Three Dreams

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We were on the summit of a mountain, so high that the valleys were invisible. The sky was perfectly clear and colourless. The summit of the mountain was covered with rich pastures. In these pastures, four herds of cows were grazing, guarded by four cowherds. These herds were at an equal distance from one another, thus forming approximately the four corners of a square. Each guardian had his own very particular appearance and characteristics. “He” was seeking something that he wanted to express and make effective, and for this he lacked certain elements. These elements lay beyond the summit of the mountain and He was asking me if there was any way of going there to fetch them. The question was voiced aloud and all the cows of the herd that was nearest to us bounded towards Him, lowing with delight. The man who was leading them, tall, strong, stocky, clothed in animal skins, white-skinned and very hairy, with black, shaggy hair and a square face, went towards Him and said to Him in a loud voice, “I put myself entirely at your disposal, my cows want to serve you and so do I. I shall lead them to the place where the elements of knowledge you want to acquire are lying and we shall bring them to you.”

While he was speaking, the herd which was on the right in the same line drew near, led by its guardian, who was interested and came to listen. He was tall, thin, sumptuously dressed, with smooth skin, an oval, elongated face and very black and silky hair falling to his shoulders. One part of his garment was red, but there were several other colours. He was friendly and well-disposed. But he did not offer his services.

2 August 1914
We were advancing along the broad white highway which led to our goal, when at a fork in the road we saw a great number of people massing and huddling together with expressions of terror. We wonder why as we proceed on our way, when we hear ourselves being called by a shepherd dressed in white, who tells us to join the people on the bank by the roadside. And in answer to our enquiry, he tells us that an enormous herd of cows and bulls has been kept prisoner until now, but that the time has come to let them loose, that the rope which is holding them back will be removed, and that they are going to charge and are likely to destroy everything in their path. I reply, “Indeed these creatures are full of vigour and sometimes even of apparently blind violence, but for people such as we two who are walking straight on our way, there is nothing to fear; bulls have never done us any harm.” But the shepherd insists, saying that it is really something exceptional and unprecedented. So as not to vex him we stop and stand by the roadside in front of the crowding people. But there again he insists, saying, “Not there, not there, you will be trampled down, behind.” And he makes us stand behind all the others, back from the side of the road.

At that moment, in the distance, I catch sight of the immense herd of cows and bulls; the rope that held them back is removed and they surge forward, charging straight in front of them; and if anyone had been in their path, they would certainly have trampled him down. When all have passed, the leader of the herd, who had been kept until last, is let loose. He is a splendid, enormous white bull. Instead of following the same path as the others, he turns to the right, in front of us, following the descending path. But after a moment he stops, looking for something, does not find it, retraces his steps, and finally stations himself just in front of me. Then I see that it is a triple bull, composed of three bulls closely bound together. One of the three (the middle one, I think) was a little less white than the
two others. To my left there was a priest who, at the sight of this enormous creature charging upon us and halting just in front of me, is seized with a great fear. And in his fright he begins to move restlessly. Then I say to him, “Well then, what about your faith in God? If He has decided that you are to be trampled down by this bull, won’t you find that His will is good?” Rather ashamed of himself, he wants to look brave, so he starts talking to the bull and giving him friendly pats on the muzzle. But the powerful creature was beginning to lose patience. And I was thinking, “With his fear, this fool will really end up by causing a disaster.” “We had better go away,” I said, turning towards “Him”. And without any further care for the bull, we set out on our way once more. We have scarcely taken a few steps on the road when we see the bull quietly passing beside us, calm and strong. A little farther on, I see another bull coming in the opposite direction, all reddish-brown, with a wild and ferocious look, charging with its huge horns pointed forward. I look back towards “Him”, walking a few steps behind me, and I say to him, “This one is the really dangerous creature, the one that is alone and going in the opposite direction to the others. This one has evil intentions. It cannot even see us because we are on the straight path and are protected. But I am much afraid for the others.” Still a little farther on we hear a galloping sound behind us, as if the ferocious bull were coming back with others. I feel that it is time for us to reach the goal. At that moment the road seems to be closed; in front of us there is a door that I want to open, but my hand slips on the knob and I cannot turn it. And yet time is pressing. Then I distinctly hear the deep Voice, “Look.” I look up, and right in front of us, beside the closed door, I see a wide-open door leading into a square room which is the goal. And the voice resumes, “Enter. That is where all the doors are to be found and you will be able to open them all.” With a feeling of great peace and tranquil strength I woke up.

