

Mother's Agenda

1961

volume 2



Mother's Agenda

II

1961

Translated from French

Institut de Recherches Evolutives

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Rendered into English under the direction of Satprem

*This Agenda... is
my gift to
those who love me*

MOTHER

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January 7, 1961

I came down at 9:30 sharp, thinking half an hour would be enough to cross the corridor and get here. Apparently not!

(Mother gives Satprem a rose.) This is the Tenderness of the Divine for... for himself! The tenderness He has for his creation. 'Creation'... I don't like that word, as if it all were created from nothing! It is He himself, creating with all his tenderness. Some of these roses get quite big; they're so lovely!

And I am... how to put it? Nothing we say is ever absolutely true, but, to stretch it a bit, while I am... not worried, not perturbed, not discouraged, I feel I can't get anything done; I spend all my time, all my time, seeing people, receiving and answering letters – doing nothing. I haven't touched my translation¹ for over a week. T. sent me her notebook with questions and I had it for two weeks before I found time to answer.² Nothing is ready for the *Bulletin* except what you have done.

It's a pity you have no time to do your work.

Even the translation.... You know, when I am tired and work on the translation I feel rested. But, oh, all these letters! Even the best of them are stupid. Anyway.... When I came here just now there was someone waiting to see me – I told him to come at 11:00, and by then there will be 700 people waiting for me to come out. They are already gathered around the Samadhi.³

Well, enough grumbling. Let's get to work.

* * *

(Later, during the course of the conversation, Mother remarked:)

Understanding *The Synthesis of Yoga* is quite simple: I have only to be silent for a moment, and Sri Aurobindo is here. It's not this body's understanding: HE is here!

¹Mother generally worked a little every day on the French translation of *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

²The notebook in which a young woman disciple asked questions on Sri Aurobindo's *Thoughts and Aphorisms*. Later, Mother preferred answering verbally Satprem's questions on the aphorisms. This allowed her to speak of her experiences freely without the restrictions imposed by a written reply. These 'Commentaries on the Aphorisms' were later partially published in the *Bulletin* under the title *A Propos*. Here they are republished chronologically in their unabridged form.

³Where Sri Aurobindo's body lies, in the Ashram courtyard.



January 10, 1961

I have a stack of unread letters this high and an even bigger stack I've read but haven't answered. How can I work on the *Aphorisms* when I am constantly hounded by people 'pulling' on me simply because they have written! If I don't answer immediately, they say (not in words, but...): 'So you're not answering my letter!' These are not very favorable conditions! Everything is in an awful confusion.

(silence)

What is the next aphorism?

49 – To feel and love the God of beauty and good in the ugly and the evil, and still yearn in utter love to heal it of its ugliness and its evil, this is real virtue and morality.⁴

Do you have a question?

How can one collaborate in curing the evil and ugliness seen everywhere? By loving? What is the power of love? What effect can an individual consciousness, acting alone, have on the rest of mankind?

How to collaborate in curing evil and ugliness?... We can say that there's a kind of hierarchic scale of collaboration or action; a negative cooperation and a positive cooperation.

To begin with, there's what could be called a negative way, the way expounded by Buddhism and similar religions: the refusal to see. To be in a state of such purity and beauty that there is no perception of evil and ugliness. It's like something that doesn't touch you because it doesn't exist in you. This is the perfection of the negative method.

It is quite elementary: never take notice of evil, never speak of the evil present in others, never perpetuate the vibrations of evil by observation, criticism or giving undue attention to the evil deed. This is what Buddha taught: each time you mention an evil you help spread it.

This skirts the issue.

Nevertheless, it ought to be a very general rule; yet its critics have a reply: 'If you don't see evil you can never cure it. If you leave someone to his squalor he will never emerge from it.' (It's not exactly true, but it's how they legitimize their actions.) In this aphorism, Sri Aurobindo has anticipated these objections: it is not through ignorance or unconsciousness or indifference that you fail to see evil – you can see and even feel it, but you refuse to collaborate in spreading it by giving it the force of your attention or the support of your consciousness. And for that, you must yourself be above the perception and sensation – able to see evil or ugliness without suffering, without feeling shocked or troubled. You see them from a height where such things do not exist, yet you have the conscious perception of them – they don't affect you, you are free. This is the first step.

⁴Sri Aurobindo's aphorisms appear in the Cent. Ed. Vol. XVII, pp. 79-159.

The second step is to be POSITIVELY conscious of the supreme Goodness and Beauty behind all things and supporting all things, permitting them to exist. Once you have seen Him, you can perceive Him behind the mask and the distortion – even ugliness, even cruelty, even evil are a disguise for that Something which is essentially good or beautiful, luminous, pure.

With this comes TRUE collaboration. For when you have this vision, this awareness, when you live in this consciousness, you also get the power to PULL That into the manifestation on earth and put it into contact with what, for the time being, distorts and disguises; thus the deformation and disguise are gradually transformed by the influence of the Truth behind.

Here we are at the top rung on the scale of collaboration.

Put this way, there is no need to bring the principle of love into our explanation. But if we want to know or understand the nature of the Force or Power that permits and accomplishes this transformation (specially in the case of evil, but for ugliness to some extent as well), we see that of all powers, Love is obviously the mightiest, the most integral – integral in that it applies to all cases. It's even mightier than the power of purification which dissolves bad wills and is, in a way, master over the adverse forces, but which doesn't have the direct transforming power; because the power of purification Must FIRST dissolve in order to form again later. It destroys one form to make a better one from it, while Love doesn't need to dissolve in order to transform: it has the direct transforming power. Love is like a flame changing the hard into the malleable, then sublimating even the malleable into a kind of purified vapor. It doesn't destroy: it transforms.

Love, in its essence and in its origin, is like a white flame obliterating ALL resistances. You can have the experience yourself: whatever the difficulty in your being, whatever the weight of accumulated mistakes, the ignorance, incapacity, bad will, a single SECOND of this Love – pure, essential, supreme – melts everything in its almighty flame. One single moment and an entire past can vanish. One single TOUCH of That in its essence and the whole burden is consumed.

It's easy to understand how someone who has this experience can spread it and act upon others, since to have it you must touch the unique, supreme Essence of the whole manifestation – the Origin and the Essence, the Source and the Reality of all that is; then you immediately enter the realm of Unity where there is no more separation among individuals: it's a single vibration that can repeat itself endlessly in outer forms.⁵

If you go high enough, you come to the Heart of everything. Whatever manifests in this Heart can manifest in all things. This is the great secret, the secret of divine incarnation in an individual form. For in the normal course of things, what manifests at the center is only realized in the outer form with the awakening and RESPONSE Of the will within the individual form. But if the central Will is constantly, permanently represented in one individual, he can then serve as an intermediary between that Will and all beings, and will FOR THEM.

Whatever this being perceives and consciously offers to the supreme Will is replied to as if it came from each individual being. And if individuals happen to be in a more or less conscious and voluntary relationship with this representative being, their relationship increases his efficacy and the supreme Action can work in Matter in a much more concrete and permanent way. This is the reason for these descents of what could be called 'polarized' consciousnesses that always come to earth for a particular realization, with a definite purpose and mission – a mission decided upon before the actual embodiment. These mark the great stages of the supreme incarnations upon earth.

⁵Later, Satprem asked Mother, 'Is it a single vibration that *CAN REPEAT* itself endlessly or that *REPEATS* itself endlessly?' Mother replied: 'I meant several things at once. This single vibration is in static latency everywhere but when you realize it consciously you have the power to make it active wherever you direct it; that is, one doesn't "move" something, but makes it active by the insistence of the consciousness wherever you focus it.'

And when the day comes for the manifestation of supreme Love – a crystalized, concentrated descent of supreme Love – that will truly be the hour of Transformation, for nothing will be able to resist That.

But as it's all-powerful, a certain receptivity must be prepared on earth so its effects are not devastating. Sri Aurobindo has explained it in one of his letters. Someone asked him, 'Why doesn't this Love come now?', and he replied something like this: If divine Love in its essence were to manifest on earth, it would be like an explosion; for the earth is not supple enough or receptive enough to widen to the measure of this Love. The earth must not only open itself but become wide and supple. Matter – not just physical Matter, but the substance of the physical consciousness as well – is still much too rigid.

* * *

Wouldn't it be better if each time you answered these questions on the Aphorisms verbally?

Ah, that's always better! With pencil and paper I have to look at what I'm writing and it holds me back like a leash.

Then why don't you just speak? T or Z could come and listen to you – they would be overjoyed!

Oh no, my child, you don't see at all! To speak I must have a receptive atmosphere! The idea of talking aloud all alone in my room would never occur to me. Sound doesn't come: what comes is a direct transmission – and if I manage to connect it to my hand and write it's transmitted, although it always gets somewhat pulled down. I can be doing anything at all, it doesn't matter, but it must be something that doesn't monopolize my attention, like brushing my hair in the morning for example: then it comes directly and nothing stops it! But I would never think of uttering a word! That only happens when I find some receptivity in front of me, something I can use.

What I say to people depends entirely upon their inner state. That's precisely why I had such enormous difficulty at the Playground⁶ – the atmosphere was so mixed! It was a STRUGGLE to find someone receptive so I could speak. And if I'm in the presence of people who understand nothing, I can't say a word. On the other hand, some people come prepared to receive and then suddenly it all comes – but usually there's no tape-recorder!

I have replied endlessly, I have given all sorts of explanations about the organization of the School, about *World Union*,⁷ about the true way to organize industry (its true functioning) – so many things! If all that were compiled we could publish brochures! Sometimes I've spoken three-quarters of an hour non-stop to people who listened with delight and were receptive but quite incapable of making a written report of it. At times like that we could have used one of your machines! But when things are organized in advance, it may well be that nothing comes out at all – mentalizing stops the flow. If I is in front of me, I can't say anything to her because she doesn't understand. I already have trouble writing to her – what I have to say is always brought down a bit; but if she were here in the room and I had to speak to her, nothing at all would come out!

No, when we feel like it and when she doesn't raise any question about an aphorism – at least not an

⁶Twice a week, during the period of the Playground Talks, Mother would publicly reply to questions put to her by the disciples assembled at the Ashram Playground.

⁷*World Union* – a 'movement' launched through the personal initiative of a disciple.

impossible question – we'll do this: I will speak here, it's much easier for me. This way things come that I haven't seen before; while when I write like that, they are usually things I've seen on other occasions (not that I try to recall them, they are there and simply come back). But when there's a new contact, something new always comes.

* * *

(A little later, Mother made the following remark concerning the Agenda of December 13, 1960, where she speaks of the physical Mind's 'disbelief' and defeatist reactions as intimately linked to the body's illnesses.)

This defeatist Mind is still functioning – and in full swing!

When we get out of that....

I want to be able to act directly without its help – do what Sri Aurobindo said: be rid of it!



January 12, 1961

What is the next aphorism?

50 – To hate the sinner is the worst sin, for it is hating God; yet he who commits it glories in his superior virtue.

Do you have a question?

When we enter a certain state of consciousness, we plainly see that we are capable of anything and that ultimately there is no 'sin' not potentially our own. Is this impression correct? And yet certain things make us rebel or disgust us. We always reach some inadmissible point. Why? What is the true, effective attitude when confronted with Evil?

There is no sin not our own....

You have this experience when for some reason or other, depending on the case, you come into contact with the universal consciousness – not in its limitless essence but on any level of Matter. There is an atomic consciousness, a purely material consciousness and an even more generally prevailing psychological consciousness. When, through interiorization or a sort of withdrawal from the ego you enter into contact with that zone of consciousness we can call psychological terrestrial or human collective (there is a difference: 'human collective' is restricted, while 'terrestrial' includes many animal and even plant vibrations; but in the present case, since the moral notion of guilt, sin and evil belongs exclusively to human consciousness, let us simply say 'human collective psychological consciousness'); when you contact that through identification, you naturally feel or see or know yourself capable of any human movement whatsoever. To some extent, this constitutes a Truth-Consciousness, or at such times the egoistical sense of what does or doesn't belong to you, of what you

can or cannot do, disappears; you realize that the fundamental construction of human consciousness makes any human being capable of doing anything. And since you are in a truth-consciousness, you are aware at the same time that to feel judgmental or disgusted or revolted would be an absurdity, for EVERYTHING is potentially there inside you. And should you happen to be penetrated by certain currents of force (which we usually can't follow: we see them come and go but we are generally unaware of their origin and direction), if any one of these currents penetrates you, it can make you do anything.

If one always remained in this state of consciousness, keeping alive the flame of Agni, the flame of purification and progress, then after some time, not only could one prevent these movements from taking an active form in oneself and becoming expressed physically, but one could act upon the very nature of the movement and transform it. Needless to say, however, that unless one has attained a very high degree of realization it is virtually impossible to keep this state of consciousness for long. Almost immediately one falls back into the egoistic consciousness of the separate self, and all the difficulties return: disgust, the revolt against certain things and the horror they create in us, and so on.

It is probable – even certain – that until one is completely transformed these movements of disgust and revolt are necessary to make one do WITHIN ONESELF what is needed to slam the door on them. For after all, the point is to not let them manifest.

In another aphorism, Sri Aurobindo says (I no longer recall his exact words) that sin is simply something no longer in its place. In this perpetual Becoming nothing is ever reproduced and some things disappear, so to speak, into the past; and when it's time for them to disappear, they seem – to our very limited consciousness – evil and repulsive: we revolt against them because their time is past.

But if we had the vision of the whole, if we were able to contain past, present and future simultaneously (as it is somewhere up above), then we would see how relative these things are and that it's mainly the progressing evolutionary Force which gives us this will to reject; yet when these things still had their place, they were quite tolerable. However, to have this experience in a practical sense is impossible unless we have a total vision – the vision that is the Supreme's alone! Therefore, one must first identify with the Supreme, and then, keeping this identification, one can return to a consciousness sufficiently externalized to see things as they really are. But that's the principle, and in so far as we are able to realize it, we reach a state of consciousness where we can look at all things with the smile of a complete certainty that everything is exactly as it should be.

Of course, people who don't think deeply enough will say, 'Oh, but if we see that things are exactly "as they should be," then nothing will budge.' But no! There isn't a fraction of a second when things aren't moving: there's a continuous and total transformation, a movement that never stops. Only because it's difficult for us to feel that way can we imagine that by our entering certain states of consciousness things would not change. Even if we entered into an apparently total inertia, things would continue to change and we along with them!

Ultimately, disgust, rebellion and anger, all movements of violence, are necessarily movements of ignorance and of limitation with all the weakness that limitation implies. Rebellion is a weakness, for it's the feeling of an impotent will. When you feel, when you see that things are not as they should be, then you rebel against whatever is out of keeping with your vision. But if you were all-powerful, if your will and your vision were all-powerful, there would be no opportunity to rebel! You would always

see that all things are as they should be! That is omnipotence.⁸ Then all these movements of violence become not only useless but profoundly ridiculous.

Consequently, there is only one solution: by aspiration, concentration, interiorization and identification, to unite with the supreme Will. And that is both omnipotence and perfect freedom. It's the only omnipotence, the only freedom – all the rest are approximations. You may be en route, but it's not That, not the total thing.

If you make the experiment, you will come to see that this supreme freedom and this supreme power are accompanied by a total peace and an unfaltering serenity; if you notice any contradiction – revolt, disgust or something inadmissible – this indicates that some part in You is not touched by the transformation, is still en route: something still holding on to the old consciousness, that's all.

In this aphorism, Sri Aurobindo speaks of those who hate sinners – that one mustn't hate sinners.

It's the same problem seen from another angle, but the solution is the same.

But the difficulty isn't so much not hating the sinner, but not hating the virtuous! That's far more difficult! Because one readily understands sinners, those poor people, but the virtuous....

Actually, what you hate in them is their self-righteousness, only that. After all, they're right not to do evil – they can't be blamed for that! But what's hard to tolerate is their sense of superiority, the way they look down their noses at all these poor fellows who are no worse than they!

Oh, I could cite a few shining examples!

Consider the case of a woman with many friends, and these friends are very fond of her for her special capacities, her pleasant company, and because they feel they can always learn something from her. Then all of a sudden, through a quirk of circumstances, she finds herself socially ostracized – because she may have gone off with another man, or may be living with someone out of wedlock – all those social mores with no value in themselves. And all her friends (I don't speak of those who truly love her), all her social friends who welcomed her, who smiled so warmly when passing her on the street, suddenly look the other way and march by without a glance. This has happened right here in the Ashram! I won't give the details, but it has happened several times when something conflicted with accepted social norms: the people who had shown so much affection, so much kindness... oh! Sometimes they even said, 'She's a lost woman!'

I must say that when this happens here.... In the world at large it seems quite normal, but when this happens here it always gives me a bit of a shock, in the sense that I say to myself, 'So they're still at that level!...'

Even those who claim to be broad-minded, above these 'conventions,' immediately fall right into the trap. And to ease their consciences they say, 'Mother wouldn't allow that. Mother wouldn't permit that. Mother wouldn't tolerate such a thing!' – to add a further inanity to the rest.

This state is very difficult to get out of. It is really Pharisaism – this sense of social dignity, this

⁸When asked later about the meaning of this somewhat elliptical statement, Mother said: 'There are two stages. The first involves a mental (and possibly intuitive) vision of what will be (perhaps in an immediate future), and this is what we call seeing things "as they should be." The other is an identification with the supreme Will and the perception that at each second everything is exactly as the Supreme wants it to be, that it is the precise expression of the Supreme. The first is a vision of what is coming and says, "That's how things should be." But we overlook the distance between what presently exists and what is coming. While if we go high above and become one with the Consciousness of the supreme Will, we see that at every instant, at every moment in the universe, all is exactly as it should be – exactly as the Supreme wants it to be. That is Omnipotence.'

narrow-mindedness – because no one with an atom of intelligence would fall into such a hole! Those who have traveled through the world, for instance, and seen for themselves that social mores depend entirely upon climatic conditions, upon races and customs and still more upon the times, the epoch – they are able to look at it all with a smile. But the self-righteous... oohh!

This is a primary stage. As long as you haven't gone beyond this condition, you are unfit for yoga. Because truly, no one in such a rudimentary state is ready for yoga.

* * *

A short while later:

I am going downstairs on the 21st, for Saraswati Puja.⁹ They have prepared a folder with a long quotation from *Savitri* and five photos of my face taken from five different angles.

The title of the folder is the line from *Savitri* that gave me the most overpowering experience of the entire book (because, as I told you, as I read, I would LIVE the experiences – reading brought, instantly, a living experience). And when I came to this particular line... I was as if suddenly swept up and engulfed in... ('the' is wrong, 'an' is wrong – it's neither one nor the other, it's something else)... eternal Truth. Everything was abolished except this:

For ever love, O beautiful slave of God¹⁰

That alone existed.



Undated

(Regarding the ego and the ancient religious initiations which taught: 'You are That' or 'You are the All.)

A moment comes when self-observation is no longer possible.

Even in these expressions 'All is You' or 'You are the All' (and the same holds for 'You are the Divine' or 'The Divine is you'), there is still something watching.

A moment comes – it comes in flashes and doesn't easily remain – when it's the All who thinks, the All who knows, the All who feels, the All who lives. There's not even – not even – the feeling that you

⁹Saraswati represents the universal Mother's aspect of Knowledge and artistic creativity. On this occasion, Mother would go down to the Meditation Hall and the disciples would silently pass in front of her to receive a message. This year they would receive a folder containing five photographs of Mother.

¹⁰Savitri, Vol. 29, XII.702.

have reached this state.

Then it is good.

But up to this point there is still a small corner [of the 'I'] somewhere – generally the observer, the witness who is watching.

(silence)

I don't know if it's worth keeping this. Or rather let's keep it for later. It's a little too much.... We have to go by stages.

It's not correct to say that you know you have no more ego. The only correct thing would be to affirm that you are ON THE WAY to having no more ego.¹¹



January 17, 1961

51 - When I hear of a righteous wrath, I wonder at man's capacity for self-deception. What do you have to say?

Our self-deception is always in good faith! We always act for the welfare of others or in the interests of humanity and to serve you (that goes without saying!). How exactly do we deceive ourselves?

I would like to ask you a question in turn – because there are two ways of understanding your question. It can be taken in the same ironic or humorous tone that Sri Aurobindo has used in his aphorism when he wonders at man's capacity for self-deception. That is, you are putting yourself in the place of the self-deceiver and saying, 'But I am of good faith! I always want the welfare of others – the interests of humanity, to serve the Divine (of course!). Then how can I be deceiving myself?'

But actually, there are really two quite different forms of self-deception. One can be very shocked by certain things, not for personal reasons but precisely because of one's goodwill and ardor to serve the Divine, when one sees people misconducting themselves, being egoistical, unfaithful, treacherous. There comes a stage when one has mastered these things and doesn't permit them to manifest IN ONESELF; but to the extent that one is in contact with ordinary consciousness, ordinary viewpoints, ordinary life and thought, their possibility is still there, latent, because they are the inverse of the qualities one is striving for. And this opposition always exists until one has risen above and no longer has either the quality or the defect. As long as one has virtue, one always has its latent opposite. The opposition disappears only when one is beyond virtue and sin. But until then, there is this kind of indignation stemming from the fact that one is not entirely above: it's a period when one totally disapproves of certain things and would be incapable of doing them. And up to this point, there is nothing to say, unless one gives an external, violent expression to his indignation. If anger interferes, it

¹¹This fragment possibly dates from 1958.

indicates an entire contradiction between the feeling one wants to have and this reaction towards others. Because anger is a deformation of vital power originating from an obscure and thoroughly unregenerate vital,¹² a vital still subject to all the ordinary actions and reactions. When an ignorant, egoistic individual will exploits this vital power and encounters opposition from other individual wills around it, then under the pressure of opposition this power changes into anger and tries to obtain through violence what could not be achieved by the pressure of the Force alone.

Anger, moreover, like all forms of violence, is always a sign of weakness, impotence and incapacity. Here the deception comes from the approval one gives it or the flattering adjective one covers it with; for rage can be no more than blind, ignorant and asuric – opposed to the light.

But this is still the best of cases.

There is another case where people – without knowing it or because they WANT to ignore it – always pursue their personal interests, their preferences, their attachments, their concepts; people who are not entirely consecrated to the Divine and make use of moral and yogic ideas to conceal their personal motives. These people doubly deceive themselves: not only do they deceive themselves through their outer activities, their relations with others, but they also deceive themselves about their personal motives; instead of serving the Divine they are serving their own egoism. And this happens constantly, constantly! One serves his own personality, his egoism, while pretending to serve the Divine. This is no longer even self-deception: it's sheer hypocrisy.

This mental habit of always cloaking everything with a favorable appearance, of giving all movements a favorable explanation, is at times so flagrant that it can fool nobody but oneself (although it may occasionally be subtle enough to create an illusion). It is a sort of habitual self-exoneration, the habit of giving a favorable mental excuse, a favorable mental explanation for all one does, all one says, all one feels. For example, someone with no self-control who strikes another in great indignation and is ready to call it divine wrath! *Righteous*¹³ is perfect, because *righteous* immediately introduces this element of puritanical morality – wonderful!

This power of self-deception, the mind's craft in devising splendid justifications for any ignorance or folly whatsoever, is tremendous.

And it's not a random experience coming now and then, it's something you can witness minute by minute. You generally see it far more readily in others! But if you watch yourself carefully, you will catch yourself a thousand times a day – looking at things in a favorable way: 'Oh, it's NOT the same thing!' And besides, it's NEVER the same for you as it is for your neighbor!



January 19, 1961

¹²For Sri Aurobindo and Mother, the 'vital' represents the regions of consciousness or the centers of consciousness below the mind between the throat and the sex center, i.e. the whole region of emotions, feelings, passions, etc., which constitute the various expressions of the Life-Energy.

¹³Throughout the *Agenda*, words Mother originally spoke in English are italicized.

I am going to let you work. No work for me! I'm a little.... I haven't eaten for two days, so... not very bright.

It won't tire you if I read these texts?

No. It's purely physical. It's because people.... When I came down, I felt fine. Only they kept me standing there, on and on. When I am seated, it's all right; but beyond a certain point, speaking also becomes difficult.

* * *

After the work:

I think it would be wiser if I went back upstairs – although if I leave here too early, people will be waiting for me and I'll have to see them before going up. We could meditate a little; as soon as I meditate, everything is fine.

(meditation)



January 22, 1961

(Mother had been unwell the past few days. She speaks here of the causes behind the physical disorder.)

Ah! How are you?

You're the one who should be asked that!

I'm all right.

All right?...

I saw it last night... oof! It was a kind of artificial hurricane created by semi-human beings (that is, they have human forms but they aren't men). They created the storm to cut me off from 'my home.' But everything and everyone was disrupted - it must have been going on for a rather long time. Finally last night it became quite amusing: I kept attempting to get to 'my home' which was up above, but each time I tried to find a way everything was blocked by... try to imagine, artificial, mechanical and electric thunderstorms, and then things made to cave in. All of it was artificial, nothing real, and yet terribly dangerous.

At last I found myself in a big place down below where there was a row of houses, all kinds of

things, and it was absolutely essential that I go back up – when suddenly a somewhat indistinct form (rather dark, unluminous) came to me and said, ‘Oh, don’t go there, it’s very bad, very dangerous! They’ve set it all up in a terrifying way: none can withstand it! You mustn’t go there, wait a bit. And if you need something, do come, you know I have everything you need! (*Mother laughs*) it’s a little old and dusty but you’ll manage!’ Then she led me into a huge room filled with objects piled one on top of another, and in one corner she showed me a bathtub – my child, it was a marvel! A splendid pink marble bathtub! But it was unused, dusty and old. ‘We’ll just wipe it off,’ she said, ‘and you’ll be able to use it!’ She showed me other areas for washing and dressing, there was everything one could possibly need. ‘You can use it all. Don’t go up there!’ I looked at her closely. She struck me as having a tiny face, it was odd – it wasn’t a form, it was... it was a form and yet it wasn’t! As imprecise as that. Then I clasped her in my arms and cried out, ‘*Mother, you are nice!*’ (*Mother laughs*) I knew then that she was material Mother Nature.

After that I felt quite at ease. The battle was over – it was over FOR THE MOMENT, because they weren’t finished: they continued their uproar on the other side; but I didn’t have to go there anymore.

It has been deferred because I was still down below; I had not yet returned to the upper levels. Anyhow....

But they are furious! There is evidently a whole alignment of forces (they must be vital forces) between here and... my domain. They’re furious! They set up explosions, demolitions.... And I could see all the settings – they were quite artificial, nothing real, but dangerous nonetheless.

All in all, it was rather amusing.

You were disrupting their work, is that it?

Yes, I am disrupting their work – I know perfectly well that I am disrupting their domination of the world! All these vital beings have taken possession of the whole of Matter (*Mother touches her body*) – life and action – and have made it their domain, this is evident. But they are beings of the lower vital, for they seemed artificial – they didn’t express any higher form, but an entire range of artificial mechanisms, artificial will, artificial organization, all deriving from their own imagination and not at all from a higher inspiration.¹⁴ The symbol was very clear.

And I saw my own domain through them and through it all; I saw my domain: ‘I can see it!’, I said. But no sooner would I start on my way than the path would be lost, I no longer saw it, I couldn’t see anymore where I was going. It became almost impossible to get my bearings there: hundreds and thousands of people, things – utter confusion. An incoherent immensity – and violent, what violence!

I felt something last night....

Yes, it was last night.

I received some extraordinarily violent vibrations.

Ah, you felt them too!...

At one point, it seized me here in the belly as if it wanted to rip something out.

¹⁴These seem to be the forces ruling the subconscious mechanisms or reactions of the body: all the automatism produced by evolution and atavism – what might be termed evolutionary habits. This is the ‘descending path,’ which started forty years earlier, as Mother said (or the ‘physical plunge’ referred to by Sri Aurobindo), leading to the pure cellular consciousness.

Yes, yes – oh, what violence, what fury!

At first I thought it was coming from you (!) – as if you were trying to remove something undesirable in me.

Oh, no! (*Mother laughs*) I don't use such violent means! No, no! It was very strange.... When it fell upon me (four or five days ago, I no longer recall), everything I had gained materially disappeared! As though all that had been conquered and mastered, even what had begun to change, even wrong functionings that had completely ceased, all that had been set right and brought under control: gone! Gone! Completely gone! As if everything came back in one fell swoop.

I remained perfectly tranquil, there was nothing else to do; I knew it meant a battle. I was perfectly tranquil, but I could no longer eat, I could no longer rest, do japa¹⁵ or walk, and my head felt as though it would burst. I could only abandon myself (*Mother opens her arms in a gesture of surrender*), enter into a very, very deep trance, a very deep *samadhi* – this is something one can always do. But that was the only thing left to me. Ideas were just as clear as ever (all that is above and doesn't budge), but my body was in a very bad way. It was a fight, a fight at each second. The least thing, just to walk a step, was a struggle, an awful battle!

Then last night I saw the symbol, the image of the thing. But... what was it? It was an element in the most material Matter,¹⁶ because it was deep down below; yet despite it all, Mother Nature was in charge there: she was familiar with everything, knew everything and it was all at her disposal – absolutely the most material Nature. And she herself had no light, but was very, very... she had a concealed power that was completely invisible.

Each time I set out to leave her domain and ascend above, it triggered a hurricane. I would pass this way and the storm started up, pass that way, unleash a gale. Finally she approached me and said very gently, very sweetly, in a most unassuming way, 'No, don't go there, don't go! Don't try to return to your home. They have set up a dreadful hurricane!' And artificial: there were explosions like bombs everywhere, and even worse, like thunderbolts. One could see the artificial tricks and electrical effects they were using to create their thunder, but it was on a tremendous scale!

It isn't over.

I simply consented to stay there. 'You will have all you need, stay here quietly.' And what beautiful things she had, lovely things! They were unused and dusty. (It was surely the symbol of ancient realizations – realizations of the ancient Rishis, things like that. Who knows?) They were first class, but completely neglected and thick with dust, like material objects left unused – which no one knew HOW to use. She put them at my disposal: 'Look, look, let me show you!' There was a tremendous accumulation of things, piled in such great confusion that one couldn't see. Yet the marvel of it was that when she led me to a corner to show me something, everything immediately moved aside and order was restored, so that the object she wanted to show me stood out all by itself. And oh, a thing of beauty!... Made of pink marble! A pink marble bathtub of a shape I didn't recognize – not Roman, not antique (not modern, far from it!) – how beautiful it was! And whenever she wanted to show me something in this untidy and cluttered room full of objects piled one on top of another, they would organize themselves, take their proper place, and all became neat. 'You will just have to dust them off a

¹⁵*Japa*: the continuous repetition of a mantra. Mother's mantra is a song of the cells, the sole material or physical process used by her for awakening the cells and stabilizing the Supramental Force in her body.

¹⁶Later, Mother specified: 'These are elements in the material substance entirely possessed by adverse forces and opposed to the transformation.'

bit,' she said. (*Mother laughs*)

But I'm not surprised it came down on you.

Oh, I felt it! It was very violent. It came down on me three times and I told myself, 'Hmm, someone is cleaning out!' It felt like something was being removed from me that shouldn't be there. But the third time I doubted it was you because it became so violent, particularly around the abdomen, like something being torn out of me. Strange.... Vibrations, nothing but vibrations... very, very violent.

For me it was in the head (not last night but over the past few days), when I was trying to do my *japa* – oh, it was as though my head would burst! All the nerves were not just tense (*Mother touches the nape of her neck*), but cramped. And my head felt as if boiling oil were being poured inside it; it was about to explode, and I couldn't see clearly.

Something was obviously bent on preventing me from going down for the distribution.¹⁷ But by an act of will I went down. 'I will do it,' I said. But it was difficult. There were moments when it sidled up to me: 'Now you're going to faint,' and then, 'Now your legs will no longer be able to walk. Now....' It kept coming like that. So I kept repeating the *japa* the whole time, and it was touch-and-go right up to the end. Finally I couldn't distinguish people, I saw only shapes, forms passing by, and not clearly. When the distribution was over, I got up (I knew I had to get up), I stood up without flinching and stepped down from the chair without faltering. But I was not careful and when I turned away from the light in the room to go towards the staircase – an abrupt blackout. Not the blackout of a faint – my eyes no longer saw. I saw only shadows. 'Ah!' I said to myself, 'where is the step?!' And to avoid missing it, I clutched the railing. What a commotion that made! Champaklal came rushing up, thinking I was about to fall!

Anyhow....

It was only afterwards, a long time after, that I began to see again. It was clearly something that was NOT WILLING. But when will it give in?... I can't say. No victory has been won, far from it. And it has remained like this: status quo.

It will probably have to begin again, but in what manner?

Evidently all the vital forces who have taken the habit of ruling the earth (last night it had the proportions of the earth, it wasn't universal) are the very ones who refuse to listen; they don't at all like what I am doing.

You see, personal *surrender* and devotion is an excellent solution for the individual, but it doesn't work for the collectivity. For example, as soon as I am alone and lying on my bed – peace! (Ah, I forgot! They had invented yet another thing: making my heartbeats irregular. Every three or four beats it would stop; then it would start up again, pounding as if I had been struck. Three, four beats, a faint little beat, then stop... then, bang! Blow after blow.... One more of their extraordinary inventions!) But, as soon as I stretch out and make a total *surrender* of all the cells – no more activity, nothing – everything goes well.

But I am well aware that this surrender has an effect on the action only to the extent that the Supreme Lord has decided upon the action, and those movements stretch over long periods of time¹⁸ : all sorts of things may happen before the final Victory is won. Because, for us, the scale is very small; even if it were of terrestrial proportions, it would be a very small scale; but on a universal scale.... These forces have their place and their action, their universe, and as long as their place and their action are maintained, they will be here. So before their action can be exhausted or become useless, many

¹⁷On the previous day, January 21, Saraswati Puja, Mother had given a message and photos to each disciple.

things can happen....

Individually, however, there is almost instantaneous bliss. But this is not a true solution... it's a solution in the long run, by repercussion. To have true command here in this world, all of that must be mastered.

And this is the confusion made by all those people who believed that their... what they called their 'personal salvation' was the salvation of the world – it's not true at all! It isn't true – it's a PERSONAL salvation.

(silence)

But all of that is wonderfully, accurately expressed and EXPLAINED in *Savitri*. Only you must know how to read it! The entire last part, from the moment she goes to seek Satyavan in the realm of Death (which affords an occasion to explain this), the whole description of what happens there, right up to the end, where every possible offer is made to tempt her, everything she must refuse to continue her terrestrial labor... it is my experience EXACTLY.

Savitri is really a condensation, a concentration of the universal Mother – the eternal universal Mother, Mother of all universes from all eternity – in an earthly personality for the Earth's salvation. And Satyavan is the soul of the Earth, the Earth's *jiva*. So when the Lord says, 'he whom you love and whom you have chosen,' it means the earth. All the details are there! When she comes back down, when Death has yielded at last, when all has been settled and the Supreme tells her, 'Go, go with him, the one you have chosen,' how does Sri Aurobindo describe it? He says that she very carefully takes the SOUL of Satyavan into her arms, like a little child, to pass through all the realms and come back down to earth. Everything is there! He hasn't forgotten a single detail to make it easy to understand – for someone who knows how to understand. And it is when Savitri reaches the earth that Satyavan regains his full human stature.



January 24, 1961

I have something to tell you now.... We'll work later.

In the middle of the night before last, I woke up (or rather I returned to an external consciousness) with the feeling of having a much larger (by larger I mean more voluminous) and much more powerful being in my body than I usually have. it was as if it could scarcely be held inside me but was spilling over; and SO COMPACTLY POWERFUL that it was almost uncomfortable. The feeling of: what to

18Later, on the 27th, Mother remarked: 'I was reading about this very thing yesterday in *The Secret of the Veda*, in the first hymn translated by Sri Aurobindo (*the reference is to the colloquy between Indra and Agastya, Rig Veda 1.170 – cf. The Secret of the Veda, Cent. Ed., X.241 ft.*), and it helped me put my finger on the problem. In this hymn there is a dispute between Indra and the Rishi because the Rishi wants to progress too quickly without first passing through Indra [the god of the Mind], and Indra stops him; finally they reach an agreement. Sri Aurobindo's commentary is quite interesting: when one has the INDIVIDUAL power to go directly, but neglects the steps which are still necessary for the whole, for the universal movement, then one is stopped short. That is absolutely my experience.'

do with all this?

It lasted the remainder of the night and all day long I had considerable trouble containing an overwhelming power that spontaneously created reactions utterly disproportionate to a human body and made me speak in a way that... When something was not going well: wham! Such an instantaneous and strong reply that it looked like anger. And I found it difficult to control the movement – it had happened already in the morning and it very nearly happened again in the afternoon. ‘That last attack has weakened me terribly!’ I told myself, I don’t have the strength to contain this Power; it’s difficult to remain calm and controlled.’ That was my first thought, so I insisted upon calm.

Then yesterday afternoon, when I went upstairs to walk,¹⁹ a couple of things occurred – not personal, but of a general nature – concerning, for instance, certain old-fashioned conventions having to do with women and their particular nature (not psychological, physical) – old ideas like that which had always seemed utterly stupid to me suddenly provoked a kind of reprobation completely out of proportion to the fact itself.

Then one or two other things²⁰ happened in regard to certain people, certain circumstances (nothing to do with me personally: it came from here and there). Then suddenly, I saw a Force coming (‘coming,’ well, ‘manifesting’) which was the same as that ‘thing’ I had felt within me but even bigger; it began whirling upon the earth and within circumstances... oh, like a cyclone of compact power moving forward with the intention of changing all this! It had to change. At all costs, it must change!

I was above, as usual (*Mother points above her head, indicating the higher consciousness*), and I looked at that (*Mother bends over, as if looking down at the earth*), and said to myself, ‘Hmm, this is getting dangerous. If it continues like this, it will result in... in a war or a revolution or some catastrophe – a tidal wave or an earthquake.’ So I tried to counteract it by applying the highest consciousness to it, that of a perfect serenity. And I saw especially that this consciousness has been missioned to transform the earth through the Supermind and by the supramental Force, avoiding all catastrophes as far as possible: the Work is to be done as luminously and harmoniously as the earth would allow, even by going at a slower pace if need be. That was the idea. And I tried to counteract that whirlwind power with this consciousness.

