

## **Introduction:**

Two stories are woven together. Two stories encompassing three lives.

R's tale is told in this san-serif script. (one life time)

S and K's (I's) story is in this serif type-face. (two consecutive lives)

# **R & S & I**

I'm sorry, my Love, I don't clearly remember you. It's the pain that predominates, and the unspeakable horror. I can't quite follow the threads of love though I know they are still there, through all this long time. I feel it in some deep familiar recess of my heart, whenever we are together. But when I look into your eyes, I see only a shadow reflected there – shadows and half-veiled memories. What I really remember however, all of it in stark detail, is the sadness, and the terror, and the death.

The sword of war cut us apart and asunder. Violent, insanely cruel events tore our lives and dreams to shreds. The seamless web of unfolding karma was snarled and knotted in clots of hideous torture, unspeakable agony, and fathomless despair. The machinations of war pulverized our hopes and ground my body to black blood and dust. There was no moment for even 'good-bye.' My family and I were taken away, and later, far, far away and beyond caring, I died a humiliating, pitiful death in the concentration camp with hundreds of thousands of others.

I shall never see Selma again. She died in Auschwitz in the same gas chamber in which three weeks earlier, her father and little brother were murdered. But her eyes I shall always see before me. Selma's eyes have accompanied me ever since I was sixteen. Why start with what I would like most to forget? It continues to come back when I try to find a way into life again. So many, many things have happened since that horrific day in 1942.

... Very softly I enter, you do not notice my presence yet. My eyes slowly glide over you. How I would love to kiss you... Still it is quiet, then you sense the caress of my eyes. You look up, you see me standing there. A smile begins to move over your face. You are glad I am here. We look deep into each other's eyes, penetrate into each other's soul. Your face radiates. Now you can forget all your sorrow. My hands softly embrace your tender cheeks and lovingly our lips meet.

We were young, so long, long ago. We were childhood friends. Were we, perhaps? No, never lovers. But, oh, we yearned, adolescent, circumspect, honorable. I gladly remember the bittersweet nobility of our being together and the high, dignified, passion that we felt. Did we even kiss? We did hold hands. We were sweet and innocent, but the world was full of unsettling, dangerous things.

We had been wrenched away while only adolescent. The deepest desires were just stirring and our innate modesty bounded our behavior within idealized, almost stylized forms. The Jewish culture held us tightly in prescribed patterns and ancient traditions. We were too young to consider marriage, but the mere thought of it and of life together fired our devotion, and the seed was planted in the fertile soil of our innocent imaginations. We lived and dreamed then, in a world of richest possibilities. Everything lay before us: pleasure, joy, victory, fulfillment of our secret heart's desires. We knew life would bring sorrow and pain as well, but we trusted that love would gild it all, ease the pain, be a source of always renewing vitality, and so much more. We were very young and in love, and our souls were infinitely compatible.

Hand in hand we sit on the mattress, the last piece of furniture left. The room has a door that opens directly onto the street; it is the only house built that way. Every time I pass this house now, I feel that same throbbing pain in my heart. In this room, I looked into eyes so deep, so warm, so overwhelmingly beautiful, I looked into the depths of a soul. I still see before me the worn-out carpet and the old mattress on which we sat. Her voice had a deep warmth, not really matching that of a girl of barely sixteen. I still can recall the smell of her skin. Even now I can feel how her lovely face came to rest in my hands. How cruelly everything had to end. "I am Selma", that's how you introduced yourself and with these words everything started.

Come sit next to me, as close as possible. In this way we can sit for ages and forget everything. Only our two souls exist. Two and yet one, in spite of everything. Time comes to a standstill, we do not even notice it. We are one another and everything is possible. We live just for each other now. Time is at a standstill. Then the moment comes I have to part. It is not goodbye, before you know I shall be back.

I had a job as so many others had in the Jewish community, to avoid deportation to Poland. We did not know yet how the system had been planned by the Nazis. You asked me to help you because you had the responsibility for your little brother and your father; like many others, you did not know what to do and I had already seen so many thousands during the last several months on their way to the death camps. The very moment I saw you, I knew I had met the woman of my life.

We saw each other daily. Every evening I could free myself from work, I came to you. I had a permit which allowed me to be on the street after eight p.m., you were imprisoned like all Jews every evening and every night in your home. When I returned to my parents around eleven pm, they had already gone to bed hours ago and I had to heat up my own meal. Everything I experienced during the day, I had to digest alone.

Every night around two a.m., the Nazis arranged the transportation to the death camps of their Jewish catch out of the theater, in which they had assembled their prisoners. During the night there was a curfew for the whole city, so they had no onlookers to observe their diabolical deeds. Twice daily I brought warm meals to the theater. Then I had to wait on the theater balcony until the food containers were empty. From this balcony I could follow what was happening in the stalls below. I remember cabaret performances, given by members of the famous Nelson Cabaret and the Cabaret of Willy Rosen. These artists were also imprisoned in the theater and tried to postpone transportation to the death camps by giving performances. The absurdity of this ridiculous situation brought us to laughter on a number of occasions. Grim humor in the real sense. These men and women were literally playing for their lives. The performances lasted several hours, no one was in a hurry; everybody welcomed the distraction. The audience was not very demanding, the applause always thunderous...

