparently they were in the city too but in a different borough. I immediately sent a heartfelt wish into the universe that if there is anything real to this guy called Guha, any particular state that he is in that means something/anything, then please have them call me back and invite me to see them today. To increase the degree of difficulty for the universe to prove to me that there is something to Guha I also wished that they would invite me to stay over in NJ. The chances of both these things happening were practically nil. But over the last few months I wanted to see or get some sign that this guy was unusual. Lo and behold Julie called me right back and asked me if I wanted come over and see them today. I said, "Yes, of course". So the first part of my fervent wish was granted. Then after a very brief conversation in the background with Guha, Julie asked if we wanted to come stay at her house in New Jersey and said we were very welcome. I could not believe this was happening! Not only do I get to see Guha but I was also going to be driven over and stay at Julie's place. Before it was a gut feeling, now I was convinced that Guha was special as the universe told me so. I knew I was being pretty giddy-headed but what are the odds of this happening? I immediately cancelled all my plans with my cousin. He was just getting ready to eat his lunch. I made him pack it up and I hired a cab to head over to my uncle's house to collect our bags. Before they could blink in response, we were out the door and in another cab heading to the

address somewhere in Manhattan given to me by Julie. All this was accomplished in record time despite NYC traffic.

The address given to me by Julie belonged to the apartment of Luna Tarlo (author of *Mother of God* and the central character of *Guha talks to the Mother of God*). Julie came to the front entrance of the building and received us with a warm hug and a kiss. Saying a quick goodbye to my cousin we headed upstairs. As the elevator moved up my heart was pumping like crazy to meet Guha in person. I felt like all kinds of orchestra music was hitting crescendo levels like in the movies, while Julie and my daughter were exchanging pleasantries.

As we entered the apartment my eyes were drawn to G. (At this point Guha become G in my diaries as I had now met him). He seemed tall and slender and was wearing neat, crisply pressed white trousers and white shirt with a brown belt and matching brown leather shoes. He looked *tres chic* and classy. He had a pencil-thin mustache, no beard, his black hair tidily slicked back and smelled like delicate sandalwood. My eyes were opened extra wide to capture everything in the screen shot of my brain. He walked over to us and gave a beaming smile and greeted us with handshakes. In that instant I felt that this was akin to Henry Stanley's "Dr. Livingstone, I presume" historic moment. I caught myself before I blurted out, "Dr. Guha, I presume". What strange things the brain conjures up and throws out in moments of extreme emotion! We all sat down and exchanged pleasantries. Again I felt a bit tongue-tied in asking any questions. I was introduced to Luna and then we all had some tea/coffee and snacks. I recall my hands shaking a bit as I held the dainty tea cup. Conversation between Julie, Luna and G was quite general and he laughed quite heartily and very easily. It all felt very smooth. Actually smooth is a very bland word but unless one is actually there it is hard to describe it. After that we all headed out.

G asked Julie to take us through downtown NYC so we could see the cityscape by night. Everything felt enchanted and spectacular. I was ecstatic. Eventually we made it to Julie's place. We had a light dinner together and G invited us for lunch at his place the following afternoon so I could meet Lakshmi and the rest of his family as well.

I was too wound up to sleep but eventually I did. I had my first UG dream that night and the details of it are very clear even today. In the dream UG was wearing white kurta-pajama and sitting in the balcony of Julie's apartment. I was sitting right next to him and he was talking to me animatedly for hours. At the end of it he gave me a piercing look and said, "You will not remember a word of what I said in the last four hours". That was the end of the dream.

6/24/2008

I woke up the next morning and when Julie enquired if I slept okay I briefly mentioned about the dream. She seemed really happy and made me repeat it to G when he joined us for breakfast. Then all of us went for a walk by the canal and G taught my daughter how to flip stones across the water so that it would hop many times and create beautiful ripple effects. The scene was simple and mesmerizing to watch. He showed us around Rutgers Garden, Rutgers University where both Lakshmi and G started their careers in US and the office building and lab where he worked. I asked him if his Chinese officemate still worked there. He was really taken aback at my question and asked me how I knew. With a foolish grin I told him that I had reached out to his officemate the year before and also the lady who wrote the newspaper article in my efforts to find his whereabouts. G shook his head and laughed and asked me again what made me reach out to him. I shrugged and said that I felt compelled to do so.

After our walk, we got ready and headed to G's apartment to meet the rest of his family. Lakshmi received me with a warm hug and introduced my daughter to Shilpa and Sumedha. Since I had already talked to Lakshmi quite a few times on the phone before, this meeting did not need for any ice-breaking conversation. The girls bonded over music and movies while the rest of us talked. Lakshmi had made a sumptuous lunch of items that UG used to like. Before we sat down to eat lunch, G asked Lakshmi to bring a box of dessert from the refrigerator. When Lakshmi said that she would bring it out post-lunch, G was very insistent that we should begin lunch with the dessert. The dessert was *malaai sandwich* and G personally handed it to me. *Malaai sandwich* is a famous Bengali sweet-dish made from milk and soft Indian cheese. I don't know why but in that moment it felt like I was getting a formal initiation in to something undefinable and grand. I know I was trying to fit all his actions into some traditional model but I was

not doing it consciously. It spontaneously brought up that kind of imagery. After accepting that *malaai sandwich* from G that day, which also happened to be my favorite Indian dessert, I refused to eat it again in the subsequent years as I wanted that last time to be etched in my memory forever. The next time I had it was years later in Kolkata in 2016 when it was again handed to me by G.

At this luncheon I also met another lady, Golda, that used to be around UG and now liked being around G. Over the next few years I would run into her on different trips with G and talk over the phone many times. She would always be a voice of encouragement in all matters related to G.

After lunch there was a small singing session where G's daughters and mine sang some songs and then went off to watch some movies online. We watched a few scenes from the movie *Species II* as Julie's son had acted in it. Lakshmi shared some video clips of when UG first came to their house in 1996, when they made family trips with UG and also a clip of UG just before he passed away in 2007. It was very obvious how closely this family had bonded with UG.

G asked me yet again what brought me to him. He kept saying there isn't much written about him in the internet, so what made me come specifically to him? At that time there was no website or literature about G out in the public. Also in all the UG literature in public domain at that time there were so many people that were mentioned a lot more extensively as compared to what was said about G. I said I didn't know. Some internal push and pressure that wouldn't relent. I told him that I had never looked or searched for anybody or anything like I did for him and that I was perplexed by my own actions. He said, "Life finds its way". Funnily enough, years later, that became the title of a book written on him by Nandini Kapadia.

He also asked me when I had come to this country. Normally when people ask me that question I mention the year I entered the country. But for some strange reason I gave him date, month and year when I came to the USA. He literally jumped out of his chair and said, "You know what? I came to the country on the exact same date, month and year - November 14th, 1988". That was a very interesting coincidence indeed! We both landed in the

country same day but our lives certainly had taken very different directions.

Couple of hours after lunch it was coffee/tea time. While everyone was buzzing around putting away lunch and starting the coffee/tea business, G was sitting and chatting with me. Then Lakshmi handed him a cup of coffee and he complained that the sugar wasn't right. So Julie ran and got some sugar for him. Then he complained that the milk wasn't right. So Golda brought some milk. Then he complained that the coffee had grown cold. So Lakshmi warmed it up for him. I watched all this very keenly and with bemusement as everyone was on their toes getting G the perfect cup of coffee. A thought went through my head – I was searching for enlightenment and had devoured all books and articles written on UG because I was attracted by the manner in which he empowered and encouraged people to stand on their own two feet. This man who had three women running to make him a cup of coffee did not seem to represent the idea of someone that stands on his own two feet, let alone help me with that. It left a slightly discordant note in my otherwise picture perfect trip. Nevertheless it rankled.

I felt the need to mention this incident in this book for two reasons: Firstly, it highlights how each one of us have our own ideas of how a person in an “evolved” state should be. Although G repeatedly said that he was just a simple man that followed UG around for 10 + years, in my mind he had something special in him. But his expression of that didn't meet my so-called ideas at that point in time. Secondly, because G thought it was hilarious and insisted that I must include it. So I have included it, quite sheepishly.

In every way possible G, Lakshmi and Julie played wonderful hosts during that trip. When G asked when I was going back, I said a couple of days later. I didn't have a ride from New Jersey to New York but was hoping to catch a bus or a train. He immediately offered to give me a ride to the NYC bus station. I was again stunned by the spontaneity of that offer. On my day of departure, he was joined by Julie and Golda and we had a wonderful conversation on the ride to the city. I thought these people must really like me for the three of them to come to the long ride to the bus station. I didn't know then that wherever G went all his friends liked to go too, sometimes in multiple cars and for the most mundane errands. I have been guilty of the same in

later years but back in 2008 it was all new to me. Apparently this used to happen around UG as well but having never met the man or the people that interacted with him I didn't know of it.

As I said my goodbyes to them I felt a twinge in my heart that I was leaving. I thought maybe it was because a good trip came to an end. I was so jacked up that I could not sleep a wink during the entire bus ride home. G dominated my headspace the whole time.

A few days later I called G back and for some odd reason I cried a lot. Golda enquired in an email what made me cry. I said that I did not know.

CHAPTER 8

My Interactions With G Between 2009-2014

I stayed in touch with G, Lakshmi, Julie and Golda on and off a via phone calls and emails after meeting G in 2008.

Towards the end of 2008 I had an interesting dream. The dream was as follows:

I was in a car driving in the streets of New York. G was in the passenger seat. Behind him UG was sitting and next to him was a lady who I couldn't see because she was right behind my seat. The roads were packed with traffic and the New York drivers seemed filled with road rage and were honking and swerving their cars unexpectedly. It was very nerve-wracking to be driving to say the least. Added to this was G who was giving non-stop advice on how I should be driving and this was putting me on an edge. I felt like telling him, "If you know the streets of New York so well, then can you please drive. Then I can talk to UG peacefully." But of course I held my tongue. Then I finally came to a stop at a red traffic light and fortunately it seemed like a long one. Catching my breath I turned to UG to talk to him. Before the first words left my mouth, UG looked at me firmly in the eye and said, "The answer to all your questions is right next to you." So immediately I looked out of the window beside me, reading the store names, street signs, billboards, etc. Nothing stood out. Then I turned to the other side and saw G grinning at me very cheerfully. As the import of UG's words started dawning on me, G's grin grew wider and he leaned forward, with his arm outstretched and gave me a handshake. The handshake felt very intimate and personal as if he was shaking the core of my being. The first thought that ran through my head was, "Oh no! Not you! It can't be!" The dream ended on that note.

I have no plausible explanation for those thoughts and also it was a dream - so it wasn't as if I had any control over it. But oddly enough, after that dream I felt like some kind of baton had been passed from UG to G in my psyche. Before this dream, I would dwell on and devour words of UG, talks, videos, audios, whatever was available on the internet. Now that momentum lost its steam naturally and I would think of G more. What G said, what he did, where he traveled, his way of living and functioning, etc. interested

me more. It seemed like he was moving around all time and had wheels under his feet. Travel plans were made at the drop of a hat and before one could blink he was off in another continent. I had never met someone like this before and found it very fascinating. It was 180 degrees opposite of what I was because I was a master planner and scheduler and more or less everything I did was meticulously planned months ahead. That's the only I could juggle a demanding job, home front, kids who were involved in every extra-curricular activity that was available, family vacations and my own interests.

In the summer of 2009, G and his family had moved to 42 North Drive, their new residence in New Jersey. The house was bought in Lakshmi's name as G refused to own any property - be it a house, a car or anything of significant value. He never referred to it as his home or house. He used to hand off even his personal stuff after gentle use and his friends were only too happy to get them!

My next meeting with G also happened quite suddenly. It was during Christmas break of 2009. One of my friends was traveling to New Jersey with her family and she had room in her van for an extra person. On a whim, I called up G and Lakshmi and asked if it was ok to visit them. They said sure, no problem and within the next couple of days I headed there. I was thrilled to be meeting G again.

12/27/2009

My friends dropped me off at 42 North Drive. G and Lakshmi gave me a very warm welcome and it felt extra warm coming in from the cold weather outside. Julie also drove in about the same time as she lived fairly close to them. They showed me around the house and their backyard and the beautiful river flowing behind their yard. It looked very picturesque.

That evening I was feeling a bit cold and seeing me trying to keep my feet warm, G asked if I would like to wear some warm house slippers. Then G and Lakshmi took me near the front area of their home and showed me a big basket with a huge assortment of home slippers. They said grab whatever pair fits you. My foot size is uncommonly small and so I had to rummage through the basket to find a pair that would work. I finally found one that looked about right and wore them and they fit perfectly, like Cinderella's shoes.

Both G and Lakshmi looked at each other and called Julie and asked her to see the shoes that fit. For a few minutes I thought maybe I made a mistake in choosing that pair and asked if I should pick a different one. They all chimed in together that it was fine. It turned out they were UG's slippers! I promptly took them off and G said, "Hey if the shoes fit, please wear them. Nothing is sacred around here." With my feet warm and my heart warmer I settled in.

For a few days I hung around the family but G was mostly quiet. If I asked questions about UG he would direct me to Julie and Lakshmi and if I asked about him he said he had nothing much to say. He briefly enquired about my family and what they did. Since he had met my daughter the year before, he asked about her. One thing that struck me on that trip was there were pictures of UG and lots of Indian gods and goddesses all over Julie and G's house. Anywhere you turned either there was UG photo or some god's pictures. At a glance it seemed like homes of some very devout and religious families. I couldn't help recalling some of UG's vitriolic words at this time about gods and religion. It was their homes and it was not my business to ask them but it made me ponder. Finally a year later when I was on a phone call with G and he was bashing all the religious people and their gods I asked him if I could ask a personal question.

G: Sure

Me: You trash all the gods and goddesses so much and criticize people that put UG in the same 'shit hole' as their religious idols, yet in Julie's homes and yours, the walls are filled with so many pictures of either UG or some god?

G: This is Lakshmi's house and that is Julie's - what they do in their respective homes is not my business! I don't tell my wife or my best friend what they should or should not do, let alone anybody else!

Then he asked me the reason for my interest. I told him with complete frankness that I wanted to see if he was one of those people that said one thing and did quite the opposite. He seemed to appreciate my candor and then said, "Look, forget about other people; focus on what you want." I told him I was very focused on what I wanted and that's what brought me to his door but now I did

not know what to do. No matter how much he trashed the idea of enlightenment it would not leave me. I asked him how I could convince myself that it did not exist. I had read UG say it and I had heard him say it, but it was not helping. I was still quite miserable and hung up on the idea of it.

In fact my misery level was so high that I just wanted to quit doing everything. Every waking minute was a torture. One day when I was at work, during lunch hour I called him. It is always a hit or a miss to be able to reach him as he used to travel quite a bit and even when he wasn't traveling much he wouldn't always pick up the calls. I lucked out that day and he said a cheerful hello. I gave him a very tired and weak hello back and he asked me in a very concerned manner, what had happened. I cried a lot and said I don't want to do anything. I want to quit this meaningless existence. The only thing I felt I could do at this point was to call him. Years later he would tell me that he knew then that I had fallen for him hook, line and sinker. But G knowing that and me realizing that for myself are two very different things.

G asked me if I could take some time off from work, like a sabbatical. I said usually sabbaticals did not happen at corporate work places, it usually applied within educational institutions. He asked me to give it a shot at work - either sick leave or unpaid leave, etc. I talked to my boss the same afternoon and within 24 hours my two month leave was approved. I had never seen something like that move so quickly at work. I still had to spend couple of weeks transitioning to my replacement and then I was off. For those two months I did nothing. My family would leave home by 8 am to their respective work and schools. I would just sit and stare at the walls until they came home in the evening. No TV watching or book reading or anything useful around the house. G was traveling and was also mostly unreachable. I would shoot an occasional email and he would respond back. After two months I felt recharged and went back to work. I felt I was back on the saddle.

Life meandered along and I kept in touch with G regularly. I would always get news about him from either Julie or Golda or Lakshmi. If he picked up the call he would ask, "What do you want?" and before I could say anything he would add, "I don't have anything that you want," or "Go live your life, I have nothing to say". Just when I sounded quite defeated he would gently ask

about job, family, etc. The next time he asked me what I wanted I said I wanted to talk to him but didn't know how to because he would either not pick up the calls or hang up after saying a quick hello. I said I really tried my best not to call him but despite my best resolutions I found myself calling him. That day he said, "Whenever you feel like calling, please call. Do not worry about anything or anybody. You can call me as many times as you want. The only thing is I cannot promise you to answer those calls. If I feel like it I will pick up the call and if not then you have to just accept it. But don't ever feel bad calling me".

That green light was given in 2009 and I have called him everyday since. Even if he said a quick hello or said he was busy or complained about my call it was fine. After that green light nothing could stop me. He would joke about the story of Bhasmasura, the demon who was an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. After performing great penance for a long time Shiva tells him that he can ask for any boon he wants. Bhasmasura requests for a boon wherein if he touches someone's head that person should burn to ashes. Pleased with his devotion, Shiva of course grants him the boon. To test whether the boon works or not Bhasmasura tries to touch Shiva's head and then Shiva has to run helter-skelter away from the demon. G obviously likened my getting permission to call him as often as I wanted to Bhasmasura being granted the boon from Lord Shiva. Both of us would laugh when he related that story.

Towards the beginning of 2010 I had repetitive dreams of Saibaba. It caught me by surprise because my family and friends' circle was not at all into it. In fact based on the news articles accusing him of inappropriate behavior with children my Mom's opinion was quite vitriolic. So I steered clear of all babas in general. But the series of dreams and happenstances aroused some curiosity in me. Some of my friends were traveling to India specifically to his ashram and asked if I wanted to join. I refused as I didn't want to meet him. I found that I had pinned all my hopes and ideals on an idea of Baba and meeting him in person would definitely ruin that. So this much was clear in my head that. I was at a torturous intersection. Hearing G's logic was not enough to uproot some deep seated quest in me. I abhorred the idea of finding some new guy or gal in the spiritual marketplace selling some fake goods. That much effect G definitely had on me. So the insidious intent put together ideas suited to itself and imprinted them on Saibaba. This went on

for a few months only aggravating the existing conflict which had to come to a head sooner or later. Well it happened soon enough. One day I was sitting all alone at home in front of Saibaba's picture. I was very sad and desolate and said aloud, "You say you and I are one, then how come your photo is hanging on people's walls and I am so sad and unhappy?" Just then I could hear a voice that was crystal clear, "You really want to know?" Feeling a bit shocked I looked around with my eyes wide open to see if I was dreaming or imagining this voice or was I going stir crazy. Since I was the sole judge of the answer to that question, it wasn't very helpful. So I said aloud that I did want to know. The voice said crisply, "THEN GO TO GUHA, GO TO GUHA, GO TO GUHA!!!" I chimed in, "OMG, do you have any idea the foul words Guha uses to describe you?" There was no answer. In one swish of finality, the whole Babaism crumbled within me. Somehow my own innate intellect passed the baton of seeking from anyone and every one to just G. The seeking wasn't over by any stretch of imagination; it just found an unwavering direction in G. As the saying goes, "All roads lead to Rome"; it seemed like everything within and out was directing me towards G. This incident happened in November 2010. I did not mention this incident to G at that time.

During this timeframe I also made a consistent observation about G. I felt he could read my mind. I could think of the most random things and he could zoom in on it with unerring and uncanny accuracy. Our conversations were not very long and the meetings were far and few, so it was not as if he knew much about me or made a study of my body language as our communication was mostly over the phone. I would test it over and over and he was on the money 100% of the time. When I asked him about this "power" he was completely dismissive of it. He said he had no power - special or otherwise; and was just a simple man that lived a simple life. Simple he was - I couldn't argue about that. But my observation was also backed by years of evidence. I wasn't going to get rid of it in a flash. Actually the years into the future strengthened it more; except later I wouldn't use word "power." It was more of a "tuning" into that person. It wouldn't happen with everyone; it would be more with people that were really interested in G.