(long silence)

I must say that after this, when I read *The Secret of the Veda* as I do each evening.... In fact, I am in very close contact with the entire Vedic world since I’ve been reading that book: I see beings, hear phrases.... It comes up in a sort of subliminal consciousness, a lot of things are from the ancient Vedic tradition. (By the way, I have even come to see that the pink marble bathtub I told you about last time, which Nature had offered me, belongs to the Vedic world, to a civilization of that epoch.²¹) There were

¹⁹Mother did her japa while walking back and forth in her room.

²⁰Satprem later asked Mother what she meant by these ‘things,’ and Mother replied: ‘For example, there was a certain man’s attitude with respect to life and to the Divine, and what he thought of himself, and so forth. You see, what came was a whole range of characters and one particular action of one man, and then something else came up.... How to explain? ... These are POINTS OF WORK which come to me, things that present themselves in the atmosphere for me to see – things I see and which have to be acted upon.’

²¹A few days later, Mother rectified: ‘I have looked at the experience again and realized that it’s not Vedic but pre-Vedic. The experience put me into contact with a civilization prior to the Vedas – the Rishis and the Vedas are a kind of transition between that vanished civilization and the Indian civilization which grew out of the Vedic Age. It was yesterday [January 26] that I perceived this, and it was quite interesting.’

– there are always – Sanskrit words coming up, sentences, bits of dialogue.... This is of interest, because I realized that what I had seen the other day (I told you about it) and then what I saw yesterday – that whole domain – was connected to what the Vedas call the *dasyus* – the *panis* and the *dasyus*²² – the enemies of the Light. And this Force that came was very clearly a power like Indra’s²³ (though something far, far greater), and at war with darkness everywhere, like this (*Mother sketches in space a whirling force touching points here and there throughout the world*), this Force attacked all darkness: ideas, people, movements, events, whatever made stains, patches of shadow. And it kept on going, a formidable power, so great that my hands were like this (*Mother clenches her fists*). Later when I read (I happened to be reading just the chapter concerning the fight against the *dasyus*), this proximity to my own experience became interesting, for it was not at all intellectual or mental – there was no idea, no thought involved.

The remainder of the evening passed as usual. I went to bed, and at exactly a quarter to twelve I got up with the feeling that this ‘presence’ in me had increased even further and really become rather formidable.... I had to instill a great deal of peace and confidence into my body, which felt as though... it wasn’t so easy to bear. So I concentrated, I told my body to be calm and to let itself go completely.

At midnight I was lying in bed. (And I remained there from midnight until 1 o’clock fully awake. I don’t know if my eyes were open or closed, but I was wide awake, NOT IN TRANCE – I could hear all the noises, the clocks, and so forth.) Then, lying flat, my entire body (but a slightly enlarged body, exceeding the purely physical form) became ONE vibration, extremely rapid and intense but immobile. I don’t know how to explain this, because it did not move in space but was a vibration (that is, it wasn’t motionless); yet it was motionless in space. And the exact form of my body was absolutely the most brilliant white Light of the supreme Consciousness, the consciousness OF the Supreme. It was IN the body and it was as though in EACH cell there was a vibration, and it was all part of a single BLOCK of vibration. It extended this much beyond the body (*gesture indicating about six centimeters*). I was absolutely immobile in my bed. Then, WITHOUT MOVING, without shifting, it began consciously to rise up – without moving, you understand: I remained like this (*Mother holds her two joined and motionless hands at the level of her forehead, as if her entire body were mounting in prayer*) – consciously... like an ascension of this consciousness²⁴ towards the supreme Consciousness.

The body was stretched out flat.

And for a quarter of an hour, the consciousness rose, rose, without moving. It kept rising up, up, up – until... the junction was made.

A conscious junction, absolutely awake, NO TRANCE.

Thus the consciousness became the ONE Consciousness: perfect, eternal, outside time, outside space, outside movement... beyond everything, in... I don’t know, in an ecstasy, a beatitude, something ineffable.

(silence)

22In the Vedas, the *panis* and *dasyus* represent beings or forces hidden in subterranean caves who have stolen the ‘Riches’ or the ‘Lights’, symbolized by herds of cows. With the help of the gods, the Aryan warrior must recover these lost riches, the ‘sun in the darkness,’ by igniting the flame of sacrifice. It is the path of subterranean descent.

23Indra represents the king of the gods, the master of mental power freed from the limitations and obscurities of the physical consciousness.

24The body-consciousness.

It was the consciousness OF THE BODY.

I have had this experience before in exteriorization and trance, but this time it was THE BODY, the consciousness of the body.

It remained like that for a certain time (I knew it was a quarter of an hour because the clock chimed), but it was completely outside time. It was an eternity.

Then, with the same precision, the same calm, the same deliberate, clear and concentrated consciousness (absolutely NOTHING MENTAL), I began to come back down. And as I was descending, I realized that all the difficulty I had been fighting the other day and which had created this illness was absolutely ended, ANNULLED – mastered. Actually, it was not even mastery but the non-existence of anything to be mastered: Simply THE vibration from top to bottom; yet there was neither high nor low nor any direction.

And it went on like that. After this, slowly, still WITHOUT MOVING, everything went back into each of the different centers of the being. (Ah, let me say parenthetically that it wasn't AT ALL the ascent of a force like the ascent of the Kundalini! It had absolutely nothing to do with the Kundalini movement and the centers, it wasn't that at all.) But while re-descending, it was as though WITHOUT LEAVING THIS STATE, without leaving this state which remained conscious ALL the time, this supreme Consciousness began to reactivate the different centers: first here (*Mother points to the center above the head and then touches the crown of the head, the forehead, throat, chest, etc.*) then there, there, there. At each there was a pause while this new realization organized everything. It organized and made the necessary decisions, sometimes down to the most minute details: what had to be done in this case or said in that case; and all of that TOGETHER, at once, not one by one but seen entirely as a whole. It kept on descending – I noted many things, it was extremely interesting – down and down, farther and farther, right to the depths. Everything went on at the same time,²⁵ simultaneously, and at the same time this supreme Consciousness was organizing everything separately.²⁶

This descending reorganization ended exactly when the clock struck one. At that moment I knew that I had to go into trance for the work to be perfected, but until then I was wide awake.

So I slipped into trance.

I came out of this trance two hours later, at 3 a.m. And during these two hours I saw... with a new consciousness, a new vision, and above all a NEW POWER – I had a vision of the entire Work: all the people, all the things, all the systems, all of it. And it was... it was different in appearance (this is only because appearances depend upon the needs of the moment), but mainly it differed IN POWER – A

25Later, Mother added: 'All the experiences took place one after the other, but the new experience did not cancel the preceding one. The Consciousness – this supreme Unity that I had – remained all the time, to the very end, even while the other centers were awakening. And each center that awakened was a kind of addition, taking away nothing from what had come before. So at the end it was all simultaneous: a kind of global consciousness – total and simultaneous – of everything.... You see, while rising up (one is obliged to say "rising" and "descending" for otherwise one would never be understood), while "rising up" to reach this supreme Consciousness, all the rest was annulled, there was only That. When the supreme Consciousness was realized, it remained ALL the time, continuously, to the very end, it did not move; but meanwhile, the other centers began to awaken one after another. And each awakening center assumed its place but canceled nothing either of what had come before or of what was about to come, so that when I reached the end, all of it together was a simultaneous whole – the Supreme Consciousness.' When Satprem asked if this Supreme Consciousness was the 'New Consciousness,' Mother replied, 'Not "new!" One can't say "new" – Supreme Consciousness.'

26This entire experience and Mother's insistence that it all happened 'without moving,' unlike the experience of the ascent of the Kundalini, suggests that it is the supramental consciousness concealed in the depths of the cells, that somehow emerges and traverses all the layers until the junction is made with the most material body-consciousness.

considerable difference. Considerable. The power itself was no longer the same.²⁷

A truly ESSENTIAL change in the body has occurred.

I see that the body will have to – how can I express it?... It will have to accustom itself to this new Power. But essentially the change has been accomplished.

It's not... it is far, very far from being the final change, there's a lot more to be done. But we may say that it's the conscious and total presence of the supramental Force in the body.

(silence)

When I got up today, I was going over all this to myself, and my first instinct was not to speak of it, to observe and see what would happen; but then I received a distinct and precise Command to tell it to you this morning. The experience had to be noted down just as it occurred, recorded in its exact form.

In the body now, there is a very clear... not only a certitude, but a *feeling* that a certain omnipotence is not far away, and that very soon when it sees ('it' sees... 'it'! There is only one 'It' in this whole affair, which is neither 'he' nor 'she' nor...), when it sees that something must be, it automatically will be.

There is still a long, long way to go. But the first step on the way has been taken.

* * *

(Shortly afterwards, concerning a rampant flu epidemic.)

There is a terrible epidemic in the country – a triple epidemic.

Does a servant come to your house?... No one is sick in his family? Because what happens is that they don't want to lose their jobs or their salary, so they don't warn you. They may have smallpox or measles or chickenpox and they don't take the slightest care to wash or change their clothes; they come to your house and of course they bring along the disease. So the number of cases keeps multiplying and multiplying. I have been meaning to tell Pavitra to be careful of that little character who works for him – even ordinarily I don't like to see him running around here. It's strange how it sullies the atmosphere – oh, you can't imagine! Almost all of them, almost all!

It's not at all the same as in the West, in Europe or America, not at all. Basically, the people in those countries are made of the same stuff as we are. But here that's not the case, because for centuries it never changed – a Brahmin, for example, always remained a Brahmin, a Kshatria was always a Kshatria and all his servants were Kshatrias. It stayed in the family, in the sense that in each caste the servants – often poor relatives – be longed to that same caste. From a social standpoint this might not have been too pleasant, but as far as atmosphere was concerned, it was very good. This was changed, however, first by the Muslim invasion, and then especially by the British.

The British, you see, were served only by pariahs (in fact, it's we Europeans who named them that!). But they were not actually pariahs by birth, they became pariahs out of HABIT.

I have studied the problem very closely, because when you come from Europe you bring all your European ideas with you and you don't know or understand a thing about the way it really is. I immediately came into contact with Brahmin servants and pariah servants, but I didn't know that some

²⁷Later, Mother added: 'The Power that was acting was no longer the power that had been acting previously.'

were Brahmins and others pariahs, nobody had told me anything; it depended upon the people I was with and the places I went. But the contact, the atmosphere (*gesture of fingering the air*).... You know, I didn't even need to touch them physically! There was such a difference that I asked Sri Aurobindo, 'But what is it?' So he explained the whole thing to me.

You see, originally these 'pariahs' were people who took their delight (their pleasure) in filth and falsehood, in crime, in violence and robbery – it was a joy for them. They had castes among themselves; there is still a caste of brigands nearby – I once went to their village to have a look – people who always keep a dagger on them, they love to play with daggers. They steal not so much out of need as out of pleasure. And dirty-they abhor cleanliness! And they will lie even if they have to contradict themselves fifteen minutes later, for the sheer delight of lying.

What an atmosphere it creates!... It's palpable (*Mother fingers the air*).

I had a woman here with me who was born among these people. She had been adopted by Thomas (the French musician who composed the comic-opera, *Mignon*). They had come to India and found this little girl who at the time was very young; she was only thirteen, quite pretty and nice. So they took her back to France with them as a nanny and treated her as one of their own children. She was cared for, educated, given everything, treated absolutely like one of the family; she remained there for twenty years. Moreover, she was gifted with clairvoyance and could tell fortunes by reading palms, which she did remarkably well. She even worked for a while in a café, the Moulin-Rouge or a similar place, as a 'Hindu Fortune Teller'! What a maharani she was, with her magnificent jewels – and beautiful, as well. In short, she had completely left all her old habits behind.

Then she returned to India and I took her in with me. I continued to treat her almost as a friend and I helped her to develop her gifts.... Mon petit,²⁸ how dirty she started to get, lying, stealing, and absolutely needlessly – she had money, she was well treated, she had everything she needed, she ate what we did – there was absolutely no reason! When I finally asked her, 'But why, why!?' (she was no longer young at this point), she replied, 'When I came back here, it took hold of me again; it's stronger than I am.' That was a revelation for me! Those old habits had been impervious to education.

We think these people are the way they are because the environment is bad, the education is poor, the conditions are difficult – it's not true! In the universal economy of things they REPRESENT something, a certain type of force and vibration. It will have to be either dissolved or transformed. Transformed? But perhaps that is.... It may disappear along with the hostile forces. Perhaps once everything has been transformed it will disappear – I don't know when.

In any case, I really tried my best, with all the power I had, all the knowledge I had, because I liked this girl a lot, it wasn't at all a question of charity, I found her very interesting. But I watched – with a kind of horror, really – as this past repossessed her more and more, more and more each day, until we were finally obliged to dismiss her, to tell her, 'Go.' 'Yes, I understand,' she replied, 'I can't stay here.'

She lived in France from the age of thirteen, with all that those people did for her! (It was Ambrose Thomas, I remember now. They were so kind to her.) And naturally she had picked up very fine manners – the outer appearances were all there.

All this is just to tell you that some contacts are not very favorable. And I understand full well: I could never tolerate people like that coming into my room – sometimes it would take me hours and hours to put things right!

We have to be careful.

²⁸Mother frequently addressed Satprem as 'mon petit' or 'petit,' terms of endearment she used for very few other people. We have unfortunately been unable to find English equivalents that capture the nuances of Mother's simple 'petit' and 'mon petit,' and so have decided to leave them in the original French wherever they appear.

There was a time when we had only a minimum of servants here and they always remained apart – we never had an epidemic. I don't know for how many years it was – years and years while Sri Aurobindo was here – we never had a single case of an epidemic disease. It began when people started coming here with children; necessarily they brought their servants along with them, who went to the bazaar and even to the movies and here and there. Then everything came in.

But now the situation is bad. There are something like thirty cases of measles, four or five of smallpox and some chickenpox as well. You must be careful. I need you in good health, otherwise we'll have to stop everything!

There are places where it happens like that: suddenly everything stops – no more school, no more mail, no more trains. I remember a poor little village in Japan where they had a flu epidemic, the first of its kind. They didn't know what it was and the whole village fell ill. It was winter, the village was snowed in and there was no more communication with the outside (the mail came only once every fifteen days). The postman arrived... and everyone was dead, buried beneath the snow.

I was there in Japan when it happened.

A little vale of snow – no one left.



January 27, 1961

(On the moralistic reactions of someone who thought that certain acts 'angered' God:)

They are only too eager to believe that God can get angry with them! I try to dispel this notion as much as I can, because it's not true – it isn't true.

(long silence)

This time, something has really been achieved.

Since the last experience [January 24] I see it daily. The following day, probably for reasons connected with the body's development and adaptation, I was rather seriously ill – what is usually called 'painfully ill': the body was suffering a lot, or WOULD HAVE suffered a lot had it been in its former normal consciousness. That's where I saw the difference – a fantastic difference!

I was perfectly conscious (now when I say 'I', it refers to my body, I am not speaking of the whole higher consciousness), the body was perfectly conscious of its suffering, the reason for its suffering, the cause of its suffering, everything – and it did not suffer. You understand, the two perceptions were there together: the body saw the disorder, saw the suffering just as it would have felt it a few weeks earlier, it saw all that ('saw,' 'knew'... I don't know how to express it – it was conscious, *it was aware*) and it did not suffer. *The two awarenesses* were absolutely simultaneous.

There is now a kind of VERY PRECISE knowledge of the whole inner mechanism for all things – and what has to be done materially. This is developing, as a flower blossoms: you see one petal open

and then another and then another; it is proceeding like that, slowly, taking its time. It's the same process for the Power.

To illustrate this, an interesting thing came up – yesterday, I think. (All these experiences come to show me the difference, as if to give proof of the change.) Someone had had a dream about me whispered to him by the adverse forces for specific reasons (I won't go into the details). He was much affected by it, so he wrote down the dream and gave it to me. I was carrying his letter along with all the others, as I usually do, but suddenly I knew I had to read it right away: I read it. Then I saw the whole thing with such clarity, precision, accuracy: how it had come about, how the dream had been produced, its effect – the whole functioning of all the forces. As I read along and it went on unfolding, I did what was necessary for him (he was present at the time) in order to undo what the adverse forces had done. Then at the end, when I had finished, said everything, explained what it was all about and what had to be done, something SO CATEGORICAL came into me (I cannot verbalize this kind of experience, it is what I call the 'difference' in power: something categorical). I took the letter, uttered a few words (which I won't repeat) and said, 'You see, it's like this: so much for that,' and I ripped the letter a first time. 'Then, that's for that,' I tore it a second time... and so on. I ripped it up five times and the fifth time I saw that their power was destroyed.

I have done these things before – it's a knowledge I already had – and it always had its effect when I did them; it's not that I am passing from powerlessness to power, not at all. But it's this kind of... yes, something definite, absolute – a kind of absolute in vision, in knowledge, in action and ABOVE ALL in power – a kind of absolute that doesn't need to conquer obstacles and resistances, but ANNULS the resistance automatically. Then I saw that something had truly changed.

(After a digression, Mother gives another example of the change:)

I told you something concerning the power of the will, didn't I?...

Well, yesterday I saw R. He was asking me questions about his work and particularly about the knowledge of languages (he's a scholar, you know, and very familiar with the old traditions). This put me in contact with that whole world and I began speaking to him a little about what I had already said to you concerning my experience with the Vedas. And all at once, in the same [absolute] way as I told you, when I entered into contact with that world a whole domain seemed to open up, a whole field of knowledge from the standpoint of languages, of the Word, of the essential Vibration, that vibration which would be able to reproduce the supramental consciousness. It all came, so clear, so clear, luminous, indisputable – but unfortunately there was no tape recorder!

It was about the Word, the primal sound. Sri Aurobindo speaks of it in *Savitri*: the essence of the Word and how it will express itself, how it will bring in the possibility of a supramental expression that will take the place of languages.... I began by speaking to him about the different languages, their limitations and possibilities; and I warned him against the deformations imposed on languages with the idea of making them a more flexible means of expressing something else. I told him how completely ridiculous it all was, and that it didn't correspond at all to the truth. Then little by little I began ascending to the Origin. So yesterday again, I had this same experience: a whole world of knowledge, of consciousness and of CERTAINTY – precluding the least possibility of contradiction, discussion, or opposition; the possibility DOES NOT EXIST, it doesn't exist. And the mind was absolutely silent and immobile, listening with obvious pleasure because these things had never before come into my consciousness; I had never been concerned with them in that way. It was completely new – not new in principle but completely new in action.

The experiences are multiplying.

A sound that can bring in the supramental Force?

Yes. While speaking, you see, I went back to the origin of sound (Sri Aurobindo describes it very clearly in *Savitri*: the origin of sound, the moment when what we called ‘the Word’ becomes a sound). So I had a kind of perception of the essential sound before it becomes a material sound. And I said, ‘When this essential sound becomes a material sound, it will give birth to the new expression which will express the supramental world.’ I had the experience itself at that moment, it came directly. I spoke in English and Sri Aurobindo was concretely, almost palpably, present.

Now it has gone away.

(silence)

Oh, another little example. You know those photos I distributed on the 21st for the Saraswati Puja) Amrita told me he was going to send them to X,²⁹ I but I told him, ‘No, don’t bother.’ (The 21st was a terrible day for me. All the *dasyus* of the world were in league against me, trying to stop me – I understood this afterwards, when I saw those things.³⁰ ‘So that’s what it is!’ I said to myself, ‘That’s what has been going on!’) Then after the night of the 24th, I went down for *balcony-darshan*³¹ with such a foursquare certainty – you know, cubic: such a cubic certainty – and I said to Amrita, ‘You can send him those photos today,’ without an explanation, without a word, with nothing but a feeling of certainty, a kind of definite and absolute THAT’S HOW IT IS.

And that is a change, truly a change.



January 29, 1961

My legs are tired....

(Mother looks at T’s questions on Sri Aurobindo’s Aphorisms.)

53 – The quarrels of religious sects are like the disputing of pots, which shall be alone allowed to hold the immortalizing nectar. Let them dispute, but the thing for us is to get at the nectar in whatever pot and attain immortality.

What is this nectar of immortality?

²⁹The tantric guru.

³⁰The Vedic or pre-Vedic experience of the artificial hurricane and the pink marble bathtub.

³¹*Balcony-darshan*: up to 1962, Mother appeared every morning on the first-floor balcony to be seen by the disciples assembled on the street below.

This consciousness of immortality... is OUR becoming conscious of the realms where immortality exists; but to bring immortality into the physical consciousness requires not only a transformation of physical consciousness but a transformation of physical substance as well. So....

* * *

(Concerning the last conversation where Mother spoke of the essential Sound, or the 'Word' of the Vedic Rishis.)

I promised Nolini I would show him this.

Yes, Mother, this is a problem.... Often when you tell me things of such importance I feel I benefit from them quite egoistically – could they be shown to Pavitra now and then? Do you want them to be kept absolutely confidential, or may I show them to Pavitra occasionally?

It depends.... You can tell Sujata whatever you like.

I have never said anything. I never say a word.

You can tell her anything you like, it doesn't matter – just tell her to keep it to herself.

But otherwise.... Some of the things you note down I just put away. But some I show to Nolini (of them all, Nolini is the one who can best understand). I give him certain things to read, but otherwise, no. It is completely different between us, as I told you – completely different. If you benefit from it, so much the better! If it helps you in your inner development, good, I have no objection – on the contrary. It's quite natural, the natural consequence of our meetings.

But if while speaking with Sujata you feel that something might help her, I have no objection to your telling her – simply say that it's between the two of you.

So far, I haven't said anything. You know how I am: I keep quiet, I don't say a word.

Oh, yes, that's best. Because one must absolutely beware.... But as I said, with her I have no objection.

* * *

A short while later:

It continues. Now they have begun attacking my legs – they always have to find something new!

Your legs are giving you trouble?

For a long time. It began in the middle of November. I saw the symbol of it only recently,³² but the battle itself has been going on since mid-November.

(silence)

³²Experience of January 22 (the artificial hurricane).

You shouldn't have to suffer too much from this.

I feel all kinds of...

Yes, yes, of course, it's inevitable. But you must call in tranquillity, that's the only thing.... It keeps coming and coming from all sides; but when you feel things going badly, when you're uneasy or thoroughly upset, you must remember to call in tranquillity.

But it's about you, directed against you, all sorts of suggestions that make me....

That want to cut you off from me. Yes, I know perfectly well. It's like that for everybody, not just for you.

We must keep going right to the end, that's all – there's nothing else to do.



January 31, 1961

(Concerning the experience related on January 24, of the supramental Force reorganizing the activity of each center of consciousness. The experience ended in a deep trance: 'I slipped into trance...')

I neglected to mention something very important.

At the moment of my coming out of the trance, I had a very concrete, positive perception (not a mental understanding, it didn't come from the being's intellectual part, the part that understands and explains everything and is symbolized, I think, by Indra; it wasn't in any way conveyed through that higher intelligence, it wasn't mental). A kind of perception (not really a sensation, it was more than a sensation) of the almost total unimportance of the external, material expression of the body's condition: the consciousness OF THE BODY was absolutely indifferent to external, physical signs, whether they were like this or like that (the BODY'S consciousness was what had experienced the identity). And this body-consciousness had the perception of the EXTREME RELATIVITY of the most material expression.

I am translating it to make myself understood – it wasn't like that at the time of the experience. Suppose, for example, that there was a disorder here or there in the body, not actually an illness (because illness implies some important inner factor such as an attack or the necessity for some transformation, many different things), but the outer expression of a disorder, such as swollen legs or a malfunctioning liver – not an illness, a disorder, a functional disorder. Well, it was all utterly unimportant: IT IN NO WAY CHANGES THE BODY'S TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS. Although we are in the habit of thinking that the body is very disturbed when it's ill, when something is going wrong, it's not so. It isn't disturbed in the way we understand it.

Then what is disturbed if not the body?

Oh, it's the physical mind, this stupid mind! It makes all the trouble, always.

It isn't the body at all?

No! The body is VERY enduring.

Then what suffers?

Suffering also comes through the physical mind, because if this entity is calmed down, we no longer suffer – exactly what happened to me!

The physical mind, you see, makes use of the nervous substance; if we withdraw it from the nervous substance, we no longer feel anything, for that's what gives us the perception of sensation.... We know something is wrong, but we no longer suffer from it.

This was a very important experience. Afterwards (especially yesterday afternoon and this morning), I gradually began to realize that this kind of indifferent detachment is the ESSENTIAL condition for the establishment of true Harmony in the most material Matter – the most external, physical Matter (*Mother pinches the skin of her hand*).

This experience has been like a stage – an indispensable stage for establishing this complete detachment; an indispensable stage so that the harmony of the body-consciousness (which came with the body's experience of the Divine) might have its effect upon the most external, superficial part of the body.

(silence)

This is the logical consequence of the research I have been doing for a long time now on the cause of illnesses and how to overcome them.

This ought to be noted down, because it's important. It has seemed all the more important to me these last two days. Beginning yesterday evening, there was a whole series of experiences, and this morning I came to a certain conclusion, whose starting point, I realized, was that experience I had upon coming out of trance....

The rest will come later.

It was the very moment I was coming out of the trance, at 3 a.m. – I came out of it with that³³; it was the first contact. I had forgotten to mention this to you because it took on importance only very recently.

* * *

(A little later, concerning the Saraswati Puja photos that Mother first refused to send to X on the 21st, then decided to send on the 25th, with a kind of imperative 'cubic certainty'.)

X has replied. He said something like this, which Amrita translated: 'I have received the photos. It is a...' I don't know whether he said 'illumination' or 'flame,' 'ascending towards the Truth, leading towards the Truth.' That's the impression it gave him: that it was leading somewhere.

³³That = the perception of the almost total unimportance of the external, material expression of the body's condition.

That's good – he received it as I sent it.

But would it really have made a difference to send these photos on the 21st, as Amrita wanted, rather than later?

Ah, yes! (How to explain?...) On the 21st, these photos could still have created a kind of difficulty in X's consciousness (a semiconscious difficulty) because of all the obstacles, all the contradictions, all that was coming to put up a fight – he is very sensitive to these things and I didn't want to put him in contact with that realm. Later, though... they had been given a good thump on the head (*Mother abruptly bangs down both hands*) and were keeping still. Then I said, 'All right, now you can send them.'

I always avoid putting him in contact with the realm of conflicts and contradictions because he is extremely sensitive and it causes him difficulties. That's why I said, 'No, don't bother.' Afterwards, it was fine!

(silence)

Now I have begun reading those hymns³⁴ Oh, now I understand! All those obstacles were a preparation straight from Sri Aurobindo. Now I understand! (What I mean by 'understand' is that it's a help for making progress.) I understand the nature of certain obstructions and certain difficulties, and what allows certain forces to oppose each other – I understand it quite clearly.

I have read only two hymns so far. By the time I reach the end... I will probably have found something.

* * *

(After the work, Mother begins speaking of her translation of 'The Synthesis of Yoga'.)

A few days ago I had an experience related to this. For some time I had been unable to work because I was unwell and my eyes were very tired. And two or three days ago, when I resumed the translation, I suddenly realized that I was seeing it quite differently! Something had happened during those days (how to put it?)... the position of the translation work in relation to the text was different. My last sentence was all I had with me, because I file my papers as I go along, so I went back to it along with the corresponding English sentence. 'Oh, look!' I said, 'That's how it goes!' And I made all the corrections quite spontaneously. The position really seemed different.

It's not yet perfect, it's still being worked on, but when I read it over, I saw that I had truly gone beyond the stage where one tries to find a correspondence with what one reads, an appropriate expression sufficiently close to the original text (that's the state I was in before). Now it's not like that anymore! The translation seems to come spontaneously: that is English, this is French – sometimes very different, sometimes very close. It was rather interesting, for you know that Sri Aurobindo was strongly drawn to the structure of the French language (he used to say that it created a far better, far clearer and far more forceful English than the Saxon structure), and often, while writing in English, he quite spontaneously used the French syntax. When it's like that, the translation adapts naturally – you get the impression that it was almost written in French. But when the structure is Saxon, what used to

³⁴The Vedic hymns translated by Sri Aurobindo (cf. *On the Veda*, Cent. Ed., X.241, ff.).

happen is that a French equivalent would come to me; but now it's almost as if something were directing: 'That is English, this is French.'

It was there, it was clear; but it's not yet permanent. Something is beginning. I hope it's going to become established before too long and that there will be no more translating difficulties.

Meanwhile, I am interested in seeing how it functions in your mind.... I think that after some time – perhaps not too long from now – we will be able to do this work together in an interesting way....

*The trouble is the time shortage. There isn't enough time!*³⁵

Oh, yes, this is very, very annoying, my child! You don't need to tell me! I have never in my life had enough time. Whatever I do, whether I am speaking to someone, organizing something, doing a particular work, the time is always too short, and I have the feeling, 'Oh, if I could only do that quietly!' Anything, no matter what, becomes interesting if it can be done calmly, with the right attitude and the right concentration. Yet we are perpetually hurried by the next thing coming along.

But this is a shortcoming. And I know it, I know it – I will find the solution. And when I have found it, it will be....

But time isn't elastic! If the days had three more hours in them it would be perfect!

Ye... es... but it's because we are still too bound up in the outermost form of things. You can't imagine the difference this makes! One does the SAME thing in exactly the same way, the motion is identical, but in one case it takes time, while in the other case it doesn't.

I have experienced this very concretely. In the mornings, for instance, I have a very short time, very limited and very fixed, to get to the balcony for darshan, and there are a number of completely material things I must do beforehand. It's quite natural to feel that time must always be the same – but it's not true. It's not true – even I am astonished!

With my japa the contrast is the same, it's absolutely astounding: I feel I am saying the words in the same way, with the same sound, exactly the same rhythm, but in some cases, with a particular inner attitude, the time by the clock is different! Yet nevertheless, bound up as we are in our physical Matter, we imagine it has taken exactly the same amount of time! That's what is so strange, this extraordinary relativity vis-à-vis the clock.

This must be what they tried to express by Joshua making the sun stand still.

There is something there... to be found. Something extraordinary. How wonderful it will be when we find it!

There are a few secrets like that – I feel them as secrets. And now and then it's as though I am given an example, as though I am being told, 'You see, that's really how it is.' And I am dumbfounded.... In ordinary language, one would say, 'It's miraculous!' But it isn't miraculous, it is something to be found.

And we shall find it!³⁶

So, mon petit, that's all.

³⁵Once again, Satprem was doing seven hours of japa daily.



36In the equations of Einstein's Theory of Relativity, quantities as 'immutable' as the mass of a body, the frequency of a vibration, or the time separating two events, are linked to the speed of the system where the physical event takes place. Recent experiments in outer space have allowed the validity of Einstein's equations to be verified. Thus a clock on a satellite in constant rotation around the Earth will measure sixty seconds between two audio signals, while an identical clock on Earth measures sixty-one seconds between the same two signals: time 'slows down' as speed increases. It is like the story of the space traveler returning to Earth less aged than his twin: you pass into another 'frame of reference.'

It is striking that Mother's body-experiences very often parallel recent theories of modern physics, as if mathematical equations were the means of formulating in human language certain complex phenomena, remote from our day to day reality, which Mother was living spontaneously in her body – perhaps 'at the speed of light.'

February

February 4, 1961

Here, I have brought you two flowers. They have two different yet very typically Indian fragrances: this one is Straightforwardness,³⁷ and this is SIMPLICITY.³⁸ I have always found that this one (*Mother holds out the Simplicity*) has a cleansing fragrance: when you breathe it, ah, everything becomes clean – it's wonderful! (*Mother breathes in the flower's fragrance.*) Once I cured myself of the onset of a cold with it – this can be done when you catch it at the very beginning. It fills you completely, the nose, the throat.... And this [Straightforwardness] is right at the other end of the spectrum. I find it very, very powerful – strange, isn't it?

It's not at all sweet-smelling.

Oh, no! It's quite strong.

It's largely the fragrances that have made me give flowers their significance.... I find these studies quite interesting; it corresponds to something really TRUE in Nature.

Once, without telling me anything, someone brought me a sprig of tulsi.³⁹ I smelled it and said, 'Oh, Devotion!' It was absolutely a... a vibration of devotion. Afterwards, I was told it's the plant of devotion to Krishna, consecrated to Krishna.

Another time, I was brought one of those big flowers (which are not really flowers) somewhat resembling corn, with long, very strongly scented stalks.⁴⁰ I smelled it and said, 'Ascetic Purity!' Just like that, from the odor alone. I was later told it was Shiva's flower when he was doing his *tapasya*.⁴¹

These people have an age-old knowledge – the ancient Vedic knowledge which they have preserved. In other words, it is something CONCRETELY TRUE: it doesn't depend at all on the mind, on thought or even on feelings – it's a vibration.

What about this flower, this long corn-like stalk?

Yes, this flower is Shiva, doing his *tapasya*.

And interestingly enough, its smell is fantastically attractive to snakes; it makes them come from far away to nest in the shrubs. And as you know, the serpent is the power of evolution, it is Shiva's own

³⁷*Ixora arborea* (Torch Tree).

³⁸*Hymenanthemum*, a tiny yellow flower like a miniature daisy.

³⁹*Ocimum sanctum* (Basil).

⁴⁰*Pandanus tectorius* (Keora or Screw Pine). Subsequently, Mother named this flower 'Spiritual Perfume.'

⁴¹*Tapasya*: ascetic or yogic discipline.

creature; he always puts them on his head and around his neck because they symbolize the power of evolution and transformation. And snakes like this flower; it often grows near rivers, and wherever there is a cluster of the plants you are sure to discover snake nests.

I find this very interesting, for WE didn't decide it should be like this: these are conscious vibrations in Nature. The fragrance, the color, the shape, are simply the spontaneous expressions of a true movement.

What does the serpent represent physically? What does it embody in the material world?

The vibration of evolution.

I don't mean symbolically, but physically, materially: the animal itself.

A formidable concentration of vitality – of all animals, the serpent has the most vitality. It's tremendous! And energy... progressive energy, energy of movement (progressive in the mechanical sense). Its meaning has been changed to a psychological one, but it's a force of movement.

Then why do these creatures always seem so evil to us?

The Christians say it's the spirit of evil, but this is due to a lack of understanding.

Theon always told me that the true interpretation of the Biblical story of the serpent in the Garden of Eden is that humanity wanted to pass from a state of animal-like divinity to the state of conscious divinity by means of mental development, symbolized by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. And this serpent, which Theon always said was iridescent, reflecting all the colors of the prism, was not at all the spirit of evil, but the power of evolution – the force, the power of evolution. And it was natural that this power of evolution would make them taste the fruit of knowledge.

Now, according to Theon, Jehovah was the chief of the *Asuras*,⁴² the supreme Asura, the egoistic God who wanted to dominate everything and keep everything under his control. And of course this act made him furious, for it enabled mankind to become gods through the power of an evolution of consciousness. And that's why he banished them from Paradise.

Although told in a childish manner, there's a great deal of truth in this story, a great deal.

(silence)

One could almost say that of all animals, the serpent is the most sensitive to hypnotic or magnetic power. If you have it (magnetic power comes from the most material vital), you can easily gain a mastery over snakes; all the people who like snakes have it and use it to make snakes obey them.... That's how I got out of my encounter with the cobra at Tlemcen⁴³ – do you know the story? Theon had told me about this power and I was aware of it in myself, so I was able to make the cobra obey and he left. Afterwards (I've told this story, too), I was visited by the King of Serpents – I mean the spirit of the species. He came to me in Tlemcen after this and another incident when I helped a cat overpower a little asp (there are asps over there like Cleopatra's, very dangerous) – a big russet angora cat. At first it started to play with the asp, but then naturally grew furious. The asp struck at the cat, but the cat leapt

⁴²*Asura*: demon of the mental plane embodying the forces of division and darkness.

⁴³Tlemcen: a town in northern Algeria.

aside with such swiftness that the asp missed it (I watched this going on for more than ten minutes, it was extraordinary). Just as the snake darted by, the cat would swat at it with all his claws out – and the asp got scratched each time, so that little by little it ran out of energy, and at the end.... I stopped the cat from eating it – that part was disgusting!

Then after these two incidents, I received a visit one night from the King of Serpents. He was wearing a superb crown on his head – symbolic, of course, but anyway, he was the spirit of the species. He had the appearance of a cobra, and he was wonderful! A formidable beast, and... wonderful! He said he had come to make a pact with me: I had demonstrated my power over his species, so he wanted to come to an understanding. ‘All right,’ I said, ‘what do you propose?’ ‘I not only promise that serpents won’t harm you,’ he replied, ‘but that they will obey you. But you must promise me something in return: never to kill one of them.’ I thought it over and said, ‘No, I can’t make this promise, because if ever one of yours attacks one of mine (a being that depends upon me), my pact with you could not stop me from protecting him. I can assure you that I have no bad feelings and no intention of killing – killing is not on my program! But I can’t commit myself, because it would restrict my freedom of decision.’ He left without replying, so it remains status quo.

I have had several experiences demonstrating my power over snakes (not so much as over cats – with cats it’s extraordinary!). Long ago, I often used to take a drive and then stop somewhere for a walk. One day after my walk, as I was getting back into the car to drive away (the door was still open), a very large snake came out, right from the spot I had just left. He was furious and heading straight towards the open door, ready to strike (luckily I was alone, neither the driver nor Pavitra were there, otherwise...). When the snake had come quite near, I looked at him closely and said, ‘What do you want? Why have you come here?’ There was a pause. Then he fell down flat and off he went. I hadn’t made a move, only asked him, ‘What do you want? Why have you come here?’ You know, they have a way of suddenly falling back, going limp, and prrrt! Gone!

How many, many experiences there were during those days at Tlemcen! Surely you’ve heard them.... Were you there when I told the story about the big toad? A huge toad, covered with warts. No?... The sitting room was upstairs in Theon’s house (the house was built on a hillside) and it was connected by large open doors to a small terrace that sat almost on top of the hill. I played the piano in this room every day. And one day, what did I see hopping in through the open bay windows but an enormous black toad – enormous! He sat down on his backside right in the entrance and puffed up his throat: poff! poff! And for the whole time I played, he stayed there going ‘Poff! poff!’, as though in a state of delight! When I finished, I turned around and he gave me one last ‘Poff!’ and hopped away. It was comical!

Theon also taught me how to turn aside lightning.

Is it possible?!

Ah, yes – he used to do it.

But it must take a formidable power!

Oh (*laughing*), he had a formidable power! Theon had a formidable power.... One stormy day (there were terrible thunderstorms there), he climbed to the high terrace above the sitting room. ‘It’s a strange time to be going up there,’ I said to him. He laughed, ‘Come along, don’t be afraid!’ So I joined him. He began some invocations and then I clearly saw a bolt of lightning that had been heading straight towards us suddenly swerve IN THE MIDST OF ITS COURSE. You will say it’s impossible, but I saw it turn aside and strike a tree farther away. I asked Theon, ‘Did you do that?’ He nodded.