Because they inserted, unexpectedly, in the middle of the day, an extra transportation to the death camps. I had to wait on the balcony and was not allowed to leave before the convoy had left. And so I had to witness as a sixteen year old, everything which was enacted down below.

One by one the names of those who were to be transported were called out. Every time a name was called, someone got up and slowly slipped towards the aisle, where they had to assemble until the convoy was complete. Every time a name is being called, a shudder weaves through the hall. Everyone hopes his or her name will not be called, that this time fate will pass. But it hits, without mercy, time after time.

From above I can see how at the calling of a name someone gets up, says adieu to those around and shifts out of the row like a contagious one, marked, untouchable. Now and then you hear crying, but usually you can hear a pin drop. Anxious, uneasy silence can be felt, interrupted only by the calling of names. It takes hours, for the Nazis want to see that upon the calling of a name, a reaction follows and that the one who has been called, takes up his position in the aisle. Suddenly there is a commotion down below. I cannot make out clearly what actually is happening, but in the middle of the hall I see a cluster of people. After a while this cluster

untangles again; I do not understand what has happened. Nevertheless a strange tension can be felt.

The aisle is now crowded with people; the rows are half empty. At last it seems all finished. No names are being called anymore; a certain acceptance can be felt and the German command is heard: "March." And there the persons selected to be slaughtered go. The aisle is almost empty now. A heartbreaking scream fills the whole hall and in the following silence, no one moves. Again the stiff command: "March, quick!" Then there is a new commotion and out of a cluster of people, a woman is emerging, who, crying and shrieking, fights her way across the rows towards the aisle. In the aisle, a man and two children are still standing. A boy of about ten and a girl of about eight. To them the woman is heading. This is something which the Nazi cannot allow – panic makes it impossible for them to carry out things according to plan. They command silence. The woman does not even notice. The command is repeated. The woman reaches the aisle and finally everything is back to normal. The mother is able to join her husband and children, and the error in the administration is solved.

A sharp 'bang' is heard and the woman falls backwards on the floor. The distance between the woman and her family is only a few yards. Then a shouting German commands, "Anyone who moves an inch or comes near the woman will also be shot." Now everything becomes clear. The Nazi claim to be humane. A pregnant woman needs not to be put onto the convoy. That is the reason why the family was separated. A heavily pregnant woman should not be put into a freight train – such an action might endanger both mother and child.

I am unable to describe what happened during the following half hour for the crying, dying woman. We see now she is pregnant and that the bullet has penetrated right through her belly. The husband and the two children are paralyzed a few yards away. Then there is a deathly silence. Twenty minutes later, the woman was dead. A blanket was put over her. The husband and children were lead out of the hall and the convoy left. I got permission to leave and went out.

Much later, I was confronted again with this past event. That the Beatles would bring back this tragedy, which had been suppressed in my memory for over twenty years, I could never have imagined. You cannot always be prepared for the fact that the past will knock again. Knocking is an understatement. Slamming it in with a sledgehammer is perhaps more realistic.

In the mean-time, my friend, all through and in-between, it was you and I. You and I and the comfort of our lives together, childhood now maturing into adolescence.

We teetered on the verge of life together. Thank God, you were not with me, when they came. It was only me and my family they found. We were torn apart, everything scattered to the ill winds. I don't know where my father and brother went. I never heard. Probably, on the trains right away.

But I, I was beautiful, young, unspoiled. Those tender qualities ignited the repulsive, twisted passion of many of the S.S. They hated that innocence and vulnerability, and wanted to possess it, only to destroy it. And they did. Even now, so many years later, I sometimes still, in making love, see legs straddling my face, or feel the stigmata on the front of my body, between my breasts, where the buttons pressed and smashed against me, bruising my naked flesh, gouging my skin till it bled. Those ghosts of the past, troop in their hob-nail boots through my present life and love. It was a searing, agonizing initiation into love; no! not love! into sex, into shame, and guilt. I was a pawn in the bizarre psychology of the black arts of twisted passion, repulsion, and death. My body was the gateway to an unspeakably insane world of diabolical conflict. They, desiring and hating, groping for domination and release, pounded their rage and my body into oblivion.

My beauty was marred; the numinous, luminosity of my pubescent body soon bruised, crushed, defiled. How long did I lay naked on the floor in that filthy room? Forever. And that is where you saw me. You, my love, who I can hardly bear to remember; were forced to carry trays of food to those stupid, brutal, orgiastic hordes, as well as to the prisoners – your friends and fellow Jews. You saw me there, lying in a pool of blood and semen; wounded, humiliated. You saw me there for a fleeting moment, an eternity of pain. I can't, I won't remember your eyes. I had stopped seeing long before. It was our last glimpse of one another for oh, so, so, long.