Sometime in 2011, I had an urge to read a book on UG called, "*The Biology of Enlightenment*" written by Mukunda Rao. I decided to

go to my local bookstore and order a copy. The salesperson said that there was another book on the same topic called, "*Goner*" written by Louis Brawley and asked me if I was interested. When I looked up the book description and it said it was about the last few years of UG's life I couldn't summon much interest. I didn't want to read about UG in his "death years" and was more interested in reading about his younger years where he seemed so vibrant. I told the bookstore that I was not interested and so they ordered the book I wanted. It was supposed to be available for pickup later. When I got a call from them I rushed to the bookstore and much to my disappointment they had ordered *Goner*. I had another half hour to kill during lunch hour and so I sat in the store to read the book. Since I was not going to purchase it, I decided to peruse it at the store. G called me out of the blue and it was rare that he did. When I mentioned that to him he said that since I called him everyday I never really gave him a chance to call me. Then he just chatted for a while and I was so happy. While conversing with him I absentmindedly bought *Goner* and when I reached home I decided I would return it since the store had a 14-day return policy. I didn't want to buy or keep books that I was not going to read. I left the book at the dining table and was busy with home stuff. My daughter came home from school and poured herself a large glass of some pink cranberry juice. She accidentally spilt it all over the table and *Goner* was soaked in it. When I grumbled about my inability to return the book and how she had wasted my money she shot back, "If you don't want to waste money why don't you read the book?" I couldn't argue with that elementary logic. So I started reading it. The book mesmerized me and I could not put it down. I was very touched by Louis's style of writing especially on UG's last days. That old man seemed to be kicking ass right up until the end. His spirit and punch had not diminished a bit. He seemed frail and bed-ridden yet he was full of life. Something about it just flooded me with emotion. I felt, "What a way for a person to live!" If a faint-heart like me could experience for even five minutes of my life like that, then this life would be worth it. I said five minutes because I figured someone like me would probably not last for more than that. But it felt like a deep calling. When a Jewish friend heard me use this phrase he referred me to the words, "Deep calls to the deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me." The drumroll moment was when he looked it up and said that it came from Psalm 42:7 of the Old Testament.

Could there have been a more effective way to hear the calling of G?

March 13, 2012

As soon as I finished the book and wiped the tears from my eyes, I get another call from G. This time he asked me whether he could come to visit me. I said, "Of course you can come. Please do." After the call I really hoped that he meant it and it wasn't a joke as I was too fragile to laugh at one right now.

He called again in the evening and started making specific plans to come. He was going to be joined by Julie and Golda for his first trip ever to my hometown. He joked around that his friends made fun of him for wanting to visit this godforsaken place in winter. I didn't care what he said for his words of coming to meet me sounded like lilting music wafting through the phone. Then he added that he could be there in two days and asked about where they should book hotel. They booked their tickets and hotel the same night. Due to the immediacy of their travel they paid a bomb for their tickets. At a time when round trip tickets from Newark to Delhi were at about \$800, they paid \$1,500 each for a ticket to visit me. Domestic trips don't really have first or business class; so this was for a normal economy ticket. My jaw dropped. The airport was at some distance from my house. I was not very comfortable driving that far. Uber and any form of public transportation was non-existent then. Reading my thoughts as usual G said, "Don't worry. It is much easier for us to rent a car at the airport and drive to hotel. You can meet us there once we let you know we are close by and you are free." Based on the address I gave they found a hotel close to where I worked so it would be an easy drive for me.

March 15, 2012

G, Julie and Golda landed at the airport and called me. It would take them another hour and a half to rent car and drive over. I asked them if I could bring some food over and they said not to worry about anything. We could decide after we all met. I arrived at the hotel entrance half hour before they were scheduled to arrive as I didn't want to miss a minute of his being there either due to traffic congestion or some unexpected work meeting.

As I was waiting I was pondering over the last few whirlwind days - reading about UG in *Goner*, my wishful thinking, G's spontaneous and sudden trip plan - was there any connection? Or were things truly disconnected and unrelated? My mind was running like a mad racehorse that got off track. Minutes seemed like hours and I found myself calling them repeatedly to see if they were on track.

When their silver Jeep Wrangler rental pulled up I hopped out of my car waving madly and directing them to a spot next to mine. I was meeting him after a gap of more than two years. Although I called him everyday, meeting him in person was completely different. He literally jumped out of the car and gave me the broadest of smiles and a warm handshake. He said, "Look lady, where you brought me! I never thought I would ever come here." Julie and Golda also greeted me warmly with hugs and kisses and we all trooped into the hotel with their bags. He asked me if I had to get back to work and I said that I had taken rest of the day and the next couple of days off. As soon as they reached their rooms all the coffee paraphernalia came out. They asked if I wanted Illy coffee and I declined. I told them I hated coffee and only drank tea. We had some coffee/tea and snacks and G got down to business. He said I could ask whatever questions I wanted. First thing that came out of my mouth was that I wanted to quit my job. He discouraged me on that and explained the importance of money. Unfortunately this was the last thing I wanted to hear as my interest was elsewhere. G knew exactly where "elsewhere" was and used every ounce of his energy to point out the fruitlessness of such a search. His logic was sound which made it all the more challenging to give up my cherished dream. All I could do was cry. To ease the tension G suggested that we get out for some early dinner. We chose a Mexican place close by. We made some plans to drive around the next day and check out some local museum. Through all this I felt like G was having a strong effect on me physically. I could not figure out what or how but I felt like a huge churn of emotions were bubbling up. It was looking for an outlet but couldn't find one similar to a boiling and lidded teapot without a spout. When I returned home that evening there was a heavy storm. The cracking thunder and lightning matched the cracking headache I had. I was regurgitating everything G said that evening, allowing his words to wash over my thoughts. Having slept fitfully I was back the next morning very early at their hotel. The hotel had an extremely unusual layout. Their

corridor was almost a mile long and we all walked back and forth for sometime on each of its floors. When G asked how I was doing I said I had a headache but was feeling much better. He started talking very seriously and our plans to go to the museum just fell off. He packed a lot of intensity and passion in what he said and we took the briefest of breaks for food and beverage. Around 5 pm we decided to take a drive and went to the museum. They were closing shortly and allowed us to get in for free for a quick walk through. Apparently that was plenty of time for him and we took some pics and made our way back to the hotel. While Julie and Golda were discussing plans for having salad for dinner, G was very dismissive of healthy food habits. He said people ate ideas and not food. Julie said he was lucky to throw up whatever was not good for his system but they didn't throw up and so had figure out healthy options for themselves. I found it all to be very interesting chitchat. I was watching G bug-eyed trying to take in all his mannerisms and habits. Although they were all simple, direct and efficient there was a beautiful flow to his hand movements and functioning. It was very hard to look away. If ever the words poetry-in-motion applied to someone it was G. I never used that phrase to describe anyone in my life before that or for that matter after. Catching my stares he would ask - What? What are you looking at? I would just shrug. This guy could read my mind continents away, what is the point trying to answer those questions.

The next day, my friend Monica , who had read about UG and also heard about G from me, wanted to meet him. Since G okayed it she joined us early morning. She was shy and quiet and G drew her out of her shyness very gently. As she was leaving she asked if she could come back again the following day. That evening she also had a bad headache. The next morning we both came chuckling in discussing our headaches. This was the day G was heading back. The next few hours he talked non-stop. Unfortunately I don't recall what he said but he completely had both of us spellbound and glued. His intensity was peppered with moments of unfettered laughter. We brunched together and it was time for them to leave.

After shaking both our hands, G turned to Julie and said, "These two are the best audience I have ever had. I really mean that. I never enjoyed anybody's company so much." Not believing him I said, "You are just joking. You are a world traveler. I am sure

people are waiting in line to meet and hear you wherever you go.” He said that he does meet people but rarely finds anyone interested enough in hearing what he had to say. They were lost in their own world and never allowed for any sensitivity to creep in. Monica and I looked at each other and grinned. It felt like the back-benchers in a college classroom were just told that they came first in the national rankings. Taking his comments at face value we walked down with them. It felt a bit uncomfortable to see him go. But I was also filled with deep gratitude that he did come for a visit. Just before his rental car was going to be driven away by Julie he paused and said, “You can join me in Switzerland this summer if you want.”

Over the next couple of months there was a lot of discussion going on. Julie and Golda were working on editing G’s talks and publishing *Ansonia Chatter*. Golda was also working on launching a website dedicated to G. It was exciting times as lot of the content was sent my way for perusal. These two ladies seemed to have indefatigable energy and all their actions and their lives seemed to revolve around G. I wondered if ever I would come close to feeling that way.

On June 21st, 2012 the website guhasabysachi.com was formally launched. G asked me what I thought of it and I said I absolutely loved it. The website front had a breathtaking photograph of G taken by Julie’s son. In that time frame they were all in Switzerland. Julie would send fantastic photographs via email and this increased my longing to be with G even more. It wasn’t really about the place as I had been to Switzerland atleast three times before in my life with my family when I was much younger. My yearning was to be with G.

On July 4th, 2012 I yielded to my own demands and urgency and booked my tickets. I was traveling from US to India via Zurich. I was going to reach Zurich July 21st and leaving July 28th. The trail of seven and multiples followed. It wasn’t because I was trying, it just worked that way between their own travel plans. My daughter was going to join me as well. I worked long hours at work in preparation for my trip. Countdown continued as days felt like decades, hours like years and seconds like months. With much relief we boarded the flight. G, Julie and Golda came to pick us up at the Zurich airport which was a couple of hours drive for them as they lived in Gstaad. Our baggage didn’t make it and we had to

fill out the paperwork to have them sent to Gstaad directly. I had never been to Gstaad and only heard about it while reading about UG. G and his friends went there every year very religiously since the time I knew them. I couldn't believe that this year I got to join them too. It felt glorious to meet G again. It felt like the sun rose from his face - such was the intense luminosity. Even if these were thoughts in my head, which they were, it felt amazing to have them. I was also very shy in my expression so I kept my thoughts tightly shut. We stopped off in Bern on the way and G showed us the Einstein cafe where Einstein spent couple of years and developed his Theory of Relativity there. Now it is a museum and has a cafe attached to it. Einstein also happens to be G's idol during his student days as a budding physicist. Hence the additional interest in the whole thing. There was some kind of art fair going on and streets were flooded with music, dance and fanfare. In my little mind it felt like the world was celebrating my being with G. After lots of photographs were clicked we reached Gstaad. Luna was waiting for all of us. I had first met G at her place back in 2008 and since then she had also published her book, *Guha Talks To Mother of God*. G always speaks very fondly of her and was incredibly attentive to her needs as she was in crutches at that time. Again everyone was ready for some Illy coffee and I passed this time as well. G showed us to our room. Since our baggage had not arrived with us, he offered a small sack of toiletries for our use. I politely declined as I typically carry a change of clothes and essentials in my hand baggage; so I was well equipped at least until the next day. Golda whispered in my ears, "Hey when G offers something we typically don't refuse, we consider it an honor to get it from him." Well it was too late! I couldn't go back and say I changed my mind and so can I please have it. Technically I could do it but I was still in the initial, shy phase. He pointed out the scenery through our windows. In Gstaad, anywhere you turn in any direction it is like a picture postcard. To say it is beautiful is a huge understatement. He showed how the kitchenette worked and the fixtures in the bathroom and where the spare towels were kept. He was the impeccable host and very attuned to our needs. We freshened up and went back for dinner at G's place.

G was staying in an underground cave where apparently UG used to stay when he was in Gstaad. I remarked that he was Guha in a Guha. Guha means a cave in my mother tongue. It was a beautiful and cosy studio. Julie and Luna were sharing a two bedroom

apartment and Golda and Erietta were sharing a similar one right next to them. We stayed a couple of buildings away in a beautiful chalet with spectacular scenery. Julie made the most amazing rasam and I truly felt that she outdid any South Indian that prided in making a good rasam. G remarked that UG would have nothing but the best and so pretty much Julie had to figure out how to make a good one. Golda prepared wonderful chai and rosemary potatoes. Both were perfectly done. These ladies seemed impeccable in everything they did and every action came from a desire to please G. After dinner we all went back to our respective places for the night. We made plans to meet very early next morning.

The next day we all went to a local publisher. The *Ansonia Chatter* was in print we were going to pick up the first set of copies. When we reached there the publisher gave the first few copies to G in nicely wrapped package. G opened the package and handed the first book to me and said, "Here you go. I would like you to have the first copy." I was bowled over in joy. We collected the books and then went sight seeing. I don't want to sound like some tourist catalog; so I will summarize one phrase - EVERYTHING WAS SPECTACULAR!

The following morning my daughter declined to join the early morning walking/talking session with G and said she wanted to rest up. I asked her if she was feeling all right and she gave a strange reply. She said that whenever Guha Uncle talks she feels lot of pressure in her solar plexus. I said, maybe due to jet lag or eating different foods her stomach was upset. She said clearly, "Mom I know here the stomach/digestive system is and what indigestion feels like. I feel pressure right here in my solar plexus and it seems to happen when Guha Uncle talks seriously." Not knowing what to make of it I went to see G. He asked about her and I said she is resting. I didn't elaborate. She joined us for breakfast and next round of sightseeing. We came back for lunch and G gave another serious post-lunch talk. My daughter pointed to her solar plexus and whispered that it is happening again and she wanted to lie down. Golda later asked me what was going on. I repeated the whole solar plexus thing to her and she said, "Wow! Your daughter is really sensitive. I am very impressed." I was puzzled as I didn't know what was impressive about that. The import of that clicked a few years later.

I distinctly remember one day we were hiking up some mountain top, I think it was called Eggli. Julie chanted the haiku poem that UG wrote that went like this:

*I went up Eggli,
Found it ugly,
Came down quickly.*

We had some *rosti* which is a pan-fried shredded potato patty cooked to gastronomic perfection in loads of butter in a cute looking mountainside chalet restaurant. G said it was his favorite and it was indeed very delicious. After lunch we continued on the hike. The sun looked perfectly poised on the blue skies between the mountain ranges, the breeze was gentle and sweet, we could hear the tinkling sound of the cowbells and G was impeccably dressed - it was a heart stopping moment to see him as he personified beauty, elegance and splendor! I think it was moment that I realized that I fell in love with him deeply and irrevocably. I was way too shy to admit to myself let alone anybody else. But I can still remember the moment clearly. Back then, G would consistently beat up on the word *love* and all that it stood for so much that using that word seemed like some kind of insult. It made sense because he opened my eyes to the fact that whenever someone used the word *love* it pretty much reflected some kind of possessiveness, ego battles, pettiness, and manipulation. I didn't feel like analyzing which bucket my feeling of love for G fell in. Perhaps I was just caught up in the romance of the scenery and the moment.

In hindsight, I had yet to learn two important lessons:

1. I had no control over things happening to me.
2. Whatever feelings were being evoked in me around G had nothing to do with the sun, the mountains, the locale or how he was dressed. There was something operating in him and through him that triggered a magnetic attraction. Although it is hard to articulate what it is, it nevertheless was very much there.

Had I learnt these lessons then, I would have had no reason to feel any twinge of guilt in feeling love or attraction for G. Being

married, having kids, age, gender, disposition - none of it mattered. If one could feel that attraction, they could count themselves lucky.

One day we decided to cross the German border and go to Freiburg train station to meet G's airline pilot friend, Kamal Grover. I was awed that someone would cross a country to meet a friend for a few hours but apparently it was not that uncommon around UG or G. We picked him from the train station and then headed to the famed Black Forest to meet a few more friends of UG, G and Julie. We also went to Lake Titisee, another tourist spot, and I bought a genuine Black Forest cuckoo clock in the land famed for them.

Every morning G attempted to teach all the ladies some Hatha Yoga. The whole group around him were all women. The classes were a hoot. One couldn't bend, the other couldn't stretch, the third slept off, the fourth was not inclined to try, and the fifth had crutches. The only one that did everything that G instructed was my daughter. He would relate this incident quite often in later years with bubbling laughter.

My family was trying to decide whether to host a dance recital for my daughter the following year. These recitals needed lot of planning and is typically a very expensive affair. My husband and my daughter were very keen on it and I was not. We couldn't come to an agreement. This preyed on my head quite a bit and I asked G for his opinion. He said he never gives his opinion unless people were truly at a crossroad and would take his advice. I told him I would but he was not forthcoming with any suggestion. I would ask daily at least twice even before I came on this trip and continued to do so during the trip. One day he found a Swiss Franc coin on the floor of his apartment and handed it to me and said this was his contribution towards hosting my daughter's *dance recital*. The decision was made by me then and there and we did host it the following year. Funnily enough it was G's older daughter's *arangetram* review in a local newspaper posted online in September 2007 that helped me narrow down where he lived when I was trying to find him.

Our bags didn't come in until it was almost time to leave. The airline refunded so generously that it covered the cost of our hotel stay and a fresh wardrobe for both of us. It was an unexpected bonus. Each day was magical, beautiful, breathtaking and incredible. Unfortunately it was also time to leave and head

towards India. G drove us back to Zurich airport and allowed me to sit by him in the coveted passenger seat during the drive. He was keeping the mood light but my heart was heavy. I didn't know what to say. I couldn't voice my feelings as I could not bear the thought of him critiquing it in anyway. As we said our goodbyes at the airport I was really holding back the tears. Perhaps only Golda got a whiff of it and whispered in my ears, "Maybe you can visit him again in New Jersey."

I did visit him again that year in September for a week beginning 21st and stayed at his residence. The mornings would start at 3:30 am and he would buzz around having full days till almost 10 pm. The energy in him was full on all the time and he had tremendous zest. No wasted words, actions or emotions - everything was purposeful yet there was no agenda. There was a lightness and weightlessness about how he operated. Being around him also enabled me to feel like that. It felt like someone just wiped off all the heaviness and the problems of the world took a backseat so I could be recharged and breathe easier.

His food habits did not seem remotely healthy and he would shut down anyone that suggested eating salads or soups with accusations of them eating ideas and not food. Although the food cooked at home was very healthy he seemed to be out and about most of the time to New York or upstate or Palm Springs or somewhere in the world. He could devour cookies and bags of chips and loaves of bread and cheese, pizzas, ice creams, like it was nothing. He seemed to throw up pretty much most of the things he ate and didn't seem bothered by it. He hated it when people presented ideas of how to eat and how to live and would say animals don't ask anyone what to eat and how to live, so why do humans do this all the time? They overthink and become the very thing they wish to avoid. I specifically want to mention this because years later his eating habits became exceedingly clean and healthy. One thing was clear - whether he ate healthy or ate unhealthy and threw up seemed to make no dent to his energy levels. He was always hopping around like an indefatigable Energizer bunny from crack of dawn to the minute he went to bed. He noticed that people blindly copied whatever he did and so he had to change his own habits to help them. Although he would urge people not to copy but to experiment for themselves I don't think anyone really listened to him.

Handshakes seemed to be a big thing with him and they were never casual. He would greet people including his everyday friends with handshakes, often multiple times a day. Most of the time he would have some visible reaction after it. I asked him about it one day. He said he could feel what people were going through when he shook their hands. Some kind of heat or electric pulse that was generated indicated more things to him about the person than anything they said about themselves. He also shied away from hugs. He said he felt somewhat disturbed when people, including immediate family members, hugged him or touched him. His sensitivity seemed very acute to people's touch and his withdrawal was very instinctive. During this trip, I noticed that he shook my hands about 4-5 times a day, everyday. It was a very pleasant experience for me and I hoped I wasn't generating any 'shocks' for him.

Years later, he said that he lost this "power" and didn't seem as sensitive to people's touch. I noticed this gradual shift beginning in late 2015. Along with this, his frequent handshakes and acute sensitivity tapered off and he did allow close friends to give him an occasional hug without flinching. Nothing about him was static. Everything seemed to have a phase and duration that moved out gracefully making way for a new one. He was 100 percent surrendered to whatever operated in him and through him with zero regrets, wishful thinking or desire to hang on to anything to make it last.

I didn't get to visit G until a year later in September 2013. Earlier part of the year was extremely busy for various personal reasons. I was in touch with G multiple times each day via phone. A family wedding brought me to New York. To be honest the only reason I attended the wedding was that it provided me with an opportunity to meet G. G and Lakshmi drove over to where I was visiting as I didn't have a car. They picked me up and hosted me for the night at their house.

