

## Chapter Three

# The Hostile Forces and Hostile Beings

### The Existence of the Hostile Forces

The hostile forces exist and have been known to Yogic experience ever since the days of the Veda and Zoroaster in Asia (and the mysteries of Egypt and Chaldea and the Cabbala) and in Europe also from old times. These things of course cannot be felt or known so long as one lives in the ordinary mind and its ideas and perceptions — for there there are only two categories of influences recognisable, the ideas and feelings and actions of oneself and others and the play of environment and physical forces. But once one begins to get the inner view of things, it is different. One begins to experience that all is an action of forces, forces of Prakriti psychological as well as physical which play upon our nature — and these are conscious forces or are supported by a consciousness or consciousnesses behind. One is in the midst of a big universal working and it is impossible any longer to explain everything as the result of one's own sole and independent personality. You yourself have at one time written that your crises of despair etc. came upon you as if thrown on you and worked themselves out without your being able to determine or put an end to them. That means an action of universal forces and not merely an independent action of your own personality, though it is something in your nature of which they make use. But you are not conscious, and others also, of this intervention and pressure at its source for the reason I state. Those in the Asram who have developed the inner view of things on the vital plane<sup>1</sup> have plenty of experience of the hostile forces.

<sup>1</sup> One may have the experiences on the mental plane without this knowledge coming — for there Mind and Idea predominate and one does not feel the play of Forces —

However, you need not personally concern yourself with them so long as they remain incognito.

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It is true that all comes from the Divine and it is true also that a Divine Presence and a Divine Will is behind all that happens and leads the world towards a divine goal.

At the same time it is also taught in the Gita that this world is a world of obscurity and ignorance and to attain to the Divine one must overcome certain forces of Nature, such as Desire, which the Gita calls the enemy difficult to overcome. It is in this sense that we speak of hostile forces — those which stand in the way of coming out of the Ignorance and attaining to the consciousness of the Divine.

It is again true that those who have a complete and living faith in the Divine and a perfect sincerity in their vision of the Divine everywhere and a pure sattwic nature need not trouble themselves about the hostile forces — for from them the forces of the Ignorance fall back and cannot take possession of their nature.

The teaching about the hostile forces (Asuri Rakshasi forces) is necessary for those who have a divided consciousness or a more rajasic temperament — for if they are not on their guard they may fall into the control of undesirable forces of Desire and Ego —

*rākṣasīm āsurīm caiva prakṛtiṃ mohinīm śritāḥ*<sup>2</sup>

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Yes, they [*the hostile forces*] have their own world and, if they kept to it, there could be no objection to their existence. There is a world that is natural to them and has its own rhythm, its own

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it is only in the vital that that becomes clear. In the mind plane they manifest at most as mental suggestions and not as concrete Powers. Also if one looks at things with the Mind only (even though it be the Inner Mind), one may see the subtle play of Nature-Forces but without recognising the conscious intention which we call hostile.

<sup>2</sup> “*Dwelling in the deluding Asuric and Rakshasic nature.*” Gita 9.12. — Ed.

dharma — just as the lesser gods have theirs. But, they want to dominate the evolution and for that purpose they have taken their station in the vital worlds which influence the earth nature and give it its materials for life.

They were created or rather manifested like other orders of being as a type or several types expressing some cosmic stress, some possibility in the Infinite, the expression of a certain kind of consciousness and force. When the work that they are permitted to do on earth, the work of negation, perversion, miscreation is finished they will be destroyed here, but there is no reason to suppose that they may not exist in their own universe, as it were, outside the system here. For here their presence is an Adharma, a disturbance of the true harmony and natural evolution there should be on the earth plane; it is an intrusion and not a natural presence.

How did the Ignorance come into being out of Sachchidananda? Or ego? The Hostile Forces in their own world embody ego self-fulfilled and having its own free play — ego on earth is not self-fulfilled and not meant to be, it is in conflict with a cosmic Force greater than itself and is only a temporary expedient for bringing forth individuality out of the indeterminateness of just conscient life and inconscient Matter.

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If there were no hostile forces and there were still the evolutionary world, there could be ignorance still but not perversity in the ignorance. All would be a partial truth acting through imperfect instruments but for the best purposes of this or that stage in a progressive manifestation.

### **The Nature of the Hostile Forces**

The mere intensity of the force does not show that it is a bad power; the Divine Force often works with a great intensity. Everything depends on the nature of the force and its working; what does it do, what seems to be its purpose? If it works to purify or open the system, or brings with it light or peace or

prepares the change of the thought, ideas, feelings, character in the sense of a turning towards a higher consciousness, then it is the right force. If it is dark or obscure or perturbs the being with rajasic or egoistic suggestions or excites the lower nature, then it is an adverse Force.

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The hostiles have themselves bodies though not of a gross physical kind — they see, but with a subtle seeing that includes not only bodies, but movements of forces, thoughts, feelings.

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Very great [*are the occult powers of the hostile beings*] — it is their occult powers and knowledge of occult processes that make them so strong and effective.

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The lesser forces of Light are usually too much insistent on seeking for Truth to make effectivity their logic or their rule — the hostiles are too pragmatic to care for Truth, they want only success. As for the greater Forces (e.g. Overmind) they are dynamic and try always to make consciousness effective, but they insist on consciousness, while the hostiles care nothing for that — the more unconscious you are and their automatic tool, the better they are pleased — for it is unconsciousness that gives them their chance.