Oh, that man was terrible – he had a terrible power. But quite a good external appearance!

Have you seen his photo? No? I'll have to show it to you. He was a handsome man, about sixty years old – between fifty and sixty.

And do you know how he received me when I arrived there?... It was the first time in my life I had traveled alone and the first time I had crossed the Mediterranean. Then there was a fairly long train ride between Oran and Tlemcen – anyway, I managed rather well: I got there. He met me at the station and we set off for his place by car (it was rather far away). Finally we reached his estate – a wonder! It spread across the hillside overlooking the whole valley of Tlemcen. We arrived from below and had to climb up some wide pathways. I said nothing – it was truly an experience from a material standpoint. When we came in sight of the house, he stopped: 'That's my house.' It was red! Painted red! And he added, 'When Barley came here, he asked me, "Why did you paint your house red?"' (Barley was a French occultist who put Theon in touch with France and was his first disciple.) There was a mischievous gleam in Theon's eyes and he smiled sardonically: 'I told Barley, "Because red goes well with green!"' "With that, I began to understand the gentleman.... We continued on our way uphill when suddenly, without warning, he spun around, planted himself in front of me, and said, 'Now you are at my mercy. Aren't you afraid?' Just like that. So I looked at him, smiled and replied, 'I'm never afraid. I have the Divine here.' (*Mother touches her heart.*)

Well, he really went pale.

There were all kinds of stories in the countryside, terrible stories....

One day I will find his photo and show it to you; he is there with a big dog he called 'Little Boy,' a dog that could exteriorize – he would dream and go out of his body! This dog had a kind of adoration for me. (I should mention that at a fixed time in the afternoons I used to meditate and go into trance. When it was finished I would go out walking with Theon, and the dog always came with us, usually coming to fetch me in my room.) One day I was lying on a divan in trance when I felt his cold muzzle nudging my hand to wake me. I opened my eyes... no dog. Yet I had positively, clearly felt his cold muzzle. So I got ready, went downstairs, and who did I find fast asleep on the landing but Little Boy – he was in trance as well! He had come to wake me in his sleep. When I reached the landing he woke up, shook himself and trotted off.

It was an interesting life....

We used to go for walks in the nearby countryside to see the tombs (it was a Muslim country). I no longer recall their Arabic name, but there is always a guardian at Muslim tombs – a sage, like the fakirs of India, a kind of priest responsible for the tomb. Pilgrims go there as well. Theon was friendly with one particular sage, and would speak with him and tell him things (at these times I would see the mischief in Theon's eyes). One day, Theon took me along. (According to Islamic tradition I should have been fully covered, but I always went out in a type of kimono!) Theon addressed the sage in Arabic; I didn't understand what he said, but the sage rose, bowed to me very ceremoniously and went off into another room, returning with three cups of sweetened mint tea (not teacups, they put it in special little glasses – extremely sweet tea, almost like mint syrup). The sage was watching me, I was obliged to take it....⁴⁴

The pine tree story is also from Tlemcen.

Someone had wanted to plant pine trees – Scotch firs, I think – and by mistake Norway spruce were sent instead. And it began to snow! It had never snowed there before, as you can imagine – it was only a few kilometers from the Sahara and boiling hot: 113° in the shade and 130° in the sun in summer. Well, one night Madame Theon, asleep in her bed, was awakened by a little gnome-like being – a

⁴⁴The story doesn't seem to end here, but perhaps Mother did not wish to say anything further.

Norwegian gnome with a pointed cap and pointed slippers turned up at the toes! From head to foot he was covered with snow, and it began melting onto the floor of her room, so she glared at him and said:

‘What are You doing here? You’re dripping wet! You’re making a mess of my floor!’

‘I’m here to tell you that we were called to this mountain and so we have come.’

‘Who are you?’

‘The Lord of the Snow.’

‘Very well,’ replied Madame Theon, ‘I shall see about that when I get up. Now go away, you’re spoiling my room!’

So the little gnome left.

But when she awoke, there was a puddle of water on the floor, so it couldn’t have been a dream. And when she looked out the window, all the hills were snow-covered!

It was the first time. They had lived there for years but had never seen snow. And every winter after that, the hillsides would be covered with snow.

(silence)

You see, when people are in this occult consciousness, everything is possible – it creates an atmosphere where ALL, all is possible. What to our European common sense seems impossible... is all possible.

She was English and he.... I don’t know whether he was Polish or Russian (he was of Jewish origin and had to leave his country for that reason). But they were both European.

It was a very interesting world. Really, what I saw there.... Well, once you left, you would ask yourself, ‘Was I dreaming?!’ It all seemed so fantastic!

But when I recounted these experiences to Sri Aurobindo, he told me it was quite natural: when you have the power, you live in and create around yourself an atmosphere where these things are possible.

Because it is all here, it just hasn’t been brought to the surface.

So, it’s time to go and we still haven’t worked – once again I’ve been talking away! Don’t bother noting it all down; I’ve told it just for you, for your personal entertainment!

But many things here will interest everyone!

No. Besides, there are things.... There are things I don’t want to speak of because... (and I haven’t said them, either) because, after all, he taught me a lot.

(long silence)

So, mon petit.... Sri Aurobindo always said the greatest obstacle to true understanding and participation in the Work is common sense. He said that’s why Nature creates madmen from time to time! They are people not strong enough to bear the dismantling of this petty stupidity called common sense.

It’s time to go now. Do you have anything to say?

Sometimes I am a little troubled because I don’t feel I am advancing much or having any experiences.... Nothing seems to be happening. It’s rather discouraging and at times I wonder why...

Lately, the nights are being spent in a subconscious realm that absolutely must be clarified; it’s

precisely the realm where one feels helpless, foolish, ignorant, utterly unprogressive, bound up in all sorts of stupidities. It all must be clarified.

These nights, I have been having experiences which, if I didn't know what I do or hadn't had the experiences I've had, would be very discouraging: how to get out of it? Seekers have always had the very same impression: that we are all incurable imbeciles. And always the same solution, to flee life and escape this folly. Now I see it from another angle....

But it's truly a burden.

Well, I am going on with the work, and what I would recommend to all those with the capacity and possibility to follow me is to remain very calm, don't fret, don't be troubled. And if you feel a little depressed, don't pay any attention to it; live quietly from minute to minute, without worrying about anything – it will pass. It will pass....

Naturally, the more calm and confident you are, the more quickly it will pass. That's all.

I can assure you that you are well fastened, very well indeed; you are automatically caught up in my whole forward movement. So don't worry. Begin your book on Sri Aurobindo.

But first I would have to reread everything!

Haven't you done that already?

In ten months I've had time to read two books!

It doesn't matter! Put your ideas down on paper. There are things you already know you want to say. Put it all on paper. I assure you it will do you good. I have seen it several times recently and I wanted to tell you: begin your book on Sri Aurobindo! Begin anywhere at all, at any point – the middle, the end, the beginning – it doesn't matter! Whatever you feel you have to say, write it down. It's good to keep yourself occupied like that now, during this period. And for our next meetings you can work a little on *The Synthesis of Yoga* and we will look at it together instead of you always making me talk!... I have increased your work, there will be no end to it. If it goes on like this, there will never be an end!

Fortunately!

So, mon petit, don't worry. You are SURE, sure not only to advance but to reach the goal. And as for this troubled mind, keep it occupied with the book on Sri Aurobindo.

Good-bye now, petit. Don't worry.



February 5, 1961

O my Lord,

*If this swelling of the legs is useful for Thy work, let it be.
But if it is only an effect of my stupidity,
I ardently pray that Thou shouldst remove it quickly.*

February 5, 1961



February 7, 1961

(Mother reads the following letter aloud in English, before sending it to a disciple.)

‘You ask me what you must do. It would be better to ask what you must be, because the circumstances and activities in life have not much importance. What is important is our way of reacting towards them.’

This is where it begins....

‘Human nature is such that when you concentrate on your body you fall ill; when you concentrate on your heart and feelings you become unhappy; when you concentrate on the mind you get bewildered.’

(Laughing) And it’s absolutely true!

‘There are two ways of getting out of this precarious condition.

‘One is very arduous: it is a severe and continuous tapasya. It is the way of the strong who are predestined for it.

‘The other is to find something worth concentrating upon that diverts your attention from your small, personal self. The most effective is a big ideal, but there are innumerable things that enter into this category. Most commonly, people choose marriage, because it is the most easily available *(Mother laughs)*. To love somebody and to love children makes you busy and compels you to forget your own self a little. But it is rarely successful, because love is not a common thing.

‘Others turn to art, others to science; some choose a social or a political life, etc., etc.

‘But here also, all depends on the sincerity and the endurance with which the chosen path is followed. Because here also, there are difficulties and obstacles to surmount.

‘So, in life, nothing comes without an effort and a struggle.

‘And if you are not ready for the effort and the struggle, then it is better to accept the fact that life will be dull and unsatisfactory, and submit quietly to this fact.’

That’s for the complainers.

(long silence)

And it's absolutely true – true at each stage, on all levels. Whatever level you have attained, even the very highest, if you concentrate on that [the body], it is finished! And all the difficulties begin, you know, with that very concentration that tries to draw down Light and Power – yogic concentration itself.

So it would seem... that if one wants to use his individuality, his body, to transform the whole – that is, if one wants to use his bodily presence to act upon the universal corporeal substance – there's no end to it. No end to the difficulties, no end to the battle... BATTLE!

(silence)

Those who try to lead a spiritual life have always been compared to warriors (there are classic writings on this subject), and one must truly be a *fighter* – 'fighter' is more exact than 'warrior' because you wage war against no one: everything wages war against you! Everything... (*Mother makes a gesture like an avalanche falling upon her*) and with such savage opposition!...

Ah, well....

(silence)

You see, as long as there are currents swirling within you – swirling in the mind or the vital – you tell yourself that these currents are the cause of all the difficulties. But when there is nothing any longer?... When there is a serene and immutable peace... but still you are relentlessly hounded – oh, with such ferocity!... You cannot imagine.

(silence)

Since mid-November, this body has been living through every possible difficulty, one after another, one after another – sometimes all together – with relentless violence!

It has been good for it (not externally, but inwardly, for its state of consciousness: the body-consciousness), it has done the body some good, but.... Now it's like this (*Mother opens her hands in a gesture of total surrender*). For each blow it receives (it's a bludgeoning, my child!), for each blow, it remains like this (*same gesture*). Yesterday, to make it happy, I wrote down something like this (concerning its latest difficulty): If this present difficulty is useful... (it's the body addressing the Lord, and the Lord.... it's a perpetual adoration: all the cells vibrate, vibrate with the joy of Love; yet despite that...), if this or that difficulty is useful for Your Work – so be it. But if it is an effect of my stupidity (it's the body speaking), if it's an effect of my own stupidity, then I beseech You to cure me of this stupidity as quickly as possible.

It doesn't ask to be cured of the illness! It doesn't ask, it is ready; 'All right,' it says. 'As long as I can keep going, I will keep going. As long as I can last, I will last. But that's not what I'm asking for: I am asking to be cured of my stupidity.' I believe this is what enables it to... yes, what gives it the necessary endurance.

That's enough. I said I wouldn't say anything! You see how you are.... When I'm up in my room, I always tell myself, 'Not a word today!' I don't want to start saying unpleasant things. And then....

Unpleasant?

Yes. It is better to speak of victory than... (*Mother laughs*) to speak of difficulties!

(silence)

When we used to discuss all these things and the difficulties of the path, Sri Aurobindo told me (he was comparing his body to mine): ‘I don’t have the stuff of such endurance. I was not cut out like that – your body is solid!’ (*gesture*)

What trials it has gone through!... And it’s so docile, so docile, it doesn’t complain.

So, my child, if your body has some trouble, just tell yourself they are sympathy pains (*Mother laughs*), then you won’t be troubled. That’s all.



February 11, 1961

(*Mother comes in with T.’s notebook of questions on Sri Aurobindo’s Aphorisms.*)

55 – Be wide in me, O Varuna; be mighty in me, O Indra; O Sun, be very bright and luminous; O Moon, be full of charm and sweetness. Be fierce and terrible, O Rudra; be impetuous and swift, O Maruts; be strong and bold, O Aryama; be voluptuous and pleasurable, O Bhaga; be tender and kind and loving and passionate, O Mitra. Be bright and revealing, O Dawn; O Night, be solemn and pregnant. O Life, be full, ready and buoyant; O Death, lead my steps from mansion to mansion. Harmonise all these, O Brahmanaspati. Let me not be subject to these gods, O Kali.⁴⁵

He invokes all these Vedic gods and tells each one to take possession of him; and THEN he tells Kali to free him from their influence! It is very amusing!

It’s written in black and white, but the people here read and don’t understand what they’re reading, and that’s a pity. They have to be told, ‘This means that’!

T. asks, ‘Why don’t the gods help us? Why do they keep us in bondage?’

That’s not what Sri Aurobindo means! He means he doesn’t WANT to be limited by the gods, not even by their powers. He wants to be vaster than they are: vaster, more total, more complete. It’s not a question of getting rid of their influence but of becoming more than that.

(silence)

For Sri Aurobindo, the important thing was always the Mother. As he explained it, the Mother has several aspects, and certain aspects are still unmanifest. So if he has represented the Mother by Kali in particular, I believe it’s in relation to all those gods. Because, as he wrote in *The Mother*, the aspects to be manifested depend upon the time, the need, the thing to be done. And he always said that unless one

⁴⁵Kali symbolizes the destroying or warrior-like aspect of the universal Mother: it is she who severs all bonds ... out of love.

understands and profoundly feels the aspect of Kali, one can never really participate in the Work in the world – he felt that a sort of timid weakness makes people recoil before this terrible aspect.

* * *

How are things going for you? All right?

Yes, but what about you?

Ah, for me it's all right.

All right... because it's always all right! But... Well, it doesn't matter.

The trouble is, they hinder my work (*Mother indicates her legs*). Not the work up in my room – there, on the contrary, it is going well, very well, clear, precise.... Yesterday again I worked on the translation of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, and it was so pleasant. So pleasant.

You see, I can't stand up; and these people persistently try to keep me standing.... But I can't remain standing, it's all out of order. Anyway, it doesn't matter, it will pass.

Last night I had a dream about you that made a vivid impression on me. It's probably absurd, but it was so real!... You had called me because you were going to leave your body: you had decided to leave and you wanted somehow to say good-bye. It was so real! I came to you and for a moment you placed my head on your knees, and I was filled with light; it was very tender. But at the same time, I knew you were saying good-bye, you were going to leave your body, and I wept in my dream. Then I went to sit in a corner because there were other people who probably had come to see you as well. I remained in that corner, stricken – it seemed so real, you understand! Just then, a man I didn't know entered the room (I knew he was French), a stranger dressed all in black, and he started making a loud commotion. He was smoking a pipe,⁴⁶ a very coarse man, and he wanted to make all the people there, the disciples, get out of the room....⁴⁷ It was so real! I awoke with a start and almost cried aloud, 'Ah, it's a dream! It's only a dream!'

Oh, it was that real!

Yes, it was that real! It was during the first hours of sleep, at 11:40 p.m. It was very, very vivid I awoke with a start, exclaiming to myself, 'Ah! It's only a dream!...' But it seemed so TRUE! It left a deep impression on me. I remained awake for a long time, wondering, 'What can this mean?...' You had a tiny, pinched face (you were dressed all in white), such a pinched face, very... (how can I express it?) emaciated, as though you were suffering.

(*Mother remains silent for a long while, then replies.*) Quite evidently, the adverse forces are not only trying to convince everyone but me too, that this is how it's going to turn out.

But I have as yet had no indications.

I have asked to be forewarned, not for reasons of.... It can happen any time at all, I am always ready. I can do nothing more for the work than what I am doing now, and I haven't a single practical

⁴⁶The 'pipe' is obviously symbolic.

⁴⁷As a matter of fact, twelve years later – in May 1973 – we were indeed all forced to 'get out.'

measure to take because I have already taken them all. So that isn't why, but to... AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE to withdraw from the body all that has been put into it. There is such an accumulation inside it of force, consciousness, power, oh!... All the cells are impregnated and it would take some time if it all had to be taken out. But I have had no indication of this, neither by night nor by day, neither awake nor in trance – no indication. The indication rather points to all that must be clarified, purified so the physical may keep what it received from that experience [of January 24, 1961].

From an ordinary standpoint, I believe the situation is dangerous, because... (*laughing*) the doctor refuses to tell me what the consequences might be. I asked him but he wouldn't tell me, so that's what it must mean! But I really have no indications and... I hope I won't be told, 'Now you must go,' only at the very last minute!

The body doesn't ask (it's so docile), it doesn't even ask for its sufferings to stop – it adapts to them. It's mainly my contact with people that makes the thing difficult: when I am all alone upstairs, everything goes well, quite well. But when I spend one or one and a half hours in the afternoon seeing people, afterwards I feel exhausted. That, obviously, is what's making the thing difficult... But the body doesn't complain. It doesn't complain, it's ready. The other day when it went back upstairs, it felt a bit – well, at the end of its resources, as though it had pushed itself to the limit. It said to the Lord (and it said this so clearly, as though the consciousness of the cells were speaking; I noted it down): If this (I can't call it an illness – there is no illness! It's a condition of general disequilibrium), if this condition is necessary for Your Work, then so be it, let it go on. But if it's an effect of my stupidity... (you see, it's the BODY saying, 'If it's because I don't understand or I am not adapting or not doing what I should or not taking the proper attitude...'), if it is an effect of my stupidity, then truly I pray that.... It asks only to change – to know and to change!

It is attached to nothing: none of its habits, none of its ways of being-nothing. It says in all sincerity, 'I ask only for the Light, only to change.' That is its state. It has never, never said, 'Oh, I'm tired, I've had enough!' Bah! It's not like that. It is attached to nothing – for a long, long time it has ceased to have desires – it is attached to nothing at all, to nothing. There isn't a single thing for which it says, 'Oh, I can't do without that!' Not one. It doesn't care-if something comes, it takes it; if it doesn't come, the body doesn't think about it. In other words, it's truly good-natured. But if this isn't sufficient, then it doesn't know and it says, 'If there is something I can't do or I don't know or I am not doing...' It asks for nothing more than to make the necessary effort!

(silence)

It all began with some extremely violent attacks. So if your dream is not premonitory, then it must be the result of 'their' formation, by which they intend to disseminate the conviction everywhere, as much as possible, that this is the end.... Two years ago, when I had to retire to my room, a formidable campaign was set into operation upon all the Ashram people; and all those who were a little receptive, either in dreams or through an openness to suggestions, heard it clearly announced: 'On the 9th of December of this year [1958], Mother will leave. There's no doubt about it, it's sure.' It was said to me as well: 'This will be the end, you will leave.' It was repeated to everybody, everybody, a great many people heard it – they were virtually awaiting it. And this is why (you know how extremely ill I was at the time, I was really ill), this is why I didn't react, but all the same I didn't go to the lake [the lake estate where Mother was to have gone on the 9th of December], because I told myself, 'If anything happens there, it will be awkward – I had better not go.' But still I knew it wasn't true, I knew it.

Now this kind of attack has stopped, it is no longer like that. But there are beings who send dreams. For example, some dreams were sent to Z (who, as you know, is quite clairvoyant), in which she was told I would be 'broken to pieces.' She was very upset and I had to intervene. Is your dream of this

nature, or... are you being forewarned? I don't know, I can't say.... If the doctor were asked, perhaps he would say that if it continues like this, obviously... (you see, one thing after another is getting disorganized), if it continues in this way, how long can the body last?

But this body feels so strongly that it exists ONLY because the divine Power is in it. And constantly, for the least thing, it has only one remedy (it doesn't think of resting, of not doing this or that, of taking medicine), its sole remedy is to call and call the Supreme – it goes on repeating its mantra. And as soon as it quietly repeats its mantra, it is perfectly content. Perfectly content.

(silence)

Two nights ago, I saw a formation of illness over the entire Ashram, a kind of adverse formation trying to prevent me from leaving my room, and I had to hide to get out, leave clandestinely. Oh, what a terrible atmosphere, so heavy, so gray – everybody was ill. And this formation had some actual effects because many people fell ill who normally never do. It is an adverse formation and there's no reason to concede its victory; it's simply a force which doesn't want us to succeed, of course – so we need not pay attention.

The trouble is, if I were thirty or forty years old, people wouldn't be affected. But unfortunately they think about how old I am all the time and... it creates a bad atmosphere. 'After all,' they keep saying, 'Mother is old and....' All the usual nonsense.

But I know differently and so does my body – to me it's all foolishness and has no importance. For instance, when Vinoba Bhave came to see me⁴⁸ (the man who takes care of poor people), he looked at me and said, 'Oh, you'll live a hundred years!' And I simply said, 'Yes,' it all seemed so natural. At that moment, there wasn't even (how to put it?) the least intimation of a doubt. Of course it's a cliché, but nevertheless, he said it; afterwards he told people that this was what he had felt. And it seems completely natural – I know if my body can last till it's a hundred (a little less than twenty years more), then we will be on the other side – the difficulty will be over.

I rather feel that your dream is another part of this present mass attack, but....

There was one bizarre little detail: someone told me you were leaving because you had swallowed something – I understood it to be a 'grain of rice' – and that was why you had to leave! You had swallowed something... and that was making you leave.

(After a long silence) This would rather indicate those who disapprove of my non-asceticism. It would seem to originate from those particular forces.

You see, there's a curious fluctuation possibly indicating that your dream is part of the present attack which continues with such violence.... The night before last, between midnight and half-past, there was a formidable attack. When I emerged from it, I felt that something had lifted, a victory had been won and that the body's condition had improved. It happens like that, the horizon clears and this Certainty comes with.... (The presence is always here – Sri Aurobindo and I are together almost every night – but the night when I saw that formation, the *illness spell* over the Ashram, Sri Aurobindo was quite sick in his bed, just as I saw him in 1950.) So when it lifts, all is well: once again there is harmony, there is joy, there is force... and again the whole thing continues, the effort continues, consciously. Yet there is a kind of fluctuation: it will go on like that for a few moments or a few hours and then suddenly everything becomes muddled again and I am beset by... a fatigue. A fatigue which is – I can't say almost unbearable, because nothing in the consciousness feels it to be unbearable – but it

⁴⁸In 1956.

makes me like this (*Mother clenches her fist tightly in a tension to 'hold on'*).

For example, at five-thirty in the evening, after I've spent an hour and a half here with people, it's a labor to climb the stairs; and by the time I get upstairs, I feel strained to the breaking point. Then I begin to walk (I don't stop, I don't rest), I immediately begin to walk with my japa, and within half an hour, pfft! it has lifted.

But the body's fatigue doesn't go: it's there – it's contained but it is there.

Yet I haven't the slightest impression that the horizon is blocked – you know, that the end is at hand, that the condition has to be changed and the Work begin again on another plane and in another way; in other words, that everything attempted so far would have been only a preparation for... for later. I still don't have that feeling. If I ever do, I will say, 'Very well, that's quite all right with me,' but I don't have this feeling. Will I ever have it?... I don't know – usually (*laughing*), I know these things! For instance, I know for certain when someone is going to die, even before there's the least indication. So....

In the present case, of course, the body is always saying, 'I am ready for everything – I will do anything at all'; yet I still can't say that it has this.... It's trying to be completely 'pure' according to the spiritual concept – it doesn't sense its separate personality. More and more, year after year, it has been striving to feel only the divine Presence, the divine Life, the divine Force and the divine Will, all within itself; and to feel that without them it is nothing, it doesn't exist. This is fully realized in its consciousness (the conscious part). In the subconscious and inconscient,⁴⁹ obviously... it is not realized... otherwise, logically, it shouldn't be ill.

The whole disorder evidently originates from the subconscious and inconscient; all the more so as it came with various indications (sent by the hostile forces – but this can always be useful, provided you are careful) saying, 'Yes, everything is going well in your higher centers, but...' (because the different points of attack have clearly followed the order of the centers). Four or five days ago, or maybe a week, before this latest difficulty occurred, I saw little beings coming out of the subconscious and saying, 'Ah! Your legs haven't had any trouble for a long time! It's the turn of the lower centers!' I swept it all away, of course, but....

Taken this way, it could be an indication that all this needs... a somewhat brutal preparation in order to be put in the necessary condition.

(*silence*)

The most violent attack came immediately after that experience [of January 24]. But of all the experiences in my life, this was the most wonderful – for the simple reason that it was NOT EVEN preceded by an aspiration, not even an aspiration from the body – it came directly as the Supreme Will, bang! (*Mother bangs down her hands in an irresistible gesture*) And then there was nothing, nothing but... THE thing, WITHOUT ANY PERSONAL PARTICIPATION WHATSOEVER: no will, no aspiration, not even the satisfaction of it – nothing. It was.... I was (in my higher consciousness) filled with wonder at the ABSOLUTENESS of the experience. It came, a thing DECREED and eternal – like that (*same irresistible gesture*).

⁴⁹The terminology used by Mother and Sri Aurobindo is distinct from the terminology of Western psychology. This is how Sri Aurobindo defines 'inconscient' and 'subconscious': 'All upon earth is based on the Inconscient, as it is called, though it is not really inconscient at all, but rather a complete "sub"-conscience, a suppressed or involved consciousness, in which there is everything but nothing is formulated or expressed. The subconscious lies between this Inconscient and the conscious mind, life and body.' (Cent. Ed., XXII, p. 354)

(silence)

This detachment, as I told you, came afterwards (it was evidently indispensable); and as soon as it came, everything began to get disorganized. Well, the detachment must surely have come so that.... Actually, my immediate impression was: so that I wouldn't get worried and say to myself, 'Oh, now it won't work any more – this is the end.' So I wouldn't worry. 'All right,' I said, 'don't bother with it.' (*gesture of surrender, hands opened upwards*) And for the first two or three days I was absolutely detached, watching and not bothering about it. It's only with this last attack on my legs.... Because the rest of it tired me and made me ill but it didn't hinder my work; but things become difficult when the legs don't function.

We shall see, mon petit! We'll see what's going to happen (*Mother laughs*).

But I have no doubts about that! It just came to me – not because I was consciously concerned about Your physical future: this dream simply came so unexpectedly and vividly....

No, no – I know that! I tell you, it can only be one of two things: either a good kick from the Enemy who is still trying to find a support in someone's mentality, or else premonitory.

I certainly hope not!

Yes, the grain of rice rather makes me think otherwise – that it comes from that quarter.

We shall see, we shall see! We have only to wait. One day we are sure to know!

(silence)

I know for certain that if I can keep going until 1964, then.... That isn't long, but it will be dangerous until 1964. It's these years in particular: '61, '62... '63 is better, '64 is decidedly better, and from 1965, we should be on the safe side.

But truly speaking, the minute one completely emerges from the ordinary mind, NO EXTERIOR SIGN IS A PROOF, absolutely none. There is absolutely no standard to go by – neither splendid good health nor good equilibrium, nor an almost general disorganization – none of these. All depends exclusively – exclusively – on... what the Lord has decided. Exclusively. Consequently, if one remains very quiet, one is sure to know what He has decided.

When I am perfectly tranquil, I immediately live in a beatific joy where questions don't arise – there are no questions! One asks for nothing – one LIVES! One lives happily, and that's all. There's no, 'Will it be like this? Will it be like that?' – how childish! There are no questions, questions don't arise. One is a beatitude manifesting, that is all.

All the rest is unimportant.

Basically, if we were capable of.... When I am up in my room, it's very easy, very easy: it comes and... what is a little more difficult is getting out of that state. There I am, like this (*gesture of blissful abandonment*), and when I feel it's time to go downstairs or I have something to do or someone is coming with lunch or whatever, then it's a little difficult; otherwise, I am like that (*same gesture*). What's difficult is my contact with the Ashram people. As soon as I go down and... simply that, having to fidget on my feet, giving people flowers.... And they are so unconsciously egotistical! If I don't go through the usual concentration on each one of them, they wonder, 'What is it? What's wrong? Have I done something?...' And... and it turns into a big drama.

Otherwise, concentration is very good, it doesn't tire me – when my body is not *drained*, when it

isn't constantly aware that it exists because it hurts here, hurts there, aches here, aches there (pain is what gives it a sense of existing), when the body is able to forget itself, things go well, it's nothing. Now the Force passes through me without causing fatigue, while many years ago, too much Force created tension; but it's not like that now, not at all – on the contrary, the body feels better when a lot of force has passed through it.

I don't know. We shall see.

(silence)

To realize what one has to realize, it is absolutely indispensable to be TOTALLY free of all ties with the ordinary, false consciousness common to material body-consciousness – the consciousness of the body-substance – deriving from the subconscious and the inconscient. This must not only be mastered (it has been mastered for a long time) – but there must be complete independence so that it no longer has the power to provoke any reaction at all. But we aren't there yet, it's still not like that, and as long as it isn't, we are not *on the safe side*. But when all the body's cells, even in their most subconscious reactions, will come to know what I myself know, that the Supreme alone exists, when they will know that, it will be good – not before. As I told you just now, they still have ordinary reactions: 'If I have to stay on my feet,' (this isn't a thought; I'm obliged to use words, but it isn't a thought), 'If I have to stay on my feet, I'm going to get tired; if I do too much, I'll be tired, if I do this, it will have that consequence, if....' This stupid, automatic little mechanism. it's not yet THAT, not yet That!

Of course, there's the constant difficulty of all the thoughts coming from outside and from the people you live with. But now the consciousness is such that these outer things are seen objectively (*Mother makes a gesture of seeing vibrations coming and stopping before her eyes*) – automatically I see everything that comes from the surrounding vibrations objectively: far, near, above, below, everywhere. The vibration comes WITH THE KNOWLEDGE. In other words, it's not that you see what it is only after it has been received and absorbed: it comes with the knowledge, and this is a great help. This type of perception has considerably increased and become much more precise since that experience [of January 24], much more; it has made a big difference.

But perhaps there will have to be many experiences of this nature before the work is done. It is possible.

Something from that experience – an effect, a vibratory effect, so to speak – has not left. But the totality of the experience is not here the whole time, it's not established. I had a reminder of it one night, but not for very long; all at once, for a brief moment, this same vibration came, and my entire body was nothing other than this Vibration.

It didn't last longer than a quarter of an hour and it wasn't as total.

(long silence)

This particular period was very bad last year too.⁵⁰ There was a tremendous opposition because of February 29th [first anniversary of the supramental manifestation]. But always a little before *Darshans*⁵¹ or days for special blessings there is a new outbreak of adverse attacks – always.

⁵⁰Three years earlier, in 1958, Mother had told Satprem that February and March were 'bad months,' and she had spoken of cyclical movements in Nature like those in the individual consciousness, with alternating periods of difficulty and progress.

⁵¹Four times a year, for 'darshan,' visitors poured into the Ashram to pass one by one before Mother (and formerly Sri Aurobindo as well) to receive her look.

Well, mon petit, we have done nothing but talk. It's time to go and we haven't done anything!

There is one question I would very much like to ask you... How can all this work you are doing on your body, this work of consciousness, act upon the corporeal substance outside you? How is it generally valid?

In the same way as always – because the vibration spreads out! That's how it works.

For example, each time I have been able to master something, I mean find the true solution for an 'illness' or a malfunctioning (the TRUE solution, not a mental one, not some ordinary knowledge, but the spiritual solution: the vibration that will UNDO the wrong working or set you on your feet again), it has always been very easy for me to cure the same thing in others, through the emission of this vibration.

That's how it works. Because all substance is ONE. All is one – we constantly forget that! We always have a sense of separation, and that is total, total falsehood; it's because we rely on what our eyes see, on... (*Mother touches her hands and arms, as if to indicate a separate body, cut off from other bodies*). That is truly Falsehood. As soon as your consciousness changes a little, you realize that... what we see is like an image plastered over something. But it's not true, NOT TRUE AT ALL. Even in the most material Matter, even a stone – even in a stone – as soon as one's consciousness changes, all this separation, all this division, completely vanishes. These are... (how to put it?) modes of concentration (something akin to yet not quite that), vibratory modes WITHIN THE SAME THING.⁵²

(The clock strikes) Oh, now I must go!

(silence)

My legs feel better after staying still! (*Mother laughs*)

Anyway, I don't need to tell you that the best attitude to take regarding this dream is: 'May Your Will be done,' and tranquil, tranquil.

⁵²Since 'Bohr's atom' at the beginning of the century, which with its electrons orbiting around a central nucleus like planets around a sun was to have been the mathematical model representing the ultimate constituent of matter, nuclear physicists have discovered many new elementary particles in the universe: from leptons to baryons, with neutrinos, pions, kaons, psi and khi particles in between!

A recent – and unifying (!) – theory postulated by the American Nobel Laureate, Murray Gell-Mann, would reduce this somewhat startling enumeration to more reasonable proportions through the introduction of a unique sub-particle constituting all matter: the *quark*. Nevertheless, there would still exist several kinds of quarks (e.g., 'strange,' 'charmed,' 'colored' in red, yellow and blue) for accommodating the various qualities of matter. A proton, for example, would consist of three quarks: red, yellow and blue. However, it should be noted that quarks are basically mathematical intermediaries to facilitate the comprehension or interpretation of certain experiments thus far unexplained. Moreover, the simple question still remains, even if they do exist materially: 'What are quarks made of?'

Nevertheless, a mathematical model resulting from a recent theory that attempts to represent our material universe strangely resembles Mother's perception, for it postulates a milieu consisting entirely of electromagnetic waves of very high frequency. According to this theory, Matter itself is the 'coagulation' of these waves at the moment they exceed a certain frequency threshold; our perception of emptiness, of fullness, of the hard or the transparent, being finally due only to the differences in vibratory frequencies – 'vibratory modes within the same thing.'

But what is this 'same thing'?

In the end, the *Agenda* is simply Mother's long quest in search of the reality of Matter: what is Matter... truly? The 'transformation', perhaps, means simply to 'un-cover' what is actually there.

You can even receive the answer yourself and know where this dream comes from – simply turn towards the supreme Truth, remain like that (*immobile*) and say, ‘May Your Will be done.’ It has to go very high, very high, to the highest, to that which is supreme Freedom. And then, if you are absolutely silent, you will have, not a thought or a word, but a kind of feeling, and you will know.

For me, at the moment, your dream does not correspond to a precise fact.

So good-bye, mon petit.

(Mother gets up to leave when suddenly, turning upon the threshold, She looks at Satprem with her eyes like diamonds and, in a tone of voice he has never heard before, as if it were a Command from above, says:)

In any case, one thing: never forget that what we have to do, we shall do; and we shall do it together because we have to do it together, that is all – like this, like that, in this way, in that way (*Mother tilts her hand from right to left as though to indicate this side of the world or the other, ‘life’ or ‘death’*), it has no importance. But this is the true fact.

There, petit.



February 14, 1961

Sri Aurobindo speaks here of the ‘higher soul.’⁵³ Yet we can’t translate it by ‘âme supérieure,’ as if there were an ‘inferior soul,’ can we?

Sri Aurobindo wants to make the distinction between the progressive soul (the soul which has experiences and progresses from life to life), what can be called the ‘lower soul,’ and the higher soul, that is, the eternal, immutable and divine soul – essentially divine. He wrote this when he was in contact with certain Theosophical writings, before I introduced Theon’s vocabulary to him. For Theon, there is the ‘divine center’ which is the eternal soul, and the ‘psychic being’; similarly, to avoid using the same word in both cases, Sri Aurobindo speaks in later writings of the ‘psychic being’ and of the divine center or ‘central being’ – the essential soul.

What if we translate it ‘la partie supérieure de l’âme,’ [the higher part of the soul], rather than ‘âme supérieure?’

Then the soul would appear to be divided!

* * *

⁵³*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. XX, p. 303.

(After the work, when it is time to leave, Mother makes the following remark.)

Later on there will be a lot to say.

(silence)

Ah, if we can hold out – or to put it in a better way, after we have held out – there will indeed be some interesting things to say....



February 18, 1961

(Mother gives Satprem a flower she has named 'Supramental Action.'⁵⁴)

Don't you find it beautiful?

How living, vibrant! Isn't it lovely!

Oh, the other day I had some zinnias (*Endurance*) – literally works of art, as though each petal had been painted, and all together so harmonious and so varied at the same time. Oh, Nature is wonderful!... In the end, we are just copycats, and clumsy ones at that.

(after a moment of silence)

Well, that's all. The situation remains the same.

And your legs?

Right in the subconscious, a subconscious... oh, hopelessly weak and dull and... (how to put it?) enslaved to a host of things – enslaved to EVERYTHING. It has been unfolding before me night after night, night after night, to show me. Last night, it was indescribable! It goes on and on – it seems to have no limits! Naturally, the body feels the effects of this, poor thing! It is the body's subconscious, but it's not personal – it is personal and not personal: it becomes personal only when it enters the body.

You can't imagine the accumulation of impressions recorded and stored in the subconscious, heaped one on top of another. Outwardly, you don't even notice, the waking consciousness isn't aware of it; but they come in, they keep on coming and coming, piling up... hideous!

So we'll see how long this is going to last.... I understand why people have never tried to change it: stir up that quagmire?... No! It takes a lot (*laughing*), a lot of courage! Oh, it's so easy to escape, so easy to say, 'None of that concerns me. I belong to higher spheres, it doesn't concern me.'

⁵⁴*Barringtonia speciosa.*

Anyway, it's obvious that nobody has succeeded, so far not a single person – and I understand! I understand. When you find yourself face to face with it, you wonder, 'How could anything possibly withstand this!'

My body was strongly built, solid, full of endurance – it had a tremendous energy, yet... it's beginning to feel that it isn't easy.

(silence)

Now, what do you have to tell me? I have nothing to say. As long as it's like this, it will keep going on, that's all. Later on, we shall see.

But is it necessary to descend to the same level as all these subconscious things? Can't they be acted upon from above?

Act from above.... My child, I have been acting from above for more than thirty years! It changes nothing – or if it changes... it doesn't transform.

Then one must descend to that level?

Yes. By acting from above, one can keep these things under control, hold them in place, prevent them from taking any unpleasant initiatives, but that's not.... To transform means to transform.

Even mastery can be achieved – it's quite easy to do from above. But for the transformation one must descend, and that is terrible.... Otherwise, the subconscious will never be transformed, it will remain as it is.

One can even pose as a superman! *(Mother laughs)* But it remains like that *(gesture in the air)*, it's not the real thing. It's not the new creation, it's not the next step in terrestrial evolution.