Julie brought a gigantic fruit dessert pie that could easily feed thirty people for the three of us. G gave her a huge frowning for that and she smiled blithely and carried on. It was interesting to watch the dynamics between the two of them. They squabbled like two siblings, often times escalating to screaming matches, with objects flying in each other's direction, one or both stomping off and neither one backing down. A few minutes later they would move

on to something else and be laughing and chatting away like nothing happened. People around them knew better than to poke their nose in the midst of those episodes. It would be a wonder to me that one of them didn't have a stroke through this and the close bond that they shared was impossible to miss.

For the first time in my life I also felt free from my day to day responsibilities with kids as my younger one had headed to college a few months before. This meeting with G was a bit intense. I felt he was radiating waves of heat almost like solar flares. I asked him if he was doing anything. When he asked why I said I felt a lot of heat. He chalked it to my imagination. I asked him why I would want to imagine something like that! He just grinned in response. The day ended soon enough and he drove me back to the place where the wedding was going to take place which was couple of hours away. The heat wave from him continued despite the coolness of the weather.

From that day until almost a year after, my body was in continuous dry heat. It was not in flashes but in a continual, and steady radiation. It continued night and day, 24/7, and anyone that came close to me or touch me could feel that heat. It would be so bad that when I was driving my car I had to continually move my hands on the steering wheel because that spot on the wheel would get so hot that it would scald my palms. It was crazy. My annual physical with the doctor indicated that everything was normal. This heat was accompanied with an activation of a lot of sexual energy and imagery. I don't think I felt like this when I was sixteen. For a year it went on and on without a break.

During this timeframe there was some strange alignment that started falling into place. In November 2013 my company sent me on a business trip to India and I was there for three weeks. G was also in India at that time and we made plans to meet but they fell through. One of his friends who had just met him in Kolkata came to see me at his suggestion. She was a high flying executive at a bank and was also riding a high after having met G. We both met and talked non-stop about G and our respective journeys. Little did I know that my real journey had not even begun then.

In March of 2014, out of the blue I got another job. I had not applied for it, yet it practically fell on my lap. G asked me to negotiate a ridiculously high amount for salary increase. They

offered that and a bit more as a signing bonus if I joined immediately. The total salary package just happened to be a multiple of 7. I was bemused at this trail of 7 and so was G. The best part of the new job and I really consider this a part of some universal alignment was that I got an opportunity to travel quite a bit through work. Each of these trips also gave me a chance and an excuse to visit and hang out with G. The heat and sexual waves were still going on when this job came through. To be able to function through this extreme flow of heat I channelled all my energy into my new job. I was putting in about 18 hours at work each day and I was extremely productive. Around June 2014 things seemed to ease a little; either the heat waves were reducing or maybe my body was adapting better. I am not sure which one it was but I could sit peacefully for five minutes without feeling like my breath was getting squeezed out or my internal organs were getting fried. Over the last nine months I tried to apprise G about this many times. Each time he cut me off before I could finish the sentence with, "Enjoy, enjoy while it lasts!" I am pretty sure he knew what was going on.

5/12/2014

Me: I am paying more than 100% attention to everything and you. I can hear you everywhere – you are in my ears, my vocal chords, my head, everywhere.

G: I don't do anything my friend. If anyone is ready on the planet it is you my friend! Just function well in the office, that's all.

5/13/2014

G: Katyayani is a ferocious form of Durga

5/14/2014

G: Brahmins don't count money as they are too busy selling a higher cause. They experience something after drinking *somas* and sell the concept to the world.

I was extremely overheated that day and thought I would burn up into fumes. When I mentioned this to G, he said:

G: Kundalini can cause heat. Don't project the idea because what is happening is far more real than any concept. Let it run its course as long as it is not a medical problem. Do not inject "you" into anything happening. Whatever is happening will take care of itself.

Just keep working, and make your money, and cook and clean and take care of whatever needs to be done.

5/16/2014

Me: Quote from Sherlock Holmes - "It is like you are the gravity that pulls me towards you...I'm so glad that I'm in your orbit"

G: So what do you say madam?

Me: Those words sounded like they came from me.

G: Semblance of functional reality!

Me: Funny how functional reality can sound so beautiful and romantic

G: Romance is the prelude to action! For the human mind!

Me: What action is warranted here?

G: According to UG Attraction Is The Action! No More No Less!

Me: I have heard that before. Does this mean that attraction by itself is an action so one needs to do no more?

G: Your dilly-dallying with spirituality and so called experiences were the romance with some concept that lead you to get attracted to UG. That's what he meant.

Me: So eventually the concepts leave and you are left with...?

G: Your core sense of reality, which functions every step of the way.

Me: So whether we believe that or not it functions anyway?

G: Yes it does without turning it into concept. There is no conflict!

Me: Why is there this need to fill a void of some kind within us? What makes one so angst-ridden?

G: The struggle of living organism is the way life came into existence. The escape routes were fictitiously designed by the thinkers of human society. We as we know ourselves are the victims of those designs. No way out! Enjoy your misery!

Me: That makes me want to cry.

G: Please don't cry, be brave and dance like the powerful goddess Katyayeni in the face of death.

Me: That's why I call and bother you. It seems like for a few hours I get a free pass to happiness.

G: On that score you can consider yourself lucky.

Me: Very, very lucky! I certainly don't take it for granted.

5/17/2014

G: Luna said to me today, "If you talk anymore my solar plexus will burn!" We were all so surprised.

Me: Some people can see chakras, auras, etc... maybe she can too.

G: Bull shit! Imagination galore.

Me: Never had anyone talk to me long enough to burn anything.

G: You don't need anybody. You are burning away anyway.

Me: I certainly believe you are the catalyst for it

G: That is just your belief!

Me: Put that way isn't everything just a belief? I believe it is Sunday. I believe I have to do laundry, grocery, house cleaning....

G: That comes down to fictional reality, accepted facts like your birthday, someone's graduation year, etc. etc.

Me: So is it belief or fictional reality when I feel awesome talking to you? I know what I feel.

G: It is a qualitative and phenomenal response then. It is your subject specific reality.

Me: You have all this so clearly sorted out in your head.

5/19/2014

Me: Sometimes I feel something so strongly but I don't know why or what and cannot think logically or illogically what to say or do.

G: I know what you want to say. What you feel is a part of knowledge. The feeling without recognition is very tricky.

Me: Describing what I feel is part of knowledge. What is a gut reaction is simply the body reacting ...I can say I am feeling hot all the time but why I am, I really don't really know.

G: The feeling that can't be captured by word and or images can't be a part of you as you know yourself. All thoughts are words and images. There is no problem outside of that for human mind. Your demand for anything falls in that category.

Me: Well maybe I thought I knew myself well. Thought is the problem - yes - unfortunately it isn't going away anywhere or anytime soon. The best you can do is not give it too much importance assuming that is in your control.

G: Thought of money should be the MANTRA.

5/20/2014

G: Not looking for wisdom is the beginning of wisdom. Looking has to go! For that wisdom is the first step!

Me: Somehow looking for wisdom or truth has taken a backseat to just hearing from you and talking to you.

5/21/2014

Me: Good Morning. Normally I sleep quite well. But didn't sleep well at all last night.

G: Your mind is playing games!

Me: I don't know. Usually I'm knocked out cold at night. No time for mind games usually. There was lot of lightning and I was extremely overheated.

G: Take good care of your health my friend.

Me: Actually I am. I even upped my yoga too. I don't know what this heat thing is though. Every day I think it is getting better. But it really isn't.

G: Are you afraid that there is something wrong?

Me: No I am not afraid because I feel pretty good and active otherwise.

G: Then don't waste time and energy to bother, leave it alone.

Me: I am so thrilled to talk to you.

G: You know there is no difference between you, me and any other person right?

Me: If you mean we are all the same in terms of having one head, one nose, two eyes, two arms, etc. then yes I agree.

G: Yes we are all 99% the same.

Me: However it is the 1% difference that I see/feel that makes it very awesome to be talking to you.

G: That is your subjective reality.

Me: It may be my subjective reality, fictitious reality, functional reality...don't really care because I couldn't be happier.

G: I gave you ammunition didn't I?

Me: Yes and I am perfectly happy to use it.

G: Learn to speak well my friend and nobody can win an argument against you. For now enjoy being happy then.

Me: Will definitely do. For however long it lasts.

G: When you are hit with such deep sorrow that it completely breaks you, then it comes to an end!

I was stunned by the above comment. Clearly it came from whatever G went through and broke him completely.

5/22/2014

Me: Pass me some of your spare energy. Could use it to get through the day.

G: You have lot more than you know, my friend! You want life to move in a specific way, life has something else up its sleeves!

Me: Yeah I know.

G: Knowing doesn't alter the subtle demand.

Me: My demand wasn't subtle. All I'm saying is if I'm supposed to get up and get to work then I need some energy.

G: Just surrender to the way things are unfolding around you! You are in a good space! The power of life is unlimited; we don't question why the childbirth is painful. Pleasure and pain, high and low are the part of life unfolding - align yourself with that, is what the wise would suggest. If you are miserable stay miserable!

G: If I someday I ask you for milk and honey won't you give it to me.

Me: Sure, I can give you more than milk and honey!

G: See I am lucky - universe is kind to me as I have kind friends.

Me: Well you have shown me far more kindness and generosity than I have. Not to sound like an accountant.

G: Worship money - it will take you to the land of milk and honey!

5/26/14

Me: Hello! Busy?

G: Sure, anything sweetheart! Just ask - you will have the entire universe!

Me: When can I meet you? That would be the entire universe for me.

G: That's the universe for the time being that you want to have all for yourself so that you can play with according to your wish. I once told a god lover, "Suppose god appears and tells you the world is an illusion, leave everything and come with me. You will find yourself saying that you need little more time.

Me: The point being?

G: You can't have all that and heaven too.

Me: I thought if I asked - the whole universe could be had. Your words not mine.

G: The point is that it is a bottomless pit - the nature of self - it is never satisfied! It asks for what it knows! The more the better! That never brings equilibrium. The physical system never asks for anything more that it needs. For the system it is completely full

every second, nothing excess nothing lacking. Everything that can be known is already there!

Me: True. That's why I asked for you. It is the closest thing to my mental concept of equilibrium. You are in sync with your system. So you can keep it simple. That is not the case with me.

G: You too my friend! Your concept of perfection is messing it up all the time even in dreams.

Me: Agree. What to do?

G: No way out.

Me: :(So after calling me sweetheart and offering up the universe you go - tough luck?

G: You see I can use all the words but it means nothing!

Me: You respond to the meaning of the words, that's you.

G: It is just a word game! You are a willing victim.

Me: To me this is more than a word game. You can say whatever you want to diminish it.

G: GOD is just a word my friend. Whatever you want is in your thought. The point of all this exchange is that other than words you get N O T H I N G.

Me: How can you be so right and be so wrong? Your words are so perfectly logical that I cannot argue against it and yet my whole system comes to life when I hear you or hear about you. Subjective reality?

G: WOW I will become your disciple one day! Very well put.

Me: At least you liked something! I am well aware that my words would not carry the punch one finds in yours. Are any of us really capable of having anything other than subjective reality? Leaving aside functional reality bit...We all interact, have likes, dislikes, passions, samaskaras, ideas, opinions, etc., based on subjective reality. So what's wrong with that?

G: That's the only thing there! Why do you seek for ultimate reality?

Me: So you are saying that there is no ultimate reality that can stand by itself when everything else drops off?

G: You at least got a glimpse intellectually!

5/27/2014

G: One flash of an idea can produce a novel, one vision can produce a religion, one right argument can change the course of human life.

Me: How does one vision that one man had manage to create a religion that sustains time? No one really knows what Buddha or Muhammad or Christ really saw/felt.

G: The human passion and endeavor. The power of science and technology! The power of scientific argument produces technology, the real power that everyone is seeking as it can control the human life.

Me: And religion provides a lofty goal for the seeking?

G: Which is fictional reality! Way out for the losers! Solace for the losers! Alternative route for self-aggrandizement! One answer fits all.

Me: So when you have a difficult situation like say death of a loved one or someone close to you is unwell you are able to look at it and not seek solace or hope things get better?

G: Nobody will not hope that things go better! You will do everything at your capacity. Rest is beyond you!

5/30/2014

Me: How are you doing?

G: The best I could ever be.

Me: Do you ever have a day when you feel dull and tired?

G: Other than physical problem, I am always dealing with people! They construct my mood. When you are so eager to talk to me I wonder what I have that you don't.

Me: Because it feels absolutely great talking to you. By the same token when you are upset at me about something it is an absolute

downer and when you ignore me it feels like a fate worse than death.

G: I will never know that, except to trust you! Means taking your words for granted.

Me: Nobody likes their mood so completely influenced by another but when you say others construct your mood it almost sounds like you are saying the same thing that I am, but you have no problem with it.

G: None what so ever! My close family members are no exception. They construct me and my response. If and when I am by myself I am in deep sleep.

Me: So without people you have no mood or thought of your own? Other than for very basic functioning?

G: The brief story of my life!

Me: Brief but very enchanting!

G: One can't be interested in such a thing.

Me: Enchanting because we all drive ourselves nuts with our moods, thoughts, ideas and actions and expending energy following all of the above. To be freed from it sounds AWESOME. As you say perhaps we seek something without comprehending what we seek.

G: As you see there is nothing to get and understand. End of story! Good Bye!

5/31/2014

G: Good Morning! Have a wonderful day; you know the answers and all the answers thereafter.

Me: Yeah but that isn't the point right.

G: There is no other point what so ever for every single human mind this planet.

Me: Some of us are still primates. What to do?

G: I wish you are just a primate then you just see what is there on the retina. Effortlessly. Sahaj Samadhi. Nothing more nothing less.

Me: Na nadhi ka na ghaat ka. (Neither a river nor a river bank - meaning in this context is neither human nor primate)

G: All the left over junk from the culture to be blamed.

Me: You like to bash all the gods and god men like Rama, Krishna, Saibaba, Ramanna, RK, etc. If you succeed in bashing them, people just replace that with the image of the person that bashed it. Reminds me of a song that you have perhaps heard....

Chingari Koi Bhadke...Saawan Usse Bhujaaye....Saawan Jo Agan Lagaaye....Usse Kaun Bhujaaye? (This is a song from a Bollywood movie and the first two lines translate to - When a spark flares, rains extinguish it, but if the rain itself starts a fire, then who can extinguish that?)

G: O M G !!! What happened to you? That was my last Hindi movie that I watched in theater - Amar Prem. (Eternal Love)

Me: Uske baad Prem Amar Ho Gaya? :) (Then you found love that became eternal?)

----- 5 hours later

Me: Just entered an Indian store. Guess what song is playing? Chingari Koi Bhadke...!!! I called you so you could hear it yourself in case you didn't believe me.

G: You are quite a lady! Magical Indian, nature is playing tricks on you!

Me: I'm not getting tricked. Just having a good laugh at nature's humor. Far better than man made humor

G: Nature is full of mysterious surprises!

6/3/2014

Me: Morning. Not so good. Woke up with a headache. Dragged myself in to work.

G: Take it easy!

Later in the day...

G: How are you now?

Me: Lot better. Tired but at least no headache.

G: Good for you. Take it easy. M I N D is a M Y T H making machine. Head is not. Struggle is inevitable.

Me: Are you saying my mind is giving me a headache?

G: You and your mind have a dirty nexus against the peaceful body.

Me: I think my system just got overheated and fused my brain out. In your last comment you separate me and my mind from the body. How can there be three different things?

G: The movement of your mind makes it appear as though there is a mover, that's you. The sound that's associated with that appearance is Revathi.

6/4/2014

Me: If mind is a myth how do people set up long-term goals, work towards it and get it? Both in functional as well as so called spiritual field. Not every seeker found his/her answer but everyone that found the answer or "questioner" disappeared, it was preceded by major seeking. (I was specifically referring to UG and G.)

G: Go ahead and seek your heart's content, goal takes you to a known place. Don't then call it Brahman.

Me: I'm not calling anything. Agree goal takes you to known place like wealth, job, etc. but mind exists to make that happen right? Then how is it a myth?

G: Mind is a myth when it comes to decipher your desire. What is it that you want?

Me: To understand why you are saying mind is a myth. Even now mind is so over active interacting with you and the body follows the dictates of the mind by typing these words in.

G: Mind is myth making machine, when it makes efforts to understand itself.

Me: So this will lead to endless concoction as there are endless possibilities.

G: You are addicted to that process. When someone like UG points that out, you are suffering from withdrawal syndrome, until someone again deliver drugs.

Me: Money has its use and there is no denying that. But methods to get it are very tiresome and mind looks for entertainment while at it. Spiritual pursuit is the ultimate entertainment.

G: Go to a beer bar and enjoy football. It is the same.

Me: I remember being very shocked reading UG's words first time around - going to a temple or a prostitute are both the same. Both are pleasure movements! At the time I thought he was being inflammatory and attention seeking. But years later, I see what he means.

6/5/2014

Me: Good Morning.

G: You still on?

Me: Of course. Surprised you have a doubt. Or is it hope ? :)

G: I thought you had enough of hearing the same crap for last twenty years. You realize that your hope and belief give substance to your sense of reality, nothing outside.

Me: From you it's fresh every time. Frankly I don't think as much as you credit me with, when I contact you.

G: It is you all along madam. I will not take credit where the credit is not due. It is you and your ideas that sees things. All answers of all the devotees are similar. I will never tell anyone what to do or what not to do.

Me: I get that. But you did tell me to not quit my job.

G: I told unless you have some arrangement there is no point, since people in general ask their god to give them something that can be gotten by money.

Me: True! So any association people have with God is always about money/health. Is there anything to the word "love"?

G: No one asks give me love for humanity, Oh Lord! Such a thing has no meaning. Love for god has no meaning either. We created god to protect our self from unknown.

Me: Then what did Sri Rama Krishna have for Kali? I have heard you say you loved UG too.

G: Until I came to know love doesn't exist.

Me: If not termed 'love' then what was it? Fascination?

G: It was always me. When I am not there or I don't want to project future, there is stark reality.

Me: It was you and what feelings you projected on to UG back then. But what was that.... Love, curiosity, fascination?

G: To watch him and knowing someone exists without any agenda of his own.

Me: Thank you. You answered something significant for me. (It helped me figure out what I was seeing in G.) Fortunately or unfortunately watching a person like that fans a huge desire to be like that negating the idea of having no agenda.

6/7/2014

Me: Hi Good Morning. How are you?

G: Good Morning! This is a stunning morning with unparalleled clarity!

Me: Wow! Very original answer. In this unparalleled clarity do you have any thing to tell me?

G: There is hardly any movement for the intention generator. You come and wake me up from one to another.

Me: That sounds like Latin to me. Very poetic but don't get the meaning.

G: That's our Indian poetry lady. That's the way a sense of stillness and the oneness of the observer and the observed that leads to Samadhi is expressed. The movements that don't produce samaskaras are like fragrance that you can't recollect.

Me: You know you always say that there is no state and nothing to get. And then I look at you and/or hear you and you show an incredible beauty and grace that is an expression of that state. How can one resist it?

G: Your wanting to know/understand and get is standing in the way my friend. The one who wants to stop or not has to wither!

Me: Can one really wither out of volition? Volition would just take it away from withering.

G: The will power should be making money only.

Me: If there is will power to make money how can that constitute withering?

G: That's the no way out! No amount of crying, laughing or screaming will change the equation.

Me: It always comes back to 'no way out' or 'live in hope and die in hope'. Just want to make sure that there was never a false hope that makes me a generator of something that never existed. False hope wasn't expressly created by you verbally. Your mere existence creates it.

G: That's a subjective functional reality my friend!

Me: Your existence and my meeting you has fructified in me everything that I have read and sought. I am only capable of creating subjective reality.

G: You should know that you can never compare yourself with anybody, that's an exercise in total futility, waste of energy.

Me: What if the other person exhibits a beautiful way to be? How can I prevent the fascination? It is a very gut reaction.

G: That what resonates in you as a response by observing someone is because of its existence in you.

That comment silenced me for the day.

6/8/2014

Me: Long day!

G: That's true, I was in my shell! (G periodically withdraws into a shell and when he does, it makes for a long and arduous day for me.)

Me: I thought you were busy partying. (Reference to Luna's birthday party held earlier in the day.)