1914 (after August)
Lord, last night you gave me a dream.
This is what I remember of it:
At the top of a very high tower standing on a high mountain, in a room so vast that it seemed to be low, I was leaning against the far wall, and facing me was a window looking outside. On my left a raised throne with several steps, and on the throne sat the Lord of Nations. This I knew although I had not looked at him. To my right at the far end of the immense room, in a kind of alcove lit from above, sat a young woman—a nation. She was a small, dumpy child with very dark hair and a pale and mat complexion. She had put on a wedding-dress, with a crown of white flowers on her head (the dress was mostly white with some blue and a few touches of gold). I knew that I had helped this nation to dress in this way, and to climb the mountain and the tower to come up to the room. She had come to offer herself as a bride to the Lord of Nations, and for this purpose she was to undergo a series of ordeals that the Lord wanted to impose upon her in order to know whether she was worthy of him. These ordeals were the ordeals of Terror.

For the first ordeal he had a full glass as well as a decanter brought to her. And she was to drink the contents of both. To her they seemed to be blood—human blood newly shed. And He, from the height of his throne, was saying to her, “Drink this blood to show that you are not afraid.” The poor child was trembling with disgust and did not dare touch the ghastly beverage. But at that hour, Lord, You had given me the full consciousness and power of the Truth. From where I stood I could clearly see the transparent purity of the water which the glass and the decanter really contained. And while the child was still hesitating and the Lord was taunting her in a biting tone, “What! you are trembling already! This is yet only the first ordeal, the easiest of all, what will you do next?”...

Then, heedless of the consequences, I cried to the child in
a language that the Lord did not understand, “You can drink without fear, it is only water, pure water, I swear it.” And the child, trusting in my word that dispelled the suggestion, began to drink calmly....

But because of the force with which I had spoken, the Lord suspected something and turned towards me in fury, rebuking me for speaking when I should not. To which I replied — still heedless of the consequences which I knew to be inevitable — “What I say is not your concern since You cannot understand the language I have used!”...

Then the memorable thing happened....

The room suddenly grew as dark as night and in this night a still darker form appeared, a form I perceived distinctly although no one else could see it.

This form of darkness was like the shadow of the light of Truth within me. And this shadow was Terror.

Immediately the fight began. The being, whose hair was like furious serpents, moving with hideous contortions and terrible gnashing of teeth, rushed upon me. If with only one of her fingers she were to touch my breast at the place of the heart the great calamity for the world would occur, and this had to be avoided at all costs. It was a fearful battle. All the powers of Truth were concentrated in my consciousness; and nothing less was needed to fight against so formidable a foe as Terror!

Her endurance and strength in combat were remarkable. At last came the supreme moment of the fight. We were so close to each other that it seemed impossible that we should not touch, and her outstretched finger drew nearer, threatening my breast...

At that precise moment the Lord of Nations, who could see nothing of the tragic battle, stretched out his hand to take something from a small table at his side. This hand — unawares — passed between my opponent and myself. I was then able to take support from it and Terror, for this time definitely vanquished, sank to the ground like a dark dust without power or reality....

Then, recognising the one who sat on the throne, and doing
Words of Long Ago

homage to his power, I leant my head upon his shoulder and said to him joyfully, “Together, we have conquered Terror!”

Such was my dream — and with it You gave me the full understanding of it.

For all this I give thanks to You, as for a priceless gift.

31 January – 1 February [1915?]