November 25, 1964

(The following conversation is about the collective meditation of the day before, November 24, a darshan day.)


(silence)

Yesterday, during the meditation, I don't know what happened, but when they rang the gong for the end, I absolutely had the feeling it had just started!

As soon as the meditation started, something descended: a stillness, but a very comfortable stillness, extraordinarily comfortable, and then ... finished, nothing, blank — completely blank. I was like that all the time at the table,¹ when suddenly (the gong rang) bong! bong! it was over.

Time passed outside time.

It's the first time, because even when I have an experience, even the first time, I remember, when we began collective meditations and Sri Aurobindo came down and literally sat on the [Ashram] compound, it was very interesting, of course, and very compelling,² but I was conscious of time. And this time ... There have been ups and downs, good experiences and bad ones, all kinds of things, but I have always been conscious of time, while yesterday ... I myself was astounded. I heard the gong and I had the feeling it had just started. There was even something in the body that was jubilant like a child: “It's going to last half an hour, it's going to be like this for half an hour” (it was funny, you know) ... “ah, the true life at last!” That was the body's feeling, and it was going to last half an hour.... Bong! bong! ... As if it had been robbed of its joy!

It's curious.

It started in a strange way: I have a beeswax candle, which smells of honey when it burns, a big candle I was sent from Switzerland. I have already burned half of it: I light it for the meditations. But there was a defect in the wick, it was carbonized, and yesterday it refused to burn. We lighted it — lighted it twice just before — and it went out just at the start of the meditation when they rang the gong. So the body consciousness said, “O Lord, we are so impure that we cannot even burn in front of You!” It was full of spontaneous simplicity: “O Lord, we are so impure ...” And immediately, the answer (gesture of massive descent): everything stopped.

Perhaps it was that very childlike, but very spontaneous and very simple movement of the body, conscious of Matter's imperfection, “We are so impure that we cannot even burn in front of You!” — perhaps that's what provoked that answer.

It was a wonder — a brief wonder!

Do you meditate at home?

No, in Sri Aurobindo's room — in his corridor.

¹ Mother remains seated in front of her table during the meditations.
² See Agenda III, August 18, 1962.
It's nice there....

(silence)

Afterwards, for the rest of the day, it was as if the body were asking, or were encouraged to ask (usually, it doesn't ask, it doesn't even ask for health or anything), and for the first time yesterday in the afternoon, it seemed to be saying, with a sort of aspiration almost not formulated in words, but with the feeling and impression: “Am I not going to be ready for You to live in these cells? For these cells to be You?...” Words spoil it because they give a somewhat brutal and hard precision, but it was as if the cells were saying, “Never will we have that marvelous Peace....” It was a peace, but a peace full of creative power, and so rich, containing an infinite power, rich with joy; and it gave the body the courage to say, “We will be THAT only if You are here, and You alone.”

Sri Aurobindo wrote, “Every event (like every moment of life) will be a marvel when it is the marvelous Whole that lives” — that lives in the body. This was really like the expression of what the body felt. And it is its ONLY raison d'être — there is no other, all the rest ... It went through every disgust, every disdain, every indifference, to the point where it asked, “But how can we live? What for? Why, why do we exist, why were we created? Why?... All that is nothing!” And strangely, there was a sort of memory of the eons of time during which people lived in this ignorance of the why and in a sort of bewilderment.... That so much time could have been spent to find the only thing ... the only thing that exists! And why all that, why? All that, centuries of absurd sensations.... It was curious: like a slow memory of a futile and useless life — absurd — and so painful! “Why all that in order to find THAT?”

It is curious.

I don't know if it is an answer to this question, but there came today a sort of film show: a long procession of all the stories telling how men destroy what's higher than they, cannot tolerate what's higher than they: the martyrs, the killings, the tragic ends of all those who represented a power or truth higher than mankind. As though that were the explanation — the symbolic explanation — of the reason for the almost infinite time it took for Matter to awaken — awaken to the imperious need for the Truth.

It was as if I were told, “You see, there was a time when they burned you at the stake, tortured you ...,” memories from past lives. And those memories were associated with the recent story of a Protestant missionary who said, though not in so many words, “We worship Christ only because he DIED for men, because he was crucified for men.”

All this seems to have been necessary to knead Matter.