You might as well say, 'Why are you in a hurry? Wait for Nature to do it.' But Nature would take a few million years and in the process squander away a host of people and things. A few million years are unimportant to her – a passing breeze.

(silence)

Anyhow, I was sent here to do this work, so I am trying to do it, that's all. I could have.... If it hadn't been for the work, I would have left with Sri Aurobindo; there you have it. I remained only for the sake of the work – because it was there to be done and he told me to do it and I am doing it.... Otherwise, when one is perfectly conscious, one is far less limited without a body: one can see a hundred people at the same time, in a hundred different places, just as Sri Aurobindo is doing right now.

If I may ask, has Sri Aurobindo remained quite conscious of material things?

Completely. *(Mother reflects a moment)* Well, completely material, no – only through me. He is conscious of material things through me, not directly. He is very conscious in the subtle physical, but that's not quite the same, not quite *(Mother makes a vague gesture)*, there is a difference.

To give a rather curious example, there was a kind of *spell of illness* over the Ashram, stemming mainly from people's thoughts, from their way of thinking. It was quite widespread and it was horrible,

gloomy, full of fear, pettiness, blind submission, oh! Everyone was in a state of expectation....⁵⁵ In short, the atmosphere was such that there was an attempt to prevent me from leaving my room – I had to sneak out! It was disgusting! Well, on the very night I saw the *spell* over the Ashram, Sri Aurobindo was lying sick in his bed, just as I had seen him in 1950. Normally, we spend almost every night together, doing this, seeing that, arranging things, talking – it's a kind of second life behind this one, and it makes existence pleasant. But that night when I had to sneak out of my room (in my nightgown!), and people were trying to find me to... (*laughing*) force me back into bed, he was lying sick in bed – and this struck me hard, for it means these things still affect him in his consciousness. He was in a kind of trance and not at all well. It didn't last, but nonetheless...

Oh, the things that can collect there,⁵⁶ ugh!

(*silence*)

I hope you aren't noting down all these unpleasant things I'm saying, because it's really not encouraging.

It isn't encouraging, but it's relevant. It's part of the battle.

Oh, yes! That, surely! (*Mother laughs*)

If we spoke only of success.... And besides, we share these difficulties, more or less.

The day victory is won, all this will become infinitely interesting. But why speak of it if the victory isn't won? It just makes another lengthy description of... *failures*.

I don't believe in failure.

Run aground... like a ship!⁵⁷

A defeat?...

Ah, it's not a defeat! It is not a defeat (*Mother emphasizes this very vigorously*), it is not a defeat!

A postponement?

It is something which has not come to fruition because the time for it has not come; but what is done is done. It is not a defeat: what is gained is gained.

But I don't at all believe it won't bear fruit – a fruition is inevitable!

For the moment, I haven't been told. We'll see. No one (I mean no one with authority) has announced

⁵⁵Note that a few days earlier [the night of February 12], a disciple had a very symbolic dream in which she saw all the disciples gathered near the Ashram's main gate with an air of consternation, as though something had happened to Mother.

⁵⁶In the subconscious.

⁵⁷In French, the word 'échouer' means both 'to fail' and 'to run aground.'

to me it would be a failure. But we shall see.

The world's outer evolution is moving ahead so rapidly – in terms of scientific developments – that this change CANNOT be put off for millions of years. Man's inner development needs to catch up with all that, doesn't it?

Yes, surely – oh, yes!

It's inevitable.

* * *

(A short while later, concerning a book on Sri Aurobindo that Satprem was to write:⁵⁸)

Have you seen Bharatidi?⁵⁹

No, you know how I am, I don't go out.

She saw your publishers in Paris and they told her they are impatiently awaiting (*Mother is mocking*) your book on Sri Aurobindo....

I wish I could help them out!...

... that they are counting on it, that it's going to be a 'big hit' world-wide, and so forth. They put out a feeler with *L'Orpailleur*, and seem quite pleased. They are very, very impatient – they say now is the time. 'Now is the time' – but it will be more and more 'the time,' that's what they don't know! The time is only beginning.

The other day you were telling me to start this 'Sri Aurobindo' from any point at all....

Yes, can't you write that way?

I don't know. Perhaps I'm biased, but I feel that this book should flow from beginning to end.

Oh, yesterday or the day before, I had the occasion to write a sentence about Sri Aurobindo. It was in English and went something like this: In the world's history, what Sri Aurobindo represents is not a teaching nor even a revelation, but a decisive ACTION direct from the Supreme.

(silence)

⁵⁸*Sri Aurobindo et la Transformation du Monde [Sri Aurobindo and the Transformation of the World]*, a book that Editions du Seuil had asked Satprem to write and subsequently refused on the pretext that it did not conform to the 'spirit of the collection.' This book would never see the light of day. Satprem would later write another book entitled *Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness*.

⁵⁹A long-time disciple (Suzanne Karpeles) and a member of the École Française d'Extrême Orient.

I tell you this because just now as we were speaking about the book and you were saying it would come all at once in a single flow, I saw a kind of globe, like a sun – a sun shedding a twinkling dust of incandescent light (the sun was moving forward and this dust came twinkling in front of it), like this (*gesture*). It came towards you, then made a circle around you as if to say, ‘Here is the formation.’ It was magnificent! There was a creative warmth in it, a warmth like the sun’s – a power of Truth. And here again, I was given the same impression: that what Sri Aurobindo has come to bring is not a teaching, not even a revelation, but a FORMIDABLE action coming direct from the Supreme.

It is something pouring over the world.

Your book should convey this feeling – without stating it. Convey the feeling, transmit it – transmit this solar light.

(*silence*)

Our means are very poor, it’s true; if what I have just seen (and what I’m still seeing right now) could be expressed... what an absolutely splendid cover it would make for your book! But the best we can do is flat, flat, flat. Oh, our means are so poor!

* * *

(*After another digression, Mother again speaks of her experience of January 24, which triggered a backlash of subconscious difficulties.*)

A great deal has been brought to light since that experience.... It has been the starting point for such *turmoil*, even physically, such strong jolts that I might have wondered, ‘Was I dreaming or was it real?’.... And more and more I am coming to understand that this is the INDISPENSABLE preparation in the most material world for that experience to become definitively established, to express itself outwardly, constantly – this is obvious.

If the experience remained permanently, it would be something very close to omnipotence. I felt at the time that there was no such thing as an impossibility: it was truly the sensation of omnipotence. It is not omnipotence, because there is always a greater Omnipotence (one knows this only in the higher realms). But in terms of the material world, it was clearly something very, very different from all that has ever been seen or heard or told by all extant traditions – it all seems like the babbling of a child in comparison. At that moment itself there was only the ‘Something’ which sees, decides – and it is done.

(*silence*)

It did not remain. It has remained above, but not here.

It has given the physical consciousness a certain self-confidence in the sense that when I see something now, I am sure of it, there are no hesitations: ‘Is this right or not? Is this true, is this....’ All that has vanished – when I see, there is certainty. That is, there has really been a great change in the material CONSCIOUSNESS; but that formidable power is not there. I tell you, had that power stayed here, had I remained constantly as I was during those hours that night, well, many things would obviously have changed.

All this must be a preparation; there is a lot to be cleared out before the experience can be firmly established. That’s logical, it is quite natural.

What’s natural also – and annoying – is that people know nothing, understand nothing, even those

who see me all the time, like the doctor. He still hasn't been able to understand and he suddenly grew worried, thinking I was on my way to the other side! All this makes a mess of the atmosphere – it just doesn't help! Their faith is not sufficiently... (how to put it?) enlightened for them to keep still and simply say, 'Well, we shall see,' without questioning. They are not beyond questioning and this complicates matters.

I have a feeling (but these are old ideas) that if I were all alone somewhere and didn't have to look after these people and things, it would be easier. But that would not be the TRUE thing. For when I had the experience [of January 24], all that is normally under my care was present: the whole earth seemed to be present at the experience. There is no individuality (*Mother indicates her body*). I have difficulty finding an individuality now, even in my own body. What I do find in this body are the subconscious vibrations (conscious as well as subconscious) of a WORLD, a whole world of things. So it can be done ONLY on a large scale, otherwise it's the same old story... but then it's not the power HERE [in matter] – one simply quits this world. Oh, these people can't imagine what it is! They have made such a fuss over their 'departure.' They have wanted us to believe it was something quite extraordinary. But it's infantile, it's child's play, it's nothing at all to quit this world! One simply goes 'poff!', like diving into water – a little kick and one resurfaces, and that's all there is to it, it's done (*Mother laughs*).

And the same goes for their stories about attachments and desires – my god! There's nothing to it! Imagine, with anything concerning my body, through all this horror of the subconscious, NOT ONCE have I had to bear the consequence of a desire; I have always had to bear the consequences of the battle against life's unconscious and malicious resistances, but not once has something come up like that (*gesture of something resurging from below*) to tell me, 'You see! You had a desire, now here's the result of it!' Not once – very, very sincerely.

That's really not the difficulty – the difficulty is that the world is not ready! The very substance one is made of (*Mother touches her body*) shares in the world's lack of preparation – naturally! It's the same thing, the very same thing. Perhaps there is a tiny bit more light in this body, but so little that it's not worth mentioning-it's all the same thing.... Oh, a sordid slavery!

(silence)

I want you to have enough time to write your book, because I feel that Sri Aurobindo is interested in it – the sun that came a while ago was from him. I feel he is interested and confident you can do it.

What have you reread?

'Essays on the Gita.'

Oh, what a treasure that is – a gold mine!

And part of 'The Secret of the Veda,' as well as two other things because they contain many of Sri Aurobindo's letters: I re-read Z's book on Sri Aurobindo, since there are many letters in it, and....

Yes, only unfortunately *he has tampered with it.*

With the letters?!

Sri Aurobindo had made certain statements about me in those letters, and Z deleted them. (Anyway, it makes no difference for your book, because I'm not at all keen on having any statements about me published.)

But Z is not honest. He hasn't been honest at all.... We were forced to intervene once or twice because his deletions distorted the meaning. We finally told him (for the book published here), 'We won't publish it unless you restore these things.'

(silence)

I have also reread A.P.'s 'Evening Talks.'

Oh, in that, too, there are a lot of.... I myself wasn't present, so I don't know what Sri Aurobindo said, but I have a kind of feeling.... Just recently they wanted to publish something similar in *Mother India*⁶⁰ – 'Conversations' with me noted by A. Luckily it was sent to me first: I Cut EVERYTHING! Such platitudes, my child! Oh, it was disgusting. I said, 'This is impossible. I have NEVER spoken like that, never!' It was flat, flat, flat, with a superficial, word-for-word understanding! Oh, horrible, horrible.... Whatever passes through people is terribly, terribly lowered – popularized, made commonplace.

Anyhow.... Only Sri Aurobindo can speak of Sri Aurobindo. And as for their notes, it's still Sri Aurobindo A la Z, or Sri Aurobindo A la A, and all the more so since Sri Aurobindo wrote in very different ways depending upon the person he was writing to (*gesture indicating different levels*).

Well, if you feel the time will be found, it will surely be found.

Not only do I feel it, I'm set on it.

(Mother gets up to leave)

Tomorrow I'll be going down for handkerchief distribution⁶¹ – to wipe away the tears! (*Mother laughs like a mischievous little girl and goes out.*)



February 25, 1961

(Mother gives Satprem some flowers.)

This one is the Constant Remembrance of the Divine.⁶² This is Life Energy⁶³ and Purified Life

⁶⁰A monthly review published by the Ashram.

⁶¹On the Sunday preceding each Darshan (this February 21st, Mother would be 84), Mother used to distribute saris, napkins or handkerchiefs to the disciples.

Energy.⁶⁴ Then Faithfulness⁶⁵ : the peace of Faithfulness – Faithfulness to the Divine, of course, that's understood! This is Divine Solitude⁶⁶ ; this is the Aspiration for Transformation,⁶⁷ and the response: see how beautiful it is – like velvet! it's the Promise of Realization.⁶⁸ Here is Light Without Obscurity,⁶⁹ and finally Realization⁷⁰ – the first flower from the tree at Nanteuil.⁷¹

There you are.

You can easily make a speech using flowers and I have noticed that this can effectively replace the old Vedic images, for instance, which no longer hold meaning for us, or the ambiguous phraseology of the ancient initiations. Flower language is much better because it contains the Force and is extremely plastic – since it's not formulated in words, each one is free to arrange and receive it according to his own capacity. You can make long speeches using flowers!

I have nothing more to say now, except that the same situation prevails.

The Darshan went rather well, much better than I was expecting; but the following two days it was difficult here [in the body]. Then one night (I don't remember which), I... I can't say 'grumbled,' but... (it wasn't my body 'grumbling,' it is very docile and doesn't protest), but I sometimes find that... well, I found it a little exaggerated that day. 'All the same,' I said, 'this may be demanding a bit too much of it!' And then (*Mother laughs*) the whole night through, each time I awoke and looked (not with my physical eyes), I saw serpents! They were drawn up straight in a circle – magnificent cobras with white bellies, pearl gray backs and flecks of gold on their hoods! They surrounded me, watching, exactly as though they were saying, 'All the necessary energy is there! You needn't worry!' So I concluded that this whole affair⁷² must have its utility – it can't be simply the body's lack of plasticity and incapacity to receive. It must have a usefulness – but what?... I haven't understood. Perhaps I will get the

62*Lonicera japonica* (Japanese Honeysuckle).

63Chrysanthemum, yellow.

64Chrysanthemum, white.

65*Quisqualis indica*.

66*Malvaviscus arboreus*.

67*Millingtonia hortensis* (Indian Cork Tree).

68*Tropaeolum majus* (Nasturtium).

69*Eucharis grandiflora* (Amazon Lily).

70*Delonix regia* (Gul Mohur Tree).

71One of the Ashram houses.

72The physical disorder that had principally attacked Mother's legs.

explanation later, once it's over.

And the next afternoon, I closed my eyes while I was bathing and what did I see but an enormous, magnificent cobra! It gazed at me, almost smiling, and stuck out its tongue! 'Good,' I said, 'then everything is all right! (*laughing*) I have only to hold on.'

So, that's all I have to say.

And what about you?... Nothing to say?

(*long silence*)

There's an American living in Madras, a rather important man, it seems, and an intimate friend of Kennedy, the new President. He has read and reread all of Sri Aurobindo's books and is extremely interested. He wrote to Kennedy that he would like him to come here so he can bring him to the Ashram. This man has posed a very interesting question, drawing an analogy.... Deep in a forest, a deer goes to quench its thirst; no one is aware of it, yet someone who has made a special study of deer hunting would know by the tracks that the deer had passed by – not only what particular type of deer, but its age, size, sex, etc. Similarly, there must be people with a spiritual knowledge analogous to that of hunters, who can detect, perceive, that a person is in touch with the Supermind, while ordinary people know nothing about it and wouldn't notice. So he asks, 'I would like to know by what signs such a person can be recognized?'

It is a very intelligent question.

I replied very briefly in English. I haven't brought my answer with me, but I can tell you right away that there are two signs – two certain, infallible signs. I know them through personal experience, for they are two things that can ONLY come with the supramental consciousness; without it, one cannot possess them – no yogic effort, no discipline, no tapasya can give them to you, while they come almost automatically with the supramental consciousness.

The first sign is perfect equality as Sri Aurobindo has described it (you must know it, there's a whole chapter on equality, *samata*, in *The Synthesis of Yoga*) – exactly as he described it with such wonderful precision! But this equality (which is not 'equanimity') is a particular STATE where one relates to all things, outer and inner, and to each individual thing, in the same way. That is truly perfect equality: vibrations from things, from people, from contacts have no power to alter that state.

In my reply I mentioned this first, though I didn't give him all these explanations. I put it in a few words as a kind of test of his intelligence, and in a somewhat cryptic form to see if he would understand.

The second sign is a sense of ABSOLUTENESS in knowledge. As I have already told you, I had this with my experience [of January 24]. This state CANNOT be obtained through any region of the mind, even the most illumined and exalted. It's... not a 'certainty,' it's (*Mother lowers both hands like an irresistible block descending*), a kind of absoluteness, without even any possibility of hesitation (there's no question of doubt), or anything like that. Without (how to say it?).... All mental knowledge, even the highest, is a 'conclusive' knowledge, as it were: it comes as a conclusion of something else – an intuition, for instance (an intuition gives you a particular knowledge, and this knowledge is like the conclusion of the intuition). Even revelations are conclusions. They're all conclusions – the word 'conclusion' comes to me, but I don't know how to express it. This isn't the case, however, with the supramental experience – a kind of absolute. The feeling it gives is altogether unique – far beyond certainty, it is... (*Mother again makes the same irresistible gesture*) it is a FACT, things are FACTS. It is very, very difficult to explain. But with that... one naturally has a complete power – the two things always go together. (In my reply to this man I didn't speak of 'power' because the power is almost a

consequence and I didn't want to speak of consequences.) But the fact remains: a kind of absoluteness in knowledge springing from identity – one is the thing one knows and experiences: one is it. One knows it because one is it.

When these two signs are present (both are necessary, one is incomplete without the other), when a person possesses both, then you can be sure he has been in contact with the Supermind. So people who speak about receiving the Light... well, (*laughing*) it's a lot of hot air! But when both signs are present, you can be sure of your perception.⁷³

(*silence*)

It is quite evident that with these two things, you truly... it's what Sri Aurobindo says: *you step into another world*, you leave this entire hemisphere behind and enter another one. That's the feeling.

The day it's established, it will be good.

(*silence*)

And it results neither from an aspiration nor a seeking nor an effort nor a *tapasya* nor anything else: it comes, bang! (*same irresistible gesture*) And when it goes away, something like... like an imprint in the sand remains – in the consciousness. The consciousness is like a layer of sand on which the experience has left an imprint. If you stir about too much, the imprint vanishes; if you remain very still, it... But it's only an imprint. And it can't be imitated. What's marvelous is that it can't be imitated! All the rest, all the ascetic realizations, for example, can be imitated, but you can't imitate this, it is... there is no equivalent.

It's like the extraordinary feeling I had in my experience that night [January 24] – the individuality, even in its highest consciousness, even what's known as the *atman*⁷⁴ and the soul, had nothing to do with it. For it comes like this (*same gesture*), with an absoluteness. There is NO individual participation – it's a decision coming from the Supreme.

It's the same thing for the rest: all your aspiration, all your tapasya, all your efforts, all that is 'individual' – absolutely no effect. It comes, and there it is.

There is only one thing you can do – ANNUL YOURSELF as much as possible. If you can annul

⁷³The following is the exact text of Mother's reply to this American gentleman: *Two irrefutable signs prove that one is in relation with the Supermind:*

1. *A perfect and constant equality.*
2. *An absolute certainty in knowledge.*

To be perfect, the equality must be invariable and spontaneous, effortless, towards all circumstances, all happenings, all contacts, material or psychological, irrespective of their character and impact.

The absolute and indisputable certainty of an infallible knowledge through identity.

Mother then made the following commentary regarding the 'impact' of circumstances, happenings, etc.: 'There is no longer this kind of opposition between what is an agreeable impact and what is a disagreeable one. There are no more "agreeable" things and "disagreeable" things: they are simply vibrations one registers. Usually when people receive a shock they do this (*gesture of recoil*), then they reflect, concentrate, and finally restore peace. But equality does not mean that! That's not what it is. The state must be SPONTANEOUS, constant and invariable.'

⁷⁴*Atman*: the Self or Spirit.

yourself completely, then the experience is total. And if your 'disappearance' could be constant, the experience would be constantly there – but that's still far away.... I don't know if all this... (*Mother looks at her body*).

(silence)

Obviously, the body needed a test, a VERY SEVERE test, because... from a personal viewpoint, it's the only explanation I can find for all these disorders. There are many explanations from a general viewpoint, but.... Anyway, I will know the day I am told – all these imaginings are useless. But from a personal viewpoint.... You see, for a long time (more than a year now, probably almost two), this body hasn't felt its limits.⁷⁵ It is not at all its former self; it is scarcely more than a concentration now, a kind of agglomeration of something; it is not a body in a skin – not at all. It's a sort of agglomeration, a concentration of vibrations. And even what is normally called 'illness'... (but it is not illness, these are not illnesses, they are functional disorders), even these functional disorders don't have the same meaning for the body as they have for the doctor, for instance, or for ordinary people. It's not like that, the body doesn't feel it like that. It feels it rather as... as a kind of difficulty in adjusting to some new vibratory need.

(silence)

Formerly, when it couldn't do its work, the body had a kind of impatience – a feeling that despite all its aspiration and goodwill to be a fit instrument, these disorders were barring the way. Even this has completely gone.

Now the body has a kind of extraordinary smile for everything. At the end of the day, with the accumulation of everything coming from the people I have seen and the work I have done, when I have to push and pull myself just to climb the stairs because my legs are like... iron rods, without any will (that's the most terrible part: they don't respond to the will), even at times like these, when my arms are what pull me up the stairs (no longer my legs), the body doesn't protest, doesn't protest. Then it begins walking back and forth for japa. And after half an hour of walking, things are infinitely better (*Mother makes a gesture of the Force descending into her body*).

(silence)

But the body itself doesn't know why this is happening.... And in fact, it finds it unnecessary to try: it's like that because it's like that. And were it called upon, it would say, 'Very well, when conditions ought to be otherwise, they will be otherwise.' That's exactly its position.

(silence)

Evidently this was necessary.

We shall see.

(silence)

All this [the world, the Ashram] is held in my consciousness with a kind of essential compassion applying equally to all things, all difficulties, all obstacles. I receive letters by the dozens, as you know,

⁷⁵Here Mother gradually goes into trance and all the rest of this conversation will take place in a state of trance.

and each person comes to me with his own little misery or problem, inner or outer (a tiny pimple becomes... a mountain). When people come to me, my inner consciousness always responds in the same way, with a kind of... equality and compassion for all. But when people are talking to me or I am reading a letter and my body grows conscious of what it calls the 'to-do' they make over their miseries, it has a kind of feeling (I mean there is a feeling in the cells): 'Why do they take things like that! They are making things much more difficult.' The body understands. It understands that their way of taking the least little difficulty in such a blind, egotistical and *self-centered* manner, increases its difficulties furiously!

It's a rather amusing sensation, a combination of sensation and feeling, that the ordinary human attitude towards things multiplies and magnifies the difficulties to FANTASTIC proportions; while if they simply had the true attitude – a NORMAL attitude, quite simple, uncomplicated – ahh, all life would be much easier. For the body feels the vibrations (those very vibrations which concentrate to form a body), it feels their nature and sees that its 'normal' reaction, a peaceful and confident reaction, makes things so much easier! But as soon as this agitation of anxiety, fear, discontent comes in, the reaction of a will that 'doesn't want any of it'... oh, right away it becomes like water boiling: pff! pff! pff! like a machine. While if the difficulty is accepted with confidence and simplicity, it's reduced to its minimum, and I mean purely materially, in the material vibration itself.

Almost (I say 'almost' because the body hasn't had every experience), but almost all pains can be reduced to something absolutely negligible. (Of course, some pains it hasn't had, but it has had a sufficient number!) It's this anxiety resulting from a semi-mental vibration (the first stirrings of Mind) that complicates everything, everything! For example, take this difficulty I mentioned of climbing the stairs: in the doctor's consciousness or anyone else's, pain causes it. According to their ordinary reasoning, pain is what tenses the nerves and muscles so one can no longer walk – but this is absolutely FALSE. Pain does not prevent my body from doing anything at all. Pain isn't a factor, or rather it's a factor that can be easily *dealt with*. It's not that: it is Matter; Matter (probably cellular matter, or...) losing its capacity to respond to the will, to will-power. But why?... I don't know! It depends upon the particular disorganization; but why is it like that? I don't know.... Now each time I climb the stairs, I am trying to find the means of infusing Will in such a way that this lack of response doesn't last – but I still haven't found it. Although there's all this accumulated force and power and will (a tremendous accumulation, I am BATHED in it, the whole body is bathed in it!), yet for some reason it doesn't respond. Here and there, groups of cells fail to respond, and the Force cannot act. So what must be found is....

(silence)

Even in this, right now, in what I am saying, there's a sense of tapasya; there's the whole inner consciousness making the body do a tapasya. But my knowledge and my certainty (what I KNOW) is that it may be a necessary preparation, but it is NOT what accomplishes the work.⁷⁶ Rather, it is something acting like that (*Mother abruptly turns her hand over to indicate a reversal of states*). And when it goes 'like that,' it is done, all is done. All is done.

Are these disorders necessary for it to become 'like that'?... I have my doubts. I have my doubts. But the question can't even be asked, because what it implies seems to verge on a fatalism having no truth in itself – it is not a fatalism, not at all. What is it?... Something that defies expression.

(silence)

⁷⁶I.e., it is not through any effort or tapasya that the true change is brought about.

Even the body, the body itself, has the constant perception of bathing in the vibration of the CONCRETE divine Presence; so certainly from a psychological standpoint there is not the slightest shadow in the picture. Even from the material standpoint, this Presence is here. Yet although it is here, felt, perceived and experienced, there is still this disorder! (I call it disorder.)

(long silence)

It is a great Mystery... oh!

(silence)

All is a great Mystery.

(silence)

What Sri Aurobindo calls ‘the Great Secret’ – a GREAT secret.

The day we find it... things will change.

(silence)

How clearly one sees and knows that even the HIGHEST, the most luminous intelligence can understand nothing, nothing – it is idiotic to try.

(silence)

All our aspirations, all our seekings, all our ascents always remind me of that flower I gave you the other day⁷⁷ : it’s something like that (*Mother makes a vague, ethereal gesture*), vibrating, vibrating, vibrating, very luminous, very delicate, essentially very lovely... *(silence)* but it is not THAT (*Mother again turns her hand over to indicate an abrupt reversal*). It is not That.

(silence)

It is the VERY NATURE that changes, it is... something else.

Always, when this feeling of absoluteness – an absolute – comes (in whatever realm it may be), it carries EVERYTHING within it, it is....

(silence)

Even ‘absolute’ is not strong enough (*Mother makes a gesture of a solid block descending*). That is why one speaks of an irrevocable, irremediable absolute... but I don’t know how to express it. And NOTHING BUT this Absolute exists, there is nothing else. There is only that.

And everything is there in it.

When that comes, all is well.

(silence)

⁷⁷*Barringtonia speciosa* (‘Supramental Action’).

So, mon petit, I have talked the whole time and we still haven't done anything – another day without working! (*Mother laughs*)

It's a curious thing... speaking evidently helps me follow the experience. But I can't just begin speaking all alone up in my room! And talking to a tape recorder is useless. Up to now, it certainly flows the best with you – by far. I haven't tried with others, although occasionally I've said something to Nolini, but his receptivity is fuzzy (I don't know whether you can understand this impression: it's as though my words were going into cotton-wool). Once, as I told you, I spoke with R., and with him I felt that three quarters of it was absolutely lost – and as a matter of fact it was. But with you I begin to SEE, and the need to formulate makes me concentrate on my vision. And this I experience with you more than I ever have with anyone. So....

So you are bearing the consequences!

Well, then – do you need anything?... Nothing?... Petit, when I have something especially good for lunch, I always feel like giving it to you!...



February 28, 1961

I have brought you the exact text of that sentence on Sri Aurobindo I told you about the other day.⁷⁸ It was in reply to a letter....

You know this mental habit (which people take for mental superiority!) of lumping everything together on the same level: all the teachings, all the prophets, all the sects, all the religions. You know the habit: 'We are not prejudiced, we have no preferences – it's all the SAME THING.' A dreadful muddle!

It's one of the biggest mental difficulties of this age.

Anyway, in reply to this nonsense, I have said: 'Your error, to be precise, is that you go to the Theosophical Society, for example, with the same opening as to the Christian religion or to the Buddhist doctrine or with which you read one of Sri Aurobindo's books – and as a result, you are plunged into a confusion and a muddle and you don't understand anything about anything.'

And then the reply came to me very strongly; something took hold of me and I was, so to say, obliged to write: *What Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's history is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is a decisive action direct from the Supreme.*⁷⁹

It's not from me. It came from there (*gesture upwards*). But it pleased me.

⁷⁸See conversation of February 18: 'Sri Aurobindo is an Action...'

⁷⁹Mother added: *And I am just trying to fulfill that action.*



March

March 4, 1961

(Mother gives Satprem a ruffled mauve petunia.)

Look, it's Enthusiasm, see how beautiful it is! It must be put in water right away, otherwise.... It needs vital force and water is vital force. It's lovely! What fantasy! And this one is the Consciousness one with the Divine Consciousness,⁸⁰ but supramentalized – beginning to be supramentalized. And here is a very pretty Promise of Realization⁸¹, and here's Balance⁸² and... the Peace of Faithfulness.⁸³

There you are, mon petit.

Now then, anything to ask?

(silence)

Oh, it's dreadful, each one ... *(Mother is referring to the disciples).*

Well, never mind.

I'm not so late today.

What do you have to say?

To say?

Oh, to say, work on, do, decide, arrange, anything!

One day when you have time, I would like to ask you a question.

Ask it.

It isn't a personal question, but something that has been troubling me a little. It's about World Union⁸⁴ ...

80Hibiscus, double flower, light pink.

81Nasturtium.

82Begonia.

83Portlandia grandiflora.

84A movement launched by some disciples for 'the unification of the world.'

Oh, World Union!... What troubles you?

Listen, mon petit, you don't need to ask, I will tell you right away.

Sri Aurobindo has written somewhere that the movement of world transformation is double: first, the individual who does *sadhana*⁸⁵ and establishes contact with higher things; but at the same time, the world is a base and it must rise up a little and prepare itself for the realization to be achieved (this is putting it simply). Some people live merely on the surface – they come alive only when they stir about restlessly. Whatever happens inside them (if anything does!) is immediately thrown out into movement. Such people always need an outer activity; take J. for example: he fastened onto Sri Aurobindo's phrase, 'World Union,' and came to tell me he wanted....

He has been like that since the beginning (*gesture expressing agitation*), and he had a go at a considerable number of things – but none ever succeeded! He has no method, no sense of order and he doesn't know how to organize work. So World Union is simply to let him have his way, like letting a horse gallop.

I used to send him around to the various centers (because he had to do something!), and he would visit, speak to people... I don't know about what. And during one of his trips to Delhi he happened to meet Z, who had been sent by the government of India to the Soviet Union, where it seems he delivered an extraordinary speech (it must have been extraordinary, because I have been receiving letters from everywhere, including America, asking for the text of this sensational speech in which he apparently spoke of 'human unity'). So Z returned with the idea of forming a 'World Union,' and J. and Z met. Furthermore, they were encouraged by S.M.⁸⁶ and even by the Prime Minister,⁸⁷ who probably had a special liking for Z and had given him a lot of encouragement. That's how things began.

I treated it as something altogether secondary and unimportant – when people need to gallop, I let them gallop (but I hadn't met Z). Then J. and Z left together on a speaking-tour of Africa and there things began to go sour, because Z was working in one way and J. in another. Finally, they were at odds and came back here to tell me, 'World Union is off to a good start – with a quarrel!' (*Mother laughs*) Z was saying, 'Nothing can be done unless we base ourselves EXCLUSIVELY on the teaching of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and they are behind us giving support.' And J. said, 'No, no! We are not sectarian! We accept all ideas, all theories, etc.' I replied, and as it happens, I said that Z was right, though with one corrective: he had been saying that people had to recognize us as their guru. 'No,' I said, 'it's absolutely useless – not only useless, I refuse. I don't want to be anybody's guru. People should simply be told that things are to be done on the basis of Sri Aurobindo's thought.'⁸⁸

So they kept pulling in opposing directions. Eventually they tried to set something up (which still didn't hold together), and finally they wrote me a little more clearly. (There is one very nice man involved, Y. He isn't particularly intellectual but has a lot of common sense and a very faithful heart – a very good man.) Y asked me some direct questions, without beating around the bush, and I replied directly: 'World Union is an entirely superficial thing, without any depth, based on the fact that Sri Aurobindo said "the masses" must be helped to follow the progress of "the elite" – well, let them go ahead! If they enjoy it, let them go right ahead!'... I didn't say it exactly like that (I was a bit more polite!), but that was the gist of it.

⁸⁵*Sadhana*: spiritual quest and discipline.

⁸⁶A politician, disciple of Sri Aurobindo and friend of Jawaharlal Nehru.

⁸⁷Nehru.

Now it has all fallen flat. They are carrying on with their little activities, but it's absolutely unimportant. They publish a small journal, and V, who writes for them, is far from stupid. She is rather intelligent and I have some control over her, so I will try to stop her from writing nonsense.

They also had a sudden brainstorm to affiliate with the Sri Aurobindo Society. But the Sri Aurobindo Society has absolutely nothing to do with their project: it's a strictly external thing, organized by businessmen to bring in money – EXCLUSIVELY. That is, they want to put people in a position where they feel obliged to give (so far they have succeeded and I believe they will succeed). But this has nothing to do with working for an ideal, it is COMPLETELY practical.⁸⁹ And of course, World Union has nothing to offer the Sri Aurobindo Society: they would simply siphon off funds. So I told them, 'Nothing doing – it's out of the question!'

'But your name is there as President of the Sri Aurobindo Society,' they said. My name is there to give an entirely material guarantee that the money donated will really and truly be used for the Work to be done and for nothing else; it's only a moral and purely practical guarantee. These people aren't even asked to understand what Sri Aurobindo has said but simply to participate. It's a different matter for those in World Union, who are working for an ideal: they want to prepare the world to receive (*laughing*) the Supermind! Let them prepare it! It doesn't matter, they will achieve nothing at all, or very little. It's unimportant. That's my point of view and I have told them so.

In addition, I told them it was preferable not to hold any functions here – they can be held at Tapogiri in the Himalayas, or elsewhere – and this is understood. They did hold a seminar here (a perfect fiasco, besides), but it had been arranged a long time ago. They invited people who promised to come (I think very few showed up in the end), and it was of very secondary importance. Nevertheless, I told them, 'This is the last time; don't do it here any more. At Tapogiri, as often as you like: it's a beautiful spot in the mountains, a health resort, people go there in the summer for the fresh air and... to sit around and chat!'

What shocked me was.... You know I rarely leave my house, but each time I would come to the Ashram for darshan or to see you, always, as if by chance, I would find J. off in a corner with some European visitor. The repetition of this coincidence made me wonder, 'What's he doing so systematically with ALL the European visitors?!' And it shocked me to imagine myself in their place: just suppose, I said to myself, you are coming to the Ashram for the first time, very open, in search of a great truth, and you stumble upon this man who tells you: Sri Aurobindo = World Union. Well, my first reaction would be, 'I'm leaving, I'm not interested!'

88This is the text of Mother's reply to J.: 'I have read Z's account and your own letter on this subject. in the faith of his devotion, he must have been quite offended. The truth in what he says is that any idea, WHATEVER its degree of truth, is ineffective if it does not also carry the power acquired through realization, by a real change of consciousness. And if the proponent of this idea does not himself have the realization, he must seek the backing of those who have the power. On the other hand, what you say is true: an idea ought to be accepted on the basis of its inherent truth and not because of the personality expounding it, however great this personality may be. These two truths or aspects of the question are equally true but also equally incomplete: they are not the whole truth. Both of them must be accepted and combined with many other aspects of the question if you want to even begin to approach the dynamic power of the realization. Don't you see how ridiculous this situation is? Three people of goodwill meet in the hope of teaching men the necessity for a "World Union" and they are not even able to keep a tolerant or tolerable union among themselves, because each sees a different angle of the procedure to be followed for implementing their plan.'

89Although it began as a fund-raising organization for the needs of the Ashram and Auroville, this 'strictly external thing,' which had 'nothing to do with working for an ideal,' would, after Mother's departure, coolly declare itself the 'owner' and guide of Auroville.

It serves as a test, my child, a very good test! There are many things like that....

For example, there's someone here, Mridou (you know her, she's as round as a barrel⁹⁰), who gossips to everybody. She had quite a clientele for a long time because she used to make Indian sweets and the Europeans went to her place for snacks. She is a woman who, when there isn't any gossip, invents it! She tells all the dirt imaginable to all her visitors – a fact which was brought to my attention. I recall that a long time ago Sir Akbar from Hyderabad warned me, 'You know, she's the second Mother of the Ashram, be careful!' 'It's a good test,' I replied, 'people who don't immediately sense what it is aren't worthy of coming here!'

Well, with J. it's the same – from an intellectual viewpoint, it's the very same thing: if people are taken in by what he says, it means they're not ready AT ALL.

But the danger isn't to be 'taken in,' but to be disgusted by it!

Disgusted? But that amounts to the same thing!

They'll say, 'So that's Sri Aurobindo!...'

Then it proves they have never read anything by Sri Aurobindo. It's unimportant. No, it's even better than unimportant: it's a test. This place is full of tests, full, full, full! People don't realize.... One can see it happening, as though it were done on purpose just to trip people up (not really 'on purpose,' but that's how it acts). It protects me from hordes of good-for-nothings! I am not eager to have a lot of people here.

Another thing that shocked me was in their journal....

I've never seen it – full of stupidities?

It's outrageous! First of all, they use Sri Aurobindo's name, putting it on a level with Vinoba Bhave or Dr. Schweitzer or who knows what other sage; then at the end they launch an appeal for people to 'enroll'! So the reader is left wondering, 'But I thought Sri Aurobindo....' You understand, this indiscriminate mixture, this diminishing....

I wrote them a letter where I stuck this nonsense of theirs right under their noses.

Listen to this appeal: 'If the opportunity offered by this movement appeals to you, if you have the feeling that you are one of those who have been prepared to collaborate in the spiritual adventure, we invite you to write to us, enrolling yourself as a member of World Union....'

I'm going to send this to V, asking her innocently, 'Has this appeared in your journal? Because it would be better if it didn't: we don't make propaganda.' Oh, I am hard on them, you know!

But it doesn't matter, we must always keep smiling, mon petit. In the end, good always comes out of such things – it's a sorting-out! A splendid, splendid sifter!

The truth is, VERY FEW people are ready to be here, very few. We have taken in all types – we accept, we accept, we accept – afterwards, we sift. And the sifting goes on more and more. Actually, we accept everything, the entire earth, and then... (*gesture*) there's a *churning*. And everything useless goes away.

⁹⁰Sri Aurobindo's old cook.

The opposition is clearly becoming stronger and stronger, a very good sign – it means we are advancing. But circumstances are growing more and more difficult: the least thing becomes an opportunity to demonstrate bad will and spite – on the part of the government, on the part of people here and so on. Seen from a superficial viewpoint, we are more than ever in the soup. But this makes my heart rejoice! I take it as a sign that we are getting nearer.