G: All alone by myself in the party! People were busy partying so I was spared.

We discussed some personal investment details...

Me: Close to making a decision but having last minute thoughts.

G: You are supposed to be money wizard!

Me: Supposed to be and actually being are different.

G: Well you will take the right decision.

Me: Thanks for your vote of confidence. You are more sure of me than me.

G: That's the difference between you and me.

Me: Can think of plenty more differences!

G: That's the main one. You don't trust me.

Me: I trust you. I don't trust me.

G: If you do, then listen to this, I have nothing that you don't have. It never enter in my head that I have something special.

Me: It doesn't enter your head that you are different. It doesn't leave my head that you are different!

G: We all are different! That's the given beauty of Mother Nature. But we all have the ability to see things the way they are. All animals too.

Me: It sounds so unbelievably simple when you say it.

G: It is simple my dear friend. Not having a desire beyond our need is simple. Simplicity is a natural state, can't be acquired by practice. With that note I say good night.

Me: Feel like being in a boat with you and crossing hundred rivers. Does that sound simple to you? (Reference to the boat/canoe rides during Luna's birthday party in G's backyard)

G: We can talk for eternity. Where do you get those cute pictures of crying n laughing?

Me: Emoji. It is an application on the phone for emoticons. You can download the free app :) XD :(

(This was the day G discovered emoticons on his iPhone and downloaded the app!)

6/9/2014

G: (Referring to someone) Some people ask too many questions! They are terribly afraid of losing what they think they have. They don't mind getting killed but want to make sure that they survive.

Me: How can you get killed and survive?

G: That's the funny part; everyone wants Ramana's State, UG's State. Implication is they want to die and come back. That's the signal of ending of you as you know yourself. The pinnacle of Indian Spirituality. End of knowledge!

Me: So that should be the same as = to die and not come back.

G: To die and not knowing anything after. What will happen after someone dies is not a valid question. That's like negotiating a deal with god or investment strategy. Gurus are brokers. If you and I can't live without an extra agenda for the self then what good is it to strive for a living without conflict.

Me: Wow! Well said! Interacting with you is the only "hope" I see in possibility of dropping agenda. Unless you can see someone living wonderfully well without an agenda you don't even know that it is a possibility. Agenda and me are one. How to knowingly drop? It takes a backseat when it meets you and hence the wonderful feeling. But later it is back to wishing and hoping agenda. I can see it clearly but.....

6/12/14

Me: Good Morning. How are you?

G: You know the answer. No aches and pains, no hunger and no longing for anything. Simple playfulness with the words that seems to connect us in an already connected timeless web of life.

Me: Wow. So nice.

G: I will send Golda's synopsis of supposedly Guha's website. (Reference to the soon to be launched website on G - www.guhasabyasachi.com)

Me: You say supposedly...Why you don't agree?

G: If someone asks what's there in the website, I can't tell. Unlike the paper I published in my research days, I had to know everything.

Me: Are you saying opinions expressed on website are subjective and so you don't know or are you saying you have no desire to know?

G: I don't know what I talked to anyone all these days and years! It just comes as a rush - subject and situation specific and gone like the passage of so called time. That's the difference, I lost the desire of image making. Yet all I say can be only captured by thoughts and images.

Me: Desires wither away or burnt down in one stroke?

G: The growth from a seed to tree is always there (implying it takes time for the desires to wither away). We are just the witness of several snapshots! Be a seed carried by a bird or tree burnt by a forest fire. Infinite possibilities! Have a nice day lady!

Me: Got our email (about the yet to be launched website). Thanks. You born in 1953?

G: 1st May, 1953.

Me: Is anybody working on English translation of your Bengali work 14 Days In Palm Springs with UG?

G: Not that I know of!

6/15/2014

Me: Good Morning

G: That was an early morning SMS. My morning starts long before that. (It seemed like most days he was up by 3:00 am). Usually when I have nothing to do I am up very early. That's what is happening these days. I used to sleep late when I was working. Old age you know. The body knows it is coming to an end.

Me: What end? You look fit and you are usually tension free.

G: The less samaskara you have, the less sleep you need. You can get by with a cat nap.

Me: Guess body doesn't need that much rest as it doesn't go through much stress?

G: There is stress in demand. No demand no stress.

Me: Do you still do yoga? Hatha yoga?

G: Hatha yoga was designed to prepare the body in case yoga happens. Whatever I had done, if I had met UG, then I wouldn't have done. That's my point of view.

Food and knowledge is the curse for human self! Run away from me, it is not what you are looking for. There is no reward!

Me: I can't run away from you. Not fit enough!

G: Cute! Learn to run or shield.

Those that are passionate can forget food. Buddha ended up looking like a skeleton! Ramana died, Sri Ramakrishna almost killed himself. Problem with all of you is that you want all that and heaven too! Enjoy your food and enlightenment!

6/17/2014

Me: How are you doing?

G: How can anyone be better than this? So I say couldn't be better. I can't form an image of a better state than this other than money. I can have lot more money. If that's what for everyone means better.

Me: For all the money talk you do it truly seems to be the last priority for you.

G: Since I am not earning?

Me: No you are not worried about it or preoccupied with it. There are a lot of people that aren't earning but doesn't mean financial worries leave them.

G: I have no more talent left to earn money my dear friend. But if I am starving I will cheat you to get a day's meal. Or you will offer me a meal. So I am not worried. Buddha started begging, you see.

Me: Why do you say you have no talent? Your Physics hasn't left you. You could have continued teaching. What made you say enough? Not doing it anymore...

G: It has no purpose as far as I am concerned. I just made a *sankalp* (a solemn vow or determination). Let me not do anything that has no value to me. So it happened. Now you can ask: Why am I talking to you? I have no answer.

Me: Your talking to me is my good fortune.

G: That's your answer, not mine. So on that note I say have a nice day.

Me: Thanks! When did you make that *sankalp* and what prompted you do that?

G: Some other time when I see you.

Me: When will that be?

G: I will not make that *sankalp* now! I am a powerless person, you see.

Me: Not buying that...yes that is my opinion :)

G: You don't trust me.

Me: Yeah yeah I trust you.

G: You really don't.

Me: I do. I may express my opinion but that doesn't mean I don't trust you. My opinions change like the sun positions during the day...so I don't take them too seriously.

G: If you think I am ordinary like most human beings, then your interest about me will vanish. So to justify your interest - you don't believe me that I have nothing that you don't have.

Me: You have a sense of tranquility about you that has a way of transmitting itself to me regardless of what words are being exchanged.

G: That's your quality of perception! Newton derived gravitational theory by observing a falling apple.

Me: I feel time and again that you are a catalyst for something by your impact on me. Not sure how or what but I am not really

making a random statement. I have observed this very, very closely.

G: So it is all about you my dear friend.

Me: I don't have a way with words as you but the impact is definitely there. Otherwise by now I would have been bored stiff.

G: I am *nimitta matra*! It's a Sanskrit word. It translates to 'insignificant existence'. Trillions of human beings have come and gone. How can it be otherwise?!

6/18/14

Me: You said people hear through their own filter. What option do they have?

G: Sorry no option! You are the filter and you will do everything to keep the color glass in front of you.

6/19/14

Me: Good Morning. How's it going?

G: Good Morning. No place to go so life is throbbing at its optimum power.

Me: For someone that says no place to go, you are a very busy man.

G: Busy for nothing with no agenda whatsoever.

Me: So what prompts your movement - physical and mental? Sometimes people call or text and that might prompt a response from you but other times you reach out to them.

G: I wish I knew the root cause of the action.

Me: This agenda-less way of being...were you always predisposed to it?

G: If you say you could find yourself in carbon then yes. Life is carbon based.

Me: You mean diamonds? Just kidding :). No I don't really spend time thinking I am carbon based. I function like a human being with agenda - whatever those maybe. Half the time I end up chasing my own tail.

G: Then why do you want to capture life with human understanding of causality? How do you ever verify that anyone is just bullshitting or telling truth?

Me: Perhaps thinking erroneously that one might stumble on to a code that might be a key to some imaginary happy state. I think when you deal with enough bullshitters - you might stumble and find this one person that wants to say things as it is. That was the charm for me in reading UG and meeting you. It also makes me introspect that if one person can function so well without agenda then why am I killing myself with so many.

6/20/14

Me: Good Morning. How are you?

G: I am really well. How is the world treating you?

Me: Pretty good. I have no questions today.

Shortly thereafter I left for India for a few weeks. On my return I had to make a business trip to Europe.

7/15/14

Me: Coming to France?

G: How I wish to spend some time with someone who is interested in a subject that consumed me in my formative years! But I realized that personally I don't make decisions, it happens.

Me: Well I will wait to see if it happens. So even if you wish you can't make decisions?

G: Guha's wish is no different from another ordinary person's wish. Outcome affects differently! It doesn't have much bearing on my mind.

Me: So you don't take your wishes seriously?

G: The life plays a music independent of Guha's wish, I am very ordinary.

Me: Doesn't the same life play the same music for all?

G: We can't tune in!

Me: You say you are the same as everybody...how come you can tune in and I can't?

G: My mind that lives in creating future can't. MY mind cannot - that's the only thing I know.

Me: So if something happens in my life - good or bad - is it because I did something towards it or is it because life just happened and I am taking false credit for fault for it?

G: I know I can't decipher the movement of life by my power of logic which connect the movement by cause and effect. So there is no effort.

Me: Are you saying you can't impose your cause and effect logic onto movement of life and therefore it will remain a mystery?

G: You are getting very close in articulating.

Me: When you refer to life - something outside of you - is this what was originally termed as God in different religions?

G: There is no outside and inside. The oxygen is constantly going through us.

7/26/2014

Someone asked G: This is the longest I haven't seen you travel anywhere. What's going on?

G: Sometimes you make a commitment and even you cannot change it.

Me - Really I didn't have you down as the commitment type. You seem more like the "go with the flow" type.

G: Well that tells you - you don't know me. Sometimes when your commitment is strong enough that becomes the flow. Then it is not an "either/or situation".

Before the summer of 2014, someone very close to G was hospitalized. The person developed unusual complications and it was touch and go there for a while whether they would make it. I was very curious as to how G would react to such a personal crisis. I happened to reach him at the hospital and asked him if I could ask a personal question. He said shoot.

Me: Sorry for prying, but do you mind telling me how you feel? Are you worried? Do you find yourself praying to Mother Nature?

G: I am definitely concerned but not worried. Worrying doesn't solve any problems. I have made the best possible medical care available that I could afford and now I have handed it off to the medical staff. I don't pray to anyone as there is no magical power out there. Medical science is the best shot I have got at this point.

Me: So you have no problem trusting the medical community? I have heard and seen your reluctance to submit yourself to any doctor for consultation. Sometimes you even make disparaging remarks about them.

G: I don't like to go to doctors if it is not necessary and submit myself to unnecessary tests. On the other hand if I break an arm or a leg I will definitely go to a doctor to get it fixed. I am not going to be an idiot and think that it will get fine by itself. At this point, for this patient, I believe only science can help. No other mumbo-jumbo stuff! I am a scientist by training and profession and would trust science any day, any time!

Me: So you perceive no power within you that can help this patient? No ability to heal or trigger spontaneous recovery?

G: I see no power within me. I am just a simple, regular guy. If I had that kind of power wouldn't I have already used it to help someone close to me? In fact I would have used it to ensure that they didn't fall sick in the first place! I would have absolutely no qualms in doing so as what would be the use of a power if you can't use it when you need it. Might as well be honest and admit that I have none and that will free me to make the best decision for the patient.

That conversation touched me deeply. He was doing what any concerned adult would do minus the unnecessary worrying and praying to some higher authority. His logic, clarity and practicality at the time of personal chaos and crisis really hit me home that day. He means what he says and he says what he means. No gap whatsoever!

Once the patient made completely recovery and was home safe and sound, I had another conversation with G.

Me: Despite your closeness to the patient you exhibited no signs of stress or worry, that really impressed me.

G: Worry comes from some projected outcome and your attachment to it. I am not capable of that kind of projection. My mind cannot conjure such a thing as it is fully engaged in trying to find the best possible solution to the problem in front of me. I have no pre-conceived idea if the best solution will actually solve the problem or not. But I am completely absorbed in putting that solution into effect if it is a viable one.

Me: At no point you even had a sliver of doubt about maybe some higher power, by whatever name you wish to call it, can help?

G: If there is such an intelligent, higher power operating, then I shouldn't have to ask, pray or beg for its mercy or kindness. Its intelligence should be sufficient. So for me prayers and besieging are useless. I am not saying others should follow my way of thinking. Since you are asking these questions I am telling you how I operate. I cannot be any other way.

Me: That's why I am fascinated. Your complete frankness in answering them is making me wonder why can't I have that conviction.

G: That's because you are addicted to your crutches. You have been brainwashed to believe that if you throw them something bad will happen to you. Throw them and see! I will give you guarantee that nothing bad will happen because of it.

Me: Are you in a position to really give that guarantee?

G: Yes! I am not saying everything in your life will be hunky-dory. My stint at the hospital with my dear one would have shown you that. But I can promise you that if you throw your crutches away, nothing bad will happen because of it. Trust me for once, when I say that you will be fine. You will be all the better for it in being able to handle any and all life situations that get thrown your way with your intelligence and talent. There is absolutely no power outside of you. That I can say with 100% assurance.

That was an extremely empowering and unforgettable conversation. What was the source of such unshakeable confidence?

8/29/2014

An interesting incident took place end of August 2014. I was doing some cleaning at home and suddenly I had a tremendous urge to throw out all the idols of all the gods and goddesses that were around the house. So I grabbed a large trash bag and started collecting all of them. I was not religious currently but over the decades I had accumulated quite a few knick-knacks related to various figures of gods. I got rid of everything in my sight. I couldn't stop at that. I grabbed all the religious and spiritual books - some of them I had considered as precious reading over the last decade - and got rid of them too.

The very act of getting rid of them felt like something deep was getting purged out of my system. There was a finality to their disposal as in no matter what the future holds for me I will not go back to them as an escape mechanism. Just as the last bag was dropped off at end of my curb for garbage collectors to pick it up, G called. He greeted me with his usual cheerful hello and asked what I was up to. I said I had an energy surge and decided to bag all the gods, goddesses and literature related to them and trashed them all. G was thrilled to hear it and called Julie, put the phone on speaker and had me repeat it to her. Then he called Lakshmi and had me repeat the story to her for the third time. They all congratulated me profusely and said it was a great step which made me wonder what is it that I did. Then Lakshmi added that today was also a very significant day. It was Ganesh Chaturthi and I was unaware of it. That put G in a whole new orbit of joy and he specifically asked if amongst the idols I discarded if there was any Ganesha in them. I said there were at least half a dozen. He was so tickled pink about it for he felt it was the ultimate middle finger to the whole religious and spiritual shebang! Then right after that he said something that completely surprised me.

G: Now you owe me a guru-dakshina!

Me: You are kidding right?

G: Why do you think it is a joke? A Guru is someone that shines light within. Finally some wisdom and light seem to be peeking through.

Me: So after all this, guru-dakshina?

G: NOPE! Before anything further happens, guru-dakshina! Later you as you know yourself will not be around to give it because you won't exist.

Me: This is so utterly confusing. What are you saying? You usually debunk everything. Anyway I am happy to give you anything you ask. I doubt very much you would want my left or right thumb (reference to the Eklavya story from Mahabharat).

G: Certainly not! I have no use for it. Right now I don't need or want anything from you or for that matter anybody. At an appropriate time, you will know what to do.

Me: What if I don't recognize it at that time?

G: No worries! Nature will ensure it gets its due.

On that note, G disconnected the call. What a bizarre conversation! What did he mean? Was he joking? Was he serious? Was he jokingly serious? Was he seriously joking? My head was exploding with questions. I called back numerous times to get clarification but he was unavailable. I called Julie to ask what he meant since she was right next to him. She said she heard him but had no idea what made him say it. That made me feel that at least I was not imagining these things. Also I was hurriedly writing notes as he was saying as I am used to doing something like that for work purposes. Next day I asked him again about the whole guru-dakshina conversation. He said those words just popped out of him and he could think of no rhyme or reason why. Then he said to 'fuggetaboutit'. Much later he would deny having said anything like that and I would email or message him back with my neatly typed notes. He would say, "Sometimes I don't know what comes out of my mouth. It is a surprise for me too!"

G has never made any kind of demand either before this incident or after. It is not how he generally operates. Whatever he has, he shares with everyone but at the same time he will never ask anyone

for anything. This has been my observation in the fourteen years since I first contacted him in 2007. If he does ask, it is usually for someone to fork their share of the expenses, if they don't offer it by themselves.

In hind sight, I perceive this incident to be extremely significant for me. I had to get rid of the old to make way for the new. Belief structures change like flavors of Baskin-Robbins ice cream to be replaced by a new one. However religiosity is so deeply embedded in our system through its inputs and influence from our infancy, from our social structure that one can't wish it away. We replace it with agnosticism or atheism which still revolves around some aspect of religion. Either you are saying yes to it or denying it or you are on the fence; but it still has to do with religion at its center.

11/14/2014

I was headed back to NJ to visit G for about a week. I was staying at their place in 42 North Drive. He had just returned from India and a lot of the conversation revolved around the people he met there. No matter what G said or did, his presence was always arresting. Amongst a room full of people it was so easy for the eyes to fall on him and 'eyeball' him, basically gaze at him unblinkingly.

11/15/2014

Whole bunch of us moved around with G during the day. We had our afternoon coffee/tea at G's place. Somehow the conversation drifted to the topic of dreams. Since I was besieged by dreams over the last year during the internal heatwave, I was paying close attention to it. G was saying that dreams could either be highly instructive for the dreamer or it could be body's way of throwing out ideas imposed by the dreamer which it did not need. I asked him how could one tell the difference between the two - one was highly desirable and the other was trash. He said that was up to each one's discrimination and sometimes it was not easy to figure it out.

At this point I related to him the UG dream I had in end of 2008. *The one where we were all traveling in the same car and I was driving. I was dying to talk to UG who was sitting behind me.*

However G was sitting in the passenger seat was giving me continual directions on maneuvering through NYC traffic. It made for a very stressful situation. Finally when I stopped at a red light and turned towards UG he said the answer to my question was right next to me. I looked out of the driver's side window and finding nothing worth noting I turned the other way. G sat there with a big gleaming smile and a twinkle in his eyes and I wondered if this was the guy that help the key that would unlock my questions and problems. Then G gives me a warm and cozy handshake. After that dream I felt as if the baton had been passed from UG to G as my preoccupation with UG seemed to taper off.

G heard my entire dream recitation with rapt attention. Then he asked me when I had this dream. I said end of 2008. He jumped up and in raised excited voice said, "You had this dream in 2008 and you are telling me only now? Almost six years later?" Then he called out for Julie and Lakshmi who were in the kitchen making tea/coffee and had me repeat the entire dream. Again in a tone of admonishment he asked me how could I have not understood the significance of that dream. Frankly, I wasn't too sure if I understood it even now. Then suddenly he turned to me and asked, "Which year were you born?" As soon as I responded he got up very abruptly and left the room in a huff. This caught everyone's attention in the room. Nandini asked me what was wrong. I shrugged and said, "I don't know. He asked me which year I was born in and as soon as I replied he left." She asked me what was so significant about the year. I replied that it was the same as the 49th year of UG when the calamity happened about maybe a month or two after. I don't know why that triggered a strong response in G. We all craned our necks to see what was happening in the next room where he was pacing around. After a few minutes he came back and told me that my dream was very significant and I should have mentioned it to him sooner. He also muttered softly, "All the signs were there, how did I not see it? All the numbers and coincidences were there and they were one too many." I asked him what signs and G responded forcefully, "Nothing!" We all looked at each other, shrugged and had our tea/coffee.

The week went by quickly. We drove to New York City to see Ansonia and then to Woodstock. Every day we were moving around quite a bit. Another fantastic trip came to an end. Every

time I met G and spent time with him the ache to be with him some more got stronger.