### The Conquest of the Hostile Forces

The universe is certainly or has been up to now in appearance a rough and wasteful game with the dice of chance loaded in favour of the Powers of darkness, the Lords of obscurity, falsehood, death and suffering. But we have to take it as it is and find out — if we reject the way out of the old sages — the way to conquer. Spiritual experience shows that there is behind it all a wide terrain of equality, peace, calm, freedom, and it is only by getting into it that we can have the eye that sees and

hope to gain the power that conquers.

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It [*the adverse force*] is the Power that keeps up ignorance and darkness in the world — it can only be destroyed when mankind is no longer in love with ignorance and darkness. Each sadhak has to push it out of contact with his being. When it has gone from him, then there will be no longer any serious difficulties in his sadhana.

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The hostile Forces are Powers of Darkness who are in revolt against the Light and the Truth and want to keep this world under their rule in darkness and ignorance. Whenever anyone wants to reach the Truth, to realise the Divine, they stand in the way as much as possible. But what they are specially against is the work the Mother and myself are doing, to bring down the Light here into the earth and establish the Truth — that would mean their own expulsion. So they always try to destroy the work as a whole and to spoil the sadhana of each sadhak. It is not only you who are attacked: all are attacked more or less — especially when there is a great progress, these forces try to interfere. The only way to avoid it is to be entirely turned towards the Mother and to refuse any opportunity to these Forces.

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The evil forces are perversions of the Truth by the Ignorance — in any complete transformation they must disappear and the Truth behind them be delivered. In this way they can be said to be transformed by destruction.

### **Asuras, Rakshasas and Other Vital Beings**

The Asuras and Rakshasas etc. do not belong to the earth, but to supraphysical worlds; but they act upon the earth life and dispute the control of human life and character and action with the Gods. They are the Powers of Darkness combating the Powers of Light.

Sometimes they possess men in order to act through them, sometimes they take birth in a human body. When their use in the play is over, they will either change or disappear or no longer seek to intervene in the earth-play.

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These things [*such as temptation by Apsaras*] are possible but they do not usually happen — because it is difficult for beings of the subtle worlds to materialise to such an extent or for a long time. They prefer to act by influencing human beings, using them as instruments or taking possession of a human mind and body.

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There are two kinds of Asuras — one kind were divine in their origin but have fallen from their divinity by self-will and opposition to the intention of the Divine: they are spoken of in the Hindu scriptures as the former or earlier gods; these can be converted and their conversion is indeed necessary for the ultimate purposes of the universe. But the ordinary Asura is not of this character, is not an evolutionary but a typical being and represents a fixed principle of the creation which does not evolve or change and is not intended to do so. These Asuras, as also the other hostile beings, Rakshasas, Pisachas and others resemble the devils of the Christian tradition and oppose the divine intention and the evolutionary purpose in the human being; they don't change the purpose in them for which they exist which is evil, but have to be destroyed like the evil. The Asura has no soul, no psychic being which has to evolve to a higher state; he has only an ego and usually a very powerful ego; he has a mind, sometimes even a highly intellectualised mind; but the basis of his thinking and feeling is vital and not mental, at the service of his desire and not of truth. He is a formation assumed by the life-principle for a particular kind of work and not a divine formation or a soul.

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Yes. Some kinds of Asuras are very religious, very fanatical about

their religion, very strict about rules of ethical conduct. Others of course are just the opposite. There are others who use spiritual ideas without believing in them to give them a perverted twist and delude the sadhaka. It is what Shakespeare described as the Devil quoting Scripture for his own purpose.

At present what they are most doing is to try to raise up the obscurity and weakness of the most physical mind, vital, material parts to prevent the progress or fulfilment of the sadhana.

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As to Asuras, not many of them have shown signs of repentance or possibility of conversion up to now. It is not surprising that they should be powerful in a world of Ignorance, for they have only to persuade people to follow the established bent of their lower nature, while the Divine calls always for a change of nature. It is not to be wondered at that the Asura has an easier task and more momentary success in his combinations. But that temporary success does not bind the future.

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It is the movements of the lower nature that get purified. The Asuras themselves are not so easily transformed.

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The Asuras are really the dark side of the mental, or more strictly, of the vital mind plane. This mind is the very field of the Asuras. Their main characteristic is egoistic strength and struggle, which refuse the higher law. The Asura has self-control, *tapas* and intelligence, but all that for the sake of his ego. On the lower vital plane the corresponding forces we call the Rakshasas which represent violent passions and influences. There are also other kinds of beings on the vital plane which are called the Pisachas and Pramathas. They manifest more or less in the physico-vital.

On the physical plane the corresponding forces are obscure beings, more forces than beings, what the Theosophists call the elementals. They are not strongly individualised beings like the Rakshasas and Asuras, but ignorant and obscure forces

working in the subtle physical plane. What we in Sanskrit call the Bhutas mostly come under this class. But there are two kinds of elementals, the one mischievous and the other not.

There are no Asuras on the higher planes where the Truth prevails, except in the Vedic sense — “the Divine in its strength”. The mental and vital Asuras are only a deviation of that power.

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The Gandharvas are of the vital plane but they are vital Gods, not Asuras. Many Asuras are beautiful in appearance and can carry even a splendour or light with them. It is the Rakshasas, Pisachas, etc. who are ugly or evil in appearance.

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Some of the vital beings are very intelligent — but they do not make friends with the Light — they only try to avoid destruction and wait their time.

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Very few [*vital beings*] come upon earth — they prefer to get hold of human beings and make them their instruments. They do not evolve. They have no evolved or evolving psychic being and they dread to incarnate just because they would then be obliged to progress and evolve the psychic.

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There is no particular number [*of vital beings that surround a person*] — but sometimes there are particular vital beings that attach themselves to a man if he accepts them.