

Not from This World

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I stepped through the doorway into the adjoining room and ran smack into the gaze of Mario Mantese. Stunned as I was, my body managed to move across the room. But I knew immediately that I had entered another dimension. His powerful gaze, soft but piercing, seemed for a moment to stop time itself. I think sometimes that at that very moment my life was restructured by a higher power, realigned in a completely new direction.

Shortly after this first encounter, the gatherings were initiated. When I first observed M.M., I noticed the unsteadiness of his physical body. His walk was wobbly, and many of his movements required great concentration. I was deeply impressed when I witnessed his calm and care as he maneuvered his handicapped body. His speech was often unclear, his voice still showing the effects of his painful accident. But despite his outer appearance, I discovered a vital, bright, and dynamic spirit and a room filled with tremendous light. I knew he was the source of this light.

“Today we let go of time and space and move into the all-encompassing land of silence.” These

were his initial words. We seated ourselves quietly and straightened our bodies. Very soon, I noticed the vibration in the room intensifying enormously. It flowed into us and lifted us into a luminous, timeless state. This strong energy created a platform from which he shared his intense, deeply penetrating words. After he spoke awhile, he invited us to ask questions.

One person questioned:

Q.: Can you give advice on how I can overcome my great fear of death?

M.M.: Can your eyes see themselves?

Q.: No, but what does that have to do with death?

M.M.: Have you seen your own death, that event you are so afraid of?

Q.: I haven't exactly seen my own death, but I have lost someone who was very close to me. This person has died. This abrupt end, which comes so unexpectedly and wipes out everything, really scares me. I don't know how to deal with this.

M.M.: This occurrence you are calling death, you have observed it outside your own being. You have lost someone. Now the impressions, the images, and the information from this event have lodged themselves in your mind. If you look closely, you will recognize that it is these images and impressions that are arousing your fears and emotions.

You have adopted an idea that you, the subject, can have and possess another person as an object. Now you have lost him, and you are sad. But has this man really belonged to you, in such a way that you now have really lost him? How can one really lose another person?

Please see this clearly. We are not dealing with death itself but rather with concepts of death, with opinions and ideas, gain and loss, the discharge of thoughts in the brain. Looking at it this way, we can see that death takes place only in your mind.

You cannot observe yourself sleeping or dying, because your body has absolutely nothing to do with these things. And yet you are convinced that you are the body and your outer senses. But this *I* that believes that *I* sleep, *I* wake, *I* live, and *I* die is not your body, for your body can neither think nor speak. Your body is only the instrument that enables you to express thoughts and feelings in words and actions!

This *I* is only a concept, nothing real or lasting. It builds itself up from subjective impressions, pictures, and information. But these are only appearances in your brain.

Memories are merely shadows of the mind, and they disappear as soon as they are seen for what they are. When you recognize this clearly, death itself is dead, as is the one who conceives and produces these deceptions. Never has someone died, for in reality this someone has never existed.

You are not that which you think or believe you are, for what you are does not tie itself to thoughts and words. Life and death are not meant to be your enemies. How could they be, when they are only reflections in your mind?

A man whom you loved very much has left this world, and now you are sad. Yes, death is a sad and painful experience for those left behind.

But look deeply within yourself and observe: This man never really was his body. You assumed his existence was the reflection you see in your own consciousness. This is because you are so identified with the body. But the body exists only as a superimposition, a projection of the senses.

The Totality contains all objects and the entire universe. Therefore it is impossible that something like an *I*, a *you*, or an *other* exists.

Don't be afraid of things that are not real. You are deathless! Don't confuse your own imaginings with what you really are.

Obviously moved, the person said a quiet thank-you. Something fundamental had become clear for her.

The profound insights of this day remained with me. Many of Mario's more intricate thoughts echoed in my mind weeks after the seminar. I noticed that, over time, this encounter had an increasingly powerful effect on me. Much was clarified and released. What truly surprised me was that it happened without me being aware of when the shifts took place. A powerful

light had entered me and touched the deepest levels of my being. It was as if a stream of crystal-clear water had swept through my body and soul and dissolved all that had been polluted.

I was in great need of what I received. My personal life just prior to that meeting had been abruptly severed from its roots. Difficulties and conflicts in my outer world had become so burdensome that I was no longer in a position to resolve them. After a last effort to bring things together failed, the entirety of the personal difficulties I was having manifested in painful new ways. From one day to the next I experienced awful soreness throughout my body, and I came down with a terrible fever. For weeks I stayed in bed and just lay there. I had been taken over by a raging fire in my body and soul. Feeling completely isolated from everything and everyone, there was nothing I could do but lie there and watch.

When my illness finally subsided, I was extremely weak. Each movement still caused pain. And then Mario entered my life. There I was, sitting across from him – he who had seen much physical hardship, who knew much worse suffering than I. He sat there so serenely, shining like the sun. His bodily limitations seemed nonexistent. Really, I had no doubt that he was the healthiest and strongest person in that room. To be there and hear and see all that I did that first day was a great healing and encouragement.

The Star of Sinai

After attending several group gatherings I felt the strong need to have a private conversation with Mario. My health was still terrible, and I was continuing to lose strength. Although he has since discontinued private meetings with students, it was possible at that time to visit him at his home in Switzerland, and he enthusiastically welcomed me there.

Very quickly after we sat down, we were discussing the nature of my struggles. I told him that I was very sick. He answered, "The body is always sick, and in fact that is the only sickness." He closed his eyes and sat still for a while. Then he spoke rather abruptly, "In seven weeks something new will come into your life. Don't hesitate to accept it. This will not appear to you as you might expect." I was excited about this, for I knew from previous experience that his words are deeds. What he says will happen will happen.