One of the things I asked G on this trip was whether he recommended or placed any food, smoking or alcohol restrictions on people around him. Julie had mentioned that UG didn't like people around him smoking or drinking. Also one of G's friends who had also been with UG had some wine that day and there was a lot of discussion about it as if it was taboo. So I wanted to hear it straight from G what suggestions he had for me. He said that I could eat/drink/smoke whatever I wanted as long as my body allowed it. However if the body rejected it by itself then I should respect it. This sounded very sensible to me. I am one of those people that if someone forbids me from doing something then its charm increases manifold. I told him I had never smoked or ate meat but I occasionally had alcohol at parties and during vacation. However I didn't have the capacity to consume a lot as I would get high fairly quick. G didn't seem to make a big deal about my admission. He said he used to consume a lot of meat, alcohol, cigarettes, *beedis* (cheap unprocessed tobacco wrapped in dry leaves) and weed. One by one they naturally fell off and his food consumption got more restrictive.

The following month over Christmas break we went on a family vacation to Puerto Rico, a beautiful tourist spot. Alcohol was available in a steady flow and I was drinking like a fish beginning with breakfast to after dinner. Even G asked over the phone - have you become an alcoholic or what? I laughed and said, "No. However I had never consumed alcohol until I met you in 2008. Then I started trying it out slowly." My answer surprised him as most people stop consuming after meeting him. After I returned from my vacation I noticed that my body got more sensitive to alcohol. It smelled stronger, tasted heavier and I would get a headache right after consuming it followed by vomiting. This happened every time I tried it thereafter. With a grand finale in Puerto Rico I bid alcohol goodbye after being soaked in it for most of my trip.

1/1/2015

New day, new year!

I started the morning off by calling G.

G: (Breezily and loudly) “Hello, Happy New Year! This year is going to be the most amazing year of your life! All the best to you! You are going to need it!”

Me: Why G? What is going to happen?

G: I don’t know. It just comes out of my mouth and I have no idea.

Me: Well ‘most amazing year’ sounds pretty good to me!

Well those words were prophetic alright!!!

PART THREE

POST-CHICAGO TRIP

CHAPTER 9

Post Chicago - 2015

Before the Chicago trip I would call G once or twice a day but texted him a little bit. After this trip (details of which were covered in Part One of this book), an intense period of texting between us started as it became my complete preoccupation. Since all these messages were automatically saved to my computer I have pretty detailed notes on the things that followed and G's take as well as his incredible support.

In the next few days there was a lot of discussion on the phone, email and text about various edits to the book, *Back to Square One* (BTSO) which was in the process of getting completed. It gave me a consistent reason to be in touch with G.

1/21/2015

There was some email discussion on the topic of headaches. I was coming out of a bad one and G asked me if I get headaches when I go through emotional turmoil. I responded that I used to get them very rarely but of late they seemed more painful. They started somewhere in 2002 and I noticed a specific pattern wherein they were always triggered after reading about UG. When I stopped reading (had to) they went away and this repeated for years. When I read that UG had passed away the headaches came back very strongly again. I recall in August of 2010 (I remember because I had family visiting me) one day it got so bad that I went to lie down in my bedroom. I thought my head would split half right down the middle and I was really crying because there was nothing I could do. Although my family was downstairs I couldn't move my finger to ask for help. I really thought I was going to die in pain when I had strong vision/hallucination wherein a Jain monk who had his mouth covered in a white patch like Jain monks do and wearing some faded and frayed white dhoti walked up to me in my bed and put his right palm in the middle of my forehead and held it for a few minutes. After a while he faded away and I felt both sides of my head were conjoined again. After about a half hour to an hour I was completely better. After that incident I have had milder headaches but last year or so I have been more or less ok. I had almost forgotten this incident until G asked me the

question this morning. I didn't really have any mental images of Jain monk healers prior to the dream and I was not sure whose image my mind conjured up but I was glad for the help any which way it came.

2/3/2015

Me: Until a few years ago I would think round the clock about enlightenment and how I could get it. Now all my spare thoughts are on you and I don't even know when that change happened.

G: I had a similar natural happening! Without any effort on my part The Old Man (UG) completely infested my brain and all the time, like a weed whacker, threw out all the cultural junk - gods, goddesses, godlets and all the social icons! The inspirational addictions went by the wayside too!

Me: I feel as if you took the words out of my mouth as you are really doing something similar to my system as well. In my case, growing up, the sports and movie icons seemed more alive than the gods. Then I shifted gears to reading about inspirational stuff. I read lots of them and they had zero impact on me or maybe they did fuel my yearning. Hard to say now. However they did take me to places wherein bigger ideas were created. When you first met me you must have thought - "Boy, she is carrying a lot of junk"

He gave a surprising response to that:

G: Not really! You are one of the most natural seekers I have ever come across!!

Me: Not sure what that term means. Isn't everybody naturally seeking? Misguided perhaps but seeking nevertheless.

G: There is an inherent restlessness and struggle about the human brain, that's my two cents! Looking for stability is an organic need! In that process one can invent umpteen ideas and images! There is no general truth to that!

Me: True. When you have just one problem like that of hunger then all your senses are honed to satisfy that hunger. But once that problem is solved we have 100 new problems to solve.

G: Not really! Objectivity takes precedence! It is not a matter of the ego or to prove anything to anybody.

Me: How does objectivity take precedence?

G: Needs are more important than wants which are based on prejudice and conditioning.

G shut his phone off for the next two days. I experienced a bad headache, neck and chest pains all one after another. It also triggered an intense phase of vivid dreams and hallucinations with G in the midst of it. The story lines were quite interesting and G would hear these dreams in great detail. He would often rope Julie into the discussion as she had studied Freud and Jung for years and G respected her abilities in dream interpretations. After hearing her perspective he would also give his own take on my dreams whichever completely different from anything Julie said or I speculated.

2/6/2015

Me: I had a vivid dream with you in it during the last couple of days.

G: Type it out. I would like to read it.

Me: Here they go:

1) You were in my house. I kept saying I can't believe you are here. Then you said laughingly, "Are you just going to stand there and cry or offer me some food?" I laugh through my tears and said, "Sure" but I find that I cannot move. For some reason my feet are rooted to the ground. You remark, "You have been offering food to statues and images so far dear!"

Then I ask, "I have all this cooked food in the kitchen but why am I not able to move?"

You say, "That's ok I will get it and grab two plates, fill it with food and bring it back. There are others in the room and they join us for the meal as well. My dog insists on sitting next to you and you absolutely love it.

2) Then cut to next scene - we are in a museum kind of place. Everyone is looking at the display items but you are interested in

the people around you and not the displays. There is a lady sitting in the chair with a small baby in her arms. You sense some imminent danger for the baby and ask the lady to sit in a different chair. She misunderstands you and is upset thinking you want to sit in her chair. Then you put a protective hand on the baby's head and touch the electric lamp at the side table right next to the lady. The faulty lamp short circuits and sends out lots of sparks. It would have hurt the baby but for your protective hand. The lady jumps out in gratitude and is very apologetic. We all look at you in awe and you say, "What? That was nothing magical". We don't believe you but you make light of it.

3) Cut to next scene. It is very early in the morning (about 4 AM) and I am back at my house in our dining room. I am waiting for you to come from the hotel. Your friends are looking for you and report back that you were not at the hotel and nobody could find you. I say I don't know either. Julie is fretting and is very worried. Then suddenly we all see you come down the stairway (in my house). I say, "Wow you were sleeping the whole time in my house and I didn't even know!" Julie seems very happy to see you and that we didn't have to go searching for you in the dark and cold weather (Its 3 deg F outside). Anyway we all gather around you to hear you. And you say, "Why do you guys micro-analyze everything I do? I am just an ordinary man doing ordinary things and we look at each other going - yeah right!!! In general everyone is super happy and charged up. People are cooking, singing, watching TV, joking and there is a lot of laughter in the air. I tell you, "The happiness that you are able to give us - is beyond anything the so-called imagined Gods can give!! This concludes my dream.

After reading all the dreams:

G: Thanks for sharing! I wish I had all that imagined power that your wishful thinking is producing through dreams! One thing is true and that's your happiness my friend!

G's and Julie's takes on my three dreams were as follows.

First dream: I was starting to feel G's presence within me much to my pleasant surprise. However, I could not move in any direction to feed this presence and I felt that G had to step up to do it. The fact that my dog was comfortable and loved G was indicative that a part of me was ok and grateful to accept this help.

Second dream: I was the lady holding the baby in my arms. The baby also represented the fragile and newly birthed energy that was part of me and I was extremely protective of this presence to such an extent that I wouldn't let anyone near it. A part of me also recognized that I was not aware of the imminent danger the baby was in and G had to really step in forcefully to assist me. Once I recognized his role in assisting the baby I was very grateful for it. I felt it was magical how he knew and jumped to help but he dismissed the magical side of it. For him it was something that needed to be done.

Third dream: I was sitting and waiting expectantly for G. However his presence shows up not from outside but from within - something that was sleeping within had woken up. I didn't have to look outside of myself for it. This presence was a source of tremendous happiness and lightness. Although I feel G is the source of this happiness he dismisses it and comments on his "ordinariness".

Me: I don't think I had any control over what I dreamt. I am only relating as it happened. If wishful thinking produced dreams why would we get bad dreams?

G: Fearful thoughts are the other side of the coin! I am not questioning the existence of thought though.

Me: So someday you might show up as a nightmare?

G: You never know RUDRA!! You even wanted to beat me up in Chicago with a big stick.

Me: You know in Chicago I said that aloud because it was such a strange thought that filled my head for those few seconds. It puzzled me because I was there and was so happy to be there. I feel you cornered me and I felt I was physically suffocating and the only way out was to lash out so you would stop cornering me.

G: Well very, very penetrating observation!! I am proud of you. I was worried that too much pushing would flip you and that's why I saw you went crazy and running across the hallway laughing out loud!! (G actually dreamt this when we were in Chicago.)

Perhaps that's why I said it aloud. After my visit to New Jersey last time (Nov 2014) I developed a fear that I would flip out like someone G and I knew and wondered if that could easily happen to me as well. Finally I had to tell myself, if that happens so be it, I can't control it. But in Chicago I was nowhere near losing it. I was very perplexed with what was happening to me because I felt I was getting punched in my guts and my breathing pattern was getting all wacky. I had cold waves and shivers running through my body (not imagined, but real). I realized that what he was hitting me with was more than his words. By themselves the words were not really harsh and I wasn't listening to him because I felt that I was trying to save myself and keep myself alive. (Sounds very dramatic but it felt very real). Here we all were having a nice cup of tea in a royal king's room with a fancy view and all I could feel was that I was fighting for my life! That threw me off completely.

G would often remark that sometimes the dreams were more instructive to the dreamer than any spiritual teaching and perhaps I needed to pay attention to them. Other times he would say it reflected the junk that the system was trying to throw out and I shouldn't dwell on them. It depended on the dreams themselves really. These dreams were coming in at such a furious pace at that time that I didn't really have the discrimination to figure out what was what. Julie would say that all the characters in the dreams were actually different facets of the dreamer himself/herself that expressed themselves via the dreams.

2/7/2015

I was at Barnes & Nobles bookstore when I got a call from G. I was already feeling a bit fragile as I was eating less, sleeping very little and feeling jittery all the time. During the call he perturbed me about how he was having a jolly good time with all his friends and I couldn't be there. He has done this many times in the last few years and usually I take it in my stride but on that day, it affected me deeply and physically. While G was on the phone, I felt as if the floor was giving way underneath my feet and I was spiraling downwards and out. Something unraveled. I could faintly hear G on the phone saying, "Are you ok? What's happening? Say something. Are you having cold shivers?" I could not get a word out as my throat was constricted and I couldn't breathe. Simultaneously I felt a searing pain in my chest area and thought I was having a massive heart attack and would die

pinned to the ground at the bookstore. Seeing me fall to the ground, the bookstore assistant came running and helped me off the floor. She walked me to the nearest sofa and settled me there. She also fetched me a glass of water and asked if I was all right and if I needed any medical help. I gulped the water down and refused further assistance.

I sat there on the sofa, chilled to the bone, not sure of what was going on. No coherent words or thoughts came to my head to describe my situation or how to move on. I literally could not put two consecutive thoughts together that made any sense. I felt bereft and beleaguered and later when I was able to, I drove home. I crashed to bed early and slept fitfully. Just before I dropped off to sleep I decided to turn my phone off and never call G again. I did not want anyone to have the right to create that kind of disturbance in me.

2/11/2015

The “not-calling-G-ever” business lasted about three days and those were probably the worst days of my life. Life was sheer hell. Vivid dreams cropped up at night and during the daytime when I was wide awake I had hallucinations. I thought I was losing my mind. To add to the agony, my head, neck and chest area were hurting terribly. Never had I experienced this kind of pain all in one shot. When I could take it no more, I broke through my pig-headedness and called G. He asked me what happened and I mumbled out all my lucid dreams, hallucinations, aches and pains - everything tumbled out. He talked to me gently and kindly for a very long time and the conversation gradually erased all the aches and pains. I started feeling better. By the next day my mood soared to ecstatic heights. I experienced tremendous joy, energy and vitality and I felt that my heart would burst open with the love I was feeling. I could barely recognize myself from a few days ago.

2/12/2015

I was still riding the ecstatic high from yesterday. I started wondering what kind of rollercoaster I was on. By nature, I was a very stable and easy-going person and my actions were usually logical and predictable, but now I was completely confounding myself. Just then I talked to G and it seemed as if he gave me an

energy shot. Was it my overactive imagination or was he actually doing something despite claiming otherwise. Perhaps sensing my volatile swings, G texted and asked me if I wanted to hear a story. At my exuberant, “Of course, yes!” G proceeded to relate an incident about Larry Morris and UG.

“Larry Morris was a devoted follower of UG and also wrote couple of books about him. When he was with UG he would go through highs and lows and was not stable. His then girlfriend/ soon to be wife - was skeptical about the whole thing. When he was walking around in the mall one day a thought hit him....what control do I really have around UG? Do I really think I have any at all? Then it really exploded in his head and after that he never came down from that high!”

After relating the story, G added, “Don’t read between the lines.” This was exactly what I was doing - trying to draw a parallel. I was in such a drunken state all day and his voice on the phone had a lot to do with it.

I was riding a high like I had smoked some marijuana or cannabis. Coincidentally G remarked later, “All around me people have problems, but I am sitting in the midst of it all like a bhole bala....dham marne wale bhole baba” (a ganja-smoking sadhu or baba). The day ended on a beautiful note with both of us flying high like two kites.

A song from a Bollywood movie, Devdas, called “Maar Daala” swirled in my head. The words roughly translated to this:

*Whose movement is this
That grabs my attention,
Whose shadow is this?*

*There is a knock on the door of my heart,
Who has come
Who has thrown green color on me?
Oh, who has thrown green color on me?*

*This insane happiness of mine
Has killed me, killed me,
Yes killed me!*

2/13/2015

I was wide awake by 2 am and started listening to some songs. I sent the Youtube link for the 'Maar Daala' song to G. I think this was the first of the many songs that I sent his way. He was surprised to receive it as he didn't think I was interested in Bollywood movies at all. For some reason he was still unaware of the side of me that raced to watch the Friday evening, opening night of an opening show!

I was thoroughly impressed when G quoted a dialog from a Bollywood movie,

*"Tasveer me aajata
Tho tera kya bigad jata
Parda bhi rahe jaata
Aur mera dil bhi deedar ho jata!"*

This translated to:

If you show up in a picture/photograph
What do you have to lose dear one,
The veil remains
Whilst my heart goes absolutely crazy.

G claimed that it was from the movie, *Pakeezah*. To check this out I watched this 3.5 hour long movie twice but never found this dialog. I felt it was a wild goose chase. I was barely sleeping for two hours each night ever since I got back from Chicago and found myself to have all kinds of extra time to chase down movies and songs.

In the meantime I was jumping up and down as if I was on a pogo stick wanting to intensely devour someone or something out of sheer delight! By this time I gave up trying to understand myself and my emotions.

I remarked to G, "Here I was patiently and sedately chasing the idea of enlightenment. You practically dragged me from that and made a wild beast out of me! To hell with enlightenment!"

His response, "Love it! There is life in that!!"

Me: You are like a raging fire!

G: No I am just a lighted matchstick (sirf ek chingari). If it ignites, then well and good! There is no appropriate simile for life's energy and its expression! Go Chinnamasta, behead anything that comes on the way. Say whatever comes to your mind, no preparation is required.

Me: (asking about Chinnamasta) Who is that? Some version of Kali?

G: Some headless bitch that beheaded herself and drank her own blood!

Me: The only head I am interested in is yours!

G: No harm and no loss to anyone!! Welcome!

Again his “no harm, no loss” had a huge effect on me. This was like *deja vu* from Chicago when he said, “Go ahead, beat me up - no loss to humanity”. I could barely finish typing as my whole being just slumped. I fell into a deep slumber right then. Later, I mentioned to G that his “No harm and no loss to anyone!” stopped me in my tracks and had a strange effect on me. I felt like a lioness being tamed into submission! After a nap I felt much better. G asked me if I was familiar with the word ‘*ardor*’. I said that it might be a quaint word to describe love. He said, “It is not that common to have *ardor*, it is a very special gut feeling that eliminates fear. My old man used to say: there can't be fear in love.”

While all this discussion was going on I was experiencing tremendous shaking and rocking sideways movement. From my lower body to shoulders I was shaking like a dry leaf in cyclonic winds. I was a little hungry, but couldn't eat because I felt there was a big lump in my stomach preventing me from eating anything. G asked me to drink some water and rest. I hadn't slept a full night's sleep in a month and was merely taking catnaps. I couldn't eat much and was very wired most of the time. My work at the office was going exceedingly well as my focus had been pretty good. I would work speedily and efficiently so I could rest more often and text G all the time.

G said that he had to meet me very soon. The thought of meeting him soon elated me.

2/14/2015

I woke up feeling super high and drunk yet again!

G: You are drinking your own soma and getting crazy. That's Vedic Soma!

Me: You are such a center point that I cannot feel where I begin or where I end. Just the rhythmic pulsation reminding me that I must be somewhere there!

On my way to work, I was listening to the Aladdin movie song, *A Whole New World*. It felt as if my whole mid-section was reacting to it. I assumed I was getting sillier by the day until G chimed in, "Here it is just a nuclear reactor brewing energy from the solar plexus!" Towards the end of the day, I felt internally a whirlpool sucking me in. G kept saying to let go. I wasn't sure what to let go. Nothing was making any sense and I seemed to be in and out of consciousness. I was flitting between unfamiliar emotions with great volatility and my physical strength and stamina went up and down like crazy, sometimes in a span of a few hours. G said, "So many colors" - and on further probing said the comment was for what he was seeing in me.

I had listened to more songs in the past four days than I had in the last 4 years. There was a strange demand from within and an incessant need to reach out to G. He also responded as much as he could. He said he was messaging me all day long like a teenager and his friends were pulling his leg. He was planning a trip to see me but the plans fell through. His trip to India was getting finalized.

2/15/2015

The conversations between us were getting stranger by the day. G was trying to say something deep and important and I was frothy and frivolous like champagne bubbles.

Me: To meet you has been purely my good luck. To attribute any other reason like books, Internet, stories, descriptions, or knowledge would be a blatant lie! Feel absolute raw tenderness.

G: Like a new born baby. Take good care dear.

Me: Yes new born baby. Nice sound to it. Didn't know it would feel like going through childbirth!

G: You have to, I count on you!

Me: You make it sound like I can say or do something about it. I'm just sitting here in absolute wonder and bewilderment!

G: Let it be!

Later that morning I was in a grocery store and felt very funny as to how the buying decisions were made by the mid region of my body and not by my head or a grocery list. G said it was the solar plexus. So the way it went was: I would pick some fruit or vegetable and I would experience a severe kick in my solar plexus. It felt exactly like the kick of an unborn baby in a mother's womb. It wasn't a mild kick either. So when I felt this kick I dropped my planned purchase and moved on to something that felt a bit more congenial to my system. I know this sounds quite crazy but that's exactly what I experienced that day and fortunately this phase lasted for only a few days else I would be in some looney bin by now.

G: You will discover so much!! Red or Blue, two sides of the same coin!

Me: What's red or blue?

G: High or low!!