Don't let it trouble you, you must always smile. Smile, be absolutely above it all – absolutely.

(silence)

I told them.... Because at World Union they asked me what their mistake had been (they didn't state it so candidly, but in a roundabout way), and I replied (not so candidly, either – not exactly in a roundabout way, but in general terms). I told them their mistake was being unfaithful and I explained that to be unfaithful means to put everything on the same level (that's when I sent them those lines⁹¹). I told them, 'Your error was in saying: "One teaching among many teachings – so let us be broad-minded and accept all teachings."' So along with all the teachings, you accept every stupidity possible.

But if someone is taken in, it proves he's at an elementary stage and unready.

Oh, I've had all sorts of examples!... All these errors serve as tests. Take the case of P.: for a long time, whenever someone arrived from the outside world and asked to be instructed, he was sent to P.'s room. (I didn't send them, but they would be told, 'Go speak to P.!') And P. is the sectarian par excellence! He would tell people, 'Unless you acknowledge Sri Aurobindo as the ONLY one who knows the truth, you are good for nothing!' Naturally (*laughing*), many rebelled! (You see, out of laziness – so as not to be bothered with seeing people or answering their questions – one says, 'Go find so-and-so, go ask so-and-so,' and passes off the work to another.) Well, it was finally understood that this wasn't very tactful, and perhaps it would be better not to send visitors to P., since so many had been put off. But actually.... I was told about it afterwards and I replied, 'Let people read and see for THEMSELVES whether or not it suits them! What difference does it make if they're put off! If they are, it means they NEED to be put off! We'll see later.' Some of them have come full circle and returned. Others never came back – because they weren't meant to. That's how it goes. Basically, all this has NO importance. Or we could put it in another way: everything is perfectly all right.

(silence)

Each one of us must learn his lesson – that's a different matter. WE are not perfectly all right because we can be better – circumstances are simply the outgrowth of what we are, nothing else. And we needn't worry – I never worry myself!

What's more, I find it so funny! A time comes when all such things seem so childish, so stupid, so... *meaningless!* What difference can it make! As long as people are still at that level, that's where they are. The day they get away from it, they too will smile!

Of course, I have a kind of responsibility because people expect me to organize everything, so I try to put things in their place. That's why I told them I preferred they didn't hold seminars here, because it appears a bit... I didn't say 'parasitic,' but it's like (*laughing*) a toadstool growing on an oak tree!

* * *

91'... What Sri Aurobindo represents is not a teaching, not even a revelation, it is an ACTION direct from the Supreme.' (See conversation of February 18, 1961.)

(Mother begins the work. A mosquito bites her and she remarks.)

Oh, I don't like that! You know, I have filariasis in my legs. Yes, I think so – there's every reason to believe it! *(Mother laughs)* But it doesn't matter, it will go away... I think. I don't like to be bitten on account of the germs; but during the day there's nothing for them to pick up – they only pick up germs around midnight.

There are no mosquitoes upstairs.

(Mother resumes the work.)

* * *

(At the doorway, as she is leaving.)

Each time I have a 'Cheerfulness,'⁹² I will bring it to you. It is a GREAT FORCE, a great force.

Things are going very badly: a pack of enemies assailing me, friends deserting us – it's going very, very badly. Then yesterday evening, while I was walking for japa and all these 'good tidings' were arriving, I said to the Lord, 'Listen, Lord, you have Indra to help the good people – I beseech you, send him to me; he has some work to do!' *(Mother laughs)* Then my walk became so amusing! I was watching them come in as I walked – Indra and all the other gods – and they were hard at work. Delightful!



March 7, 1961

(Mother arrives late... as usual. Crossing the corridor was like crossing through a jungle and has taken her almost one hour.)

How long it has taken me... oh, it's disgraceful! I'll have to start coming down at 9 a.m., but then I won't get anything done upstairs, that's the problem.

But Mother, the earlier you come down, the more of your time they'll take!

Anyway....

I have brought you a whole discourse! *(Mother gives Satprem some flowers)* First, the goal of the

⁹²Gaillardia.

Vedas: Immortality.⁹³ That was their goal: the Truth that led to Immortality. Immortality was their ambition. I don't think it was physical immortality – but I am not sure, because they do speak of the *forefathers* and this refers to the initiatory tradition prior to the Vedas as well as the Kabbala, and immortality on earth is spoken of there: the earth transformed – Sri Aurobindo's idea. So although they didn't explicitly state it, perhaps they knew.

(*Mother gives more flowers*) This one is more on the personal side: Friendship with the Divine,⁹⁴ the friendly relationship you can have with the Divine – you understand each other, you don't fear each other, you're good friends! And this one is a wonder! (*Mother gives Divine Love Governing the World*⁹⁵) What strength! It's generous, expansive, without narrowness, pettiness, or limitations – when that comes....

* * *

(*After the work, towards the end of the conversation:*)

I've been feeling lazy! I have received an abominable avalanche of letters, three-quarters of which are useless – but I have to look at them to know whether they're useless or not, so it takes up my morning before coming downstairs. I usually translated *The Synthesis of Yoga* in the afternoons, or answered questions, but nowadays I go into concentration at that time: I don't do anything. I want to cure my legs.

I am determined to cure myself – they told me it was incurable. The doctors poison you to cure you (as they poisoned our poor S.), and that's no cure! When they don't feel the need to show off in front of the patient, they openly acknowledge that it isn't at all sure that their medicines cure: they merely make you inoffensive to others! But I don't believe in it – I don't believe in doctors, I don't believe in their remedies and I don't believe in their science (they are very useful, they have a great social utility, but for myself, I don't believe in it).

I knew when I caught it: it was at the Playground.⁹⁶ Certain people poisoned me with a mosquito bite – the instant the mosquito bit me, I knew, because it so happens I am a little bit conscious! But I controlled it like this (*gesture of holding the disease in abeyance and under control*), so it couldn't stir. Probably it would never have stirred if I hadn't had that experience [of January 24] and the body didn't need to be made ready. For the body to be 'ready,' a host of things belonging to the *dasyus*, as the Vedas say, can't be stored inside it! These are very nasty little *dasyus* (*laughing*), they have to be chased away!

When the disease came back, I said to myself, 'Very well, this means it must be *dealt with in a new way*.'

⁹³*Gomphrena globosa* (purple Amaranth).

⁹⁴*Canna indica*, small red flower.

⁹⁵*Brownea coccinea*.

⁹⁶Until 1958, Mother went daily to the Ashram Playground, from 5 p.m. to 9 or 10 in the evening, to see people and give her direct spiritual help to some 2,000 disciples who passed before her one by one.

(silence)

The body is waging a magnificent battle, oh, a magnificent battle! And it's faring quite well.

It's a rather difficult business and could last a long time: I don't want it to stay dormant and then resurface with the next attack of this or that. So I am proceeding slowly and cautiously, which means it takes time: I concentrate and work on it for one hour after lunch every day. (I used to do my translation then, but since I'm at least two or three years ahead of the *Bulletin*, it doesn't matter, I won't be delaying the work! I have almost finished 'The Yoga of Divine Love'; now there's only 'The Yoga of Self-Perfection' – that's quite a job, oh!... I miss it – this translation was my pleasure.) But the work on the body is useful – something must be attempted in life; we are here to do something new, aren't we?!

But were you bitten like that 'by accident'?

No, no, it wasn't by accident, but because....

Mon petit, I don't claim to be totally universal, but in any case I am open enough to receive.... You see, given the quantity of material I have taken into my consciousness, it's quite natural that the body bears the consequences. There is nothing, not one wrong movement, that my body doesn't feel⁹⁷; generally, though, things are automatically set in order (*gesture indicating that Mother automatically purifies and masters the vibrations coming to her*). But there are times – especially when it coincides with a revolt of adverse forces who don't want to give up their domain and enter into battle with all their might – when I must admit it's hard.... If I had some hours of solitude it would be easier. But particularly during the period of my Playground activities, I was badgered, harassed; I would rush from one thing to the next, one thing to the next, I had no nights to speak of – nights of two and a half or three hours rest, which isn't enough, there's no time to put things in order.

Under those conditions I could only hold the thing like this (*same gesture of muzzling the illness or holding it in abeyance*).

All the same, wasn't it a mosquito that bit you?

Yes, it was a mosquito.

It was a mosquito but there was an INSTANTANEOUS, localized poisoning. It was... hideous! I knew it when I got the bite and I tried... but it was at the Playground, I was busy and I couldn't do anything about it until an hour or an hour and a half later. Then it was too late, it was already circulating in the blood.

I have had three bites like that, but not of the same thing; I knew this last bite was filariasis. It was on the arm. Since my legs are covered when I am outside they don't get bitten; but my arms....

Long ago when Sri Aurobindo was still here, I was once bitten by a mosquito that had just come from a leper. He was sitting on the street corner, although I didn't know it at the time (I was in my bathroom, just opposite the corner). Suddenly I was bitten here, on the chin, and I knew IMMEDIATELY: 'Leprosy!' Within a few seconds it became terrible – hideous! I did what was necessary at once (as I was in the bathroom, I had what I needed). Then I suddenly got the impulse to go and look out the window – there was the leper. And I understood: the mosquito had been kind enough to fly from him to me! But in that instance I was able to check it right away (it lasted three or four days) – I say 'check' because they claim leprosy sometimes takes fifteen years to surface, so....

⁹⁷Mother is referring to the movements of consciousness, both good and bad, of those whom she has accepted as disciples and taken into her consciousness.

But now it has been more than fifteen years (*Mother laughs*), so it's finished!

No, the difference, the great difference, is that when one is conscious, the thing is KNOWN immediately and one can react.

That's all, mon petit.

Yesterday I sent you something (there wasn't much of it, just a taste): it's a bit of the pistachio puree they make for me. Concentrated food.⁹⁸ It's funny – I have got it into my head to make you a gourmand! (*Mother laughs*) Good-bye, mon petit.



March 11, 1961

Good morning!

I have to fight to get out of there! I began to scold them all, saying they were wasting all my time – then I was able to come. Otherwise, impossible.

(Satprem puts a cushion under Mother's feet)

It's almost a luxury these days!

When was it?... Not last night, but the night before, I was with you; and while I was with you I heard the clock strike. I didn't count, but I told myself, 'It's 4 o'clock!' and got out of bed.... One hour later I saw that it was 4 a.m.: I had risen at 3, and by then we had been together for quite a long time. I had gone... where? I don't know. I was living some place (certainly somewhere in the Mind) and we were together, we had been working together, doing all sorts of things and spending a lot of time together... I don't know for how long because time there isn't the same.

Then I had to return here – that is, to my home in India, to Sri Aurobindo's home: I had to return to Sri Aurobindo's home. Pavitra was also working there and he didn't want to let me leave; when he saw me going he came and tried to stop me. You, on the contrary, were helping. 'Shall I take anything with me or not?' I asked myself... 'Oh, I don't need anything, I'll go all alone.' That worried you a little because of the journey ahead, and you said, 'There will be many complications....' 'It doesn't matter!' I replied (*laughing*). But if you only knew how living and concrete it was! The impressions were so... there was the feeling of making a long voyage – it was a LONG voyage, as if I were crossing the sea (but not physically), a long voyage. I remember setting off (I was with you, you were there) and telling myself, 'At last he's here! At last I have found a reasonable being who doesn't try to stop me from doing what I must do!' I had... (*laughing mischievously*) a very high opinion of you, that's why I am telling you this!

I was abruptly awakened by the clock striking (I didn't count), and my immediate feeling was, 'Well, he is really very nice! Now there's a good companion!'

⁹⁸Mother was already seeking the 'new food.'

But I woke up one hour too early!⁹⁹

Oh! (*Mother notices the flowers in her hands*) This is Supramental Beauty,¹⁰⁰ this is Supramental Victory and this is the Endurance¹⁰¹ needed to get there and the Promise.¹⁰² Then this one is a lily that grows here (*Mother looks at it for a long time*)... and inside I have put “Attachment for the Divine”¹⁰³ – I brought it for you because it’s so lovely.

What are we working on today? (*Mother looks at Sri Aurobindo’s Aphorisms*)... I’ve already begun replying!

Already!

Yes... you know, I read and it comes like that, brrm! Like opening a tap. (*Mother reads.*)

56 – When, O eager disputant, thou hast prevailed in a debate, then art thou greatly to be pitied; for thou hast lost a chance of widening knowledge.

How fine! Many things could be said....

What use are discussions? in general, those who like to discuss need the stimulation of contradiction to clarify their ideas.

It’s a thing I live almost constantly: I have people like that around me!

It’s clearly the sign of a rudimentary intellectual stage.

But if you can ‘witness’ a discussion as an impartial spectator (I mean even if you are involved in the discussion), you can always gain a lot from it by considering a question or a problem from several points of view; and by trying to reconcile opposing opinions, you can broaden your ideas and rise to a more comprehensive synthesis.

What is the best way to make others understand what you feel to be true?

By LIVING it – there is no other way.

* * *

Read me another aphorism.

58 -The animal, before he is corrupted, has not yet eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the god has abandoned it for the tree of eternal life; man stands between the upper heaven and the lower nature.

⁹⁹This enigmatic experience was actually very important, as Mother will later explain (on March 17): Mother was leaving behind the subjection to mental functioning, symbolized by this place where Pavitra was working.

¹⁰⁰Salmon-colored hibiscus.

¹⁰¹Zinnia.

¹⁰²Nasturtium (Promise of Realization).

¹⁰³Violet orchid.

Do you have a question?

Was there actually an earthly paradise? Why was man banished from it?

From an historical viewpoint (not psychological, but historical), based on my memories (only I can't prove it, nothing can be proved, and I don't believe any truly historical proof has come down to us – or in any case, it hasn't been found yet), but according to my memories.... (*Mother shuts her eyes as if she were going off in search of her memories; she will speak all the rest of the time with eyes closed.*) Certainly at one period of the earth's history there was a kind of 'earthly paradise,' in the sense that there was a perfectly harmonious and perfectly natural life: the manifestation of Mind was in accord – was STILL in complete accord – and in total harmony with the ascending march of Nature, without perversion or deformation. This was the first stage of Mind's manifestation in material forms.

How long did it last? It's hard to say. But for man it was a life like a sort of flowering of animal life. My memory is of a life where the body was perfectly adapted to its natural surroundings. The climate was in harmony with the needs of the body, the body with the demands of the climate. Life was wholly spontaneous and natural, as a more luminous and conscious animal life would be, with absolutely none of the complications and deformations brought in later by the mind as it developed.

I have a recollection of this life, for I relived it when I first became conscious of the life of the entire earth; but I can't say how long it lasted or what area it covered – I don't know. I only remember the conditions at that time, the state of material Nature and the human form and human consciousness, and this state of harmony with all the other elements of the earth: harmony with animal life and a great harmony with plant life – there was a kind of spontaneous knowledge of how to use the things of Nature, the qualities of plants, fruits and all that vegetal nature could offer. There was no aggressiveness, no fear, no contradictions or frictions, and no perversion – the mind was pure, simple, luminous, uncomplicated.

It was certainly with the progress of evolution, the march of evolution, when the mind began to develop for and in itself, that ALL the complications, all the deformations began. Indeed, this story of Genesis that seems so childish does contain a truth. The old traditions like Genesis resembled the Vedas in that each letter¹⁰⁴ was the symbol of a knowledge; it was the pictorial résumé of a traditional knowledge, just as the Veda contains a pictorial résumé of the knowledge of its time. But what's more, even the symbol had a reality in the sense that there was truly a period when life upon earth (the first manifestation of mentalized Matter in human forms) was still in complete harmony with all that preceded it. It was only later that....

The tree of knowledge symbolizes this kind of knowledge... a material knowledge, no longer divine because its origin was the sense of division – and this is what began to spoil everything. How long did this period last? I am unable to say. (Because my recollection is of an almost immortal life; it seems that it was through some sort of evolutionary accident that the destruction of forms became necessary for progress.) And where did it take place?... From certain impressions (but these are only impressions), it would seem that it was in the vicinity of either this side of Ceylon and India or the other, I don't know exactly (*Mother indicates the Indian Ocean either west of Ceylon and India or to the east between Ceylon and Java*), although certainly the place no longer exists; it must have been swallowed up by the sea. I have a very clear vision of the place and a consciousness of that life and its forms, but I can't give precise material details. Did it last for centuries, was it...? I don't know. To tell the truth, when I was reliving those moments I wasn't curious about such details (for one is in another mental state where there is no curiosity about material details: all things turn into psychological facts). It was

¹⁰⁴In Genesis, Hebraic letters.

something so simple, luminous, harmonious, far removed from all our usual preoccupations – those very preoccupations with time and space. It was a spontaneous life, extremely beautiful, and so close to Nature – a natural flowering of animal life. There were no oppositions or contradictions, nothing of the kind – everything happened in the best way possible.

(silence)

A similar memory has recurred several times under different circumstances – not exactly the same scene and the same images, because it wasn't something I was seeing but A LIFE I was living. During a certain period, at any time, night or day, I would experience a particular state of trance in which I was rediscovering a life I had lived. I was fully conscious that this life had to do with the first flowering of the human form upon earth, the first human forms able to incarnate the divine being from above. This was the first time I could manifest in a particular terrestrial form (not a general life but an individual form); that is, for the first time, through the mentalization of this material substance, the junction between the higher Being and the lower being was made. I have lived that several times, and always in a similar setting and with quite a similar feeling of such joyous simplicity, without complexity, without problems, without all these questions. It was the blossoming of a joy of life – nothing but that; love and harmony prevailed: flowers, minerals, animals all got along together perfectly.

Things began to go wrong only a LONG time afterwards, long after (but this is a personal impression), probably because certain mental crystallizations were necessary, inevitable, for the general evolution, so that the mind might prepare itself to move on to something else. That was when... oh, it seems like a fall into a pit – into ugliness, darkness! Everything became so dark, so ugly, so difficult, so painful. Really... really the sense of a fall.

(silence)

Theon used to say it wasn't... (how to put it?) inevitable. In the total freedom of the manifestation, this voluntary separation from the Origin is the cause of all the disorder. How to explain it?... Words express these things so poorly. We can call it 'inevitable' because it happened! But outside of this creation, a creation can be imagined (or could have been) where this disorder would not have occurred. Sri Aurobindo saw it in approximately the same way: a sort of 'accident,' as it were – but an 'accident' allowing the manifestation a far greater and more total perfection than if it had never occurred. But this is all still in the realm of speculation, and useless speculation at that. In any case, the experience, the feeling, is that all at once... (*Mother makes the gesture of a brutal fall*)oh!

For the earth it probably happened like that, all at once: a sort of ascent, then the fall. But the earth is a tiny concentration – universally, it's something else.

(silence)

The recollection of those times is stored somewhere in the terrestrial memory, that region where all the earth's memories are inscribed. Those who contact this memory can tell you that the earthly paradise still exists somewhere.¹⁰⁵ But it doesn't exist materially.... I don't know, I don't see it.

(silence)

¹⁰⁵This is the origin of such legends as *Shangri-la*. But 'psychics' most often confuse two planes of reality, attributing to their SUBTLE vision a physical reality which it does not have or no longer has: they have merely entered into contact with the memory of a place – for places, like beings, have a memory.

Of course, these things can always be explained symbolically. Theon explained man's 'exile' like this: when the Being – the hostile Being – assumed the position of the Lord Supreme in relation to the terrestrial realization, he didn't want humanity to progress mentally and gain a knowledge permitting it to stop obeying him!... That is Theon's occult explanation.

According to Theon, the serpent wasn't the spirit of evil at all: it was the evolutionary Force. And Sri Aurobindo fully agreed; he used to tell me the same thing: the evolutionary power – the mental evolutionary power - is what drove man to gain knowledge, a knowledge of division. And it's a fact that along with the sense of Good and Evil, man became conscious of himself. Naturally, this ruined everything and he couldn't stay: it was his own consciousness that drove him out of Paradise - he could no longer stay.

Then was man banished by Jehovah or by his own consciousness?

These are just two ways of seeing the same thing!

In my view, all these old Scriptures and ancient traditions have a graduated content (*gesture showing different levels of understanding*), and according to the needs of the epoch and the people, one symbol or another was drawn upon. But a time comes when one goes beyond these things and sees them from what Sri Aurobindo calls 'the other hemisphere,' where one realizes that they are only modes of expression to put one in contact – a kind of bridge or link between the lower way of seeing and the higher way of knowing.

A time comes when all these disputes – 'Ah, no, this is like this, that is like that'-seem so silly, so silly! And there is nothing more comical than this spontaneous reply so many people give: 'Oh, that's impossible!' Because with even the most rudimentary intellectual development, you would know you couldn't even think of something if it weren't possible!

(silence)

So, mon petit, we've had quite a little chat!

Is everything all right?... Yes?

Oh, you know, if that could be found again.... But how?¹⁰⁶

Truly, they have ruined the earth, they have ruined it – they have ruined the atmosphere, they have ruined everything; and for it to become something like the earthly paradise again, ohh! What a long way to go – psychologically, above all. Even the very structure of Matter (*Mother fingers the air around her*), with their bombs and their experiments and their... oh, they have made a mess of it all! They have truly made a mess of Matter.

Probably... no, not probably, it's absolutely certain that this was necessary for kneading matter, churning it, to prepare it to receive THAT, the new thing yet to manifest.

Matter was very simple and very harmonious and very luminous not complex enough. This complexity is what ruined everything, but... it will lead to an INFINITELY more conscious realization – infinitely more conscious. And when the earth again becomes as harmonious, simple, luminous, pure – simple, pure, purely divine – then, with this complexity added, something can be achieved.

(Mother gets up to leave)

¹⁰⁶At first, Mother had said, 'But it's impossible.' Then, laughing, she had the word deleted.

It doesn't matter. Fundamentally, it doesn't matter. Yesterday, while I was walking... I was walking in a kind of universe that was EXCLUSIVELY the Divine – it could be touched, felt: it was within, without, everywhere. For three-quarters of an hour, NOTHING but that, everywhere. Well, I can assure you, at that moment there were certainly no more problems! And what simplicity – nothing to think about, nothing to want, nothing to decide: to BE, be, be!... (*Mother seems to dance*) To be in the infinite complexity of a perfect unity: all was there but nothing was separate; all was in movement yet nothing changed place. Truly an experience.

When we become like that, it will be very easy.

Good-bye, petit. You know, I enjoy myself, I enjoy myself every day!

(Mother notices a brilliant crimson canna in a vase)

Ah, there were many flowers just like that in the landscape of this earthly paradise – red, and so beautiful!



March 14, 1961

I haven't done anything, haven't worked, answered questions or prepared anything for the *Bulletin* – nothing at all.

You saw the people waiting in the corridor; when I left the other day they kept me there three-quarters of an hour and when I finally went upstairs I was ill. Not really ill but not well. So once again it's all called into question.

(Mother goes on to the work and listens to the reading of an old Talk of September 26, 1956, to be used in the Bulletin. In it she speaks of moments of opening in the yoga: 'Then there are days when you are in contact with the divine Consciousness, with the Grace, and all is tinged, colored by this Presence, and things which usually seem dull to you become charming and pleasant... all is alive, all is vibrant. At other moments you are clouded, closed, you no longer feel anything, everything loses its flavor... you are like a walking block of wood.')

It comes and goes along the way, you don't keep it permanently; it's like crossing a zone, a perfumed zone, and then it's past – for the moment, it's over. A fleeting caress.

* * *

After the work:

Generally speaking, the progress is undeniable, but the physical body... has a terrible need of rest. It's annoying, for it prevents me from working.

How to explain it?... It's rather strange: the cells' attitude and their state of consciousness is changing with extraordinary rapidity; yet from the ordinary viewpoint of 'health,' there is no

corresponding progress, quite the contrary. One could say things aren't going too well, but I see clearly that it's not true. I see that it isn't true, it's only an appearance – but reconciling the two is difficult.

I have been honored with a form of filariasis which occurs perhaps not once in a million cases.... The doctor isn't tearing his hair out because that's not his way, but he is perplexed.

Yet the cells sense so perfectly that.... All the experiences in the subconscious at night are quite clear proofs that a... a WORLD of things and vibrations is being cleaned out – all the vibrations opposed to the cellular transformation. But how can one poor little body do all that work! The body is quite aware of being a sort of accumulation and concentration of things (yet there is inevitably a selection – *Mother laughs* – because if everything had to be worked out in one center like this [her body] it would be... it would be impossible!). Oh, if you knew how deeply and perfectly convinced these cells are, in all their groups and sub-groups, each one individually and within the whole, that everything is not only decreed but executed by the Divine, everything! They have a kind of constant awareness so filled with... a conscious faith in His infinite wisdom, even when there is what the ordinary consciousness calls suffering or pain. That's not what it is for the cells – it's something else! And the result is a state of... yes, a state of peaceful combat. There is a sense of Peace, the vibration of Peace, and simultaneously an impression of being... (how to put it?) on the alert, in constant combat. Taken all together it creates a rather odd situation.

And within... oh! It's like waves, constantly, the equivalent of those nuances of color I was speaking about, waves of this joy of life, the joy of life rippling past, touching; but instead of being.... At times, you see, the body is in a sort of equilibrium (what we, in our ordinary outer consciousness, call 'equilibrium' – that is, good health), and then this joy is constant, like swells on the sea (*Mother shapes great waves*): it seems to flow on behind everything; it comes and shows its face for a moment, then vanishes. In the very tiny things of life – yes, physical life – the joy of these things, the joy life contains, this luminous, special kind of vibration, rises up as if to remind us that it's here; it is here, it mustn't be forgotten, it's here – but it's kept down by this... tension.

Then, from time to time, everything seems to be on the edge of a precipice; the body doesn't fall simply because it keeps its balance – but without this higher state of perfect faith, one would surely fall!

All together, as a whole, it's something so... peculiar!¹⁰⁷

(long silence)

There is the sense of all things being organized, concentrated and arranged according to a rhythm, and if one manages to maintain the equilibrium of this rhythm, something permanent results.

(Mother remains absorbed within herself) The equilibrium of this rhythm – the progressive, ascending equilibrium of this rhythm – is what, for Matter, must constitute Immortality.

Yet even so....



¹⁰⁷In other words, this coexistence or simultaneity of joy and tension, combat and peace, progress in the cellular consciousness and physical disequilibrium, form a physiological whole which is ... strange.

March 17, 1961

Aphorism 57 – Because the tiger acts according to his nature and knows not anything else, therefore he is divine and there is no evil in him. If he questioned himself, then he would be a criminal.

What might be man's true, 'natural' state? Why does he question himself?

Man on earth¹⁰⁸ is a transitional being and as a consequence, in the course of his evolution, he has had several successive natures following an ascending curve which they will continue to follow until he touches the threshold of the supramental nature and is transformed into a superman. This curve is the spiral of mental development.

We tend to apply the word 'natural' to all spontaneous manifestation not resulting from a choice or a preconceived decision – that is, with no intrusion of mental activity. That's why a man with an only slightly mentalized vital spontaneity seems more 'natural' to us in his simplicity. But this naturalness bears a close resemblance to the animal's and is quite low on the human evolutionary scale. Man will not recapture this spontaneity free of mental intrusion until he attains the supramental level, until he goes beyond the mind and emerges into the higher Truth.

Up to that point, all his modes of being are naturally natural! But with the mind's intrusion, evolution was, if not falsified, then deformed, because by its very nature the mind was open to perversion and it became perverted almost from the start (or to be more exact, it was perverted by the asuric forces). And what appears unnatural to us now is this state of perversion. At any rate, it's a deformation.

You ask why man questions himself, but this is the nature of the mind!

Along with the mind came individualization, an acute sense of separation and a more or less precise feeling of a freedom of choice – all of that, all these psychological states, are the natural consequences of mental life and open the door to everything we see now, from the worst aberrations to the most rigorous principles. Man's impression of being free to choose between one thing and another is the deformation of a true principle that will be totally realizable only when the soul or psychic being becomes conscious in him; were the soul to govern the being, man's life would truly be a conscious expression of the supreme Will translated individually. But in the normal human state, such a case is still extremely rare and doesn't seem at all natural to ordinary human consciousness – it seems almost supernatural!

Man questions himself because the mental instrument is made for seeing all possibilities and because the human being feels he has freedom of choice... and the immediate consequences are the notions of good and evil, right and wrong, and all the ensuing miseries. This can't be called a bad thing: it's an intermediate stage – not a very pleasant stage, but nevertheless... it was certainly inevitable for a total development.

* * *

Between 2 and 3 o'clock this morning, I had an experience... something resurging from the subconscious: it was appalling, my child, the *disclosure* of an appalling inefficiency! Disgraceful!

¹⁰⁸Satprem later asked if this 'on earth' wasn't superfluous and Mother replied: 'This precision is not superfluous; I said "on earth" meaning that man does not belong only to the earth: in his essence, man is a universal being, but he has a special manifestation on earth.'

The experience occurred in a place corresponding to ours [the main Ashram building], but immense: the rooms were ten times bigger, but absolutely... one can't say empty – they were barren. Not that there was nothing in them, but nothing was in order, everything was just where it shouldn't be. There wasn't any furniture so things were strewn here and there – a dreadful disarray! Things were being put to uses they weren't made for, yet nothing needed for a particular purpose could be found. The whole section having to do with education [the Ashram School] was in almost total darkness: the lights were out with no way to switch them on, and people were wandering about and coming to me with incoherent, stupid proposals. I tried to find a corner where I could rest (not because I was tired; I simply wanted to concentrate a little and get a clear vision in the midst of it all), but it was impossible, no one would leave me alone. Finally I put a tottering armchair and a footstool end-to-end and tried to 'rest'; but someone immediately came up (I know who, I'm purposely not giving names) and said, 'Oh! This won't do at all! It CAN'T be arranged like that! Then he began making noise, commotion, disorder – well, it was awful.

To wind it all up, I went to Sri Aurobindo's room – an enormous, enormous room, but in the same state. And he appeared to be in an eternal consciousness, entirely detached from everything yet very clearly aware of our total incapacity.

He hadn't eaten (probably because no one had given him anything to eat), and when I entered, he asked me if it was possible to have some breakfast. 'Yes, of course!' I said, 'I'll go get it,' expecting to find it ready. Then I had to hunt around to find something: everything was stuffed into cupboards (and misplaced at that), all disarranged – disgusting, absolutely disgusting. I called someone (who had been napping and came in with sleep-swollen eyes) and told him to prepare Sri Aurobindo's breakfast – but he had his own fixed ideas and principles (exactly as he is in real life). 'Hurry up,' I told him, 'Sri Aurobindo is waiting.' But hurry? Impossible! He had to do things according to his own conceptions and with a terrible awkwardness and ineptitude. In short, it took an infinite amount of time to warm up a rather clumsy breakfast.

Then I arrived at Sri Aurobindo's room with my plates. 'Oh,' said Sri Aurobindo, 'it has taken so long that I will take my bath first.' I looked at my poor breakfast and thought, 'Well, I went to so much trouble to make it hot and now it's going to get cold!' All this was so sordid, so sad.

And he seemed to be living in an eternity, yet fully, fully conscious of... of our total incapacity.

It was so sad to see how good-for-nothing we were that it woke me up, or rather I heard the clock strike (like the other day, I didn't count and leapt out of bed; but I quickly noticed that it was only 3 o'clock and lay back down). Then I began 'looking' and told myself, 'If we really have to emerge from all this... infirmity before anything can truly be well done, then we have quite a long road to travel!' It was pitiful, pitiful (first on the mental, then on the material plane), absolutely pitiful. And I was depending on these people! (Sri Aurobindo was depending on me and therefore on them.) 'Good god,' I said, 'if I only knew where things were kept! If they had just let me handle things, it could have been done quickly.' But no! All those people had to be involved Oust as we always depend on intermediaries in real life).

It made me wonder.

(silence)

When I told you last time about that experience [of March 11, with Pavitra] the night I met you and was saying 'good-bye,' I neglected to mention one very important point, the most important, in fact: I was leaving the subjection to mental functioning permanently behind That was the meaning of my 'departure.'

For a very long time now I have been watching all the phases of the subjection to mental

functioning come undone, one after another – for a very long time. That night was the end of it, the last phase: I was leaving this subjection behind and rising up into a realm of freedom. You had been very, very helpful, as I told you. Well, this latest experience was something else! It came to make me look squarely at the fact of our incapacity!

Can you imagine!

One thing after another, one thing after another! This subconscious is... interminable, interminable, if you only knew... I am skipping the details-such stupidity, oh! This person I won't name, who so clumsily prepared breakfast, told me, 'Ah, yes, Sri Aurobindo is a little... morose today, *he is depressed.*' I could have slapped him: 'You fool! You don't understand anything!' And Sri Aurobindo, although he didn't want to show it, was completely aware of our incapacity.

(silence)

Now I should say-if it's any consolation – that each time something like this comes into my consciousness at night, things go better afterwards. It is not useless, some work has been done – cleaning, cleaning, cleaning out. But there's quite a lot to do!

Does this have an effect on people's consciousness – I mean their outer consciousness?

Ah... not much!

Yes and no in the sense that I do manage to bring about a general progress. Some individuals are receptive, sometimes astonishingly so, receiving the exact suggestion exactly where it's needed, but such a person is one in a hundred-even that is an exaggeration.

A sort of power over circumstances does come to me, however, as if I could rise above it all and give the subconscious a bit of a work-over. Naturally this has some results: entire areas are brought under control. That's the most important thing. Individuals get the repercussions later because they are very... very coagulated, a bit hard! A lack of plasticity.

Take the case of this man I'm not naming – I've been training him, working with him, for more than thirty years and I still haven't managed to get him to do things spontaneously, according to the needs of the moment, without all his preconceived ideas. That's the point where he resists: when things have to be done quickly he follows his usual rule and it takes... forever! This was illustrated strikingly that night. I told him, 'Just look: it's there – it's THERE – hurry up and warm it a little and I'll go.' Ah!... He didn't protest, didn't say anything, but he did things exactly according to his own preconceptions.

It's a terrible slavery to the lower mind, and so widespread! Oh, all these goings-on at the School, my child, all the teaching, all the teachers....¹⁰⁹ Terrible, terrible, terrible! I was trying to turn on the switches to give some light and not one of them worked!

Of course, these scenes are slightly exaggerated because they are seen in isolation from the rest; within the whole many things crisscross and complete each other, diminishing each other's importance. But in an experience like last night's, things are taken singly and shown in isolation, as through a magnifying glass. And after all... it's a good lesson.

Inefficiency.... All right, then.

And it all exists PRIMARILY because each individual is shut up in his own little personal formation (*Mother forms an eggshell*), a formation of the most ordinary mind, the mind that fabricates

¹⁰⁹Here, Mother had a passage deleted.

the details of everyday life; it's like being cramped into a narrow prison.



March 21, 1961

Last night I had two consecutive experiences showing with extreme precision that black magic is at the root of all this (*Mother is speaking of both general and personal difficulties, in the Ashram and in her body*).

First of all, on the mental plane (the physical-mind, the material mind) I saw an individual.... I am not entirely certain of his identity (when I saw him last night I didn't associate him with anyone in particular) but from his outer appearance he is evidently a sannyasi. He was pursuing me, blocking my way and trying to stop me from doing my work (it was a long, long affair). But I was very conscious and could foresee everything he was about to do, so it had no effect. After a long while I emerged from this – I had something else to do and I left – and on my way home he was everywhere, hiding and trying to catch me; but he didn't succeed in doing anything. And I knew he had been acting in this manner for a long time.

Then I woke up (I always wake up three or four times during the night) and when I went back to bed I had an attack of what the doctor and I have taken to be filariasis – but a strange type of filariasis, for as soon as I master it in one spot it appears in another, and when I master it there it reappears somewhere else. Last night it was in the arms (it lasted quite a while, between 2:30 and 4 a.m.); but I was fully conscious, and each time the attack came, I went like this (*gestures over the arms, to drive away the attack*) and my arms were not affected at all. When it was over, I consciously entered the most material subtle physical, just beyond the body. I was sitting in 'my room' there (an immense, cubic room) reading or writing something, when I heard the door open and close, but I was busy and didn't pay attention, presuming it was one of the people usually around me. Then suddenly I had such an unpleasant sensation in my body that I raised my head and looked, and I saw someone there. Do you know how the magicians in Europe dress, in short satin breeches and a shirt?... He was wearing something like that. He was Indian, tall and rather dark, with slicked-down hair – what you would normally call a 'handsome young man.' He seemed to have been 'drawn'¹¹⁰ there because he was standing in front of me staring into space, not looking at me. And the moment I saw him, there was the same sensation in all my cells as I have with what I've been calling filariasis (it's a special, minute kind of pain) and simultaneously all the cells felt disgust – a tremendous will of rejection. Then I sat up straight (I didn't stand up) and said to him as forcefully as possible, *How do you dare to come in here!* I said it so loudly that the noise woke me up! I don't know what happened then, but things went much better afterwards.

The moment I saw this person I knew he was only an instrument, but a well-paid instrument – someone paid a great deal to have him do that! I would recognize him again among hundreds... I can still see him... I see him more clearly than with physical eyes. He is an unintelligent man with no personal animosity, merely a very well-paid instrument – someone is hiding behind him, using him as a

¹¹⁰Mother means drawn by a force not his own.

screen.

Before that experience, as part of the attack, I also got a sore throat. I didn't believe it would manifest, but around 9:30 this morning when I came downstairs for meditation with X,¹¹¹ it did. It's nothing at all, though. The whole time I was with X (and even before, when I was waiting for him), it was halted completely – everything in that room came to a halt. It started up again only after he left and I came here. But it's nothing.

X told me he has been doing something for me in his *puja*¹¹² – since December, it seems – so this morning I thought he should know about the experience and I sent Amrita to tell him. He replied to Amrita that this confirmed his certainty that Z has been making black magic against me since December. He had been told that Z was practicing black magic in Kashmir. Could this be the same person I saw before [during the December 1958 attack]? Since it was someone who concealed his identity, I can't say – but this form was robed as a sannyasi. Perhaps it's he, I don't know. I reserve my judgment because I don't know personally. But this is what X said, and he's going to redouble his efforts.

That's the situation.

I had a talk with the doctor this morning and he told me, 'In fact, your case of filariasis has some symptoms missing and others that don't normally exist.' He was a bit perplexed because it's impossible for him to understand what it might be if it's not filariasis. I said that perhaps (because as I told you, I did have filariasis some years ago, but brought it under control) perhaps it's being used as a base for this attack.