Seven weeks later I was with my wife in Israel, in the Sinai. We were lodging at an inn that reminded us of the old caravan stops. Our room was very small, and on the concrete floor were reed mats that served as our beds. The inn was called the Star of Sinai. In the evening, shortly before going to bed, very suddenly a source of light appeared in my heart. From an indescribably small seed, this light inside me grew to the power of a shining sun. This light streamed through my entire body and held me in a

warm and affirming buoyancy. Full of gratitude, I accepted this gift. In this moment I also knew with absolute certainty that I was saved. I sensed the truth of Mario's full presence. His words had come true.

I had waited my entire life for this wonderful radiance in my heart to appear. Now it has actually happened, and since that moment this flame has not receded. I have only one burning desire: the wish to give myself up completely to this redeeming light. From the time of its appearance everything in my life has gradually found its natural order. It has brought fully restored health to my inner being as well as to my physical body.

At that time I could only guess at who and what Mario Mantese really is, and although I now have known him for many years, he remains incomprehensible to me. His love and kindness reflect something that is not of this world.

Step by Step into the Light

Years later, when Mario founded the "Inner Circle," my work with him again deepened, revealing to me a completely new dimension. Initially I felt elevated and well cared for. But then he exposed through his field of light an even more powerful I-shattering light-force of energy. I must say, the intensity took us all by surprise. I noted the freedom that arose, to leave my known way of living, to overstep my usual

modes of behavior. But with this new freedom also came dark shadows from the depths of my being, surfacing frequently in the routines of my daily life, and often with great ferocity. To go through with this process took all the courage and trust I could generate, for it was exactly these dark places that I had sidestepped and avoided so often in my life. In this dramatic and difficult period I was able to remain aware of the source of light in me and of the necessity of this process of elimination. I also knew that the liberating light-force that came from Mario was with me each moment, and that with immeasurable love it would lead me out of my inner darkness into the eternal light.

In this powerfully illuminated field of energy that was the new work, I felt all borders and burdens falling away. My body transformed gradually, with each cell continually passing through the high vibration of this light-field, until one day it was clear to me that I had been absolved completely from my illness and could never fall ill in that way again. This new light was to become the cornerstone of my existence. On this calm, clear foundation a refined intuitive perception, a pure sensitivity, was born.

At times, my awareness sheds all self-consciousness and this gentle light seems to set aside the physical body and the world of appearances. Events proceed as they should on the surface of the world. The clouds go by. But the things of this transient world become of only secondary importance, losing their grip and

pull. This divine power softly soaks into the body, filling it with vitality and well-being. The individual personality gives way to this grace and recognizes its common source with all other things, dissolving particularities. There is nothing more to achieve. The end of effort and striving has come.

The Other Face of the Cosmic Master

Some years later we met again in Switzerland. I stood with others in front of the train station, in the town where Mario had lived years before. I was looking for him across the street, observing the forms of people on the sidewalk, trying to spot him. It then occurred to me that I was unable to form an image of his face. How could that happen? When he later arrived, I was happy. He appeared the same as usual.

It was a warm summer day, and we decided to take a walk along the shore of the lake, outside the city. This was a good opportunity to ask a few questions, but none arose in my mind. When we are in his presence, the brain comes to a halt, the constant flow of thoughts calming immediately. So the five of us simply walked alongside him, enjoying the silence. During the walk I sensed something special, something uplifting, penetrating, and immensely powerful in his energetic expression. We continued along the edge of the lake for quite a while, and then he suddenly stopped. We looked over the water to the

nearby mountains and saw heavy dark rainclouds coming our way from the west. Strong winds blew across the country landscape, forebodings of a coming storm. I figured we should head back to the village as quickly as possible, before it began to pour. If we didn't make a turn right away, there was no chance to avoid getting wet. Mario Mantese, however, didn't seem impressed by the threatening skies, which had become almost black. The wind had become stronger, kicking up fallen leaves on the path, and the branches of the trees creaked and groaned as they swayed under the force of the gusts. Then the first raindrops began to fall, big, heavy ones. No other person was to be seen for miles around. We were the only ones still out in this dreadful weather. We started back, our feet speeding up the pace as if they knew themselves how bad the weather was. But the village was far ahead in the distance, beyond our sight.

Then the floodgates opened, and it began to rain very hard. Mario remained composed as he gazed toward the sky and raised his right arm. With his hand he made circular motions in the air. This gesture set a tremendous energy free. Instantly the storm front was halted. Stunned, we continued on, and not a drop of water wet our path! A dry and calm channel had formed, visible from the ground up through the clouds. Through it you could even see a little sunlight. Still, all around us it continued to rain in buckets, the heavy clouds unloading all of their mass with rage.

After twenty minutes we arrived at the village, completely dry. we were awestruck! How was that possible? He raised his hand in the air, and the powers of nature obeyed him. Something was transformed very deep inside all of us there. An inner border had been wiped away. I remember now the words he offered us to explain that occurrence. "The awakened being is empty, and yet billions upon billions of creations are vibrating inside him. Yet beings and creations exist only as reflections in our consciousness. There is no form that exists."

Free from the Fetters of the World

Mario Mantese is the master I had always expected to find. Some of the renowned teachers from India are the only masters that seem similar. For me, he stands in line with Ramana Maharshi, Babaji, Yogananda, and perhaps other masters as described by Baird Spalding in his books. With his uncompromising, ego-shattering methods, he reminds me of H. W. L. Poonja of Lucknow.

The world of psychotherapy is quite familiar to me. In this work usually one is capable only of changing perspectives and approaching certain problems from a new context that allows for understanding. In being with Mario every aspect of life is permeated by a powerful universal force, whereby all old obstacles and hindrances are released and dissolved.

This allows an unimaginable and unexplainable awakening in love and kindness.