Me: Look, I have been in a roller coaster with all kinds of emotions, feelings, physical - whatever. Just barely hanging in there. So when you say high or low are two sides - right now it's a coin toss for me which way it lands!

G: The blue should be alien to you.

Me: Not feeling blue right now. Can't project. Or maybe I don't understand. New thing I feel is that simple decisions are being made by this center in the midriff area which was afire last night. Don't know if this is a "this too shall pass" phase or what!

G: A whole new world ... Ha!

Me: Just feel centered in you.

G: I am nothing my friend, you have everything I will ever have!!

Me: Your saying that makes me melancholy. These words are not coming out of my head or brain. Where from? Fascinating!

G: Don't analyze! Just feel the fire that sends the raw life force into the blood stream!!

Me: How do you know I'm not just bullshitting?

G: You can't. You may be gullible but you are not a bullshit artist

Me: Pffft ..That's a relief! Mind has manifested strange things in the past. Don't want to be gullible to yet another mind trick

G: What's going on within you right now...This is a real battle!!

Me: I feel battle weary, just want to be

G: Here you need a true friend. My old man used to say: all you need is a real friend!! ONE real friend!!

Me: You are all I need! By whatever name you wish to choose! Speaking of friendship, here's one that is apropos: Draupadi had 5 husbands. Yet the only man who stood by her in crisis time was Krishna. Moral of the story: whether you have one husband or five, Ladies - you still need a boyfriend!

G: This is the most hilarious note from you, my dear friend. I am sending it to everyone.

Me: My mind was wandering in its usual way ... my solar plexus just had a violent reaction forcing me out of that meandering...so strange. Like a small child that demands immediate attention!

I promptly fell asleep right after that.

2/16/2015

Woke up with violent pain. G said it would be a wild ride. But that offered no clue of how wild it would be.

Me: Seems like every want and need has faded into the background to fuel this intense one! As soon as I open my eyes in the morning I'm hit with it full on!

G: What's that, dear?

Me: You tell me. Having visceral pain.

G: You want to just kill me!!

Me: No. But damn you for not being here. I can't take this pain anymore. Please don't tell me about being available in time and space. That is not doing anything for me right now.

G: Ok ok got it, not for you anymore! You are making me speechless!

Me: I can't even type on this phone anymore because it is flooded with tears.

G: Hey we have to figure out something. Let us see

Me: How am I going to be functional at work? This must be the battle you were referring to yesterday. Something blue.

G: Yes!

Me: All that I want to do is close my eyes and lie down and make the world go away. I seem to be doing everything but that. Just reached work. So fricking bone-tired. The only energy that I seem to have is to curse you out for not being here.

G: Do it, that's the raw energy of life!! You are working harder than ever. It is a real tear jerker. Never can you offend me!!

Everything is fair in and war!! Its now Jihad!!! Hang in there, baby!?!?!?

Me: I'm really trying. Don't even recall what critical work I came in here for. This isn't exactly hearts and flowers. What a revelation! I have hardly eaten anything in the last four days. Is that exacerbating things here?

G: Well then no wonder you want to rest!

Me: Feel very nauseous to eat. Revolting actually! Been having fruits here and there and tea of course. Actually I swing between energy and exhaustion every couple of hours.

G: Eat less but many times. Drink warm water.

I hurriedly finished the critical work and headed back home to sleep. I felt a little better although I was afraid to get off the bed in case it all came back - the whole bag of craziness. I apologized to G but he didn't care. He was concerned for my health and kept in touch all day long. I kept fading in and out of sleep. I went to bed hoping the next day would be a little better. I felt I was head over heels in love. Perhaps maybe I will just float away in my sleep. Barring five minutes of feeling good, the whole day I was wracked with physical pain and mentally I felt I had gone cuckoo. All in all a very rough day.

Me: You weren't kidding when you said wild ride. I almost lost it today.

G: I won't say anymore!! I can't afford to lose my very close friend. You have a busy life ahead lady.

Me: Please tell me my busy life isn't all work, work, work. Wish I could hear your voice now!

G: Yes dear, anytime! I would love to hear you say, "My anxiety about my future has gone for a toss" (bhaad me gaya)!!

Me: Right now I feel very raw and tossed around.

G: You want to hear a parting shot, dear? You ain't seen nothing yet ...!

Me: Please come here! Oh God. That sounds scary. Trying to give me nightmares?

G: Why it could be towards red!! Why do you think blues?

Me: Because I always thought in reds. So when the blues came I was unhinged. (Reds are the high points and the blues - extreme lows)

G: You see it is the blues that makes the red so meaningful.

Me: You are in my head 24-7.

G: Really? When did the transition occur?

Me: Since the time this thing in the solar plexus was activated. Probably poor choice of English words but no precedent here you see.

G: Well you will be exhausted again, go to bed.

The day ended with that warning from G - You ain't seen nothing yet and you will be exhausted again! I wondered what else there could be. I already felt completely wrung out. Whatever was unraveling was pushing me to the edge of my existence. Could I survive any more onslaught? The more these things happened, more dearly I clung to G. He was not just a friend, he was my lifeline at this point. That much was very clear. Amidst the chaos, I felt an insane amount of love flood my system and seep out of every pore. That was the strangest and most mystifying thing for me! No time to dwell on it though as I would be assailed by the next wave of emotions and pain.

CHAPTER 10

Night of Mahashivaratri and After

2/17/2015

This morning had the most unusual start with G. First of all it was exactly a month after the Chicago trip. Much later in the day we both realized that it was also the day of Mahashivaratri. As per the Hindu calendar and especially amongst the worshippers of Lord Shiva it is considered the most auspicious day of the year. People often fast, meditate and stay awake all night to seek spiritual advancement. The day meant nothing to me since I had completely bagged all aspirations - spiritual or otherwise. My existence revolved around G and thoughts of him rotated in my head with unbroken constancy. This was with no effort on my part. Most of the time, in the last month, I seemed to be drifting in and out of some stupor and there was no question of exercising any will or creating focus. It turned out to be a very significant and tumultuous day for me! Of course I had no clue about it that morning nor for that matter in my entire life before.

I was up at the crack of dawn full of energy and verve. I knocked at G's door with a text.

Me: Hello Sleepyhead! New morning beckons!

G: Hey sleep some more, Good Night!

Me: Slept enough, system is wide awake! Why ruin a good morning sleeping some more?

G: I'm *in Yoga Nidra, Devi abhi jagat mujhpar dhyan kar raha hain!! Disturb mat karo priye*

(Translation - I am in Yoga Nidra, oh goddess, the whole world is meditating on me. Please do not disturb me, dear!)

I was extremely puzzled by his response and so I double checked my message to ensure that I didn't text any wrong number. Everything was fine. I thought maybe it was a new ploy to keep the monkey (meaning me) off his back.

Me: What? Ok whatever. Be that way!

G: (Little later) Ok tell me now what you want?

Me: I don't want anything other than to interact with you.

G: Ok. Alright. But don't get angry. It is not good for your health.

Me: I have no idea what is good for my health right now as everything is topsy-turvy. But I do recognize that you are my need.

G: Since when did this useless wisdom descend into your useful head?

Me: I don't have any wisdom or a head that is working right. Just writing very spontaneously what comes.

After coffee:

G: Are you meditating?

Me: On what?

G: On your red and blue (referring to my highs and lows).

Me: I'm incapable of meditating. Too giddy-headed and ditsy. Will leave meditation to the serious heavy weights.

G: You have to work! You need to calm down, dear!

Me: Its only 5:30 AM and I am working remote. I don't have to start work until 9 AM. Besides I don't have to worry as you are keeping me on track.

G: You have Mother Nature.

Me: Mother Nature speaks through you! She wants me to experience her delectable and mouthwatering side! Who am I to decline?

G: Hello! Anybody home?!

Me: LOL. What does meditating on red and blue even mean?

G: The source movement of high and low!!

Me: Certainly something new for me. You have to tell me more.

G: Ok

Me: Well looks like my happy time is done. Stomach is churning wildly.

G: Well then take rest.

Me: All I have been doing is resting.

G: Not really! How can you be connected with wildfire and rest at the same time!?!

Me: I haven't rested this much since my kids were born. It's true that I don't feel too rested. It feels like I'm delivering a baby with no baby to deliver.

G: Take care of yourself and your clothes.

Me: What do you mean?

G: The fire cannot distinguish. Destroys everything in its way. Don't go crazy!! Sorry buddy!

I was wondering why he was saying sorry and why he thought I would go crazy - I mean more than the usual, that is.

Me: I'm perfectly sane in this moment, the most lucid I have been all week.

G: Nice. Bye for now.

A little later I was experiencing extreme unease:

Me: Will Tums (digestive tablet) resolve this uneasiness?

G: No. It will make it worse.

Me: Ok. I still think this might be some gastric problem! And a bit of a soft head.

G: Sure. Head is connected to stomach.

Me: Yes. At this time both of them feel very woolly.

G: Both need rest!!

Me: Yes boss! Gonna take a nap.

My nap was filled with images of G. My eyes were shedding a lot of water. I wasn't crying happily or sadly. Actually the wetness of the tears woke me up.

Me: I don't know why my eyes are shedding so much water. Also I think YOU ARE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PERSON that I have EVER met. Whether you are male or female seems immaterial!

G: I am with a lot of people here. But nobody knows what you are going through.

Me: Actually I have been napping like a baby, in and out. Physically feel exhausted but mentally feel high. Haven't eaten or drank anything. Probably the reason for exhaustion.

G: Sleeping is good! Drink water.

Me: (After a short nap) Woke up to a visual of fire. Other than sleeping and texting have done nothing else for 24 hours. Every teenager's dream life!

Julie sent me a photo of G wearing a new shirt and talking to me on the phone. During the call G said to enjoy it while it lasts.

Me: You said enjoy it while it lasts. Why does it have to end? Does it need to?

G: Nope. It's only the call of so-called duties. The resonance that gives joy would conflict the demand of social dynamics!!!!

Me: I can see that. When the day-to-day demands are met can I still remain immersed in you or does it fade away?

G: The focus and enthusiasm would be difficult for others to handle my dear friend!

Me: Really? I thought everybody appreciates focus and enthusiasm.

G: Not at all! How are you feeling?

Me: Mentally fine. Physically fatigued. Feel so heavy in my belly area. Difficult to go up and down the stairs. If I lie down I feel ok. But walking brings aches and pains to the fore. I could be in this mental state for the rest of my life though and it would be great. Last night I woke up twice very startled because I felt knocking on my left foot underside. Both times I thought maybe someone was in the room but of course that wasn't the case. Didn't seem like a circulation issue or a tingling sensation.

I sent him some song to watch on YouTube. He said that although he had heard the song quite a few times, he felt different this time. He asked me to not ask him to explain why. I said that I had heard it many times before too but felt very different this time.

Me: Just thinking of you makes me so happy. Don't know when and how that happened. But it did.

It was night-time and I napped off and then woke up to excruciating pains. These were way worse than any labor pains I went through. I thought I would go mad with pain and I just grabbed my phone and used my last vestige of strength to text him. I figured he might be asleep as it was night-time but I was hoping maybe he would suggest something to help my pain. Following are a series of texts that I sent him while my entire system was collapsing under the sheer magnitude of pain.

Me: Everything that can possibly hurt physically is hurting. I think new body parts got added to my system just to cause additional pain.

Epidural anyone?

So burning hot!

Contracting, flexing, contorting, twitching, tossing, turning, burning, eyes watering.

Wondering why I'm texting to a sleepyhead? Call it a coping mechanism. Makes me feel somebody out there is listening. Pain is tearing me lengthwise in the back and breadthwise on the front torso. Is this even possible? (It felt as if someone took a giant axe and was slicing me right down the middle - both front and back)

Reminding myself that this is what I wanted, no matter what. Silly me. My focus when I wanted it was on the "bliss" state. Boy was I off!

All the Bollywood and Hollywood songs have left me.

Delivered two kids in the past. This seems like I'm delivering a country!

Fireworks set off in my system - shooting pains everywhere!

Momentary respite. Flash back 2009 Mahashivratri. Ate a wonderful meal at the Sai center and sang merry bhajans all night clapping hands with great gusto! What a trade-in!

Writing all this. pretending that the sleepyhead cares. Probably will be the morning entertainment when he wakes up.

Looks like things have quieted down a bit or maybe it's all done.

Actually it was not all done. It was heading to the crescendo. I was pinned to the bed and couldn't move at all. At this time a large amount of saliva pooled in my throat. I also felt like vomiting but I couldn't move even my finger tip in any direction and I felt I was choking and drowning in my own saliva and vomit. I really panicked and thought this is it. This is the end. What a way to go drowning in my own vomit! My only regret was that I couldn't even text G. I heard my phone ping and since I had a specific ringtone for G I knew it was him texting back but couldn't read it right away. However I started feeling a little better and things seemed to calm down a bit. Immediately I checked my phone.

G: I don't have an emoticon to express!!! I am throwing up for you.

Me: It's ok. Doing plenty of emoting for both of us! That's funny I was just going to type - sudden nausea. Can't even get up to go to the bathroom to throw up! Kid you not. Never had someone throw up for me - how romantic! So how and when does this end? (12:24 AM).

Much later, we both were quite puzzled as to how G woke up and threw up the exact moment I needed to throw up. How was it

possible that as soon as he threw up I felt a whole lot better? At that precise moment neither of us were aware of what was going on with the other. Perhaps this aspect of how nature works will remain a mystery. I was well aware that G's body was quite sensitive to his immediate surroundings. He was also quite sensitive to people in different parts of the world that were closely connected to him. He would often say that time and space was not a constraint. What puzzled me that night was how my own system felt better after he threw up. I could see over the last month my whole system was getting more and more fragile and sensitive. But this night it reached a whole new level of sensitivity!

2/18/2015

I woke up feeling absolutely and hopeless in love. My mind went back to the violent night I had and connected with G via text. He asked me to forget about the violent part and focus on the feel good part. I mentioned that the love I felt somehow felt pure and untainted - like the age, gender, nature, etc. of the recipient did not matter at all. It seemed like a completely different and remarkable feeling where the feeling itself purified, cleansed and nourished me. It was as if a new tap or valve was turned on in my being to feel this way. I felt tired and exuberant at the same time and slept for perhaps 45 minutes the night before. I was supposed to give my husband a ride to the airport that morning. I was in no position to drive long distance and made alternative arrangements. G mentioned that Julie also seemed to have a difficult night and suggested that maybe people should leave stay away from him and live a peaceful family life. I disagreed.

Me: Feel crazy energy revving my system up. Need to plan some practical aspects like airport rides, work etc. need some guidance

G: Call if you can . I called you. Are you working today?

Me: Working remote. Too much body jangling to drive anywhere

G: How is your stomach? You had the worst night ever!

Me: Much better. Still some activity but at 20% of what it was yesterday evening. Yes I did have the worst night ever. I know for certain this was no gastric problem.

Me: Working from home rest of the week and cleared my weekend completely too. Did you actually read all those text messages that I sent last night? I was unstoppable

G: I know I had to throw up!

Me: I presumed you would be asleep and it won't bother you. Felt the need for some anchor in the swirling waters. Is this done?

G: Depends on you! If your intellect stands in the way the system has to fuck you! Agenda for the self has to be carefully discriminated, that is in your hand!!

Me: You can tell me this when I call you. All this seems way too cryptic for me. First thing I did for self was clear out my schedule. Seemed imperative

G: We have to discuss this face to face in person. No phone call will substitute that

Me: I agree. But I'm not in a position to travel. Too fragile yet

G: Not now. Healing takes time. It's life, it's not magic

Me: Well I leave it in your hands!

G: Nature takes care!!

Me: You, nature, whatever! When I say you it is synonymous with nature for me. Mentally moving between moments of profound clarity to a big smoky swirl. Physically moving between spurts of crazy energy to dead weight with aches, pains and twitches. Just logged into work. Amazing focus. Always been a focused person but this is like laser sharp.

G: You are more available to yourself my dear!!

Me: Where was it before?

G: In search of useless ideas!

Me: My search for useless ideas brought me to you. Never underestimate its power 😊

G: Aap ne kaha ki o sab bhaad me gaya! You told me no causality, pure luck!!

Me: Yes I agree. Say bhaad me gaya. Busted!

G: I have to go. Call me whenever you want.

I was already doing that but to have it in writing was great!

Little later:

G: Now only when we are there in front of each other (in person), nothing much to say!!

Me: How is that going to happen? Don't say Mother Nature will take care. She has provided you with car and flight. Napped off. You popped in my dream. Becoming daily routine now

G: What did I ask? Be honest

Me: In the dream? Honestly can't recall.

Me: (Little later) Pressure in my teeth, ears and top of my head. I was asking isn't this done?

G: Don't resist anything !

Me: Delirium! It was the hissing breath pushing my teeth out and ear. Not done are we? I should have guessed it from your evasiveness.

G: You are supposed to rest dear! Enjoy the shivering.

Funny thing is when he said enjoy the shivering I wasn't cold at all and wasn't shivering either. But it started half hour later. G seemed to know and anticipate what's coming up and gave tips to handle it to the best of my ability.

Me: Remind me to feed my dog at 7 PM. Yes I'm very cold to the bones and I think they might snap.

G: Ok

Me: (I was in extreme delirium and shivering like anything. My breathing pattern was very wonky and kept changing as well. I had no clue what was happening and I was literally typing as the thoughts came out of my head) I thought the heating in the house was out. Hot tears well up as the feeble body sees the coiled one. I don't stand a chance. Warm silky breath from both nostrils fan my face very gently and reassuringly. I feel as if I am in suspended animation. Why am I writing all this? I have no clue but I'm pushed to. I have never seen or felt my body this microscopically before. Only when I woke up I realized that the whole stomach churning stuff is back. I had a couple of olives. They tasted phenomenal. My taste buds just sang!!!

G: You will also love rasam, potatoes and avocados.

Me: There is no one here to make or buy anything right now. Are you actually reading all this stuff?

G: Ask your friend Monica to get something and visit you!

Me: Ok. She is a perceptive lady. She will want to know more.

G: Sure. What's there to hide?

Me: Well yesterday you said something about not mentioning to anyone there.

G: I didn't want your family members or others to worry! I meant in that way.

Me: Oh ok. True. I'm finally convinced this isn't some generic health problem. How are you able to tell that I'm hot or cold at the precise minute when I haven't said anything to you about it?

G: Chalo yaar!! You know suddenly that song Lagan Laagi Tumse Manki Lagan started playing in my cell!

Me: Evasive? Providing distraction? I will take it. After brief respite pains are back like birthing contractions.

G: Ha ha! Human mind old habits die very, very hard!?!?!?!

Me: I am back in the pain cloud. It is more intense now in my back and I feel as if I am burning a hole in my bed here.

I must have passed out in sheer pain.

G: (at precisely 7:00 PM) Hey you have to give dog food. It is 7:00 PM

Me: I just woke up. I am up and about around the house so I don't forget to walk. My dog must be wondering what happened. I am watching Jeopardy (TV show) with a happiest smile on my face. How can I be this happy with all the pain, heat and burning that I just went through?

Me: (just before I went to bed) What's with the red/blue meditation - source of joy/sorrow? You said you would let me know.

2/19/2015

At crack of dawn

Me: Good Morning. Slept, slept and slept. Some tea would be nice. But I have a small challenge.

G: Good Morning. Yes what challenge?

Me: My body won't cooperate to get tea.

G: Drink Coffee.

Me: Funny. I'm still trying to get off bed.

G: Don't try anything. Be bored, be lazy, be depressed!!!

(Actually G was hinting that I should just rest and not try to do anything and the lows were lurking in the corner but I assumed at that time that he was just joking.)

Me: What happened to have a nice day? Your solution does not get me tea!

G: You don't need any tea now! Just have a lazy day.

Me: OK. You must be right because I just flopped in my bed. I feel like a cotton ball - fluffy, befuddled and with not much content.

G: You are a cotton ball full of wild imagination!!

Me: Is that so? When wayward thoughts flow through there is thing in the solar plexus area that punches it out. I am not imagining this as my body actually jerks in response.

Me: (Little later) I am feeling silly happy. I have been through a myriad emotions in 10 days - like wave upon wave that fluctuate in an acutely short span of time. The only constant is you. I am saying this for real and not as some romantic bullshit. Not that romance isn't there. But that is not all of it.