Of course, there are certain symptoms which never appear with filariasis. And the doctor has been astounded at the control I've had over it: it began in the feet, I checked it there; it went higher, I checked it there; then it went higher still and I continued to control it. Finally, the other day, it tried to get into the arms, but it couldn't hold out – and last night there was a real riot!... (*Mother laughs*) So perhaps it's the deformation or transposition of some sort of mantric effort, like last time in '58 when there was an attempt to make me throw up all my blood but only food came out! It's probably something similar. My impression (I've had it from the start) is that they have made a try at thrombosis (you know, when something blocks the circulation). Besides, it seems that X asked the doctor if blood-poisoning might be involved, so he must have seen this possibility. There has been absolutely nothing of the kind, but there has been an effort to block the circulation in the veins, probably an 'adaptation' of the magic attack. And along with this have come all the usual things: all the usual suggestions, all the usual 'prophecies' [about Mother's departure]... But for me, these are the normal facts of life, that's all. I am used to it. It has no importance.

Do you really believe Z could be behind this magician you saw?

It could be.

I hadn't thought of it at all – not at all. I have seen Z's thoughts several times, but not in this form: very, very angry thoughts but simply trying to... catch my attention.¹¹³ But this was something else. X

¹¹¹The tantric guru.

¹¹²*Puja*: ceremony, invocation or evocation of a god (in this case, a tantric ritual).

¹¹³Z was Satprem's first guru when he became a sannyasi. Then Z tried to exert his control over Satprem and predicted to Mother that he would never remain in the Ashram. Finally Satprem broke with him and Z went away furious.

said it was Z, that's what X saw. He doesn't seem to have attached the slightest importance to my magician – obviously this person was just a screen. It must be someone who knows magic and is being used by another as an instrument. But when I saw it all this morning, I must say I didn't once think of Z. It's only X who said so.

But Z... I don't know how to explain my relationship with him. He is sheltered by a 'light of benediction,' so.... When he was here I opened the doors for him to a realization he was incapable of having, something light years beyond him; and it gave him an appalling ambition, totally spoiling everything. From this point of view, it's a great blessing for him; even if he becomes a dreadful Asura, it will come to a good end! It doesn't matter, it's not important. That's why this morning, even when I heard what X said about Z, it was the same thing: this great Light of the supreme Mother going out towards Z. His magic is not important, but if he indulges in it, too bad for him. It doesn't concern me: it's X's business and X is doing what's necessary – and I believe (*laughing*) he hits hard!

(*silence*)

When I came down this morning I didn't want my cold to disturb the meditation with X, and this immobility came (*Mother brings down her fists, showing a solid mass descending*). It's what he uses for healing and I must say that the same thing happens to me, even when it doesn't come from him: a Force that seizes everything, stops everything – no more vibrations, an immobility.

I had told N. to knock at the door when he arrived with X, but he didn't do it – luckily I heard the door opening. I stood up, still in that state... and almost fell over! X must have thought I was having a spell of weakness or something, because I was holding onto the arms of the chair, and when I took his flowers, my hands were trembling – I wasn't in my body. And afterwards, ah, what a concentration! We remained in it for about thirty-five minutes. It was SOLID – an extraordinary solidity! I didn't want to waste time waiting for it to subside before coming here, and you must have seen how I was when I arrived: like a sleepwalker! I said to the people I passed in the corridor, 'I'm coming back, I'm coming back!' That's all I could say, like an idiot.

(*silence*)

I wanted to tell you about this because it's an indication. It's better to say such things as soon as they happen, to be sure of being accurate.

This stupid cold... in the middle of the night. It was the start of the attack.

And now the door is open – that's not so good! (Satprem gets up to close the door.)

(*Mother laughs*) No! I'm not cold, I'm hot!

Yes, but there's a draft.

I'm hot! It's a congestion. We'll see if last night's discovery has any results.... This cold was all I needed! It's absolutely ridiculous.

I didn't give it to you, did I?

Do you have a cold?

No... but a bit of a bad mood!

Yes, I noticed....

What use is a bad mood?

I'm a little overloaded by... too many things.

Too much work. No, you shouldn't have to do this work.¹¹⁴

Who can do it, then? There is no one here. That's why I wish greater attention would be paid in publishing translations of Sri Aurobindo....

Yes, it's a problem. That's why I don't categorically tell you not to do it, because after all, he shouldn't be massacred!

Yes, I can't do it superficially, you understand. I can't, it's impossible for me.

No, but.... Well, we will try.

You can't imagine how difficult things are now! You have to hold on tight: everything is difficult, everything. It's not an individual problem: everything is grating everywhere, as though there were sand in all the gears. And things are reaching a kind of climax now.

We simply have to hold on and endure – no movement. The remedy is the same as for an illness: no movement.¹¹⁵

It will pass.

I'm putting everything I can into your food – except my cold!



March 25, 1961

(On the previous day, Satprem had written a letter to Mother complaining of never having any concrete experiences.¹¹⁶ After a meditation together, this is what Mother replied.)

It's not that you don't have experiences! You even have access to regions where people very rarely go; you are capable of receiving light, intuitions, revelations – but this is probably so normal for you that

¹¹⁴Satprem was trying to patch up some French translations of Sri Aurobindo done by well-meaning but not very gifted disciples, who of course wanted 'to publish' at all costs.

¹¹⁵This 'massive immobility' Mother spoke of earlier.

¹¹⁶This letter has disappeared.

you don't notice it! I came to meditate with you especially to see what was preventing you from being conscious.... And on your right side, I saw a sort of crystallization... somewhat as though you were inside a statue.

It seemed made of transparent alabaster – hard, harder than stone. It was the result of an individualization – that was my impression – an individualization that has become very... hardened. It has tried to become entirely transparent but has no tangible contact with things – things enter only through the higher regions, through intellectual perceptions (not intellectual, a sort of mental vision). And I began to bang on it!

It was mainly on your right side – I banged on it. But strangely enough, it didn't break... it became supple, but then it lost its beauty. (It was so beautiful, as though sculptured!) I tried to pass through it, but to do so (this is what I found interesting), instead of passing through at this level (*the chest*), the psychic plane – the level of the soul's vibration – I had to climb up above and then descend; and finally, without even realizing it, I found myself inside – I had entered through sheer force of concentration. There, at the vital level, the emotional vital (*solar plexus*), I put two flowers: one very large Endurance in the Most Material Vital [zinnia] and another flower like the one X just gave me [cosmos] but bigger and pure white (it concerns sexual movements, light in sexual movements). But curiously enough, I passed inside through a trance; I was quite busy trying to make it more fluid when all at once, poof! I found myself inside. But since I entered through a trance it became completely objective: no more thought, nothing. And I saw I had put these two flowers there (*at the levels of the abdomen and chest*), one more active, a very large, dark purple Endurance flower, and another much smaller, pure white, slightly lower down. While I was watching this I think the clock must have struck – something pulled me and it all faded away.

And I found it interesting that when I received your letter yesterday evening I concentrated for a moment, almost out of curiosity: 'Why doesn't he ever feel he has an experience? Why doesn't he feel anything?' I wanted to know precisely what type of experience would give you the feeling of having an experience!

If I could receive the Light: if I could SEE this Light; if I could see the vastness opening before my eyes....

Then it's in the realm of visions, of conscious perception.

Yes, conscious perception, vision – otherwise, nothing ever happens!

I understand! But yesterday when I was concentrating, I seemed to be sitting right in front of you again; and in the same way, with my left side, I was banging, banging on that absolutely rigid thing on your right. I was astonished: 'Why am I banging?' (I had no intention of banging!) It was strange. The left side isn't like that, it's the right.

But now I have done some damage!

(silence)

Strangely enough, I've received the same complaint from S. He says, 'I don't have any experiences.' 'What kind of experience do you have?' I asked. He replied, 'I sit in meditation and what comes is peace, peace, peace... it's always the same thing!' (Some people would be very happy with that, but him....) I asked him, 'What experience do you want?' 'To be conscious,' he told me, 'to be conscious of the Divine, conscious of the divine Presence!' And I always answer him, 'It's because your mind is barricaded.' (*Mother forms a geometrical figure*) He is so convinced that he knows! He tells me, 'No!

It's not that.' He doesn't believe me!

At any rate, I have had no results with him, nor with X.

Several times in my life I have met with the particular phenomenon of having an absolutely exceptional and unique experience and at the same time feeling that a part of my being was unaware of it! I would tell myself, 'if I hadn't been both here and there at the same moment (*Mother indicates two different levels in her consciousness*), I might have had all these experiences and never known it!' And this happened not just once but many times. Some were utterly unique, like certain ancient Vedic experiences – utterly unique. When I recounted them to Sri Aurobindo, he told me, 'Oh, it's extremely rare! Some people try all their lives to attain that.' And it happened to me not just once but often: the experience took place there (*gesture above*) and something up there knew, and yet there was something down here that would never have known if the other hadn't (*same gesture*). Nevertheless... the total experience was there.

It's very difficult to explain, it's extremely subtle.

But it made me think that something like this must be happening with people here. Because, not to boast, but I do give you people experiences!

Of course, all of you would be perfectly justified in replying, 'What good does that do if we're not aware of it!' But it must be a phenomenon like the one I described. I am looking for the reason... something... *which refuses the knowledge*. A part of the being is refusing – although not consciously – to become aware of the experience.

Can I do something practical about it?

It's rather.... It may be something more in the line of childlike candor, childlike simplicity and candor – where there is now a very intellectualized consciousness.

It is something very much on its guard, that doesn't want to be duped or be a victim of imagination.

A sort of childlike candor is lacking somewhere.



March 27, 1961

(Mother brings along a note she had written the same morning concerning a meditation with X, the tantric 'guru.')

'The extreme subjectivity of experiences is very disconcerting. Yesterday, while waiting for X, I was as usual in communion with the Supreme in his aspect of Love. Suddenly I felt X arriving and spontaneously, like a Veda, a movement of gratitude for his great goodwill arose from my heart, and it was formulated as a prayer to the Supreme: "Give him [X] the bliss of Your Love and the joys of Your Truth."

‘For a long time X has said nothing about his meditations with me, but just yesterday he told N. that he had some difficulty at the start of the meditation due to the presence of an adverse force, and it took him five minutes to overcome it! ‘Evidently he was in a completely different state of consciousness.... ‘But....’

And for me the experience was so clear! So lovely and so spontaneous! And it’s the first time – at the very beginning of our relationship, I had often concentrated on X to thank him for what he had done, but this is the first time it came like that: such a sweet, sweet atmosphere, so luminous, so radiant. Then in the afternoon N. tells me this [that an adverse force was present in the atmosphere]!

I had felt NOTHING. Nothing.

You know he said someone has been doing black magic against me; but I have never felt anything of the sort in the room where we meditate, because I make a point of coming half an hour early and this of course clears the atmosphere: everything is always ready when he arrives, in silence, in perfect peace. Hasn’t he always told you that when he comes into that room he enters another world, like Kailas?...¹¹⁷ And that’s the way it has always been. If there has been a change, it’s that now it’s even more like that – because (how to put it?) it’s more stable. Before, it fluctuated a bit: it came, went, came.... But now it’s like a tranquil mass (*Mother lowers her arms*) that doesn’t stir. Yesterday in particular, this was the experience: I felt him coming (when he is about to come in, I always sense something drawing me outward a little so that I won’t be completely in trance and can stand up), and this prayer came so spontaneously, oh!... And then (*laughing*) in the afternoon N. tells me, ‘Oh, X said he had some difficulty at the start of today’s meditation – a hostile force was present and it took him five minutes to clarify the atmosphere!’

It gave me the impression you get in outer life: all the pieces more or less dovetail but with no inner unity – there’s not ONE thing, not one, that is true, essentially and always true. We know it is like that outwardly, of course; but I have always felt that with people who have an inner life, one could attain a kind of identity of vibration and knowledge – but no!

‘Very well,’ I said, ‘if that’s how it is.....

All yesterday evening I was wondering, ‘Is it... *hopeless?*’ That’s obviously not true, I know very well it’s not *hopeless*. Yet what does it need to be different? Clearly nothing less than the supramental transformation. Well, there’s still quite a long way to go.

I was under the impression, for example, that when I thought something (not actually ‘thought,’ but when I had an inner perception) X could receive it; particularly when I had such a feeling for him and summoned the Force, made the Force come down, my impression was that he knew it!

But if it’s like that....

It’s not encouraging.

Ah, no! I didn’t feel encouraged.

Because truly... it was truly the best I could have done for someone! It came so spontaneously! And then (*laughing*) he comes in and feels a hostile force!!

He was evidently on another plane entirely.

What ruffles me is that someone like X, who has worked on himself, ought to have felt it. Why do I

¹¹⁷A region high in the Himalayas, also known as the abode of Shiva.

feel it? Because since I have been doing all this work on my body, it senses things and it is never mistaken. I have had repeated proof that it is never mistaken. When a higher vibration comes, it feels it right away! But I must say that this has only been the case since the body became very universalized. However, I was under the impression that X must have been somewhat universalized to have the powers he has, but now I don't know....

It's not that I was disappointed by his way of being, certainly not; but it has suddenly confronted me with a terrible problem: 'Is it impossible to live a truth in material consciousness? Is it really impossible? An absolute, I mean an absolute truth – not something entirely subjective and relative, each one living his own truth in his own manner. Will one person always be like this and the other like that and the third like something else? So that only by putting all the pieces together do we actually amount to anything – and yet to what?! Is it completely impossible for absolute truth to manifest in the present state of Matter?' This is the problem that has seized me.

Why? Probably because I was ready to face it. But it has been posed so intensely.... It was so intense that it was painful.

It reinforces what the old Schools have always taught – but Sri Aurobindo rejected it! Sri Aurobindo told us precisely that the Truth could be lived IN material life.... Of course, there must be a change of consciousness, but I thought....

(silence)

My body's consciousness has changed – that much I know. Not totally, of course, but enough to feel that there's no separation, that vibrations are unpartitioned – there are no partitions! And I felt this very strongly with X: that when we were face to face in meditation there was no longer any difference between us, that this Vibration I was feeling – this Vibration of a strong and very solid, very balanced peace – was the same for him as for me. I didn't feel that I was here and he was there. I had only to shut my eyes and there was no difference between us. (This doesn't happen just with him: I feel it with everyone; but I am aware of how it is with others, I can sense why they don't feel it.) But I was under the impression that he, at least, would have felt it – I must have been mistaken! This incident came to tell me I was mistaken.

Still, it surprises me.... Because sitting in that room, one has the feeling (I say 'one,' it's probably... I don't know what it is), I thought he had the same feeling I did: oh, it could last an eternity! It's like that: tranquil, tranquil, peaceful, balanced, strong. On other occasions there was a kind of movement: it came, went, came, went; but this time... (*Mother stretches forth her arms as if time had stopped*) and I am like that (not the 'I' here, the 'I' above), I see it like that. Then just as the clock is about to strike, when the half-hour is finished, something comes and tells my body, 'Now!' A tiny shock, and two or three seconds later the clock strikes. I always feel beforehand, 'Now it's over.' Otherwise there would be no reason for it to end – it's so peaceful! And not something diluted, as it were, but strong, compact. Compact. Then that tiny shock and the body comes to attention: 'Ah, I'm going to have to move!' And always after about two seconds, the clock strikes. I open my eyes, look at X and wait. Three or four seconds later, or after a minute or two, he opens his eyes, bows to me and gets up. Then I get up. It's always the same. So I don't know why.... I don't understand what goes on in his consciousness. I no longer understand.

I'm not so sure about what he said to N....

(Laughing) Neither am I!¹¹⁸

He doesn't speak about these things with N. Perhaps N. has confused two different times or.... Because X's way of expressing himself can seem very vague when you don't know him well, especially when it concerns time and place. This attack may not have occurred during the meditation with you, but beforehand or elsewhere.

I don't know, because N. said quite categorically: 'X told me that on arriving for this morning's meditation he had some difficulties and it took him five minutes to get over it; an adverse force was present.' N. was quite positive and I even made him repeat it. 'Are you sure,' I asked him, 'that it didn't happen when X came to you.'

'No,' N. replied, 'X met that force THERE.' He said THERE! Yet that it could have been there, with all the force, light and peace that descended... is incomprehensible to me. Because the first thing I do when I sit down is to make a thorough cleaning.

It ruffles me because it's like a negation of my power. Till yesterday I had never experienced anything of the kind!... On the 29th, you know, it will be forty-seven years since I first came here¹¹⁹ – that's not exactly yesterday! And ever since I began working with Sri Aurobindo, I have had the sense of this Power, it has never left me; so.... It is disconcerting to have this kind of episode come up after such a long time.

I'll try to speak with X and find out exactly what happened.

That risks a terrible misunderstanding; be careful. Perhaps he won't even remember what he said anymore. It's difficult with X because he doesn't say things with his mind – it just comes like that, and then he forgets. You know how it is. Something may have made him speak. For instance, I know that with N. he almost always says unpleasant things about people and situations and this entirely results from N.'s atmosphere. I have told N., 'He speaks like that because of your inner attitude.' To one person he will say one thing, to another something completely different on the same subject – it depends a great deal on who he's talking to. No, I haven't told you all this for you to speak with X about it, I have told you because... it has posed a serious problem for me.

It's best to wait and see. I put a certain force into that note I wrote this morning (I wrote it at a very early hour) and you know that a 'formation'¹²⁰ is created when I write; I willed it to go to him – and he may have received it. We'll see what happens. It's better not to speak of it because it might... speaking is too external.

On other occasions (as I have told you) I had difficulties with X on the mental plane; now all that has cleared up, cleared up very well. But this present situation is on another plane, so let's wait. Perhaps... probably it will clear up.

¹¹⁸Note that N. will try to be the future 'proprietor' of Auroville. Already Mother was surrounded by lies on all sides.

¹¹⁹On March 29, 1914.

¹²⁰In the occult sense, a 'formation' signifies a concentration of power or force directed towards a particular goal. It is like a bullet of force going inexorably to its target. In fact, all beings are constantly making 'formations' with their thoughts and desires, but these formations have scarcely any power other than that of clinging to the one who has made them or returning upon him like a boomerang.

(silence)

I probably needed the experience.... You remember that type of detachment I spoke of when I had that experience – when the BODY had that experience [of January 24, 1961] – well, it has increased to such an extent that it now applies to anything and everything linked with action on earth. This detachment was probably necessary. It began with something like... things dissolving (*Mother makes a gesture of crumbling something between her fingers*); certain kinds of links between my consciousness and the Work were dissolving (not links with me, because I don't have any, but with the body; the whole physical consciousness, all that attaches it to the things in its environment, to the Work and to the entourage – I spoke to you about that in regard to physical immortality; well, that's what is happening now). It's like things dissolving – dissolving, dissolving, dissolving. And it's more and more pronounced. During these last days, things have been becoming increasingly difficult – difficulties have been coming one after another, one after another. Formerly, I had the power to get a grip on them and hold them (*Mother tightens her grip as though mastering circumstances*); but now that this type of detachment has begun, things drift away everywhere – everywhere, everywhere....

So this episode with X is probably part of the same process. What has been affected is a certain confidence in the REALITY of the Power, the REALITY of spiritual action; there seems to be no communication between here (*above*) and there (*below*).

Does that mean you're breaking all contacts with the earth?

No, that's not it. Things go on. I don't know, I have no idea. I can't say exactly what it is, but.... It's a.... Don't know. In any case, it seems obvious that the NATURE of the contact must become very different. Because in proportion to this detachment, the reality of the Vibration – and especially the vibration of divine Love – keeps growing and growing (out of all proportion to the body, even) in a FORMIDABLE manner, formidable! The body is beginning to feel nothing but that.

Is this detachment necessary, then, for divine Love to be established? I don't know.

Yes, it's as if I were living, as if the BODY were living (despite all the illnesses and attacks, all the ill will besetting it), living in a bath of the divine vibration – bathing in something... immense – immense, immense... limitless, and so stable! The body lives in it like this (*gesture as if Mother were floating*). So even when there is what we call physical pain, even when there are blows to morale (like having a cashier ask you for money and you have none to give him¹²¹), well, despite it all, despite all the possible complications (coming all at the same time), EVERYTHING, everything that happens now, even things which seem extremely unpleasant to our mental conceptions or our mental reactions, everything is a bath, a bath of the vibration of divine Love. So much so that if I didn't control my body, I would be smiling at everything all the time like an idiot. A beatific smile for everything (I don't show it because I control myself).

(silence, the clock strikes the hour)

No, no: *do not brood about it*. Let it be, it will work out. It will work out the way it has to work out.

X is sensitive mentally, but to what degree? And to what degree do things crystallize differently for him because of all his ideas?...

¹²¹The following undated note (which could date from this or any number of other times!) was found among Mother's scattered papers: *Now the situation has become very critical, all the reserves have been swallowed up, there are debts, many important works remain unfinished and the daily life has become a problem. It is the subsistence of more than 1,200 people which is in question.*

We'll see.

(silence)

But you know, it's no *joke*, this transformation!

(silence)

Yesterday I had such a strong feeling that ALL constructions, all habits, all ways of seeing, all ordinary reactions, were all crumbling away – completely. I felt I was suspended in something... entirely different, something... I don't know.

(silence)

And truly, with the feeling that ALL one has lived, all one has known, all one has done, all of it is a perfect illusion – that's what I was living yesterday evening.

And then....

It's one thing to have the spiritual experience of the illusion of material life (some find this painful, but I found it so wonderfully beautiful and happy that it was one of the loveliest experiences of my life); but now the whole spiritual construction as one has lived it is becoming... a total illusion! Not the same illusion, a far more serious illusion.

If That was not there.... Obviously, That [divine Love] is here, like a mattress placed so you won't break your neck when you fall. That's precisely the feeling: this experience of the vibration of divine Love is the mattress... so you don't break your neck!

So, petit, don't brood; whatever your difficulties may be (*laughing*), you can tell yourself they are only beginning!

And I'm not exactly a baby; I have been here forty-seven years, and for something like... yes, certainly for sixty years I have been doing a conscious yoga, with all that memories of an immortal life can bring – and see where I am! When Sri Aurobindo says you must have endurance, I think he is right!

This path is not for the weak, that's for sure.

I believe this body has suffered as much as a body can bear without going to pieces, and it keeps going, it has never asked for mercy – not once has it said, 'No, it's too much,' not once. It says, 'As You will, Lord: here I am.'

And so it continues.

(Mother gets up to leave)

Well, I'm never going to tell people that it's just a promenade! No, it's nothing like a promenade. Some say, 'Oh, you're too severe!' But too bad for them; it's better to tell the truth, isn't it?

We mustn't get discouraged.

The absolute certainty of the Victory is unquestionable; but I am not speaking at the scale of our bounded mind. It's up to us to CHANGE TACK – this is what's expected of us, to change tack and not keep going round in circles.

There you are, petit.

It's a process of tempering, you know – we get tempered.

And there's no point in giving up, because it would just have to be started all over again next time. What I always say is: 'Here's the opportunity – go right to the end.' It's no use saying, 'Ah, I can't,' because next time it will be even more difficult.



April

April 7, 1961

X tells me you're feeling better now....

X hears about it from the doctor. He asks the doctor and the doctor tells him whatever he likes. X says to him, 'I will completely cure her,' and the doctor replies, 'That's impossible – it can't be cured!' So X says, 'You have no faith,' and the doctor replies, 'You're living in illusions'!

The truth is that the body is holding its own quite well. But it's a formidable affair. They¹²² are multiplying by the millions; so you can see it will take time to get rid of them! They circulate throughout the body, sometimes for two, three or four hours at night, *pricking* and stinging from inside out; they prick like fiery needles. And they go everywhere, in the legs, the trunk, the arms – they're really having fun! But anyway, it's subsiding: the legs are better. It's not quite right yet, but it's coming along. It's nothing.

* * *

Later:

Each time X comes here, all the difficulties rise up to their maximum, they seem to become absolute. And I understand why: his power acts in a domain full of human pettiness. What a domain! Oh, awful! And we're not out of it yet: quarrels, divisions, misunderstandings, bad will.... I fully understand that it all has to come up in order to be healed. But it gives me a tremendous amount of work!

Anyway....

In your case, it is very clear: each time he comes, everything seems to go askew. And the only reason for it is the conflict between the force he brings down (of course, when he comes I encourage it to come down!), and the inner resistances; and this creates the Contradiction, which becomes more and more pronounced.

It speeds up the work, but at the same time it makes it a bit... taxing.

As for him, even now his way of working consists in eliminating all obstacles – just the opposite of what Sri Aurobindo was doing. Sri Aurobindo used to envelop them, like this (*Mother opens her arms to embrace everything*), and then act upon them so that they would no longer be obstacles. But the first thing X said when he first came to the Ashram was, 'Oh, there are a lot of elements which shouldn't be here!' And he would talk about a 'purge': eliminate, eliminate, eliminate. But if you eliminate everything from life which is unresponsive to the Divine, what will be left?

He certainly hasn't understood Sri Aurobindo's yoga. And it's useless to try to explain anything to him.

¹²²See conversations of February 11 (p. 73) and March 7 (p. 114).

He began to understand after a year, and he understands much better now. But he is shut up in his construction. He doesn't have the kind of personality that can see the earth as something very small. And that's basically what is needed with Sri Aurobindo: the earth must be seen as just a small field of experience... within an eternity.

But that is difficult.

* * *

(After the work, Mother embarks on another topic.)

I am continuing my reading of the Veda. I had to stop for some days because of a sore throat. But anyway, I'm starting again.

The Vedas, after all, were written by people who remembered a radical experience, which must have taken place on earth at a given moment, as an example of what was to come. (This always happens in the yoga: a first radical experience comes like a herald of the future realization.) So in the terrestrial yoga – in the yoga of the earth, of the planet earth – there was a moment when it came; they who are called the *forefathers* must have created, through their effort and their yoga, at least an image of the supramental realization. And those who wrote the Vedas, who composed all these hymns, remembered or kept the tradition of that experience. And oh, mon petit, it had the same effect on me as when I read the 'Yoga of Self-Perfection' in *The Synthesis of Yoga (Mother catches her breath)*: there is such a gulf between what we are, what life on earth and human consciousness now are, even among the most enlightened, the most advanced, and THAT!...

I don't know if it's because I have been so violently attacked – bludgeoned – by all these malevolent energies, but in any case, I sensed acutely the FORMIDABLE immensity of what has to be done... in order for THAT to be realized.

(silence)

When external difficulties subside, when the body becomes passive and quiet, when it is not constantly demanding attention, then you can LIVE in this supramental consciousness and it does not seem so difficult; you feel it is so victorious in its essence that it will end all difficulties.

But for this to come about, you must remain for a while on those higher reaches and not be constantly, constantly dragged down below where you have to fight each minute simply to LAST – to last in all ways: not just personally, but collectively.¹²³ It's a minute-to-minute bout, simply to last. And how long do we have to last for the thing to be done?...

It is a difficult period.

And there has been a decline in everyone's health. Many people are sick. The illnesses are of a more serious nature – there has been a decline.

You have to look at all this with a smile, of course (and I do), but I must say that... the enthusiastic side (you know, that fire of enthusiasm)... has been dampened. Well, there's no need to get excited – it will take time.

¹²³Note that just a few days earlier, the Ashram coffers were completely empty. Mother had sold the last of her jewels: 'It is not for the upkeep of any [Ashram] department that I have sold my jewels; it is for food, lodging [of the sadhaks] and wages for domestic servants.'

We just have to keep on going, keep on moving: one step after another, one step after another, one step after another, without asking how many steps it's going to take, or recalling how many we've taken.

What we really have to do is come alive from minute to minute, living always in the present moment, stubbornly, like this (*Mother puts a fist on the arm of her chair, then another, and so on, in a slow, dogged, unrelenting march*).

Yet Sri Aurobindo seemed to say that things would be easier once the Supermind came down.

Yes. Yes, obviously! But easier than what, mon petit?

I don't know. I have reread some of his writings where he seemed to say the work would be easier. What happened, why isn't it like that? He seemed to be saying everywhere: things will be easier, the work will be easier...

Yes. But 'easier' is only relative.

You mean that even so it's easier than before?

Ah, yes! I mean that something is being done which couldn't be done before.

Ah!...

(silence)

It's not something 'miraculous,' you know. To be really satisfied, the human mind always needs some kind of miracle. In its thought, the miraculous is associated with the Divine. I know, because I was born like that. I felt like that when I was very young. And only because life has dealt me some extremely brutal denials have I come to this kind of... sober and reasonable attitude. You know (I told you this the other day), it's disgusting! (*Mother laughs*) All the bloom has gone... banished by the hard knocks of life. For I was born with this feeling that... yes, that Truth is something miraculous, which has only to show itself to prevail.

It would be like that – without the adverse forces.

The universe would be like that, if it had not been for the deviation of the adverse forces – I see it very clearly. The perversion, the cold-blooded and cruel perversion of sheer malevolent will keeps it from being like that. That's what intervenes.... They all call it an 'accident,' but a lot of good that does us! The fact is there.

The adverse force is what keeps the Divine from blossoming miraculously whenever He appears. Because I know that wherever Matter is not under the influence of this adverse will to any degree, it blossoms immediately. And everything in the human heart, in human consciousness, in human thought, all that is slightly sheltered from this adverse influence – sheltered by the psychic, the divine Presence – blossoms, becomes... immediately becomes marvelous, without any obstacle – all the obstacles come from that source. So it's all very well to call it an 'accident,' but....

It's obviously reparable, there's no doubt about that, but at what price? And how it complicates things!

We are told it will be all the more beautiful later – I am absolutely sure of this – I don't doubt it for

a minute, but....

The world as it is, really... say what you like, even upon the most perfect heights, it's woeful. It is woeful.

There have been moments, you know, in supreme experiences of perfect union in a wondrous Love, when I have turned towards the world – simply turned the consciousness for a second towards the world as it is... (with the aspiration, I remember, for EVERYTHING to participate) and in that state of ecstasy, really, there were... tears of burning sorrow. It happened just like that.

Theoretically, it shouldn't be that way, but in fact it is. Something will never be perfect until this accident has been abolished.

That is my experience.

And to come to this experience I had to pass through a state of the most supreme indifference, where the whole terrestrial manifestation is an illusion; I passed through that, I had my experience BEYOND that. And beyond that... at the moment of supreme ecstasy came fiery tears of grief.

(silence)

I have wondered, at times, whether some extraordinary *tapasya* might not achieve that.... But....

(silence)

But the indispensable foundation is truly an indomitable courage and unflinching endurance – from the most material cells of the body to the highest consciousness, from top to bottom, entirely. Without that, we're pretty useless.

And I am really in the most favorable conditions, because my body says 'yes.' It says yes, yes, yes – it doesn't complain. This may be the sense behind all this illness and difficulty.... Not a single day of complaint.

The night before last I was again awakened at midnight (not 'awakened': I came out of my trance) with those stings burning from inside out, from the tips of the feet up to here, everywhere, in the back... it lasted four hours, non-stop. Well, my body didn't once complain. Not once did it ask for it to stop; it just kept quiet, saying: 'Thy Will be done.' And not only saying it but FEELING it, quietly – four hours of minuscule tortures. It didn't say a thing.

Saying nothing is elementary for me! But the body didn't say anything – it didn't even fidget; it didn't even have, you know, that feeling of, 'When will it be over?' Nothing. It just stayed quiet, quiet. I was like a statue in my bed, stinging from head to toe. So I really can't complain! The instrument I have been given is of truly good quality. An unflinching goodwill.

But without any doubt, this is diabolical.

(silence)

Well, mon petit.

And if you really want to please me (I believe you do!), if you want to please me, concentrate on the book on Sri Aurobindo – you can't imagine how much I am interested! And as I LOOK, I see into the future (not with this little consciousness), I see that it's a thing of GREAT importance. It will have a great action. So, I want to clear the way for you now, for us to have time.

*I will surely need a quiet mind to prepare the work.*¹²⁴

Yes, yes of course.

To finish this reading and assimilate it quietly. I don't feel capable of writing at all, unless I can receive the inspiration.

But you will receive it!

Yes, I have faith in that.

I haven't the slightest doubt. It's a certainty, a certainty.

I have never written or spoken to X about this, but through mental contact I have told him I don't know how many times: 'Satprem has a work to accomplish that is INFINITELY more important than reciting mantras. If it can help him to discipline himself, fine, but it's nothing more; he will not accomplish his work by reciting mantras. He has something to do and he will do it.' I have hammered that into his head (*Mother laughs*).

So, petit, see you tomorrow.



April 8, 1961

After more than a month I have resumed my translation [of *The Synthesis of Yoga*], and I fell exactly – it's splendid! – exactly on the passage that helped me understand what has happened, why there are all these difficulties. And the *Synthesis* and the Veda go hand in hand, so reading that passage brought some improvement; it's like being able to shift position, you know, so that now it's a bit better. Anyway....

* * *

(Then Mother listens to a reading from the 1960 'Agenda.' At the end, Satprem remarks, as though to excuse himself for noting some apparently irrelevant details.)

All these things are interwoven, you see – each time, you seem to be adding a touch. Even a detail that doesn't seem 'relevant' by itself becomes part of a gradually emerging picture when seen with the whole.

Yes, of course. But it's basically a description of my *sadhana*, that's all, and I always say that it will be

¹²⁴Satprem is referring to the enormous amount of material work he had in addition to seven hours of daily japa.

interesting only if I go through to the end.

Bah!

When I reach the end or when something truly concrete is realized, then it will become interesting, but not before.

But still, the story of the journey is interesting!

Until something is realized, it's nothing at all.

It will make it easier to understand...

Oh, mon petit! As if anyone ever understands anything about anything! Anyway.... We'd better go back to work.

* * *

(Later, concerning the disciple's very traditionalist guru who falls ill each time he comes to the Ashram:)

He seems to understand better. In his own way, he is 'progressive' – unfortunately, it always makes him sick! The Force is too great for his body to bear.

He is used to maintaining a kind of poise, the poise of the traditional attitude of indifference towards everything material: 'It's an illusion, it has no importance, there's no need to be concerned with it. Nature is acting, not I; Nature is acting and Nature is built like that, so why bother about it, why worry.' That's how he lived until he came here, and it's why he had this attitude of indifference. But here it began to change. And of course his body isn't used to it; it has difficulty keeping up, it lacks plasticity.

The first thing he did was to go see the Doctor and ask him to heal his ear, heal his stomach, heal.... So the Doctor told him, 'But why do you eat just anything at any time of day? Naturally you're sick....' And then he was constantly running up against our ways of organizing material things here – people like him don't organize, they don't care, they just let things drift. Regarding his son, for instance, the Doctor told him, 'It's because you don't look after him. If you did, this wouldn't happen.' And X very bluntly replied, 'But why!?'..

There's a gap.



April 12, 1961

*(The disciple asks for permission to poison some cats who have been disturbing him every night.
Mother replies.)*

I once had a cat with almost a child's consciousness, and someone poisoned it. And when he came back poisoned, dying, I cursed all people who poison cats. And that's serious, so you mustn't do it. It was a real curse – I was with Sri Aurobindo, so it was serious – so don't do it.

But there is a way....

You know, I made a pact with cats, with the King of the Cats – it goes back very, very far. And it's extraordinary (it happened in Tlemcen, entirely on the occult plane), extraordinary! For certain reasons, the King of the Cats gave me a power over these creatures – and it's true. Only I have to see them.

We shall try.

(silence)

What do these animals represent in the terrestrial manifestation? They're so strange....

Cats are vital forces, incarnations of vital forces. The King of the Cats – that is, the spirit of the species – is a being of the vital world.

For instance, cats can very easily incarnate the vital force of a dead person. I have had two absolutely astounding experiences of this.

The first was with a boy who was a Sanskritist and had wanted to come to India with us. He was the son of a French ambassador – an old, noble family. But he learned that his lungs were bad, and so he joined the Army; he enlisted as an officer, just at the start of the 1914 war. And he had the courage of those who no longer cling to life; when he received the order to advance on the enemy trenches (it was incredibly stupid, simply sending people to be slaughtered!), he didn't hesitate. He went. And he was hit between the two lines. For a long time, it was a no man's land; only after some days, when the other trench had been taken, could they go and collect the dead. All this came out in the newspapers AFTERWARDS. But on the day he was killed, of course, no one was aware of it.

I had a nice photo of him with a Sanskrit dedication, placed on top of a kind of wardrobe in my bedroom. I open the door and... the photo falls. (There was no draft or anything.) It fell and the glass broke into smithereens. Immediately I said, 'Oh! Something has happened to... Fontenay.' (That was his name: Charles de Fontenay.) After that I came back down from my room, and then I hear a miaowing at the door (the door opened onto a large garden courtyard¹²⁵). I open the door: a cat bursts in and jumps on me, like that (*Mother thumps her breast*). I speak to him: 'What is it, what's the matter?' He drops to the ground and looks at me – Fontenay's eyes! Absolutely! No one else's. And he just stayed put, he didn't want to go. I said to myself, 'Fontenay is dead.'

The news came a week later. But the newspapers gave the date when they had moved out of the trenches and been killed – it had been on that day.

(silence)

The other story dates farther back. I was living in another house (we had the whole fifth floor), and once a week I used to hold meetings there with people interested in occultism – they came to have me demonstrate or tell them about occult practices. There was a Swedish artist, a French lady and... a

¹²⁵Rue du Val-de-Grace (in Paris).

young French boy, a student and a poet. His parents were decent country people who bled themselves white to pay for his life in Paris. This boy was very intelligent and a true artist, but he was depraved. (We knew about it, but it was his private life and none of our business.) One evening, when four or five of us were to meet, this boy didn't turn up, although he had said he would. We had our meeting anyway and didn't think much about it – we thought he must have been busy elsewhere. Around midnight, when the people were leaving, I open the door. A big black cat was sitting in the doorway and, in a single bound, it jumps on me, just like that, all curled up in a ball. So I calm it down, I look at it – 'Ah, the eyes!' They were this boy's eyes. (I no longer recall his name.) Right away (at the time we were all involved in occultism), we knew something had happened; he had been unable to come and the cat had incarnated his vital force.

The next day, all the newspapers were full of a vile murder: a pimp had murdered this boy – it was disgusting! Something utterly vile. And it had happened at the very moment he should have come – the concierge had seen him going into the house with this pimp. What happened? Was it just for money or for something else – vice? Or what?

But both times, the incarnation was so (how to put it?) powerful that the eyes changed; the eyes of the cat changed completely into the eyes of the dead person. Unmistakable. Both came to me and both times there was the same movement, the same kind of feline howl – you know how they sound.