I was herded onto the trains with how many thousands of others, destination termination. For me, however, the inhuman conditions in the boxcar was almost a relief, I was left alone. Everything had been wrenched away. Only a shell was left, and that shell did not, does not remember the train, the camps, the insanity of the so-called life there.

Even at a distance I saw that things had gone wrong. The doors securely sealed and locked by the Nazis. Selma, her father and little brother taken. I could not sleep that night. The next morning I arrived earlier than usual at my job, to go as soon as possible with my containers of food to the theater. Long before noon I arrived there. I asked someone from the Jewish council to inform Selma, her father or her brother that I was in the theater. Selma knew I was coming every day to the theater and I was certain she would be on the look-out for me. But I did not see her. When I had to leave I was told that her father and brother were on the list of the people that had

been transported to the gas chamber that same night. Selma was not mentioned on the list and therefore she still had to be in the theater.

That evening when I came again to bring the food, I was in a state of utmost tension. Why wasn't she looking for me? I was certain she knew I would be on the balcony. She was aware we would not be able to meet, but at least it would be possible to see one another. But again, that same evening I could not find her. I simply did not understand and that evening I asked and also the next day, if she had been put on a convoy. They assured me that she still had to be there, as she was mentioned on the listing of people that still remained in the theater. Wherever I looked and asked, I could not find her. Not the next day, nor the third day or any of the following days. I became desperate and did not know what to do. She was in the theater and had to know that I would be on the lookout for her. For seventeen days I looked for her but could not find any trace of her.

Then on the evening of the eighteenth day I looked straight into her eyes as I entered with the food containers. Those eyes, that expression I will never be able to forget. That gaze is penetrating through everything ever since. Eyes filled with endless sorrow, eyes begging to be forgiven. She lay naked in the sentry room of the Nazi guards. We looked into each other's eyes for only a fraction of a second. In this one moment our two souls flowed into each other. In this same moment our world got lost. She was beautiful and young and wanted to live. She had tried to prolong her stay in Amsterdam. She had let her father and little brother go and wanted to say one more time that she loved me. In this way!!

What must have gone through her soul, she who knew that she was lost and none the less – even for one moment – before the end should come, wanted to see me. That night her willpower broke. That same night she was put on the convoy to the gas chambers in Auschwitz, where she was gassed a few days later. That night something broke in me. I have not even been aware of it. I had to continue to live. I existed, but I did not live. I fell headlong into a deep dark hole...

But would you like to know what I do remember? I remember the chamber, the showers. I remember so many of us, all pitifully scrawny and naked, queued up and pushed into that filthy white room. I wondered why it was so dry. I remember the acrid smell, and the fear. Suddenly all the skin-and-bones bodies were dancing grotesquely, like puppets in a hurricane. I was twisted, contorted – hit with the force of a thousand tanks. My body bent backwards, farther and farther, the vertebrae cracking, then snapping, crushed in the lethal grip of cyanide convulsions. With an agonized cry, muffled in the stifling room, my soul, along with so many others, jerked loose from the mangled body, and jostled its way to a ceiling corner of the hideous room. The

grotesque scene below wrenched an involuntary sob, as the naked bodies twitched and writhed in a sea of scrawny arms and legs, teeth shattering, blood gushing as some hit the tiled floor. The horror was palpable and the souls pressing near me screamed soundlessly, “oh god, oh god, oh my god,” eyes riveted on the insane dance below. We watched for eternity – time stopping as our bodies slowed and stopped. But the terror went on. Like a hungry tiger, the fear circled round us, hedging our souls in, snarling and gloating. Paralyzed, trapped, my soul huddled in the upper corner while down on the floor, my body lay beneath a pile of corpses. Frozen, torn, shredded with fear, and sorrow, and helpless indignation, I waited, like a fly in a web, for the real end to come – waited, hovering, for total annihilation. Do I remember this from being inside that broken body? Or had I already let go and crossed over?

When exactly did I die? I never knew, because the pain didn't stop. On the other side confusion and terror still reigned. Usually, the rainbow bridge or the tunnel of light is the gateway of the journey to the moon, the planets and ultimately the stars – before the soul turns again to earth and reincarnation. Death by cyanide, like atomic annihilation, destroys the etheric as well as the physical body. There is no unrolling flashback of the life just left, no review, no chance to learn, no opportunity to perceive the working of karma. The soul is stripped of all vestiges of existence.