Me: I am lying down lazily on my couch with a comforter, my eyes closed. It seems like my body is releasing hundreds of teeny tiny happy bubbles. They float in every direction I turn. When I pop one bubble it is as if 10 more take its place. If this is imagination - what a perfect use for it! O M G!!

G: What's up?

Me: Everything is right side up!

G: The cotton ball flying and the heavenly words have nothing to do with me either! Anyway your gesture matters!

Me: Ok. I think I'm losing coherence between what I feel and the interpretation of it. It's ok. All good for now! At some point language falls short. I see that now. Laundry, garbage, dishes, etc. - should I bother with them today or leave it for some other time?

G: Just text (implying rest and stay connected).

Me: I am overcome with exhaustion after an ecstatic couple of hours. Think I will lie down now. Some roller coaster!

The rest of the day went in alternating between excruciating pain, euphoria and taking catnaps like a little baby. The body seems to release these chemicals that create the euphoric feeling making it easier to handle the pain. I realized today what a chemical laboratory our human body is. It releases just the right amount of chemicals at the right time. My lack of knowledge about it was thankfully not a deterrent. I was mostly bed ridden. Lack of food or drinks did not seem to bother me. Besides I couldn't get it even if I wanted to. G indulged me in texting and kept a close watch on me through the day. When I asked why all this was so unknown to the general public he remarked that UG would say that even cabbages are more sensitive than the Indian people!!

Me: Tell me if I need to do something and I will do it. I'm really not trying to look for life answers now. I don't care.

G: Good to know!!

Me: You are the only one I'm talking to in this whole wide world and this must be the most idiotic conversation.

G: Imagine that!

Me: You say you have some things to say in person. How come whoever wants to see you, whenever gets their wish. But I'm unable to?

G: You are not at all helpless, therefore, you don't need any help from anybody let alone from an ordinary person like me!!

Me: That knowledge doesn't change my question.

G: The absence of an answer should finish the question and by finishing all questions one finish the questioner!!

Me: That also doesn't help me

G: You want to see me??

Me: Absolutely!

G followed it up with a long FaceTime call.

2/20/2015

Me: When does this darkness end?

G: What is happiness?

Me: I just want to be done with all this push and pull. It was good while it lasted but I feel that it should all be done now. Answer to your red-blue meditation - cause for joy and sorrow - a man's search for eternal joy, wanting to keep his sense of self going in pursuit of this mythical joy!

G: It's dangerous!

Me: When he finds things going his way - calls it happiness.

G: Otherwise blue.

Me: If he doesn't get what he wants he is sad, depressed, and feels like it is the end of world/life.

G: Someone has to say you are doing great.

Me: Problem is there is unending flow of wants that keeps the wheel going forever.

G: One day the clever old man showed me a poster it was written: Love Is The Only Way. It took a while to imbibe that!!

Me: (He was giving me a broad hint but it was hitting a brick wall here) All the love seems to have emptied itself.

G: Your conception of love is wrong.

Me: What did you imbibe from that?

G: That I don't know what love is, all I knew was what gives me pleasure, pain, happiness and sorrow!

Me: You just repeated what I said (I think)

G: If you don't know what love is how do you say love emptied out? Love has no opposite.

Me: What I thought was love emptied itself. So this must not be love. Then what is it that I feel for you? I would call it indescribable for now.

G: Opposite of something that's hate and apathy is not love. Don't label it if you don't know.

Me: The word love didn't play a big role in my life. Somehow it came into my vocabulary around you. Clearly that's the end of it!

G: I understand the body language, so there is no need to tell me!

Me: Whose body language?

G: Anybody that comes my way. Rest well. Thank you for making me a SMS junkie! I feel like a teenager now. When I am in India the texting will stop.

Me: I have rested plenty but it doesn't seem to end my exhaustion. You made me a junkie too - in more ways than SMS!

G: So much of Samaskara and Samaskara gathering tendency! Time lagta hai yaar! Bachha ek din me paida hota hai kya? (It takes a lot of time. A baby is not born overnight.) I taught you how to use swear words. Did you ever swear at anybody like this before?

Me: Here and there I might have used a few. But I never used it with any punch.

G: Have you ever said to anyone face to face fucking shithead!!

Me: N E V E R. Still stuns me that I did!

G: Chupe Rustom ho. Kisiko pata bhi nehi (You are a dark horse. No one realized it.)

Me: Yes I was such a dark horse that even I was not aware of it. I will chalk it to crazy energy riding my system at the time! Aap bhi koi gentleman nahi nikle! (You were no gentleman either!)

G: I am absolutely raw!! From Vedic sages to UG rag rag me doud rahe hain (the sages and UG all running through my system like anything). Human excremental fertilizer!

Me: So I wasn't too far off then in calling you names!

G: Absolutely loved it!

Me: If you had a chance to meet your old man today would you take it?

G: Absolutely! Any day, any condition, any situation!! Even if I was in the midst of making love!! He would say what the fuck are you doing? Old habits die hard!!

Me: Don't know if I'm smiling at your old man or you or both. It would have been nice to meet him.

G: He took out all my regrets of not meeting anybody on this planet!! (Again a hint for me).

Me: So I feel better today. Should I try to come to NJ? (He was leaving for India the following week and I was trying to squeeze a trip before that.) Can I come this afternoon? I can return Monday.

G: No.

Me: Why? (I was puzzled as he kept saying we need to meet face-to-face and yet he said no. Didn't realize at that moment that his instinctual response had a lot of foresight)

G: You decide.

Me: How can I decide if you say no?

G: Then why ask why?

Me: Look I just had a brainwave to visit you and I'm pain free at the moment, so I'm asking.

G: What about your work?

Me: I don't care about it. To hell with it!

G: Are you Queen Victoria or Queen Elizabeth? You need your income.

Me: No worries. I am confident that I can take care of my work while visiting you. I barely sleep anyway. I can work at night.

G: Bahut acchha. Jo aap samjhe. (Alright, do whatever you feel like.)

Little later:

Me: Sorry. I was running around looking for doing the ticketing and I had searing pain. It is hard to think straight then. It's nothing like the birthing contraction pain. I thought they were gone but came back just now with a vengeance. I think I will take a nap to take the edge off. Will text you later when I feel better. So you will be reachable in India?

G: For you? Yes always!

Me: Thanks. I don't know why I'm crying so much. I feel so helpless and weak.

G: It's good for you!!

Me: Really? I thought I would hear more of it is all in your head business. I think I am falling apart at every level.

G: Yes it's in your head and that's your functional reality!! There is no denying that.

Me: Last night was the worst. It was way worse than the pain filled night before. The physical pain at least gives focal point to the mental mess. I feel so needy and clingy for you right now. You made me a bigger SMS junky than you.

G talked to me over the phone about his two weeks in Palm Springs with UG in the summer of 1996. He talked about something unraveling within him at that time and hinted that I might be going through something similar. I heard his story with half an ear as I was consumed by my pain and couldn't get a

handle on it. I also made three attempts to book a ticket to go to New Jersey but all those attempts were thwarted when I experienced pain seizures. G scolded me and told me to stop trying to book as it was not happening and that he had started off the morning telling me not to come. So that was that!

Me: The phenomenal amount of energy, emotions, mental stuff running crazy right now feels utterly ravaging to the body. Where is all this flowing from? Feel completely bulldozed by it. I am unable to even lie down and rest. Somewhere in one of your texts you mention that when there is no answer, question ceases and then no questioner - I assume there is zero influence on that, right?

G: Well it was just to tell you that nothing is in your hands. So stop there!!

Me: It would be nice if you could drive here to visit me.

G: Enjoy the visit! (His comment seemed very random but it made sense half hour later).

Half hour later, my friend Monica unexpectedly decide to drop by for a visit. She had taken half day off from work. I mentioned this to G and he said, "That's best!! Have a ball!!!!!" Was it this visit he referring to when he said, "Enjoy the visit?"

Later that evening:

Me: You know I just figured out in my conversation with Monica why I'm into bugging you so much. It didn't dawn on me earlier. I just realized that TV, books, Internet surfing, daydreaming about mythical life styles haven't interested me because of this new found whatever that has completely yanked and held my interest. You are the only one I am interested in. I am feeling proud of my lightbulb moment! Despite all the hi-low my life couldn't be more interesting and absorbing.

2/21/2015

Me: I woke up this morning in the most incredible manner possible! I could feel the gentlest of the flutter moving through my system. It was so gentle, light and frothy that I didn't want to breathe in case I accidentally crushed it. As this flutter meandered

around lazily it evoked even more flutters along the way creating waves upon waves of ecstasy coursing gently through the system. As the body moved and convulsed to accommodate this movement, this flutter kept flirting with its gentle demand to be crushed. Words and imagination fall short to describe what was happening. Thankfully the system seems to possess its own innate intelligence to welcome it, savor it, and fulfill itself sending pleasure waves through the system. Oh what a feeling! This is beyond mind, knowledge, reasoning and thinking. What a whole new way to feel! It's as if a million nerve endings came alive and sensitized themselves to bask in this pleasure! Wow!

G: Good for you!

Little later:

Me: I am reading what I wrote this morning. Surprised that I wrote all that. You know tea used to be the best thing that I tasted before. Now it tastes like piss water. Too bad. Too sad.

G: Good riddance. You should write a book. There will be lot of takers.

Me: Who would care? Most of the time I am rambling and have no clue what I am saying or what is happening to me.

G: If you can write well, that's a gift!! A new found talent!!!

Me: My mind is full in this exchange. To recollect and write is hard. I have a practical question for you. I haven't stepped out in five days. You think I can handle getting out and getting a few chores done? It will take me couple of hours. I won't go until you answer.

G: Yes of course! You should go out. You were about to come here.

After my trip out.

Me: Every morning the insides of my body feel more raw and tender. I mean physically not some imaginary stuff. It could be because my system is extremely overheated during the night. It feels like a fire is coursing through my body and I wonder if this

releases some endorphins in the morning as a healant. Right now if I laugh, cough, or move quickly, everything hurts. But my mind is stoned. My body is so tired and fragile and I am curled up as a tight ball right now. Hearing from you somehow seems to unlock those endorphins to handle the pain. Don't know. Pure speculation on my part but it sounds right to me. It mimics epidural during delivery. I know that because I have taken that before and I know what it feels like.

G: Call when free.

Me: Can I make a request?

G: Please please please.

Me: Before you go to India can I please have one hour FaceTime with you so I can get to ask you some questions without being hurried?

G: Sure!! That's all?

Me: Yes for now, oh my genie!!! I'm usually more lucid in the afternoon. Morning and evening are typically shot due to extremes. So should I take your "sure" as a yes?

G: Yes. Of course!

Me: Thanks!!! Right now there is zero difference between me and my dog. We are both sprawled in our family room floor where some nice sun shine is streaming in. Life couldn't be better! Kutte ki zindagi jee rahi hoon aur mast lag raha hai (I am living a dog's life right now but feels awesome). As usual you were right as hot rice, rasam and boiled potato curry was awesome (Monica had made it and brought it over). Biggest meal I have eaten 10 days although I ate very little. Hope I don't pay for it!

Me: I wish I could be with you. I am sure you don't feel anything.

G: You are branding me as if I am a lifeless, unfeeling computer

Me: No. There is vibrant life in you. That's what I'm responding to and that's what I want to be next to. I'm not saying this romantically or in some endorphin fused state. I really mean it.

G: Ok.

2/22/2015

G: Have you had something to drink this morning?

Me: I just got some tea. Pain is rotated to my upper back. So can open my eyes and breathe a little better. Is the pain aggravated because I ate better dinner last night?

G: No. Don't overthink as to why there is pain. We will have Facetime again today. Eat less but more frequently if you can.

Me: The back of neck is hurting like bitch but still way better than when my chest and head hurt (during the night).

G: Do you know how to make Angel hair with tomato sauce?

Me: I thought somebody was sitting on my chest and squeezing my breath out. Yes I know how to make angel hair pasta with tomato sauce.

G: Good take nice showers and walk around your house whenever you can!

Me: Will do. Thanks. Did you miss my morning fan mail?

G: What?

Me: Its weak humor. Usually I wake up feeling awesome and totally in "love". But this morning that didn't happen.

G: Actually you don't have to thank me ever! If this is more fire and less smoke then thank your lucky star.

Me: What do you mean by more fire and less smoke?

G: You can't understand everything in one shot. Something should be in riddle form.

Me: Then how can I thank my lucky star?

G: When you realize what I say.

Me: When I talk to you the endorphin buzz is slowly coming on. World is starting to look better.

G: Don't blame me I'm so innocent. Main nehi makhan khaya. (alluding to Krishna saying that he didn't do the mischief of stealing the butter. The sentence construction is such that when you pause differently the same can be read as, "Indeed it is I that stole the butter"!).

G: Let's do some bhajan!!!

Me: Sure you can do bhajan on my behalf as well.

G: I can sing and dance for you!!

Me: That would be awesome. Let me know when and we can FaceTime.

I was going through a lot of physical pain in my head, neck and chest and so I figured G was humoring me by saying sweet things. To my great and pleasant surprise G actually followed it through. G and his friend were visiting Julie at her town home. The night before his friend couldn't sleep much and had written this beautiful song on a napkin and wanted to sing for G. During the call G asked his friend to sing live and G danced with absolute gay abandon. All of them joined G in dancing and Julie video taped the whole song-dance-conversation routine and emailed it to me. It was the sweetest thing that G did for me.

Later that evening.

Me: I have heard you say pain and pleasure are two sides of the same coin. Now I really get what that means. Tossing the coin sounds good right now but not sure if I could really have enough of you.

That night:

G: How are you madam?

Me: I'm doing fantastic! I am watching the Oscars. It used to be my favorite show. Now it seems very flat.

G: It is flat.

Me: Food, sleep, traditional entertainment all have taken a complete backseat. I am not sure if this is temporary. But it was there one day and disappeared the next day. We will have to see what work feels like tomorrow.

The evening ended with another FaceTime call.

2/23/2015

I was going to head into work today after a break of almost 10 days and was a bit apprehensive about how things would go. G coaxed me out of bed and pumped a lot of energy to encourage and move me along.

Me: The world is alive and well!

G: Good luck for salt mines!!

Me: Salt mines as in work?

G: As in whatever you don't like to do!!

Me: Any tips?

G: Nature takes care!

Me: Could live out rest of my life in this bed day dreaming!
Sounds like a nice alternative!

G: If you have enough money then you are lucky. Otherwise you have to compromise to Tom, Dick and Harry

Me: Ever the practical man!

G: Functional Reality dear!!

Me: On a totally different note - my joints are so flexible and youthful! Usually when I wake up in the cold mornings like today

they tend to be stiff (an automobile accident had damaged my knees)

G: Good for you!! Don't overdo that's all!!

Me: Yep. So many subtle changes....like discovering something new. Overdo work?

G: All the things you want to do when you are very happy!!

Me: Damn!

G: Well you can try, no harm!! I don't want you to get hurt! Use a parachute !! Come on have some hot, hot tea or coffee!!

Me: Alright getting up. Hot piss water awaits. How exciting! I was referring to hot tea

G: All right North Indian takes coffee (referring to himself) and South Indian takes tea how perfect!

Me: Yes. Nice upside down world!

G: What happens when North meets South! Vindhya Mountain! It is Impossible. (Referring to the Vindhya mountain region that divides the North from South India.) My old man (UG) used to say, "I don't touch anything that comes from the other side of the mountain. Hindi mat bolo. Horrible aloo gobi and palak paneer!!" (Don't speak in Hindi. People from the North eat potato/cauliflower disk and spinach and cheese dishes).

Me: Lol. It seems like you have adjusted to idli sambar and coffee quite well.

G: Rasam is my favorite!

Me: How come every word that comes out of you is so perfect? Rhetorical question. Mine too!

G: For a change we have the same taste.

I reached work expecting a mountain of work to be sitting there as I had been out for 10 days.

Me: I told myself last night that I want to get to work by 8 AM. I had a really hard time getting out of bed this morning and was wondering how I was going to swing the work day. Somehow I am at work with my computer turned on and ready to work 8:00 AM. Amazing! My boss just came in. He had done all my work last week and was so happy and proud that he did it all to make life easy for me.

G: You lady!!!

Me: I know. I'm stunned

G: Pyaar ka Karishma!!! (Miracle of Love)

Me: So you don't like it when I use the word love but it is ok to say pyaar? (Pyaar is a hindi word to mean love). Sar jhakra raha hai!! (My head is spinning)

G: It is your love, there is nothing within me.

Me: If you keep burning everything down what will be there inside?

G: I am just an ordinary guy. I can't set anything on fire. I am nirdosh nirgun (I am innocent and beyond qualities).

Me: Yeah right! There is so much burning in my stomach. What will give it temporary relief?

G: Pineapple juice

Me: Ok. Will give it a shot. Please tell me that this gets better soon.

G: It should find a rhythm on its own!!

Me: Feels like hell now. Please call when free. I want to say bye before your flight takes off (to India). Just drove home for a short break and some pineapple juice.

2/24/2015

G was on his way to India. He called me as soon as he reached there.

Me: I'm burning like I'm sitting on hot pyre. Pineapple juice is not cutting it.

G: My shop is open. But no customers here yet! You can call me.

Me: I am BURNING HOT. The only time I seem to find a natural relief is when I am talking to you, talking about you or passing out in sleep!

The aches and pains continued. G remained in touch for the rest of the trip via phone calls. Julie sent photographs, video clips, information of G's whereabouts almost everyday. He was traveling from the the southern tip of India, Kanyakumari to the northern Himalayas in and around Himachal Pradesh. It seemed like he had wheels on his feet and wings on his shoulder blades. All I could hope for was his quick return so I could meet him.

3/3/2015

I wrote the following email to G trying to summarize in my head (at his request) as to what was it like before vs. what had changed now:

Had a very strange conversation with you today. Could make head nor tail of it...although that happens quite often...rarely is it that the entire conversation (between phone and text) escapes me.

It is interesting though that you brought up two words - Guru and Love - that in my personal opinion are the two most overused and abused words in Eastern and Western society. Reading and being around the spiritual melee for last so many years gave me a front row seat to watch how much these two words were used by people to exploit and extract what they wanted.

All these years - when you thought I was doing -time pass- contacting/calling you - I had to find for myself if your denouncement of both of those words were true for you or mere repetition of your old man's words.

Then I read the 'Goner' book and all this intellectual casing and pacing just wore me out completely. I said to hell with it - I can never really know one way or the other. If luck and destiny were on my side then good for me; if not - oh well - I have been willing to die for lesser reasons than that.

I learnt to trust you because you wouldn't give the same BS that every other spiritual salesman does, you negated consistently both the words Guru and Love.

So you see, you don't need to work too hard to convince me that there isn't love. On the contrary - if there is something like that that exists - it would be your challenge to prove that it is there.

As for all those songs and texts coming your way - some of it is to hold on to semblance of sanity and the rest of it can be chalked to endorphins (as you would say).

One thing is absolutely undeniable - you certainly have an effect on me and evoke a wide range of feelings/emotions.

Second thing - you have made other aspects of my life pale to insignificance. Things that I held as important in my life before became distractions that needed to be swatted away.

Been a wild ride so far....let's see how it goes down.

In retrospect, I was trying to describe something that was frankly unfathomable. I attempted but knew I failed miserably.