But I have had some cats.... I had a cat who was the reincarnation of the mind of a Russian woman. I had a vision of it one day, it was so strange – this woman had been murdered at the time of the Russian Revolution, along with her two little children. And her mind entered a cat here. (How? I don't know.) But this cat, *mon petit*.... I got her when she was very young. She would come and lie down, stretched out like a human being, with her head on my arm! (I used to sleep on a Japanese tatami on the floor.) And she would stay there, so well-behaved, didn't stir all night long! I was really amazed. Then she had kittens, and wanted to give birth to them lying stretched out, not at all like a cat. It was very difficult to make her understand that it couldn't be done that way! And one night after she had had her kittens, I saw her... I saw a young woman in furs, with a fur bonnet – you could just see a tiny human face; she had two little ones and she came to me and placed them at my feet. Her whole story was there in her consciousness: how she and the two children had been murdered. And then I realized she was the cat!

The cat wouldn't leave her kittens for a moment! Not for anything. She wouldn't eat, wouldn't go outside to relieve herself, nothing: she stayed put. So I told her, 'Bring me your kittens.' (If you know how to handle them, cats understand very well when they're spoken to.) 'Bring me your little ones.' She looked at me, went and brought one of her kittens, and placed it between my feet. Then she went to fetch the other one and placed it between my feet (not beside, between my feet). 'Now you can go out,' I told her. And out she went.

I had another cat named Kiki. He had a wonderful color and was just like velvet. We used to have meditations and he would come, get up on a chair and go into trance; he would make the brusque movements of trance during the meditation. And I had to rouse him out of it, otherwise he wouldn't wake up!

Once this cat was stung by a scorpion. A foolhardy youngster, he used to play with scorpions. I had to rescue him one day; I came onto the verandah just when he was playing with a big scorpion. I caught the cat, put him on my shoulder and killed the scorpion. But another time I wasn't there, and he was stung. He came inside, done for. I clearly saw the signs that he had been poisoned by a scorpion. I put him on a table and went to call Sri Aurobindo. 'Kiki has been stung by a scorpion,' I said. (He was dying, almost in a coma.) Sri Aurobindo pulled up a chair, sat down facing the table and began to gaze at Kiki. This lasted about twenty or twenty-five minutes. Then suddenly the cat relaxed completely and... fell asleep. When he woke up, he was entirely cured.

Sri Aurobindo didn't touch him, he didn't do anything; he simply gazed at him.

I had another cat I called Big Boy. Oh, how beautiful he was! Enormous! A tail like the train of a gown. He was beautiful! Since there were all kinds of cats prowling around, including a big fierce tomcat who was extremely vicious, I was very afraid for this one when he was little and I got him used to spending his nights inside (which is hard for a cat to do). I forbade him to go out. So he spent his nights inside and when I got up in the morning, he got up too and came and sat down in front of me. Then I would say, 'All right, Big Boy, you can go,' and he would jump out the window and go off – but never before. And this is the one who was poisoned.

Because later on he would go roaming about; he had become terribly strong and would prowl around everywhere. At that time I was living in the Library house, and he would go off as far as the Ashram street (the Ashram didn't belong to us yet, the house was owned by all kinds of people), but when I would go out on the terrace across from Champaklal's kitchen and call, 'Big boy! Big Boy!' although he couldn't hear it, he could sense it, and he would come back galloping, galloping. He always came back, unfailingly. The day he didn't come back, I got worried; the servant went looking for him – and found him moaning, vomiting, poisoned. He brought him to me. Oh, really! it was.... He was so nice! He wasn't a thief or anything – he was a wonderful cat. Someone had laid out poison for god knows what cat, and he ate it. I showed him to Sri Aurobindo and said, 'He has been killed.'

Before that, I lost another one from that kind of typhoid cats get. He was called Brownny and he was so beautiful, so nice, such a marvelous cat! Even when utterly sick, he wouldn't make a mess, except in a corner prepared just for that; he would call me to carry him to his box, with such a soft and mournful voice. He was so nice, with something sweeter and more trusting than a child. There is a trust in animals which doesn't exist in humans (even children already have too much of a questioning mind). But with him, there was a kind of worship, an adoration, as soon as I took him in my arms – if he could have smiled, he would have. As soon as I held him, he became blissful.

That one too was beautiful, with such a color! Golden chestnut, I have never seen a cat like him. He is buried here beneath the tree I named 'Service.' I put him beneath the roots myself. There had been an old mango tree there that was withering away. We replaced it with a little copper pod tree with yellow flowers.

These animals are so nice when you know how to handle them.

When I moved here to the Ashram, I said, 'We can't bring any cats into this house, it's quite impossible.' This was after Big Boy's death, and we had had enough of cats. I gave away the others, but the first one, the mother of the whole line, was old and didn't want to leave, so I felt her behind. She stayed in a house over there, within the Ashram compound. And one day – she was very old and could no longer move – I saw her come dragging in and sit down on that terrace on the other side. (Now you can't see it any more – the Service Tree has hidden it completely – but in those days you could see it very clearly.) She came and sat down over there where she could watch me... until she died. Quietly, without moving, she died watching me.

All these cat stories! If we had photographs, we could make a pretty little album of cat stories.

And extraordinary, extraordinary details! Showing such intelligence, oh!... This woman – I mean this cat who had been a woman – if you knew how she brought up her children, oh! With such patience, such intelligence and understanding! It was extraordinary. One could tell long, long stories: how she taught them not to be afraid, to walk along the edge of walls, to jump from a wall to a window. She showed them, encouraged them, and finally, after showing and encouraging them very often (some would jump, others were afraid), she would give them a push! So of course they would jump immediately.

And she taught them everything. To eat, to.... This cat would never eat before they had all eaten.

She would show them what to do, give each one what it needed. And once they had grown up and she didn't have to look after them anymore, if they kept coming back she would send them away: 'Go away! Your turn is over, it's finished. Go out into the world!' And she would take care of the new ones.

Once one of her kittens was ill. She was pretty and gray colored, clear gray like a very soft fur, very pretty. She had caught this cat sickness and was lying down. And the mother was teaching all the little ones not to come near her; she would make them go all the way around, as if her instinct told her it was contagious. And you would see them (the sick kitten was right in their way) going all the way around, never coming near.

These cat stories went on for years and years....

And it isn't true that they don't obey! It's just that we don't know how to handle them. Cats are extremely sensitive to the vital force, to vital power, and they can be made perfectly obedient – and with such devotion! Cats are said to be neither devoted nor attached nor faithful, but that's not true at all. You can have quite a friendly relationship with them.

And, an incredible thing... this cat was very pretty, but she had a wretched tail, a tail like an ordinary cat; and one day when I was with her at the window, one of the neighbor's cats wandered into the garden – an angora with three colors, three very prominent colors, and such a beautiful tail trailing behind! So I said (my cat was just beside me), 'Oh! Just see how beautiful she is! What a beautiful tail she has!' And I could see my cat looking at her. My child, in her next litter she had one exactly like that! How did she manage it? I don't know. Three prominent colors and a magnificent tail! Did she hunt up a male angora? Or did she just will for it intensely?

They are really something, you can't imagine! Once, when she was due to give birth and was very heavy, she was walking along the window ledge and... I don't know what happened, but she fell. She had wanted to jump from the ledge, but she lost her footing and fell. It must have injured something. The kittens didn't come right away, they came later, but three of them were deformed (there were six in all). Well, when she saw how they were, she simply sat on them – killed them as soon as they were born. Such incredible wisdom! (They were completely deformed: the hind paws were turned the wrong way round – they would have had an impossible life.)

And she used to count her little ones. She knew perfectly well how many she had. I just had to tell her, 'Keep only two or three' – although the first time there were only three, which was still too many, yet it was absolutely impossible not to let her keep them all. But later on I had to chide her. I didn't take them from her, but I would speak to her, convince her: 'It's too much, you'll be ill. Just keep these. See how nice these two are. Take care of them.'

Oh, what lovely cat stories! That was a whole period... for many, many years.... Many years.

Mind you, I would never have considered having any, but two cats were already there when I came to the house. They were not very interesting cats, but they became the parents of the one I just told you about (those boys who were living with Sri Aurobindo had already had some experience; they knew quite a few things about cats), and that was the origin of all the cats I had here. But people (you know how simplistic they always are!) believed I had some special attachment for cats, so then of course everybody started keeping cats! It was no use my telling them, 'No, it's a particular study we're making – I wanted to see, to learn certain things, and I learned what I had to – but now that I have moved to another house, the cat era is over; the old friends are gone, only the younger generation is left.' I gave them all away and said) 'That's enough.' But it's hard to make people understand – some people here have 25 cats! That's unreasonable! It's not the way to deal with cats. You have to look after them as I did, and then it becomes interesting.

There was one – I know I SAW it: when he died there was already the embryo of a psychic being, ready for a human incarnation. I made them progress like wildfire.

Well, petit....



April 15, 1961

I am in a state that is... how can I put it?... Non-existent.

Nonexistent because....

I would rather say nothing. Let's work.

* * *

(Later, after the work:)

All kinds of things are coming up from the subconscious. We seem to be constantly descending instead of ascending.

Oh, the subconscious! Every night it's a real invasion of things that are so... the WHOLE subconscious keeps coming up, coming up, coming up – not just mine but everybody's. There seems to be no end to it.

But now I have the knack of forgetting – I just forget. Because when I used to remember, I had to fight for entire days. So as soon as I wake up, I erase it right away: go away! Gone!

But all night long I am fully conscious of a lot of things – they can't be called trivial, but.... Oh, it's as though everything that can come to tell me: 'You think there will be a supramental transformation? Well then, just look: there is this and that and that and this, this one and that one, this circumstance, that thing, the world, people, things....' Oh, a deluge!

And in the evening before going to sleep I read the Vedas, which aggravates the situation. Because those people remember – either they have heard of it, or they remember it themselves – a supramental realization; and they describe it all so beautifully that it makes you feel very far from it, so very, very far....

After that, I spend hours concentrated in prayer – not exactly 'prayer' but... (*gesture palms turned upwards*), like that, beseeching.

What has been achieved now is that I am absolutely detached from EVERYTHING. From everything, beginning with my body and including the work, ideas, conceptions, even the... [people], all, all of them. It all seems to me so utterly... dull and nonexistent.

Before, I used to find joy in a beautiful idea or a beautiful experience – all that is finished. I am in a state where nothing, absolutely nothing has any value except ONE SINGLE THING.

(silence)

I could say something formidable... (*Mother is about to speak, then restrains herself*). But it's not true, it's not like that. If I say it, it will become something else.

It's better to say nothing.

But don't let that discourage you.

Oh, you know, nothing is very encouraging, either!

No, but it's obviously indispensable.

I feel that I've never been as low as I am now.

Low? No, you aren't low – I see you too, among the things I am looking at, and it isn't true. No, you are much better than you were! (*Mother laughs*)

(silence)

But you know, what seems to have gone is all this illusory enthusiasm we confuse with.... Sri Aurobindo speaks of it very often, and each time I read that sentence of his it's like an icy shower (*Mother laughs*). I no longer know the exact wording, but he uses two words: *illusory hopes... all the human illusory hopes*. It goes plunk! Well, all that has entirely gone. When I saw it I deliberately rejected it. 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'we are always trying to cheer ourselves up with hopes....'

(Mother turns towards the tape recorder) Don't keep all that. It's not worth it, don't keep it. It's quite useless. Take it out.

This is merely a passing phase, that's all.

* * *

(Just before leaving)

If I could remain quiet like this for hours on end, without letters, without... oh, without seeing people! Would it perhaps go more quickly?... I don't know.

Why don't you take a break for a while?

I can't.

Take a real break for some time, and then....

It's impossible. I can't. Even two years ago, when I was really sick and took to my room for the first time, I couldn't let the work go. I can't do it. It's not possible.

But surely there are things you could cut down?

Yes, if I could cut down a bit it would help.

(long silence)

Ah, petit!... *(Mother remains absorbed for a long time.)*

On the 24th, how long will it be?... Forty-one years since I came here. And I haven't moved since.

It's really strange: there is no space between that time and now. I don't know how to explain it.... I have no feeling of time, none at all, none.

(long silence)

I live in the constant feeling of PUSHING against a world of tremendous obstacles, with the certainty that – suddenly – the resistance will give way... and there will be enlightenment – no, far more than that!

That's all.

I have become only this *(Mother slowly moves her arm forward with clenched fist, as if to show all her force tensed and pushing, inexorably pushing).*

(Mother gets up)

All night long and whenever my attention is not being drawn away by something or other – and even then, it's there as if behind a veil – I am nothing but a force that pushes. That's what I have become.

(silence)

Don't worry. You definitely haven't gotten worse.

Oh, I feel we are constantly betraying – betraying you.

Betraying? Oh... I also feel that I am betraying myself, so you see!...

Actually it is because, without knowing it, you are becoming aware of the true Self, and that awareness always produces a sense of betrayal. But it's neither 'you' nor 'I' nor 'he' nor anything other than THAT which is being betrayed. All that we are is a betrayal of That. This is what it is. And we are constantly pushing, pushing, pushing to go beyond.

It's all right. Don't worry. When you are a little upset, you only have to think: Oh, Mother is here, and she will do the work.

And don't have any more toothaches. I don't like you to have toothaches!

(silence)

Good-bye, petit. Just be very, very quiet.

Things are moving... that's all.

We are all moving.



April 18, 1961

The subconscious is seething.... We shall see. And you?

I stumbled upon a sentence from Sri Aurobindo yesterday or the day before. From the occult standpoint it has to do with a rather important problem, and I would really like some light on this question: 'The man who slays is only an occasion, the instrument by which the thing done behind the veil becomes the thing done on this side of it.'

It means exactly this (I am going back to the preceding sentence): Who can protect the one whom God has already slain?¹²⁶ He has already been slain by God. When God has decided that someone is to be slain, nothing can protect him or keep him from being slain. And Sri Aurobindo adds: the man who slays (because it is not God who slays directly, he uses a man), the man who slays is only a circumstance, the instrument through which the thing decided by God behind the veil is accomplished materially here.

These are political texts from the revolutionary period, concerning bomb attacks against the English. And then he says that the man God has protected can never be touched. However hard you try, you will never be able to slay him. But who can protect the man God has already slain? He has already been slain by God. And man is simply the instrument used by God to do here what has been done there (it has ALREADY been done there). It's very simple.

Yes, I quite understand. But in general, does EVERYTHING that happens here first get played out on the other side in some way? It's an occult problem, and furthermore a problem of freedom.

According to my experience both things are simultaneous, so to speak. It's we who introduce the notion of time, but the notion of time doesn't exist on the other side.

For example, if I were asked how much time it takes for a thing decided upon there to be realized here, I would answer that it is absolutely indeterminate. That is my experience. I always give the following example because it's so clear: Thirty-five years before India became free, I saw that she was free. It was already done. And I have also seen things which for us are almost instantaneous – something is decided there and realized almost instantly here. And there are all sorts of possibilities between these two extremes, because the notion of time is not at all the same – so we can't judge. It is facile to say that what you are seeing will happen in a year or in a week or in an hour – but in fact, this is impossible. It depends upon the case and certain factors which are part of the whole.

In one chapter of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Sri Aurobindo says that there is a state of consciousness in which all is from all eternity – everything, without exception, that is to be manifested here....

In detail?

In a certain state of consciousness (I no longer remember what he calls it – I think it's in the 'Yoga of Self-Perfection'), one is perfectly identified with the Supreme, not in his static but in his dynamic aspect, the state of becoming. In this state, everything is already there from all eternity, even though here it gives us the impression of a becoming. And Sri Aurobindo says that if you are capable of maintaining this state,¹²⁷ then you know everything: all that has been, all that is and all that will be – in an absolutely simultaneous way.

¹²⁶'Whom God protects who shall slay? Whom God has slain who shall protect?' (*The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, Cent. Ed., Vol. III p. 354)

But you must have a firm head on your shoulders! Reading some of these chapters in ‘Self-Perfection,’ I thought it would be better if it didn’t fall into just anyone’s hands.

Anyway, in this state the feeling of uncertainty completely disappears (he explains it very well).

We think it’s BECAUSE we do such and such a thing that something else happens. (And how frequently, too!) People are constantly saying and writing: do this and that will happen. But the fact that this person speaks and the other one acts is also absolutely decreed.

If we could really get this into our heads, it would probably make them swim.

But things as they are wouldn’t be changed at all. I have had a very clear experience of this: the absoluteness of all that is materially; everything we think we are doing, or are planning, or intending, doesn’t change anything about anything. But then, I was intent upon understanding what difference there can be between the true and the false state, SINCE MATERIALLY EVERYTHING IS EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD BE. (We think that things are like this or like that because of certain reactions we have, but our very reactions are as absolute and decreed as the thing itself.) And yet....

I have had this experience, and I remember it even went on for several days; I saw all material circumstances as an absolute – an absolute that we perceive as an unfolding, but which is an eternally existing absolute. I had this experience, and at the same time I had a very clear perception of what falsehood is – the lie; what, from the psychological, the mental point of view, Sri Aurobindo, translating from the Sanskrit, called *crookedness*.¹²⁸ We attribute the course of circumstances to our psychological reactions – and indeed, they are used momentarily because everything collaborates either consciously or unconsciously to make things be what they have to be – but things could be what they have to be without the intervention of this falsehood. I lived in that consciousness for several days, and it became apparent that this was what separated falsehood from truth. In this state of knowledge-consciousness, the distinction can be made between falsehood and truth; and when seen in that truth-consciousness, material circumstances change character.

Now I no longer have the experience of that state except as a memory, so I can’t formulate it accurately. But what was very clear and comes very often – very often – is the perception of a superimposition of falsehood over a real fact. This brings us back to what I was telling you some time ago,¹²⁹ that everything is very simple in its truth, that human consciousness is what complicates everything. But the former was an even more total experience of it.

It is very interesting from the standpoint of death. I saw it once so clearly when someone (I no longer remember whom) had left his body. The word ‘death’ and all these human reactions seemed so foolish! So senseless, ignorant, stupid – false, without reality. There was simply something that shifted, like this (*Mother draws a curve showing a shift of consciousness from one mode of being to another*), and then we, in our false consciousness, made a drama out of it. But it was simply something evolving (*same gesture*).

Let me tell you about a recent occurrence. E. had sent a telegram saying that she had a perforated

127Satprem had assumed that this state of consciousness was accessible only through a kind of trance or samadhi and that when Mother said one had to be capable of ‘maintaining this state,’ she meant that one should be capable of bringing it back here, into the waking consciousness. However, Mother rectified: ‘It is a state with no “here” or “there”. I have had this experience in the waking consciousness and both perceptions (the true and the false) were simultaneous.’

128The Rishis distinguished between the ‘straight’ (almost in the optical sense: that which allows the ray to pass straight through) and the twisted or crooked consciousness.

129*Agenda I* of December 31, 1960.

intestine (but it must have been something else because they operated on her only after several days, and when you are not operated on immediately in such cases, you die). Anyway, it was very serious and she was on the threshold of death – that much is certain. She wrote me a letter the day before the operation (what is interesting is that now she doesn't even remember what she wrote). It was a magnificent letter saying that she was conscious of the Divine Presence and of the Divine Plan. 'Tomorrow they will operate on me,' she said. 'And I am entirely aware that this operation has ALREADY been done, that it is a fact accomplished by the Divine Will; otherwise it could be a *fatal ordeal*.' And she said she was conscious of the supreme Will's action, in a perfect peace. It was a magnificent letter. And the whole thing went off almost miraculously; she recovered in such a miraculous way that the surgeon himself said, *I must congratulate you*, to which she replied, 'How surprising! You did the operation!' 'Yes,' he said, 'we did the operation, but it is your body that willed to be healed, and I congratulate you for your body's willpower.' Of course she wrote to me that she knew who had been there to see that all went well. And this feeling of the thing being already accomplished is a beginning of the consciousness Sri Aurobindo speaks of in the 'Yoga of Self-Perfection,' where one is simultaneously both here and there. Because, as Sri Aurobindo says, some people have managed to be entirely 'there,' but what he has called the 'realization' is to be both there and here simultaneously.

Of course, one might wonder what the meaning of everything here is, if it has all been already accomplished above, on an occult plane, and we are merely re-enacting it.

No, no!

We are like puppets!

No! That's exactly our falsehood! What we see is not THE THING; it's a reflection, a distorted image in our consciousness. The thing itself exists outside this reflection, and in that existence it doesn't have the character we attribute to it. Once we have grasped this, we understand that we can get out of it – otherwise, we could never get out!

There is a universal unfolding, the true unfolding, that of the Supreme Lord who watches (this is the best way to put it) his own unfoldment. But for some reason or other, there has been a deformation of consciousness which makes us see this unfolding as something separate, a more or less adequate expression of the Divine Will. But it isn't so! It is the very unfolding of the Divine within Himself – within Himself, from Himself, for Himself. And it's simply our falsehood that makes a separate thing of it... The very fact of objectifying (what WE call 'objectification') is already a falsehood.¹³⁰

I have had this particular consciousness in flashes. The difficulty is that in expressing it, we use all our mental faculties, and they themselves are false – so we are *cornered*. Because when you follow through.... Whatever you say – 'If this, if that, if the other...' – is all part of our general stupidity. Going right to the end of it, you are suddenly like this: 'Ah!' (*Mother remains suspended midway in her sentence*) There is nothing more to do, not a move to make.

Only, as I have told you, practically speaking this experience can be dangerous. When it came, you see, one part of me was having the experience, and one part wasn't yet ready for it. Well, I was awake enough to tell myself, 'The part experiencing this prevails and keeps the rest calm, yet if the

¹³⁰Satprem remarked that this sentence might be interpreted in an 'illusionist' sense (i.e., that the objectification of the material world would be a falsehood), and Mother replied: 'No, it's not the objectification that is a falsehood, but our conception of the objectification as being something other than THAT. When we say that "He objectifies," well, we are thinking something that is not the truth-that is no longer the truth.'

preparation had not been adequate, it could have produced an imbalance.’ And if by mischance someone without sufficient strength had the possibility of picking up something of that, well, he would lose his head.

This has made it very clear to me why certain things can illuminate some people (I have clearly seen it) and drive others utterly mad – completely destroy their balance. You might say to me, ‘Then it’s because they had to go mad!’ Yes, evidently.

But even if it’s put in absolute terms, the relationships remain exactly the same.¹³¹ You see, the initial impulse is to say, ‘What’s the use of doing anything?’ But look here, the very fact that you might want to do something is part of the general determinism! Because we always keep something back and won’t admit it into the total scheme of things, otherwise.... There is no way to get out of it – that’s just the way it is.

And Sri Aurobindo explains this in such a complete, total and compact way, that there is no escape; so this so-called incapacity, this idea of still being incapable of emerging from one’s divided state, becomes false.

But you have to have a firm head on your shoulders. You must always be able to refer to THAT (*pointing above*) and then here, silence (*Mother touches her forehead*): peace, peace, peace, stop everything, stop everything. Don’t try, above all, don’t try to understand! Oh, there is nothing more dangerous! We try to understand with an instrument not made for understanding, that’s incapable of understanding.

In any case, for your question it’s very simple: we don’t need to go to these extremes!

No, I wasn’t putting the problem on a metaphysical plane but on an occult one... as if the play were acted out occultly and we were executing it materially.

For us, it seems like that.

It seems like that.... You mean it is He who is playing within Himself.

¹³¹Later, Mother clarified this sentence as follows:

We always reserve a part of ourselves for looking and observing; but if we were capable of including everything, without exception, all the relationships would remain the same – I have experienced this.

Remain the same?

The same as those we have, but without the falsehood.

An illustration of this is the well-known story about the man who refused to move out of the path of an elephant on the pretext that he was Brahman and that Brahman had told him to stay put. And the mahout replied, ‘But Brahman has told me that you should get out of the way and let the elephant Brahman pass.’ Although childishly simplified, it’s the same thing. It’s because we look ‘in this way’ yet not, in that way’ at the same time, and above all, because we don’t look at EVERYTHING at the same time. From the minute we could be integral in our perception, all relationships would remain the same, but instead of being in a state of ignorance, we would experience them in a state of knowledge.

Would remain the same? You mean they would physically be the same as they are now, but would be seen in a different way?

That’s it. I don’t know if we will ever be able to express ourselves with our present vocabulary! ... We need another language!

That is still another way of putting it!

(silence)

When I used to speak at the Playground, I tried to explain this one day – I was facing the same problem: what really is? And clearly, it is utterly impossible to understand with the mind. But I had a vision of a kind of infinite Eternity through which the Supreme Consciousness voyages¹³²; and the path this Consciousness travels is what we call the ‘manifestation.’ And this vision explained absolute freedom, it explained how both things – absolute freedom and absolute determinism – could coexist in an absolute way. The image in my vision was of an eternal Infinity in which that Consciousness voyages – one can’t even say ‘freely,’ because ‘freely’ would imply that it could be otherwise.

All who experience this say that the first movement of the manifestation, or the creation (creation, manifestation, objectification: all these words are imperfect) is CHIT, Consciousness that becomes Power. Consequently, Consciousness goes voyaging along in SAT, in Being – static, eternal, infinite and necessarily outside time and space – and this movement of Consciousness is what produces time and space within this Infinity and Eternity.¹³³ This leads to the understanding that things can simultaneously be absolutely free and absolutely determined.

This vision I had is of no value to anyone else, but it gave me a kind of satisfaction, a kind of peace (for a while).

(long silence)

I go on reading the Vedas and I see quite well how beautiful it is and how effective it must have been for those people, what a power for realization these hymns must have had! But for me....

Yet for a time I was in contact with all these gods and all these things, and they had an entirely concrete reality for me; but now... I read and I understand, but I cannot live it. And I don’t know why. It still hasn’t triggered the experience. You see, experience for me – the constant, total and permanent Experience – is... that there is nothing other than the Supreme – only the Supreme – that the Supreme alone exists. So when they speak of Agni or Varuna or Indra... it doesn’t strike a chord. However, what the Vedas succeed in doing very well is to give you the perception of your infirmity and ineptitude, of

132In ‘Questions and Answers,’ February 5, 1958 (the ‘Great Voyage of the Supreme’).

133Once again, Mother’s experience coincides with modern science, which is beginning to discover that time and space are not fixed and INDEPENDENT quantities – as, from the Greeks right up to Newton, we had been accustomed to believe – but a four-dimensional system, with three coordinates of space and one of time, DEPENDENT UPON THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA DEVELOPING THEREIN. Such is ‘Riemann’s Space,’ used by Einstein in his General Theory of Relativity. Thus, a trajectory – i.e., in principle, a fixed distance, a quantity of space to be traversed-is a function of the time taken to traverse it: there is no straight line between two points, or rather the I straight’ line is a function of the rate of speed. There is no ‘fixed’ quantity of space, but rather rates of speed which determine their own space (or their own measure of space). Space-time is thus no longer a fixed quantity, but, according to science, the PRODUCT ... of what? Of a certain rate of unfolding? But what is unfolding? A rocket, a train, muscles?... Or a certain brain which has generated increasingly perfected instruments adapted to its own mode of being, like a flying fish flying farther and farther (and faster and faster) but finally failing back into its own oceanic fishbowl. Yet what would this space-time be for another kind of fishbowl, another kind of consciousness: a supramental consciousness, for example, which can be instantaneously at any point in ‘space’ – there is no more space! And no more time. There is no more ‘trajectory’: the trajectory is within itself. The fishbowl is shattered, and the whole evolutionary succession of little fishbowls as well. Thus, as Mother tells it, space and time are a ‘PRODUCT Of the movement of consciousness.’ A variable space-time, which not only changes according to our mechanical equipment, but according to the consciousness utilizing the equipment, and which ultimately utilizes only itself; consciousness, at the end of the evolutionary curve, has become its own equipment and the sole mechanism of the universe.

the dismal state we are in now; it succeeds wonderfully in doing that!

Yesterday, this ardor of the Flame was there – burning all to offer all. It was absolutely concrete, an intensity of vibrations; I could see the vibrations – all the movements of obscurity and ignorance were cast into that. And I recall a time when I was translating these hymns to Agni with Sri Aurobindo, and Agni was real for me. Well, yesterday it wasn't that, it wasn't the god Agni, it was a STATE OF BEING. It was a state of the Supreme, and as such, it was intimate, clear, intense, vibrant and living.

(silence)

Only just towards the end of the night, after 2 a.m., does all this subconscious rise up to be relived. And with such a new and unexpected perception, oh!... It's incredible! It changes all values and relationships and reactions (*Mother shapes great movements of shifting forces*); it's like a chessboard... absolutely unexpected!

And I see a very *steady*, insistent and regular action to eliminate moral values. How I have been plagued all my life by these moral values! Everything is immediately placed on a scale of moral values (not ordinary morality – far from it! But a sense of what has to be encouraged or discouraged, what helps me towards progress or what hampers it); instantly everything was seen from the angle of this will to progress – everything, all circumstances, reactions, movements, absolutely everything was translated by that. Now, the subconscious is mounting upwards and, knee-deep in it, you see it as a lesson to tell you: so much for all your notions of progress! They are all based on illusions – a general lie. Things are not at all what they seem, they don't have the effects they appear to have, nor the results that are perceived – all, all, all, oh Lord!

(silence)

Well, obviously to establish contact with and manifest what the people of the Vedas called the 'Truth,' I still have a lot of things to change... a lot.

And yet it's a fact that I am in the state where nothing exists any longer but the Divine, the Supreme – the Supreme in every vibration, in everything I do, everything I feel. But in some way it must still be conditioned by my consciousness, since... since it's not yet THE Truth.

(long silence)

Something is happening there (*Mother touches her head*); something is taking shape, being worked on... Every day, twice a day, during my long evocation-invocation-aspiration (or prayer, if you like), I say to the Supreme Lord, 'Take possession of this brain.' (I don't mean 'thought,' I mean *this* – *Mother points to her head* – this substance inside.) 'Take possession of it!'

Once during the night, I went exploring inside this head; some cells still had fresh imprints of things registered during the day – for whatever reason they hadn't had time to be combined into the whole, so they showed up as tiny, very clear images, minuscule things utterly devoid of any mental or psychological movement – simply like tiny photographic images. There were three or four images like that, and it was so shocking to see them in this Presence that... all at once I said to myself, 'Am I going mad?!' It was that shocking. And I had to bring in a peace, a peace – not to make the movement of possession stop, but to accompany it simultaneously with a mighty peace so I wouldn't tell myself, 'You're losing your head.' That's how shocking it was.

A tiny, very tiny image, just like a little photograph, clear! Everything else was in a vibration of transformation – splendid!

You know, mon petit, you really must have your feet on the ground, be very solid, firmly balanced, and not get carried away!

But you seem to be saying that the ideas which govern or underlie our progress are more or less false moral ideas; so what should underlie our progress? What would make us say: this is good or not good, useful or not useful for progress?

That's just it – none of it is necessary!

Now I know that it's not necessary at all – not at all. Simply the aspiration must be constantly like this (*gesture of a rising flame*). Aspiration – that is, knowing what you want, wanting it. But it cannot be given a definite form; Sri Aurobindo has used certain words, we use other words, others use still other words, and all this means nothing – they are simply words. But there is something beyond all words, and that... for me, the simplest thing (the simplest to express) is, 'The Supreme's Will.'

And it's 'The Supreme's Will' FOR THE EARTH – which is quite a special thing. I am in a universal consciousness at the moment and the earth seems to me to be a very tiny thing, like this (*Mother sketches a tiny ball in the air*) in the process of being transformed. But this is from the standpoint of the Work, it's another matter.

But for those who are here, we can say, 'It is what the Supreme Lord is preparing for the earth.' He sent Sri Aurobindo to prepare it; Sri Aurobindo called it 'the supramental realization,' and to facilitate communication we can use the same words. Well, this movement (*gesture of a rising flame*) towards That must be constant – constant, total. All the rest is none of our business, and the less we meddle with it mentally, the better. But THAT, that Flame, is indispensable. And when it goes out, light it again; when it falters, rekindle it – all the time, all the time, ALL THE TIME – when sleeping, walking, reading, moving around, speaking... all the time.

The rest doesn't matter, one can do anything (it depends on people and their ways of thinking). You can just ask people like X, they will tell you: 'You can do anything at all – it doesn't matter in the least. Only you mustn't feel it's you doing it, that's all. You have to feel that Nature does it.' But I don't much approve of this system.

The important thing is the flame.

(silence)

Actually, in these scenes from the subconscious presented during the night, there were things I had believed ill-omened in my life – yet suddenly I saw the vibration of this aspiration arising, with such a power and intensity EVEN THERE. 'Oh,' I said, 'how mistaken we are!'

And this aspiration depends neither on the state of health nor.... It's absolutely independent of all circumstances – I have felt this aspiration in the cells of my body at the very moment when things were at their most disorganized, when, from an ordinary medical standpoint, the illness was serious. The cells THEMSELVES aspire. And this aspiration has to be everywhere.

When one is in this state, there is no need to worry – nothing else matters (*Mother bursts into laughter*).



April 22, 1961

I never manage to finish my morning's program. Things just keep piling up....

(Soon afterwards, concerning X, who had stated that the most recent attacks against Mother, and even those of two years earlier when she had been forced to withdraw to her room, were the result of black magic, and that certain members of the Ashram were DIRECTLY responsible for them, or in any case, had served as intermediaries – as a 'switchboard,' to quote him – in connection with an outside magician.)

I have been racking my brains, but really, I can't hit on who, IN THE ASHRAM, could be doing magic against me! Having bad thoughts is very widespread, but that doesn't matter in the least.

Yet I don't understand how someone might be doing something positively evil, to the extent that X says, 'They will repent of it.' I don't understand it, I just don't. Because usually when people are like that, they can't stay, they go. Certain people have left for just that reason. It's like this story of black magic 'performed at the Ashram' the first time I fell ill two years ago; I can't believe it, because it would prove that I am totally unconscious! And I don't think I am.

I know all the people here. I know everything that's going on, I see it night and day. But I haven't seen this. Yes, there are ill-intentioned people, but they are even obliged to tell me so! There are people who... oh, they almost wish I would leave, because they feel my presence as a constraint! They tell me so very frankly: 'As long as you're here, we're obliged to do the yoga, but we don't want to do the yoga, we want to live quietly; so if you weren't here, well, we wouldn't have to think about yoga anymore!' But they are a bunch of fools with no power in them at all. As I said, they are even forced to tell me their true feelings.

There are many – many – who think I am going to die and are making preparations so as not to be left completely out on the street when I go. I am aware of all this. But it's childishness – if I leave, they are right; if I don't, it doesn't matter!

(silence)

I had a vision last night which lasted for a long time – it was rather interesting – about your work concerning Sri Aurobindo: the plane where it's situated, what place Sri Aurobindo gives it and the HELP he is giving you. It was very, very interesting. I no longer recall all the details, but broad bands of a bluish-white light seemed to be spreading out in special forms (*Mother sketches spirals in the air*), showing how it would touch the earth's mental atmosphere. It was truly interesting.

And Sri Aurobindo spoke of it as my work with you. I told him that I myself was doing nothing! But he told me it was my work with you.

It went on for a long time – between midnight and 2 a.m.



April 25, 1961

(Mother comes in with a book by Alice Bailey, 'Discipleship in the New Age,' which had recently been sent to her. Pavitra is present and shows Mother a brochure he has received, 'World Goodwill Bulletin,' and protests against this proliferation of movements all claiming to work towards 'world union,' and proselytes making so-called 'spiritual' propaganda without having found, within and by themselves, the true spiritual foundation. Mother goes on.)

But these people just can't get out of their education! Here is a lady [A. Bailey], quite renowned, it seems (she's dead now), who became the disciple of a Tibetan lama... and she still speaks of Christ as the sole Avatar! She just can't get out of it!

And each one has the absolute Truth!

(Laughing) But it made me so angry (why, I don't know). Not anger, but a kind of... oh, it's exasperating!

And I am surrounded by people who tell me, 'I'm sending your message to so-and-so, they MUST come here, they HAVE to meet you.' Oh!... 'I'm going away!' I said to myself, 'I'm going to hide somewhere.' I've had enough.

I don't want to be the leader of a group – oh Lord, no! Not at any price! It's disgusting.

It began with this famous *World Union*¹³⁴ and now the *Sri Aurobindo Society*¹³⁵ is meddling in it! They have put together a brochure saying, 'We will facilitate your relations with the Mother'!! Luckily, the draft was sent to me. I said, 'I do not accept this responsibility.' I agreed to be President because money is involved and I wanted to be a guarantee that all these people who make propaganda don't put the money into their own pockets for their personal use; so I agreed to be President – to guarantee that the money would really go to work for Sri Aurobindo, that's all. But no spiritual responsibility; I have nothing to teach to anyone, thank God!

(Pavitra.) But Mother, A. has also been bitten by the propaganda bug; in the by-laws he sent, he put: 'The goal of the Centre d'Etudes de Sri Aurobindo [Sri Aurobindo Study Center, in Paris] is to steer people towards Pondicherry and the Mother....'

Ooh!... OH!... How dreadful. How dreadful. He too!

(silence)

I'm going to make a declaration: 'I am not the leader of a group, I am not at the head of an Ashram.' Oh! It's disgusting.

And that's not all. This J.M., who thinks herself highly intelligent, has written a letter saying, '... It is exactly the same teaching – exactly.' It's always exactly the same teaching! They are abysmally

¹³⁴See conversation of March 4.

¹³⁵After Mother's departure, this 'Society' would try to appropriate Auroville: 'Auroville is a project of the Sri Aurobindo Society.' (sic)

ignorant.

(Satprem:) They jumble everything up.

Yes. They have no discrimination. As long as the words are there, that's it – it's enough!

And what an atmosphere it all makes... phew!

The first thing I did this morning was to open this book by Alice Bailey (I've had it for several days, I had to have a look at it). So I looked... Ah, I said – well, well! Here's a person who's dead now, but she was the disciple of a Tibetan Buddhist lama and considered a very great spiritual leader, and she writes, 'Christ is the incarnation of divine love on earth.' And that's that. 'And the world will be transformed when Christ is reborn, when he comes back to earth.' But why the devil does she put 'Christ'? Because she was born Christian?... It's deplorable.

And such a mixture of everything – everything! Instead of making a synthesis, they make a pot-pourri. They scoop it all up, toss it together, whip it up a little, use a bunch of words that have nothing to do with one another, and then serve it to you!

And they want to shove me in there, too! No thanks.