My fear and anguish carried me into the void – a lost whisper among the cavernous vaults of eternity. As they shoveled out the bodies and cleaned up the mess, in the upper reaches, a light began to dawn. Gentle, unseen hands cupped my face and turned it toward the light. I felt a warmth and began to weep and knew that I would cry forever. I was guided upwards, borne by living light, till reaching a place of warm luminescence, I was laid in a pink cloud, my soul still shaking and shuddering. Release from the grip of terror was long and slow, my soul struggling with the trauma and pain that were etched deep inside. I could not let go, nor would they release me. I and so many others – millions, really – were stuck in this place of fear, sorrow and agony. Our etheric bodies had been damaged: we were broken souls. We could not let it all go and dissolve nicely like those who have died a normal death.

Usually, when the soul separates from the body at death, it takes the astral body – full of emotion – and the etheric memory body with it. It is not the “soul” really, it is the true higher Ego/I – the self conscious spark of divinity that has lived in the body the whole lifetime, that is the reincarnating principle. The physical body remains on earth, subject to gravity, entropy and decomposition into the mineral elements. Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, the body returns from whence it came.

The next part of a human body to return to its vibratory source is the etheric body – the vital life force body. The etheric world is, in contrast to the physical material world, a dimension of levity and expansion, of growth and proliferation. The etheric

forces of the newly deceased, freed from their former employment in metabolism, cell regeneration and running the autonomic nervous system to orchestrate the processes of life in the inanimate physical body, now begin to return to their own world, unencumbered by physicality. Normally, the individual ether body expands out into the etheric field around the earth. As it moves out smoothly from the confines of the singular human entity toward unity with the great etheric sheath of the earth, all the memories are imprinted on the astral body so that nothing is lost or forgotten, and everything can be resolved through the transformation of the feelings in kamaloka and out into the world of the planets and stars.

But, my soul was frayed. The etheric threads of my karmic memory were eaten through by wicked torture and cyanide poisoning. My etheric body hung in shreds and tatters, flapping in the winds of war as I struggled up into the light. It didn't expand in joyful reunion with Mother Earth's etheric body, but fell in leaden chunks at my feet. Only bits and pieces of my life review were written in broken sentences into my traumatized astral body. I couldn't move on. I had nothing left of me to work with.

If things had been different (but they weren't) and I had died in any way but through cyanide, I would have been able to journey into the many realms of the spiritual worlds of death, resolving my emotions in kamaloka or purgatory, and then journeying out through the planetary spheres. In each planet, one distills the lessons from the past life, appropriate to the energy of the specific planet. Each planet guides and nurtures particular lessons and understandings; Venus, love or hate, Mercury, intelligence or stupidity, Mars, courage or cowardice, anger or acceptance. But I couldn't go. I had nothing left to resolve. My life lay in broken, unusable pieces. So I stayed right there, near the threshold. There were million of us from the concentrations camps. A little later hundreds of thousands came from Hiroshima and Nagasaki because atomic annihilation also crumbles the etheric body. The angels cared for us as best they could. They had never seen this before either, so they just tried to soothe the many needy souls. There were warm baths, healing rainbow colors, and a gentle hum that, over time, penetrated deep into the most wounded places.

So, I waited at the bus stop to re-incarnation with a whole bunch of others. We didn't have much time to plan the next life, but would have to try to put the pieces together on the run – thinking on our feet in the midst of the next life. Karma wouldn't play out in exactly the same way as before and we might have a bit more freedom and leeway in what we could become, what we could do. Of course, that means also more responsibility too, but then, I/we didn't really have a choice. I am who I am: I got what I got. A lot of the baby boomers after the war made a very quick turnaround up there – only a couple of years, rather than the usual 50 to 100 years or so, which is as long as it usually takes to resolve one lifetime and prepare for the next.



I was one of those coming down the incarnation pike who still had vestiges of the last life clinging to me and not a really clear destiny path. I was born again, a little girl with cracks between the worlds and lives, so angels and storm troopers could walk at will into memory, dreams and reflections.

But was it any easier for you to go on living after you went into hiding? You struggled alone in your hidden closet, eating from the dog dish so the children of the woman kind enough to hide you would not suspect. The narrow little 5x9 space the only safety in a world gone mad. You hid from the Nazis and the light of day, living with your mangled, bleeding dreams, swallowed by despair which haunted and halted your breath, till like eyes shut tight against the unaccustomed glare of sunlight, your senses: sight, taste, hearing, touch, smell, the sense of life, sense of self, sense of trust, sense of love, were only bloody stumps of fingers tentatively touching reality. Your soul – a bottomless indigo reservoir of sorrow. But you ultimately found a wounded peace and the will to live on, anyway. And in the end, you manfully came out to play your appointed part in the liberation of our country, where your fears and nightmares could be lived in three dimensions and the war-torn light of day.