3/7/2015

I was feeling very restless through the day. It was Saturday. The pressure in solar plexus area was growing. I was lying around and resting the whole day. At about 7:30 PM I had one idli/sambhar which turned out to be a a very light dinner. Suddenly I felt that if there is anything I could do to numb and tire the physical and mental movement then I should. I was insanely hyper and dealing with pain without using any medication. I switched off all the lights and light a bright red candle in coffee table. Suddenly I felt very thirsty and started drinking warm water. At about 8:00 PM I played some music and started walking up and down the kitchen and family room area. I kept on drinking warm water and walking

tirelessly. Even if I willed or wanted to sit down and rest I was unable to. I was very fascinated where this energy was coming from. Clearly it seemed very different because the energy seemed inexhaustible. It seemed like every song I had heard from childhood kept playing over and over in her music system. The clock moved from 8 to 9 and 9 to 10 and 10 to 11 but it continued on. Must have had 14-16 glasses of warm water. The reddish pink candle glow continue to burn mimicking the inner burn that was happening fast and furious within me. When it was midnight I thought I would keel over in exhaustion. But quite the opposite happened. It seemed like my system was pervaded by an even more crazy and revved up energy! As waves upon waves of energy flooded within the feverish pacing stopped lending itself to some crazy fluid movements that somehow seemed to help the movement of energy in the body. Waves upon waves of energy rolled through my system and I felt every part of my body from the tip of my toenails to the tip of my hair was engulfed in this energy storm. At about midnight it felt like some dam burst within and washed away every thing that was me - body and mind. It did not even occur to me what severe stress my body was placed in or its consequences. There was additional pressure in my chest area but that did not seem to deter my system. It seemed as if the pleasure simply lived for that moment and whether the body survived it or not was not its concern. After about half hour of this, it hit its crescendo wherein the movements got stronger and wilder moving and circulating the energies up the body. Thought, mind and emotion took a backseat as the body seemed to know exactly what to do and when to do and how to do. I sank to the floor and bowed down as I accepted the grace. I shut off the music and just lied down on the floor completely passed out. I woke up a few hours later and got up gingerly in case my legs hurts. But everything worked just fine. I was very cold as the temperatures had dropped drastically in the house at night time. Shivering I walked up the stairs and went to bed. I wasn't sure what had happened the last few hours - I was like a rag doll being tossed around in a bad storm. A tiny doubt crept up in my mind...was that whole evening a waste? The doubt cleared itself by saying, " Was there even a choice?".

3/8/2015

I woke up the next morning and it seemed like all the pain and pressure had moved from the solar plexus area to my chest. There

was a bit of burn on the left side of the chest. Tears rolled down my cheeks in major disappointment. It seemed like I had just traded in one set of aches and pains and pressure for another one. There was no bliss, no joy! What was I expecting? That I would be overcome with tremendous feelings of love and beatitude? Well there was no love, no bliss, no joy, no contentment. Just pain and pressure and some overall tiredness. I stayed in bed most of Sunday as there was nothing much to be done. I was awestruck by the events of the night before...what happened there?

The pressure and pain also moved to the neck area. I was supposed to drive and give a family member a ride but I could not even turn my head. I was worried about how I was going to swing that. I asked G if I could take a pain killer but he told me to "Relax". Easier said than done! The pain did not abate at all. However it turned out by some stroke of luck the ride was arranged and I didn't have to get out at all.

When I talked to G that evening, I asked him if it seemed like I was always complaining on the phone where this is hurting or that is hurting...I was concerned whether I was boring him or being hypochondriacal. I told him that I only state my aches and pain if he specifically asked and I tried not to be whiny about it. G just told me not to worry about it and to not be so calculative! When I asked what he meant by that he just said, "No profit---no loss!!" Seeing my puzzled look he clarified that I shouldn't worry so much about his reactions and just say what I feel like. That I could handle and felt relieved.

3/16/2015

I had a strange day today. I woke up with the continued pain in the nape of my neck. The circumference of the pain area had expanded. It felt like somebody had gripped the back of my neck and was applying pressure. The front of the neck was completely fine. Felt good and headed to work. The pain started expanding to my left ear and it really hurt. I was still able to plough through work as my mood was really good.

At about 10:30 AM I saw the pic that Julie sent of G and titled it *Googoner*. Initially I thought it wasn't a great pic as it was a bit grainy and G looked like a sleepyhead. As I looked at the photo I felt an immediate pressure in my chest area. The midriff area

which had completely settled down for the last two weeks felt active and in pressure again. Suddenly I was overcome with pain and pressure in all the areas with shooting pains in the neck and left ear region. The right side of my face was ok. I lied down for 5 mins in the sofa in the Ladies' room but was starting to feel worse. I came back to my desk and was still able to do a little bit of work. However around Noon I gave up the valiant efforts because I was really crashing and decided I should go home and maybe lie down. Sometimes taking a nap takes the edge off the pain. Drove home in a lot of pain. Felt very nauseous on the drive. As soon as I reached home I collapsed on the sofa. I thought maybe I should set an alarm but had zero energy to do so. I was completely knocked out. I woke up about 35-40 minutes later to sound of loud rhythmic doorbell. Didn't understand why the doorbell sound had changed so drastically until I realized that it was really my own heartbeats. It was so quiet all around that the heartbeats sounded like loud gong noises. I got up and felt relatively pain free. Pressure in the chest was there but the midriff and pain in the neck area was gone. Felt a little pain in the right side of the face near my ear which wasn't there before but it was not very severe.

As I typed the message G, there was a natural flow from my minimally working brain...

I feel helplessly and hopelessly in love with you
Seems to matter not if you care for it or not
I am incapable of common sense, humility, cleverness
For I have fallen helplessly and hopeless in love with you!

I had to drive back to work for a meeting and felt very nauseous during the drive. I arrived at my desk and was very grateful that the scheduled meeting was cancelled. However I couldn't keep anything together and felt I was physically breaking up – don't know how else to really describe it. Just then G texted and asked me to call. I was on the phone with him for a few seconds as he had to cut the call short. But I felt a little better and started typing these notes which gave me an opportunity to gather my wits very gradually. G called back again and was on the phone a bit longer. He was saying something about some Yoga center people coming over, talked to them from 9 AM to 6 PM...seemed like random phrases just hitting me...felt nice to hear his voice and also felt like I was getting pieced back together. I felt so drained out but mentally still feeling good. I had no desire to do ANYTHING!!!

The clicking of the keyboard keys echoing in my ears seemed soothing. The keyboard didn't seem to care what I type or what makes sense...so no pressure really to make anything sensible to come out.

As I was typing this I felt sharp pain going up specific parts of my body right through my middle and up to my neck and then spreading to either side of my face - like literally cupping my face. Pain seemed to be very dulled and bearable. Despite the initial sharp, shooting pain, my stoned and euphoric mind seemed to dull it and make it bearable. Perhaps the system released some kind of chemical to handle the pain. It also made sense why G was very persistent in asking me to stay away from painkillers so that the system could release them naturally and on-demand. I was struck by the beauty of the inner-workings of a human body. Although mine was quite ordinary in every possible way, it didn't feel restricted from working in an extraordinarily orderly way. Best thing about it was that my lack of knowledge was certainly no deterrent. My sensitivity grew by leaps and bounds - I don't mean emotional sensitivity; it was of a different and systemic kind. My limited vocabulary doesn't allow me to express it the way it really was and is.

My friend invited me to stop by and have dinner. I had forgotten to eat lunch so was ravenous at dinnertime. I had some dhal soup and broccoli and bell pepper stir fry. It was a nice break. When I returned home I felt continued pain in my neck. I took a hot shower and hoped that it would take the edge off the pain but it didn't help much. Kept eating and munching non-stop. I seemed to be going through periods of not being able to eat at all to wanted to eat non-stop. The nature of my cravings had changed as well. I couldn't handle fried food or chips. Carrot sticks and mandarin oranges tasted heavenly. Olives sent me to gastronomic rapture.

I discovered today that I had accidentally recorded the talk from the Chicago trip. I heard them with great relish and it felt very nice. The casualness of the entire conversation just touched me to the core. Life could be so simple and sweet...how did we all manage to convolute and pollute it to such a degree. I guess you need to feel the breath of fresh air to know that it exists.

Between the severe pain and extreme thirst I could hardly sleep well. Since G was on the long flight from Mumbai to Newark no

texts/contact was possible. Funnily enough I had multiple dreams wherein I received text messages from G and the messages ranged from drink water, rest well to other random things. Within the dream I recall asking is this dream or am I receiving these texts for real...and of course the dream said it was real and I could read them on the phone screen with great clarity (which dreams sometimes don't give). When I woke up I realized it was all a dream but it didn't seem to matter. The contact seemed to give me joy...who cares how it came! The pain seemed to spread to my throat area and the thirst levels seemed more heightened. How much warm water can one person drink! Apparently a lot!!

CHAPTER 11

March Trip to New Jersey

3/19/2015

G flew back to New Jersey from India on March 17th/18th. I wasted no time in booking my ticket to meet him. It had been the longest 2 months since the Chicago trip in January and I was dying to see him. Suddenly my life seemed to be divided into two parts - pre-Chicago and post-Chicago. To say that my life currently was tumultuous is to put it very mildly. I was going to spend the next week with him and right now nothing seemed better than that.

3/21/2015

On the last day of his trip in Mumbai, G had met some folks from Isha Yoga group who grilled him for five hours. Later that day he had mentioned to me that he was 100% convinced that they couldn't get to the natural state with that kind of training. I asked him why was it so? Aren't there many methods to the same thing? It was clear to me that whatever practices they were doing it wasn't working, else they wouldn't be in front of him.

G's response was quite emphatic, "There is no way and there is no state!"

Me: Then what is it that Raja Yoga, Kriya Yoga, etc. propound?

G: Misery!!

Me: That's it? What about that whole *Autobiography of a Yogi* book?

G: Smoking pot! You can write a better one.

Me: Your conviction blows me away. Of course anything related to you blows me away these days!

G: You try to honestly write your story. Then others can decide what's what.

Me: Write my story? What? Why?

G: Everything!!! Be honest for once. By the way how are you feeling right now?

Me: Feeling awesome....totally besotted! Neck pain persists but it doesn't seem to matter! I seem to barely sleep much these days. Being awake has become extremely pleasurable.

Being in G's presence was like life itself was wearing rose tinted glasses. We travelled back and forth between New Jersey where he lived to Ansonia Building in New York. Julie and G fondly nicknamed the Ansonia apartment as "the office". When I asked them why they called it so, they told me that it was because they go there as often as they can and do nothing. It is really strange to hear G say he does nothing because there is never a still or dull moment around him. He is always busy buzzing around like a bee and his friends try to follow him wherever he goes and whenever it's possible. There is something inexplicably magnetic about him. I found myself to have as much will power as a metal paperclip in its attraction to a powerful magnet. I felt like Alice from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* who falls down the White Rabbit's hole beginning a trippy and psychedelic adventure in an absurd alternate universe. When I said this to G later, he said, "You ain't seen nothing yet!"

Wow - what else could be there?

3/22/2015

Today it was UG's death anniversary and quite a few friends stopped by. Many of them made trips down the memory lane and Lakshmi, made a sumptuous lunch. I was observing G closely. He was mostly quiet and affable. There was not a shred of "I miss UG" vibe about him. When I remarked on it he said, "I do not take UG's name in vain. Also living people around me - like all of you - are way more important than UG who has passed away. When he was alive, I would spend my last bottom dollar to fly wherever he was to meet him. But once he died, that movement came to a complete stop. Now if someone speaks ill about UG or says something nasty, it does not affect me at all. It is just their opinion and I don't feel I have to jump to defend UG or his name. If there

was anything to my interaction with him then it will show through in how I live. If not that is okay too.”

3/23/2015

G: I realize how little my choice is. I have to force my existential presence in social dynamics. Imagination can't replace perceptive!! But best of the worst lot if it helps to reduce conflict.

Me: Can you please elaborate on that?

G: Suppose I realize that something is bothering my mind but I am unable to stop thinking about it. The best thing would be if that entire thought pattern could be switched off, eliminating the source of the problem and making it go away. But that's not an easy thing to do. Something in our brain has already created a sentimental connection with that particular source problem and through our thinking pattern it keeps itself alive and I get upset. This is the play of the imagination.

It would be great if I have a switch that can turn my perceptive universe into such a dominant presence wherein everything I look at completely absorbs my attention and doesn't give any space in my brain to ponder over anything else. That is an idealization and not a workable solution. Suppose we use our imaginative faculty to replace the thought that bothers me to something that is more pleasant and my conditioned existence feels good because of it then I call it best of the worst lot. It is still in the field of imagination but at least it doesn't create a disturbance in me. What it does ultimately is that it reduces my conflicts and suffering and leaves me with more vital energy, positivity, and I feel less depressed as I am doing better. Although this is not an ideal situation as it still in the realm of imagination. However if the object of my preoccupation (of pleasant thoughts) turns out not to be so good then of course I am back in the same old shit.

Me: Right now I feel choicelessly focussed on you and I feel awesome.

G: Well if you feel that way and it works for you then you are very lucky!

Single powerful movement of life!! Breaking the barrier and impregnating to align the resonance!

3/26/2015

Me: (I was messaging G at crack of dawn in his house) Hi G.
Good Morning! Are you asleep?

G: No listening to sound. Feel good and strange.

Me: Why strange?

G: Never felt this way. Nobody looked at me the way you do!!
But then I forget.

Me: How do I look at you?

G: As if you see something that even I don't know. That's why
strange!

Me: That's not descriptive! Hopefully I am looking at you in a
good way.

G: You look thoroughly intoxicated!

Me: Have you ever cried so much that you feel that somehow you
rearranged something in your throat because there is a lump in it?

G: Where?

Me: In the throat - like you cannot breathe or talk or finish your
crying!

G: Who is that? YOU! That's why it is strange! So strange!!
You are totally exceptional. I don't know what you want from me,
I have nothing to give you!! You have everything!

Me: Please don't say that. You mean everything to me. You have
given me the world and you can take it away in a heartbeat when
you reject a phone call. Anyway what is going on with you? You
sound strange this morning.

G: Who is going to say? The one who doesn't know what to do
with you? Then like a child I have to do blah, blah, blah...I have
nothing that you don't have.

Me: Yesterday when I saw those words of Bulleh Shah in the picture frame (at friend's house) I felt those words were mine. Then you sang so many Tagore songs and translated them and I felt that those words were written for you. Not in a fantasy way but deep from my gut.

G: Every poem is yours. The pain of childbirth is similar to that when NATURE delivers! By staying around me you have also become headless! Bilkul Buddhu Buddha!

Well that made for one of the most headless conversations I had with him up until now.

3/27/2015

G: You should write your life story as honestly as possible without hurting others too much.

Me: Life story or just the last seven years?

G: You cannot write the last seven years without describing your foundation.

During this trip every time some pain or pressure started G gently nudged me to focus on what was congenial to me. I figured out how focusing on him somehow triggered the release of 'happy chemicals' that helped to deal with the pain. If I felt down and out he would provoke me to fight him so I good gather my wits and spirit again. He became whatever I needed him to be (needed not wanted) to give that much needed helping hand. Never did I take that for granted even for a minute.

3/28/2015

It was time to leave today. Early morning I sat in front of him and there was complete silence. I can't recall how long we sat there. Was I meditating, was I asleep, was I dosing...I couldn't tell. My eyes were glued shut and inside my body it seemed like there was major drama and theater going on. There was no pain or pressure or pleasure. Just a complete feeling of liveness, as if every nerve was dancing like the daffodils in Wordsworth poem.

Earlier in January of this year, G had asked me to read two books. One was Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and the other was Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali by Swami Hariharananda Aranya. He felt that maybe it could help me. I ordered them on Amazon and got them. However I found it impossible to read them. I would put them away and try again after couple of weeks and still couldn't read. I was highly functional at work and so it wasn't as if I didn't have a functioning brain. But when it came to reading anything spiritual or philosophical or someone's account of what happened or is happening to them; it felt as if the wiring in my brain had broken down. I was not trying to resist anything. As a matter of fact, I did give it an honest effort because G had asked me to read them. I found myself singularly incapable of doing so and the revulsion and revolt for it came from the pit of my stomach to my head. Finally I mentioned this to G during this trip and he said, "Don't bother with it. Perhaps your system doesn't need it." I told him whatever I needed to know from those books he could deliver it to me himself and he agreed.

Personally I think my body was already working overtime to get rid of the knowledge junk that I already possessed. It could not handle one more piece of information that it had to work extra hard later to eventually reject. Also I didn't want to color whatever was happening to me with someone else's words, descriptions and definitions. Although all language is borrowed, some things can be intuitive and innate in nature. I had lived a lifetime of being boxed in by nature, nurture, environment, society, etc. Finally something born in me wanted to rebel at the impositions especially self inflicted ones.

3/29/2015

I was up at 3 AM waiting to hear from G. During the wait my eyes, nostrils, throat all seemed aflame. I had slept well since my return yesterday. While I waited for G I started transcribing the text exchanges I had with G from about a year or so and must have dozed off.

Soon I heard my phone ping with G's message and my whole system got put back and buzzed to life.

G: Start writing! It's time for you to write.

Me: Well I was transcribing our text messages. I don't wish to write something which falsifies me or the situation I am in. Would rather rely on the active text exchange between us to get a proper story.

G: Anything you write will be prasad for people.

Me: Are you being sarcastic?

G: Nope. For real.

Me: I really don't know where to start. They are all stories upon stories. Who would want to read any of it? My own backstory is beginning to relevance for me; then why would it interest anyone else?

G: Autobiography of an ordinary housewife! Who happened to hit something rare!

Me: Rare - yes! But I don't even when and how it hit. I was and am so preoccupied with you. I will not exchange this for anything on this planet!

G: Well then what steps you to express the truth?

Me: Back in 2009 when I called you crying I almost had a nervous breakdown. I took two months unpaid leave at work based on your advice. Woke up each morning and did nothing all day long.

G: After you cried you were in my thoughts big time! Every time I took a tough stance or didn't pick up the phone call I was deliberately pushing you to see the obvious! Something was happening inside and the demand was increasing but you were the barrier!

Me: Yes. I was desperate. Had a rough time figuring out where to turn.

G: Well it was nice to talk you during this trip and it was a treat to have you around. It is not easy to find where and when the transition occurred. You are open to me like no one!!

Me: You have a rare gift to melt a stone! You can chalk it to nature or whatever - doesn't matter. It still operates through you.

G: If there is anything I have, then it is to be a conduit of nature for human beings like you who have naturally blossomed

Me: You know something - When my mind wanders to some old irrelevant conditioned thought - I get such a strong kick in my solar plexus exactly like a baby gives in a womb. I literally have to jump out of that thought pattern and then the mind gets auto directed to you. Ever heard of something like that? It floors me each time!

G: Your demand for things have transformed into beautiful feelings for me. There must be something powerful in them to enact those physical movements! Like the arousal for transmission of life!

Little later:

Me: While I was transcribing all the texts I realized I was going blah blah blah inexhaustibly. You were right there fine tuning to the perfect calibration. New respect for you along with trust and love! You are really racking it up! Total surrender!

G: You are the new blood on the block, you have to be equipped you know. First you have to understand the camouflage of the conman in the market place! You need real courage for that. If you have seen a real one you can never be afraid of the fake.

Me: Well now I see why you used to call me gullible. I used to fall for all the conmen.

G: Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "If you are simple and honest then even if you are misguided, nature puts you back where you are destined to find the real!" So even if you were gullible, there is simplicity and honesty.

Little later:

Me: Just wanted to say that each time another small facet of you unravels it feels like I am falling in love all over again...just a little deeper.

G: All these movements should culminate into something that even you will not believe.

Me: I feel great now. Hard to see where all it will go. I have to admit I do have fear of pain though - physical pain.

G: It's good not to know. One cannot know the future by just discovering new landscape of life.

3/30/2015

Me: Good Morning. How are you? Woke up late today.

G: I also slept longer than usual. Aap mere ek beheterin dost hain. (You are one of my very good friends.) Thank you for everything!

Me: Why are you thanking me? It is the other way round.

I took cat naps couple of times at work before lunch and a few more times after. It seemed like sleep welcomed me at every corner. G encouraged me to sleep every chance I got. In between I would squeeze in a lot of texts to G to which he responded as well.

G: What do you want dear?

Me: To be with you. All this typing nonsense is just for that.

G: Then it will happen as long as your well being is addressed in that meeting.

Me: My right ear is having killing pain and pressure. How can every part hurt like this? Digestive system is also out of whack

G: Don't let cold air bother it. Heat up your car. You have to eat very light food.

Me: You said you were done in 42 days. I know each one is different but this feels like lot more than 42!

G: No I wasn't done. Even now I have nightmarish pains.

Me: Good Lord! Why do you say you won't trade it for anything?

G: I wanted absolute freedom from the myth that people are so afraid of and worried about the future!!

Me: What a steep price to pay!