It is night. Great is my restlessness. Feelings of sorrow, impotence, despair, loneliness, and fear block my thinking. A way out I do not see. As cold as a stone am I. The ground on which I stood taken away. Selma gone. My imagination fails to understand what actually has happened. In total despair I walk up and down in my hiding place. I am more depressed than ever before. My thoughts keep turning around in circles. If only I could find a way out! Exhausted and worn out, I lay down on the bed, too weary to think. Even crying is impossible. Then I glide into a strange world. Around me it is warm. Astonished I see that there is light all around me. What I see I cannot fully remember. I do know that after the infinite feelings of sorrow and fear, suddenly it was light and warm and everything was radiant. It lasted for hours! All around, a world of color. It was pleasant and warm. Not static. It moved, it pulsed.

Warm is the light, eternal the space. Around me many colors, red and yellow, behind me darkness. In this space I am weightless, without any need. Inconceivable peace. I float. I float far away in this endlessness, hardly perceptible. Then I completely permeate this eternity. From the darkness I continue to be driven away.

The space pulsates, everything moves, comes nearer, embraces me. I am fully surrounded. Then I am far away, unimaginable small in this eternity.

The warmth pulsates, the rhythm is calming.

Eternal the warmth,            Eternal the peace,            Eternal the security.

The pulsating continues, becomes essence. The light pulsates right through me, radiating red, yellow, then darker. Unbelievable nuances the pulsating light shows, colours unknown to me.

All is warmth, All is peace, All is security.

It is eternity concealed in form. The pulsating space is peace. I become eternal.

I am eternal.

I am.

I am I.

I am reborn.

When I woke up I had received the strength to master loneliness for years to come. It has comforted me ever since. I was seventeen. Ah, but the past returns.

In the train she was sitting opposite me, pregnant, with a lovely rounded belly. I could not keep my eyes off her. I did not know her, but I had an immensely strong impulse to place my hands on her belly. To force myself to behave, I sat on my hands. It did cost me the greatest effort to resist. At the very first stop I got out. I had to wait several hours before the next train would call at this station, but I preferred this, than to go through that memory hell again. I had been in a similar situation previously. I had passed an unknown pregnant woman in the street and I simply had to touch her rounded belly. My friend knew this aberration of mine and said, "Let him be, he does no harm".

Via the Beatles I was confronted again with the murder in the Jewish Theatre. The hubbub was overwhelming, the shouting deafening! We were pressed on top of each other. The pressure from the rear became unbearable; it was almost impossible to breathe. I got stuck and panicked. The wardens pulled me over the fence and I took to flight. The Beatles performed and I, who had organized in all, I could not cope with it and fled. This performance was the last of a four-day tour of Holland. Amsterdam was topsy-turvy. Over one hundred-thousand people on the move; the traffic came to a standstill and was totally disrupted. On the occasions of the visits of Eisenhower, Churchill and De Gaulle the police had less to arrange than with these four English boys. My last conference with the police ended at 5am. At 7am I was again in the hotel where the Beatles were staying. The moment the boat trip through the Amsterdam canals should have started, the streets were blocked with people, you could have walked on their heads, but the Beatles were not there. They were still asleep.

Half an hour late the boat trip started, a trip which never has had its equal. The newspaper headlines read: "Worse than the French Revolution"

and "Fortunately, they are gone". I had every reason to be satisfied. I had started all this without having the slightest idea of how much could have gone out of control, what misery could have befallen me, if even the smallest thing had gone wrong. Possibilities by the dozen ... a man jumping from a bridge and barely missed crashing his head between the top of the boat and the side of the bridge. People diving into the canal, trying to climb into the boat, escaping by mere luck the whirling propeller. The boat upon arrival being boarded by over one hundred crazy fans, almost sinking it by their sheer weight. The top structure totally collapsed, but there was only material damage. In the newspapers: "Beatle Circus through Amsterdam".

How all this had started, still sounds like a fairy-tale. A few years after World War II, I continued my technical education, training in England at a radio-factory, then at the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) and after that at a record-company. While at this last company I lived at the home of a Mr. Stern, one of their staff employees. During the war, the Sterns had been bombed out and evacuated eight times. That clearly could be noticed on their furniture and crockery. Not one part of it fitted the other. The meager remains of what once had been a beautiful trousseau was badly damaged – not one plate without a crack or chip, not one cup with a handle. The way they received me and cared for me was beyond compare: I had a lovely time. While I worked at the radio-factory, I saw that they made plastics. They produced among other things, a complete crockery set of plastic. Such a set, I had shipped to the Sterns. I had given some radio talks for the BBC and the money I earned, I used for this present. I was not around at the arrival of my gift, but from what I heard later it must have been an unbelievable success. A truck delivered a crate of over 27 cubic feet; it could not enter the house, so the crate was opened on the street. Approximately ten different families received parts of the contents. It was amazing how much came out of this crate. The Sterns did not know how to thank me, since in the meantime I had left for Holland.

I had forgotten this matter completely, when twelve years later I had to be in London for a meeting with the record-company for which I had just started to work. I was totally surprised when I was received by the same Mr. Stern, who had climbed the corporate ladder and now was V.P. of Export. He was delighted to see me and indicated that at last he would be able to do something in return. He would see to it that The Beatles would come to Holland. "The Beatles? Never heard of them." I was only interested in classical music and never had had an open ear for pop. Stern had to convince me that it was really something good, but I had little trust in it.

At my home office, our staff was delighted and the contract was signed. I lost track of the matter because the visit of The Beatles was postponed time after time and in the meantime our company had merged

with another company, who managed it. I had nothing to do with it anymore. One day Stern called from London and informed me of the now definite date of the visit. The Beatles had become world famous in the meantime and were not extremely eager to visit Holland, but a contract was a contract. I felt obliged towards Stern to ask the new management what they had prepared for this coming event. I was flabbergasted to hear that they were not willing to spend a dime. They said they had spent already heaps of money with the acquisition of the company and refused to invest any further.

I did not want to let Stern down and so suggested in the end, to finance their visit on my own account, on the condition that I would receive a small percentage of the sale of the records sold within 6 months. They agreed – all the risks for me and the probability that I would receive a reasonable amount looked nil. Like me, they could not presume that it would become a world success. At the end of the year they had to pay me an amount surpassing my annual income.

I had every reason to look back on an unparalleled success, but instead I was crying bitterly because of undigested grief. The roar and cries had carried me back to the cabaret performance in 1942 at the Jewish Theatre, which had been interrupted by the Nazis.

Dear God, now, almost 60 years later, let us stop this hurtful reality – this frayed and blood-stained replay of horror, looping round and round in our subconsciouses; triggered by every little pain and every little joy, because the trauma was so intense that it crystallized into a wall around each of us, locking us in and blocking our ways out. We have both been smashing our heads against this invisible barrier, trying to be “normal”; heroically and foolishly trying to live like others seem to be able to do. It has taken us many years to reach the melting point of our glass prison. This life has had to soften us and strengthen us, to make ready to receive and accept what was once unthinkable.

Life is so fragile, the thread of reality too tenuous. There are cracks between the worlds that we fall into. Time and space collide and we are pressed and broken in the interstices. Yet, we live on as best we can from one amazing experience to the next. Consciousness binds the non-sequeters, or all is lost. Can we choose our reality? There are so many options. Which way shall we go? How would we like it to be?

Lying with Robbert, I entered the dreamtime of parallel worlds. Sixty years ago we were brutally cut off from our mutual destiny, and for all those years, we have been grieving the loss, and yearning for the fulfillment of the promises our souls had exchanged. But when death and disaster shorten life, human beings can only acquiesce.

So we did. Still we wept, still we called to one another through the worlds, through time and space. Until finally, secure in one another's arms, entwined like children on the little bed, we dreamed the life we never had a chance to live.

Intimations materialized in thin air above us when we first met those 16 years ago. The attraction knocked us both off our feet. What does one make of such feelings, in our society, our so-called culture? There was no place for my premonitions, my flashbacks, my dreams; no words to say what I really felt and thought I meant. So as good people, we followed the prescribed behaviors, ignoring the calls from beyond our respectful lives. Until finally, destiny allowed us to have our moment – our tiny, little opportunity, that we had been preparing for all of our lives. We both know, and there is no denying it now.

So lying in R's arms we dreamed the life we never had the chance to live, and it was beautiful. We created everything we had ever wanted; wake-dreamed in the most brilliant color and the softest air, saturated in gorgeous feelings and accompanied by the exquisite, elusive harmony of what I can only call the cosmic wind; the music of the spheres.

We were young and innocent together, and grew up adoring one another. As we matured our love also ripened, and our first sexual time together was in a sun filled meadow, beautifully warm and golden as we sat on the picnic blanket in the dappled shade of a graceful birch tree, talking and laughing, nuzzling, completely at ease and reveling in one another's body and being. Kissing opened our hearts and began the exquisite, long slow, exploration of our bodies. You were so strong and trim. The luster of your virile body rivaled the sun as we undressed one another in rapturous delight. The marvel of creation was for our sacred pleasure alone, and as you kissed my nubile breast, a tear hung a moment on your lashes. I caressed your manhood with my cheek and as the rites of adoration gave way to infinite desire, I lay back and you poised above me. So gently and so passionately you entered me, and feeling a responding rush, I pulled you inexorably into me, through my maidenhood and into the blood-red reaches of the flaming center of my being. We didn't even move for the longest time, and when you did, ripples of delight spread through me, undulating through my body and out into time and space, off into the past and far into the future. Our souls were melted together by the immense purity of our passionate embrace. It swallowed our individualities into the fusion of primal oneness, and we knew it, even as we dissolved in blinding light and rhythm beyond our simple selves. And when we lay transfixed and transformed, we knew: "This is for forever."

And then the panorama of our lives began to flow more quickly. We married, amidst much joy and ceremony. The Huppa was carried by your cousin and my

brother. We had three children and discovered Anthroposophy and the Waldorf schools. I became a teacher and you were in the three-fold social financial work. We traveled to England especially, teaching and lecturing, and helped found schools on all continents. Finally, we are in America, retired, which means writing, reading, lecturing and enjoying life. We dote upon our grandchildren. I hope that forever may really be.

But our lives are distinctly separate now. You are married, (yet again) and feel this time, to be faithful to the one who pulled you back from the brink of despair. And gratitude is good. And I have been a single mother for these past thirteen years, and have done a good job, as my three daughters are healthy, reasonably happy and adjusted and beginning to move out into the world, following their own destinies. I have three exs long past. And now this has happened. We have lain in one another arms. And what we experienced is confirmation to me and awakening to you, and now we both know without a doubt. The past is known – the real and the ‘dreamed’ – the present is hovering and what awaits?

I was beautiful once. Even now men still kiss my hand, but not on account of my looks. Quite a few years have passed since the knowledge of our ties made hesitant overture in my mind, and being not exactly free or prepared, I let the senses sweep any encroaching awareness away. But now you see, time is working in my favor. I’ve begun to wear my glasses regularly, my hearing isn’t what it was and smell and taste are fading. But the sense of touch is alive and fabulously well, maybe even more so than before; and that has caused the problem. Our touching created gaping cracks in my hitherto seamless and inviolable world. The earlier intrusions had long been staunch and I have lived in a carefully circumscribed balance for years. And now once again, I am in pieces. I must put myself together, yet another time, and once again as always, without you. In the past you were absent by unconsciousness; now by design. But all I want is time. Maybe nothing more. Just time in your arms and presence, or walking perfectly in time. Any togetherness state at all is perfect for dreaming what could have happened, what may come, or for understanding what really is.

Without the dream reality of what might have been, how can I know who I am? New yearnings are heaped on the old fractured desires. The choices are too vast, sometimes too painful, and always overwhelming. Destiny can, yes it can, be rolled back, healed, fixed, adjusted, and integrated; and I and you, if you like, can be made whole. I do the best with what I have, but in light of what we could do/be/have/choose, I feel cheated and abandoned. “Very well, I shall do it myself!” said the Little Red Hen, (one of my primary archetypes) and if that is the only option, then of course I will.

Ok, so I’ve gone over the edge of silliness. But does a partner exist like me as I exist, or am I that different, that odd, that mismatched? Will anyone? Will you dear

come with me on these journeys into the past probable/ future potential? As it is right now, I feel like a lone sock in the Laundromat of life.

Although K had been out of the country for almost a year, R had waited, slowly succumbing to cancer. Rallying and in remission, then slipping down again, to be consumed by pain and the hard work of re-evaluating a whole long difficult life, facing remorse, forgiving, and letting go. It's easy to forgive others when glimpses are granted into motive and the wounds that hinder another human being. Perception of other's conundrums is more likely than really seeing one's own dysfunction. We cannot turn our clear gaze inwards so readily. Our own shadow darkens the path. The death process for R was a quiet heroic struggle to pierce the inner darkness, behold the terrible visage of his own double, and shine the light of compassionate consciousness into all the secret shadowed corners of his soul – from the end of his life to the beginning and back again.

Fear and sorrow dogged his every step. When he whirled to face them, they slithered into the twilight realm just out of reach, only to stealthily return to cast their pall of despair over his mightily striving soul. The horrors of war, his bleeding wounded heart, love lost and gone astray, boundless passion run amuck (nowhere real enough to hold it) were all drenched in aching sadness. These and everything else were accepted, embraced, and forgiven. Everything relived and transformed. Every last shred of R wiped clean. And when all was finished, he lay emaciated and at peace. The shadow exorcized, the hand of death lay like a wreath of roses on his brow.

This is when K arrived. The room was serene. R was aware but still, communicating only heart to heart – soul to soul. All the visitors in this time went away refreshed. Everybody's old "baggage" was seen as the totally useless trash that it was and left forever at the door. Ideas of what life and death are all about were overturned in the dazzling, humble reality of one man dying. K basked in the glow, letting go of all her dreams, and her wishes of what might have been, what could have been, what she once thought should have been. The hopes fell with her tears, splashing to mist on the wooden floor, seeping into the cracks and spreading out in an iridescent sheen beneath her feet. Gone, gone, all gone. Only impersonal death was left, devoid of longing and unrequited desire. Instead, there was a deep pool of joy and warmth of soul, harbinger of more and else to come. This beauty hung in the air for seeming eternity.

And then came the pain. From deep behind this left eye, reaching down to the soft palate between his jaws, like being caught in the fangs of a huge snake, the pain bit together and inaugurated the final movement. For just an instant, he flinched and convulsed as the soul shook loose the physical. K sat still and her soul retreated to a corner of the room to watch and help if needed.

R began to emerge from the top of his head, shedding his body like an old wetsuit. As he moved free of his corpse, the silver cord – the spiritual umbilicus that connects the soul to the physical – was tangled and wrapped twice around his leg. He turned back and tugging on the cord, broke it free. He looked at his old shell gratefully, and reaching down, gently smoothed his face into an expression of divine grace, then floated upward at last.

The room was filled with whispering souls, come now to welcome him home – Jan and Joost, Gaert and great uncle Bonko, Kiska and all the others who had died so long ago – flocking around him, praising his life and work, joyous to be reunited. Soon there was a rustling parting of the group and Selma emerged from their midst. She was slight and delicate, with haunting dark eyes like long ago. As R watched, she began to shine until she stood, a gleaming, divine presence. They embraced in total satisfaction. After an eternal moment, they moved apart. Selma looked over at K, winked, and said, “Hello, you. I mean, hello me. I mean, hello, Beautiful.” and everyone laughed delightedly.

Even with spiritual knowledge, human grief can feel boundless. Many times in the next days, K curled in the fetal position, sobbed and rocked, wailed like a lost lamb, and floated in the void of dreamless sleep for long periods of time, interspersed with sitting calmly and reading verses and prayers for R, singing snatches of chants, old songs, lullabies and black spirituals. Their connection had spanned years, but never many days together, and destiny had taken them on wide-spread paths. It was only the occasional phone call, that kept the bond current, and it always went like this:

Kienda calling: Ring, Ring, “Hello, this is R.”

“Hello, R, this is Kienda.”

“Ah, Kienda, (long, sweet and drawn out) where are you?” And after locating in time and space, and a quick catching up, a few issues broached and dispatched, there was a fond farewell and then silence for many months.

The memorial service was held in the church where R and J had been married, and it was a beautiful and fitting place. It was, of course, packed, as R had touched many lives. He listened so very well, yet left people in perfect freedom. He had been generous and supported the arts and individuals. He patronized the symphony and chamber orchestra in the US and Holland. His healing touch was a balm, and in the end, his mere presence was a blessing.

K arrived at the church early and went into the garden overlooking the bay. She sat among the last of the rhododendrons, hidden away and cried again to R. Presently, his voice was clear and peaceful, just like all the times on the phone.

“Ah, Kienda, where are you?”



"You know where I am, now. Don't ask me where I am any more. Where are you?"

"Ah, Kienda, I love you (long, sweet and slow)."

"Oh, R, I love you too."

"All is well. When I am a little more settled here, let's work together."

"Oh, yes, R, let's – let's do"

"Till then, my dear, enjoy."

"I'm sad without you, though."

"We never were together this time, either, you know – only in our hearts and minds."

"Yes, I know, but I could always call and whenever I was here in the Bay Area, I looked up to the hills and knew that you were there."

"Well, now, just see me everywhere. Ah, Kienda, I love you. Call me anytime."

"OK, R, I love you too."

For days and weeks and months, Kienda would call R in Meditation:

"Hello, Robbert? Hello? Hello?"

"Ah, Kienda, (long, sweet and slow) I love you."

"Oh, R. I love you too."

And then one day it was time to get busy. This story is one of the results of our work.

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## Biography

**Kienda (Betruë) Valbracht**, IMA Thanatology, is a Clinical Hypnotherapist and a SIDS mother. The death of her infant son, Christian Alexander, impelled her into an exploration of Death's domain, culminating in her published book: *Lucid Death: Conscious Journeys Beyond the Threshold*, (available from her web site [www.cosmicodyssey.info](http://www.cosmicodyssey.info) Barnes & Noble, or Amazon.) Creating structure and form from the seething cauldron of inspiration, she has a number of monographs of the latest adventures in the spiritual worlds available to download from her web-site – as well as her blog: *Conversations with Edgar Mitchell and the Interstellar Team*.

Kienda is a Spiritual Scientist, safely navigating the spiritual worlds, researching karma and reincarnation, the journey of the soul between death and rebirth, and other spiritually oriented issues.

She also facilitates individual Alchemical Hypnotherapy sessions (Facilitated Spiritual Experiences) which are then metamorphosed into practical wisdom for a richer, more effective, conscious life in the present.

For information on talks and workshops blending spiritual concepts with years of practical experience – such as:

- \*The Journey of the Soul Between Death and Rebirth**
- \*Reincarnation and Karma**
- \*A Conceptual Matrix of the Cosmos – Humanity’s Place in Time and Space**
- \*Meditative Practices Leading to Spiritual Research**
- \*The Evolution of Consciousness**
- \*The Extra-Terrestrial Issue**
- \*The Deeds of Christ and the Redemption of Lucifer**
- \*Radiation and the Elemental World**
- \*Transformation of the Reptilian Brain-Stem to the Dragon of Higher Consciousness**

and many others, with which to understand the human condition in the greater design of the evolution of consciousness, both individually and universally –

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