After this, I received the draft of the Sri Aurobindo Society's brochure to be distributed among all disciples, all society members, in order to 'encourage' them. Well, that was the last straw! Oh, the most asinine propaganda! And plump in the middle of a bunch of other things (which had nothing to do with me), I come across this: 'We have the great fortune to have the Mother among us, and we propose to be the intermediary for all who wish to come into direct contact with her'! They wanted to print this and distribute it, just like that! So I took my brightest red ink and wrote: 'I do not accept this responsibility, you cannot make this promise.' And that was that. I cut it. And now here's A., doing the same thing!

(silence)

I'm wasting my time.

Already, with all the people here.... (But I never told them they were my 'disciples,' I told them they were my children – and with children, to begin with, there's no need to do everything they want!) I already waste all my time answering their letters, which are worse than stupid. What questions they ask – questions already answered at least fifty times – simply for the pleasure of writing! So now I've stopped answering. I write one or two words, and that's it.

No, it's disgusting!

(Satprem.) There's this passage on propaganda by Sri Aurobindo I sent to the World Union people. It should really be published everywhere. Do you remember it? 'I don't believe in propaganda....'¹³⁶

Look here, there's a muddle in all this. The Sri Aurobindo Society people had ABSOLUTELY nothing to do with the spiritual life when they began; they didn't at all present themselves as a 'spiritual group'

¹³⁶The following is the exact text referred to, an extract from one of Sri Aurobindo's letters: 'I don't believe in advertisement except for books etc., and in propaganda except for politics and patent medicines. But for serious work it is a poison. It means either a stunt or a boom – and stunts and booms exhaust the thing they carry on their crest and leave it lifeless and broken high and dry on the shores of nowhere – or it means a movement. A movement in the case of a work like mine means the founding of a school or a sect or some other damned nonsense. It means that hundreds or thousands of useless people join in and corrupt the work or reduce it to a pompous farce from which the Truth that was coming down recedes into secrecy and silence. It is what has happened to the "religions" and is the reason of their failure....' 2.10.1934 (Cent. Ed., *On Himself*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 375-76)

– nothing of the kind; they were people of good will who volunteered to collect money to help the Ashram. So I said, ‘Very well, excellent’ and as long as it’s like that, I’m behind it. Leaflets can be handed out – whatever people like; it’s enough if their interest is aroused, if they know there is an Ashram and that it needs some help to go on. But that’s all. It has nothing to do with yoga or spiritual progress or anything of the kind – it was a strictly practical organization. It was not the same thing as World Union. World Union wanted to do ‘a spiritual work on earth’ and to create ‘human unity.’ I told them, ‘You are taking something of an inward nature and you want to externalize it, so naturally it immediately goes rotten.’ (But it’s almost over now, I’ve pulled the rug out from under them.)

Anyway....

(Pavitra.) Yes, but now it’s resurging in the form of the Sri Aurobindo Society.

Ah, no! That’s not the same thing at all, They have nothing to do with each other. Nothing. They wanted to merge: I refused. I told them, ‘You have nothing to do with each other. You, World Union, are idealists (!) wanting to realize your ideal externally (without any foundation), while they are businessmen, practical people, wanting to bring money to the Ashram, and I fully agree with that, because I need it.’

It’s another thing entirely.

But then, they [the S.A.S. people] began posing as... almost as teachers! Luckily, the draft of their brochure was brought to me. I said, ‘*Nothing doing*. If you want to talk to people, tell them what you like, it’s all the same to me, but I am not publishing this. What you have written about me is not to be printed and you are not to distribute it. I’m not in the picture. My name, the fact that I am president, is simply to give my guarantee that the money won’t go into the pockets of those who collect it but will be used for the Ashram, the running of the Ashram, and that’s all. And on this basis alone I give my guarantee. I am in no way going to help people imagine they are doing a yoga!’ It’s absurd.

The other day, I told N. (and I told him loud enough for everyone to hear): ‘We can dispense with a good half of the ashramites straight-away and not lose a single *sadhak*.’¹³⁷

Well, his jaw dropped!... People imagine that by the simple fact of being here they become disciples and apprentice yogis! But it’s not true.

So, now I’m not angry any more!

It’s especially this mental paucity... everywhere they say, ‘Oh, they have the same ideas as we do! Oh, they teach the same thing! Oh!...’ Deplorable.

(silence)

* * *

Pavitra leaves.

Mother gives flowers to Satprem:

Here, this is Grace.¹³⁸ Here, Balance¹³⁹ (how lovely!). Here, ‘Light without Obscurity.’¹⁴⁰ And this is purity: an ‘Integral Conversion’¹⁴¹ *(in the cup of this flower, Mother has placed two other flowers:*

¹³⁷*Sadhak*: seeker of Truth.

'Service'¹⁴² and 'Sri Aurobindo's Compassion'¹⁴³), an integral conversion, with Sri Aurobindo, with his compassion – his compassion which gives us the opportunity to serve him.

Oh, mon petit, we need to say something a bit intelligent, don't you think? I'm counting on you.

I'm counting on you!

Yes, of course – Sri Aurobindo told me so. But I stay behind, invisible! You don't even need to tell me things – you may tell me if you like, but it isn't necessary.

(silence)

Now and then, I feel like saying outrageous things.... I almost said, 'How well I understand Sri Aurobindo – who passed to the other side!'

I have no intention of doing so, none at all. Not that I'm the least bit interested in all this outer jumble, not for that, but... I promised Sri Aurobindo I would try.... So....

So, that's that.

Only one thing would actually be true, one single thing: to DO it. All this talking and talking and promising and painting things in glowing colors – just DO it.

(silence)

Ah, but that's far more difficult than talking – far more! Far more, infinitely more difficult than talking. If you are a bit clear, transparent – it's enough just to be like this, at a given moment (*gesture of opening upwards*), to catch the Light, and then you can talk about it. Once you have seen it, you don't forget it. But to do....

This paucity, this narrowness.... It's relatively easy to get out of mental paucity, mental narrowness: one has only to pierce a hole, go beyond, and view things from above; and yes, immediately, it all widens. That's relatively easy. But this vital and PHYSICAL paucity, material narrowness... ohh!

For mental narrowness, we know the means – one has only to go beyond it – we know the means. But this (*Mother touches her body*), however much one keeps bringing in, bringing in, bringing in the Light and the Force.... Yes, for a few moments one can live a universal life, even in the sensations – but in the body....

138 *Hibiscus mutabilis*, white.

139 *Begonia*, white.

140 *Eucharis grandiflora* (Amazon lily).

141 *Hippeastrum* (white amaryllis).

142 *Peltaphorum pterocarpum* (yellow Copper Pod tree flower).

143 *Portulaca grandiflora* (rose moss).

(silence)

For obviously it has to be done in this life. The body's progress can't be preserved, can it?

Of course not – that's just it!

It could be, yes, but to no avail. If all these cells which have become so conscious have to break up.... It would result in cells that are conscious, but mixed with.... What would it amount to, mixed with the sum total of all the unconscious cells of the earth? It would be useless.

Yes, it would be useless; I mean, perhaps after millions of years it would gradually snowball and have some effect – but that's just how Nature functions when left to her own interminable way – it is not yoga.

*But once you have effected the transformation in your own body, will it be transmittable to others?
Will your experience and your realization be transmittable?*

It's a question of contagion. Spiritual vibrations are quite clearly contagious. Mental vibrations are contagious, and to a certain extent even vital vibrations are contagious (not often in their finer effects, but anyway, it's clear – a man's anger, for instance, spreads very easily). Well then, the quality of cellular vibrations should also be contagious.

But the difficulty.... You see, so far as Mind is concerned, the whole yoga has been done – like a path blazed through the virgin forest. And since it has been done, it's relatively simple: the landmarks are there and one follows them. But here, nothing has been done! One doesn't know which end to take hold of – no one has ever done it! [186] You meet all the same obstacles before which others have simply said, 'It's impossible.' Sri Aurobindo explains that it's not impossible, but nothing more. And he himself hadn't done it.

No, for the least little thing, the whole mechanism has to be discovered, and discovered in a realm of the most total ignorance, where, really, unconsciousness is the most unconscious and ignorance the most ignorant....

(silence)

Well, we shall see.

* * *

After the work:

Our habitual state of consciousness is to do something FOR something. The Rishis, for example, composed their hymns with an end in view: life had a purpose – for them, the end was to find Immortality or Truth. But at any level whatsoever, there is always a goal. Even we speak of the 'supramental realization' as the goal.

Just recently, though, I don't know what happened, but something seemed to take hold of me... (how to say it?) this perception of the Supreme who is everything, everywhere, who does everything – what has been, what is, what will be, what is being done – everything. And suddenly there was a kind of... not a thought or a feeling, it wasn't that; it was rather like a state: the unreality of the goal – not 'unreality,' uselessness. Not even uselessness: the nonexistence of the goal. And even what I was

saying just now – this will to make the experiment lingering in the body – even this has gone!

It's... something... I don't know.¹⁴⁴

There used to be a kind of mainspring, which had its *raison d'être* and so persisted: do this to arrive at that, and this leads to that (it's more subtle, of course); but this mainspring suddenly seems to have been abolished, because it became useless.

Now a kind of absoluteness prevails at each and every second, in each movement, from the most subtle, the most spiritual, to the most material. The sense of linking has disappeared: that isn't the 'cause' of this, and this isn't done 'for' that; there is no 'there' one is heading towards – it all seems....

(silence)

Is this, perhaps, how the Supreme sees?... Perhaps that is what it is: the supreme perception, an absolute.

Rather curious.

An absolute – innumerable, perpetual and simultaneous.

(silence)

Curious.

The sense of connection has gone, the sense of cause and effect has gone – all that belongs to the world of space and time.

Each... each what? What is that 'that'? You can't say a 'movement,' you can't say a 'state of consciousness,' you can't say a 'vibration' (all this still belongs to our ordinary mode of perception), so you say 'thing' – 'thing' means nothing. Each 'thing' carries in itself its own absolute law.

oh, how clumsy all this is! But what is clear, completely clear, is the total absence of cause and effect and of goal, of intention – *purpose*. There is no... (*Mother makes a horizontal motion*) this kind of connection doesn't exist; it's like this (*Mother makes a vertical motion which towers over and embraces everything at once*).

And so, in an individual consciousness it's expressed by an infinitesimal point – a physical body and everything dependent on it; but it's exactly the same thing as the Supreme Point and everything depending on that. It's the same thing. It is only like the shifting of a glance – if it can be called a 'glance' – like a needle point occupying no space.¹⁴⁵ And yet it is the same consciousness – 'consciousness': is it 'consciousness'?... Something like that. It is not 'consciousness' as we understand it, nor is it 'perception'; it is a kind of will to see (good God, what words!), and with such absolute freedom and omnipotence: it can be this or that, or yet another, and it is EXACTLY the same thing.

Don't try to understand!

It is obviously untranslatable.

But what can be translated is this kind of sensation that the sequence of cause and effect, of *purpose*, of goal, all seems to be very far below, very, very DISTANT, very... human – perhaps divine, too (from the viewpoint of the gods it may be like this also, I don't know), because in the

¹⁴⁴Mother gradually goes into trance and 'follows the experience.'

¹⁴⁵It seemed to us that Mother's experience, related while in a deep trance, could be likened to that of the Rishis, who spoke of 'an eye extended in heaven.'

consciousness of the universal Mother it is still there, there is still this ardent love to serve: 'To do Your Will.' That is still there, so it's there with the gods also.

(silence)

It seems unreal. How very curious.

It came last night. It came slowly, but last night it was very strong: no more sequence, no more linking of cause and effect, no more goal, no more *purpose*, no more intention – a kind of Absolute which does not exclude the creation. It is not Nirvana, it has nothing to do with Nirvana (I know Nirvana very well, I've had it – just yesterday evening, for instance, while walking for japa, and even this morning.... You see, I begin by an invocation to the Supreme under his three aspects, and no sooner have I uttered the sound, TAT... when all is abolished: Nirvana. And the last few days I have noticed that it's instantaneous, so easy! Oh, a delight!... Bah!...). But it's not Nirvana, it's beyond that; it contains Nirvana and it contains the manifested world and it contains everything else; all the appearances and disappearances¹⁴⁶ – all of that is contained in it.

Something....

Something which has neither cause nor effect nor prolongation (*Mother makes a horizontal motion*) nor *purpose* nor intention – intention to do what?! There is nothing to be done! It's like this (*Mother makes the same vertical motion as before*).

I hope I'm not driving you to a lunatic asylum! (*Mother laughs*)

(Mother gets up to leave)

What is most interesting is that everything stays the same. Everything stays the same. You see how it is – I can do anything, I talk to you, I joke.... Everything stays the same, it doesn't make a change in anything.

My problem begins when I ask myself how it's going to change!

There it is, petit. I think we would do well to keep all this secret.¹⁴⁷



April 29, 1961

(Some fragments of this conversation were originally published in Mother's 'Commentaries on the Aphorisms' of Sri Aurobindo. Considering it too personal, Mother had not wanted the unabridged text

¹⁴⁶The creations and 'destructions' of this world or of all worlds.

¹⁴⁷This 'secret' is no doubt part of the Secret which this entire *Agenda* seeks to track down. So where to stop? And if we are indiscreet, who knows whether the secret of man is not some simian indiscretion!

to appear even in her Agenda. However, we felt it should be kept. This conversation's starting point was the following aphorism.)

59 – One of the greatest comforts of religion is that you can get hold of God sometimes and give him a satisfactory beating. People mock at the folly of savages who beat their gods when their prayers are not answered; but it is the mockers who are the fools and the savages.

Poor T.! She asked me, 'What does it mean (*laughing*) to give God a "satisfactory beating"? How is this possible?...' I still haven't answered. And then she added another question: 'Many people say that Sri Aurobindo's teachings are a new religion. Would you call it a religion?...' You understand, I began to fume!

I wrote (*Mother reads her answer*): 'Those who say that are simpletons and don't even know what they're talking about! It is enough to read everything Sri Aurobindo has written to know that it is IMPOSSIBLE (underlined) to found a religion upon his writings, since for each problem, for each question, he presents all aspects and, while demonstrating the truth contained in each approach, he explains that to attain the Truth a synthesis must be effected, overpassing all mental notions and emerging in a transcendence beyond thought.

'Your second question, therefore, makes no sense! Furthermore, if you had read what appeared in the last *Bulletin*,¹⁴⁸ you could never have asked it. 'Let me repeat that when we speak of Sri Aurobindo, it is not a question of teaching nor even of revelation, but of an Action from the Supreme; upon this, no religion whatsoever can be founded.'

This is the first blast.

The second is:

'Men are such fools' (*laughing*: it doesn't get any better!) 'that they can change anything at all into a religion, so great is their need for a fixed framework for their narrow thought and limited action. They don't feel secure unless they can affirm: "This is true and that is not" – but such an affirmation becomes impossible for anyone who has read and understood what Sri Aurobindo has written. Religion and yoga are not situated on the same plane of the being, and the spiritual life can exist in its purity only if it is free from all mental dogma.'

People must really be made to understand this.

Yes, it is indispensable!

They are all always ready – even in the Ashram – ready to create a religion.

Yes, the people T. is talking about are Ashramites.

They are just as dogmatic as Catholics or Protestants....

Yes, it's the SAME thing. The same thing.

It means they have understood nothing.

But this: 'How can one give God a beating?' (*Mother laughs a lot*). It's funny, isn't it!

¹⁴⁸*Bulletin* of April 1961: 'What Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's history is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is a decisive action direct from the Supreme.'

But what exactly did he mean?

What did Sri Aurobindo mean?...

Do you have the English text? We may have somewhat... popularized it?

The English word is 'beating': a good beating.

'Beating?' Then that's just it: *'une raclée'*!

Religion always has a tendency to humanize, to create a God in the image of man – a magnified and glorified image, but essentially always a god with human attributes. And this (*laughing*) creates a sort of intimacy, a sense of kinship!

T. has taken it literally, but it's true that even the Spanish, when their god doesn't do what they want, take the statue and throw it in the river!

There are people here who do the same thing. I know some people who had a statue of Kali in their house (it was their family divinity), and all kinds of calamities befell them, so the last generation became furious and took the idol and threw it into the Ganges. They are not the only ones – there have been several cases like that. And to cap it all, one of them even asked my permission before doing it!

Creating a god in the image of man gives you the possibility of treating it as you would treat a human enemy.

There could be many things to say....

But these idols aren't merely human creations – they are self-existent, aren't they?

Oh, I've had some very interesting revelations on this point, on the way people think and feel about it. I remember someone once made a little statue of Sri Aurobindo; he gave it a potbelly and... anyway, to me it was ridiculous. So I said, 'How could you make such a thing?!' He explained that even if it's a caricature for the ordinary eye, since it's an image of the one you consider God, or a god, or an Avatar, since it's the image of the one you worship, even if only a guru, it contains the spirit and the force of his presence, and this is what you worship, even in a crude form, even if the form is a caricature to the physical eye.

Someone made a large painting of Sri Aurobindo and myself, and they brought it here to show me. I said, 'Oh, it's dreadful!' It was... to the physical eye it was really dreadful. 'It's dreadful,' I said, 'we can't keep it.' Then immediately someone asked me for it, saying, 'I'm going to put it up in my house and do my puja before it.' Ah!... I couldn't help saying, 'But how could you put up a thing like that!' (It wasn't so much ugly as frightfully banal.) 'How can you do puja before something so commonplace and empty!' This person replied, 'Oh, to me it's not empty! It contains all the presence and all the force, and I shall worship it as that: the Presence and the Force.'

All this is based on the old idea that whatever the image – which we disdainfully call an 'idol' – whatever the external form of the deity may be, the presence of the thing represented is always there. And there is always someone – whether priest or initiate, sadhu or sannyasi – someone who has the power and (usually this is the priest's work) who draws the Force and the Presence down into it. And it's true, it's quite real – the Force and the Presence are THERE; and this (not the form in wood or stone or metal) is what is worshipped: this Presence.

Europeans don't have the inner sense at all. To them, everything is like this (*gesture*), a surface – not even that, a film on the surface. And they can't feel anything behind. But it's an absolutely real fact that the Presence is there – I guarantee it. People have given me statuettes of various gods, little things

in metal, wood or ivory; and as soon as I take one in my hand, the god is there. I have a Ganesh¹⁴⁹ (I have been given several) and if I take it in my hand and look at it for a moment, he's there. I have a little one by my bedside where I work, eat, and meditate. And then there is a Narayana¹⁵⁰ which comes from the Himalayas, from Badrinath. I use them both as paperweights for my handkerchiefs! (My handkerchiefs are kept on a little table next to my bed, and I keep Ganapati and Narayana on top of them.) And no one touches them but me – I pick them up, take a fresh handkerchief, and put them back again. Once I blended some nail polish myself, and before applying it, I put some on Ganapati's forehead and stomach and fingertips! We are on the best of terms, very friendly. So to me, you see, all this is very true.

Only....

Narayana came first. I put him there and told him to stay and be happy. A while later, I was given a very nice Ganapati; so I asked Narayana – I didn't ask his permission, I told him, 'Don't be angry, you know, but I'm going to give you a companion; I like you both very much, there's no preference; the other is much better looking, but you, you are Narayana!' I flattered him, I told him pleasant things, and he was perfectly happy.

It has always been like that for me – always. And I have never, never had the religious sense at all – you know, what people call this kind of... what they have in religions, especially in Europe. I see only the English word for it: *awe*, like a kind of terror. This always made me laugh! But I have always felt what's behind, the presences behind.

I remember once going into a church (which I won't name) and I found it a very beautiful place. It wasn't a feast or ceremony day, so it was empty. There were just one or two people at prayer. I went in and sat down in a little chapel off to the side. Someone was praying there, someone who must have been in distress – she was crying and praying. And there was a statue, I no longer know of whom: Christ or the Virgin or a Saint – I have no idea. And, oh!... Suddenly, in place of the statue, I saw an enormous spider... like a tarantula, you know, but (*gesture*) huge! It covered the entire wall of the chapel and was just waiting there to swallow all the vital force of the people who came. It was... heart-rending. I said to myself, 'Oh, these people...' There was this miserable woman who had come seeking solace, who was praying there, weeping, hoping to find solace; and instead of reaching a consciousness that was at least compassionate, her supplications were feeding this monster!

I have seen other things – but I have rarely seen anything favorable in churches. Here, I remember going to M I was taken inside and received there in quite an unusual way – a highly respected person introduced me as a 'great saint'! They led me up to the main altar where people are not usually allowed to go, and what did I see there!... An *asura* (oh, not a very high-ranking one, more like a *rakshasa*¹⁵¹), but such a monster! Hideous.... So I went wham! (*gesture of giving a blow*) I thought something was going to happen.... But this being left the altar and came over to try to intimidate me; of course, he saw it was useless, so he offered to make an alliance: 'If you just keep quiet and don't do anything, I will share all I get with you.' Well, I sent him packing! The head of this *Math*¹⁵² It was a Math with a monastery and temple, which means a substantial fortune; the head of the Math has it all at his disposal

149Ganesh (or Ganapati): The first son of the Supreme Mother, represented with an elephant trunk and an ample belly. Ganesh is the god who presides over material realizations (over money in particular). He is also known as the scribe of divine knowledge.

150Narayana: another name of Vishnu, one of the gods of the Hindu trinity. He watches over the creation, whereas Brahma is the creator and Shiva the destroyer.

151Rakshasa: demon of the vital plane, as opposed to an *asura*, a demon of the mental world.

for as long as he holds the position – and he is appointed for life. But he has to name his successor... and as a rule, his own life is considerably shortened by the successor – this is how it works. Everyone knew that the present head had considerably shortened the life of his predecessor. And what a creature! As asuric as the god he worshipped! I saw some poor fellows throw themselves at his feet (he must have been squeezing them pitilessly), to beg forgiveness and mercy – an absolutely ruthless man. But he received me – you should have seen it!... I said nothing, not a word about their god; I gave no sign that I knew anything. But I thought to myself, ‘So that’s how it is!...’

Another thing happened to me in a fishing village near A., on the seashore, where there is a temple dedicated to Kali – a terrible Kali. I don’t know what happened to her, but she had been buried with only her head sticking out! A fantastic story – I knew nothing about it at all. I was going by car from A. to this temple and halfway there a black form, in great agitation, came rushing towards me, asking for my help: ‘I’ll give you everything I have – all my power, all the people’s worship – if you help me to become omnipotent’! Of course, I answered her as she deserved! I later asked who this was, and they told me that some sort of misfortune had befallen her and she had been buried with only her head above ground. And every year this fishing village has a festival and slaughters thousands of chickens – she likes chicken! Thousands of chickens. They pluck them on the spot (the whole place gets covered with feathers), and then, after offering the blood and making the sacrifice, the people, naturally, eat them all up. The day I came this had taken place that very morning – feathers littered everywhere! It was disgusting. And she was asking for my help!

But the curious thing is that these vital beings are aware of what is happening. I knew nothing about any of it, neither the story, nor the being, nor the head sticking out of the ground – and she wanted me to get her out of it. They ‘feel’ the atmosphere. They are aware – they may not be conscious on higher planes, but they are conscious on vital planes, aware of vital power and the vital force it represents.... It’s like this asura from M.: when I came in he suddenly seemed to tremble on his pedestal; then he left his idol and came to seek my alliance.

But it’s strange....

(silence)

In churches, I don’t know.... I haven’t been to them very often. I have been to mosques and temples – Jewish temples. The Jewish temples in Paris have such beautiful music; oh, what beautiful music! I had one of my first experiences in a temple. It was at a marriage, and the music was wonderful – Saint-Saens, I later learned; organ music, the second best organ in Paris – wonderful! I was 14 years old, sitting high up in the galleries with my mother, and this music was being played. There were some leaded-glass windows – white, with no designs. I was gazing at one of these windows, feeling uplifted by the music, when suddenly through the window came a flash like a bolt of lightning. Just like lightning. It entered – my eyes were open – it entered like this (*Mother strikes her breast violently*), and then I... I had the feeling of becoming vast and all-powerful.... And it lasted for days.

Of course, my mother was such an out-and-out materialist, thank God, that it was impossible to speak to her of invisible things – she took them as evidence of a deranged brain! Nothing counted for her but what could be touched and seen. But this was a divine grace – I had no opportunity to say anything. I kept my experience to myself. But it was one of my first contacts with.... I learned later that it was an entity from the past who had come back into me through the aspiration arising from the music.

But I have rarely had an experience in churches. Rather the opposite: I have very often had the

painful experience of the human effort to find solace, a divine compassion... falling into very bad hands.

One of my most terrible experiences took place in Venice (the cathedrals there are so beautiful – magnificent!). I remember I was painting – they had let me settle down in a corner to paint – and nearby there was a... (what do they call it?)... a confessional. And a poor woman was kneeling there in distress – with such a dreadful sense of sin! So piteous! She wept and wept. Then I saw the priest coming, oh, like a monster, a hard-hearted monster! He went inside; he was like an iron bar. And there was this poor woman sobbing, sobbing; and the voice of the other one, hard, curt.... I could barely contain myself.

I don't know why, but I have had this kind of experience so very often: either a hostile force lurking behind and swallowing up everything, or else man – ruthless man abusing the Power.

In fact, I have seen this all over the world. I have never been on very good terms with religions, neither in Europe, nor Africa, nor Japan, nor even here.

(silence)

At the age of eighteen, I remember having such an intense need in me to KNOW.... Because I was having experiences – I had all kinds of experiences – but my surroundings offered me no chance to receive an intellectual knowledge which would have given me the meaning of it all: I couldn't even speak of them. I was having experience after experience.... For years, I had experiences during the night (but I was very careful never to speak about them!) – memories from past lives, all sorts of things, but without any base of intellectual knowledge. (Of course, the advantage of this was that my experiences were not mentally contrived; they were entirely spontaneous.) But I had such a NEED in me to know!... I remember living in a house (one of these houses with a lot of apartments), and in the apartment next door were some young Catholics whose faith was very... they were very convinced. And seeing all that, I remember saying to myself one day while brushing my hair, 'These people are lucky to be born into a religion and believe unquestioningly! It's so easy! You have nothing to do but believe – how simple that makes it.' I was feeling like this, and then when I realized what I was thinking (*laughing*), well, I gave myself a good scolding: 'Lazybones!'

To know, know, KNOW!... You see, I knew nothing, really, nothing but the things of ordinary life: external knowledge. I had learned everything I had been given to learn. I not only learned what I was taught but also what my brother was taught – higher mathematics and all that! I learned and I learned and I learned – and it was NOTHING. None of it explained anything to me – nothing. I couldn't understand a thing!

To know!...

It was to happen to me two years later when I met someone who told me of Theon's teaching.

When I was told that the Divine was within – the teaching of the Gita, but in words understandable to a Westerner – that there was an inner Presence, that one carried the Divine within oneself, oh!... What a revelation! In a few minutes, I suddenly understood all, all, all. Understood everything. It brought the contact instantly.

(silence)

But all the same, can't it be said that whatever the appearances – these vital spiders or frightful Kalis – the Divine still acts and helps people through them? It's not all totally swallowed up and lost, is it?

No, but this is something else. Those who are capable of personal experiences pass through everything. But not the common herd.

(silence)

I have had discussions – not ‘discussions,’ exchanges of views – with prelates. There was one cardinal in particular.... I told him my experience, what I KNEW. He replied, ‘Whether you want to or not, you belong to the Church; because those who know belong to the Church.’ And he added, ‘You have the knowledge we are taught when we become cardinals.’ ‘Nobody has taught me anything,’ I said, ‘this is my experience.’ Then he repeated, ‘Whether you like it or not, you belong to the Church.’ I felt like telling him a thing or two, but I didn’t.

Otherwise, you just keep turning in circles, oh, caught by the form, locked in by the form!

I remember a good-hearted priest in Pau [Southern France] who was an artist and wanted to have his church decorated – a tiny cathedral. He consulted a local anarchist (a great artist) about it. The anarchist was acquainted with André’s father and me. He told the priest, ‘I recommend these people to do the paintings – they are true artists.’ He was doing the mural decoration – some eight panels in all, I believe. So I set to work on one of the panels. (The church was dedicated to San Juan de Compostello, a hero of Spanish history; he had appeared in a battle between the Christians and the Moors and his apparition vanquished the Moors. And he was magnificent! He appeared in golden light on a white horse, almost like Kalki.¹⁵³) All the slaughtered and struggling Moors were depicted at the bottom of the painting, and it was I who painted them; it was too hard for me to climb high up on a ladder to paint, so I did the things at the bottom! But anyway, it all went quite well. Then, naturally, the priest received us and invited us to dinner with the anarchist. And he was so nice – really a kind-hearted man! I was already a vegetarian and didn’t drink, so he scolded me very gently, saying, ‘But it’s Our Lord who gives us all this, so why shouldn’t you take it?’... I found him charming. And when he looked at the paintings, he tapped Morisset on the shoulder (Morisset was an unbeliever), and said, with the accent of Southern France, ‘Say what you like, but you know Our Lord; otherwise you could never have painted like that!’

Well.

In short, I have known people from everywhere, I have been everywhere, I have seen and heard everything.... It was very strange, very strange. And I didn’t do it on purpose, but just... because the Lord willed it.

What experiences!

Well, mon petit, I have to go now. I’ve been talking in torrents!

I wanted to carry on with my morning’s program, but I couldn’t. There’s a mound of letters, all in a muddle! Oh, these people here – letter upon letter, letter upon letter, ‘urgent’ needs to see me.... I thought we would prepare a reply to T., but then I chatted away.

But surely much of this could be used? I’ll note down what’s publishable... make a selection.

Oh, yes, definitely do that. But I am not keen on keeping all that – it’s much too personal. It involves a lot of people and a lot of things, and I don’t want.... I’ve told it to you, that’s all. Keep it for yourself – not even for the *Agenda*, it’s not necessary. If you enjoy it, you can keep it – that’s all. I told it to you just like that – probably because I felt like chatting!

¹⁵³Kalki: the last Avatar. He rides a white horse.

I could say many other things which would be almost the opposite of all I've just said! It all depends on the orientation. If I really started talking, you know, I would seem like... I don't know what, something like a lunatic, because with equal sincerity and equal truth, I could say the most opposing things.

And experiences!... I have had the most contradictory experiences! Only one thing has been continuous from my childhood on (and the more I look, the more I see how continuous it has been): this divine Presence – and in someone who, in her EXTERNAL LIFE, might very well have said, 'God? What is this foolishness! God doesn't exist!' So you understand, you see the picture.

You know, it's a marvelous, marvelous grace to have had this experience so CONSTANTLY, So POWERFULLY, like something holding out against everything, everything: this Presence. And in my outward consciousness, a total negation of it all. Even later on, I used to say, 'Well, if God exists, he's a real scoundrel! He's a wretch and I want nothing to do with this Creator of ours....' You know, the idea of God sitting placidly in his heaven, creating the world and amusing himself by watching it, then telling you, 'How well done!' 'Oh!' I said, 'I want nothing to do with that monster!'

(Mother gets up)

So there we are, mon petit.

I don't see you at the balcony anymore – you don't come?

I'm a little groggy.

(Laughing) Groggy?!

I'm sorry, but I have a huge amount of work.

No, it's not to ask you to come – I just want to know, if by chance I don't find you in the crowd, whether you're there and I am just not seeing you.

I could come, but...

No, no! It isn't necessary.

I still have five or six days of work left on the book...

Which one?

Pavitra's book. It's a huge task. But anyway I feel your Force – otherwise...

Good.

No, when I don't see you at the balcony, I send the Force to your room, *I pack* it off to you there!

That's exactly what I've been telling myself *(laughing)*: he must be groggy!



May

May 2, 1961

There is obviously a force at work....

When Sri Aurobindo was here, the work was done in another way; there was such an impression of hovering above difficulties, of acting on them from above. It was so strong that even rebellious elements, even things which were not going well, even... they were dominated from above and they could not manifest – they stayed like that. And as they could not manifest, they faded quietly away.

I have seen people (people from outside) who were enemies – all their enmity was pacified, pacified, pacified. They were unable to do any harm, even when they wanted to. Everything was made innocuous in that way. And it was the same thing here in the Ashram; as always, people had wrong movements and wrong thoughts, but all this, too, was dominated – it was pacified, pacified.

I had continued to work in the same way. But now... it's as if everything has been engulfed. And the number of ugly things, petty movements, nasty reactions – everywhere, everywhere, in everyone, oh!... I am swamped with letters, and such letters! Such letters!

And I don't see, I really do not see why all that needs to manifest in order to disappear. Because before, when it didn't manifest, it faded away by itself; but now it creates problems and problems and problems. (For me they are not problems but stupidities; they are problems and complications for others.) And it's so useless! So much time is lost, so much time coping with stupid reactions.... I don't know why.

And nothing can be done until it's over.



May 12, 1961

Aphorism 60 - There is no mortality. It is only the Immortal who can die; the mortal could neither be born nor perish.

The Immortal can pass from the condition of life to the condition of death (but not 'death' as we understand it); 'can die' means 'can change condition.' The Immortal can pass from this condition to that condition and back and forth again. We call it 'death,' but it has nothing to do with either life or death. They are changes of state.

(silence)

I've had this notebook¹⁵⁴ for days – don't feel like answering.

¹⁵⁴The notebook of a disciple who asks questions on the Aphorisms which Mother 'must' answer regularly.

You're not well?

I think I am! I'm not sick, in any case. No, I don't need to be concerned with my body. It's not that.... Probably the word-machine isn't working. Whatever I read seems stupid to me, whatever I am living seems stupid to me; as for the way others understand things, it's dumbfounding!

No, the mind must have gone on strike.

It's uninteresting.

(silence)

I have finished my reading of the Veda. I have really tried my best, but I cannot manage to recapture that consciousness; do what I will, it seems childish to me, I don't know why. Or else I am in the presence of a realization so far removed from what we are capable of now – but to enter into that we have to go behind the words, which requires a mighty effort.

If they really had that experience, it is admirable.

But I don't know. I don't know if they had it PHYSICALLY – in the inner worlds of course, certainly! It's all very well, one is very happy living in those worlds. But it is here – HERE! How to make of this life here, this world here, something really worth living.... Haven't yet found the trick.

That's all I can say. That's what I am up against.

That's all, I am waiting.

(silence)

Yet there are worthwhile things in the physical life. I don't know, but I still feel a nostalgia for...

Nostalgia for what? Have you actually known something worth being nostalgic about? What?

It goes back very far, to when I was a child: a sailboat on the sea.

Oh, such a trifle! It's nothing, childish.

But it's a wide physical life, and not without its beauty!

The physical life – yes, it's nothing at all. All these things of the physical life – nothing at all, nothing at all! It's childish, not worth thinking about for a second.

Unless one has the sense of the TRUE LIFE, of the Truth – it is nothing, nothing. All the rest is nothing, nothing – pastimes, childish amusements, the business of people who have nothing else to do. Ah, no! It's not worth a second's thought.

You don't understand.

Even those momentary breakthroughs one can have in life before having found the Truth, when one is on the way and suddenly has glimpses of an immortal Consciousness, the contact with a truth, even that.... These experiences are all very fine, it's very good, but it's on the way. It is not THAT.

What is worthwhile is to seek the TRUE SENSE of life: to what does it really correspond? What is there behind it all? Why has the Lord created it? What is He heading towards? What does He want?

What does He want to happen? That, we have not found. What does He want!!

He obviously has a secret, and He is keeping it. Well, I want His secret.

Why is everything the way it is?

It's certainly not the way it is just to be the way it is – it's meant to become something else. And it's this something else that I want. What is worth seeking is the something else that He wants, but as long as I don't have it....



May 19, 1961

(During the work, the difficulty of competently translating Sri Aurobindo comes up.)

Something is inevitably lost in translating; we translate, we lose something.

Not something – a great deal. A great deal.

The more I see these texts, the more.... At first I had the impression of a certain nebulous quality in the English text, and that precisely this quality could be used to introduce the spirit of another language. Now I see that this nebulosity was in my head! It was not in what he wrote.

Yes, I see what you mean – there's a sense in the way it is put.

Every word, mon petit! Every word and the POSITION of the word in the sentence – even the position of an adverb has a fundamental importance for the meaning. All the finesse, all the profound wisdom evaporates in translation, and finally we express only platitudes by comparison – platitudes. They are not platitudes compared to ordinary intellect, but they are platitudes compared to the kind of keen PRECISION with which Sri Aurobindo discerns things.

And the trouble is that if one translates literally, into poor French, it doesn't yield the deeper sense either, because that also considerably demolishes the meaning.

If we want to translate literally it's as much a mistranslation as translating freely.

Yes, yes! Actually only one thing would do – to have his genius!

Yes, we have to rethink it all.

(Laughing) It's the only solution!

Personally, I don't see at all how to write this book on Sri Aurobindo. The further I go, the more it seems to me....

That is another matter. After all, you are writing it for people who know nothing.

Yes, I agree, but still....

And despite everything, our translations of Sri Aurobindo are superior to those published in France; because those translations you know....

It's an absolute betrayal.

Oh, the translations by H. and company are appalling!

It's a betrayal. A betrayal.

Yes, and done with such self-assurance! Imperturbable.

Not very long ago I met someone from France who told me, 'Personally, you understand, I had no wish at all to read Sri Aurobindo – Sri Aurobindo translated by H.: no, thank you.' And then he read some things translated here. 'Ah,' he said, 'that makes a difference!'

But still, I am not satisfied.

Anyway, what can we do, poor creatures like us! (*Laughing*) We do our best, that's all.

* * *

(Later, Satprem wanted to read certain past conversations to Mother for her to add to her Agenda. Mother refused to listen – it wasn't the first time, either – and lively protestations ensued.)

You don't want to hear them?

I don't find it very interesting, mon petit!

Obviously, for you it's a review. But it is absorbingly interesting – no doubt about it.

I mean there is nothing sensational, interesting to recount. It's a minuscule labor, minute to minute, like... oh, it's not even like cutting a path through a virgin forest, because a virgin forest is pleasant to look at! But this.... It's almost like laying stones together to build a road. Every day and all the time, night and day and at any moment whatsoever, there are tiny, tiny things, tiny things, tiny – it's not interesting.

There are successive curves, each second of which would have to be noted down; and in the course of one of these curves, something is suddenly found. For example, at the beginning of *The Yoga of Self-Perfection*, Sri Aurobindo reviews other yogas, beginning with Hatha Yoga. I had just translated this when I remembered Sri Aurobindo saying that Hatha Yoga was very effective but that it amounted to spending your whole life training your body, which is an enormous time and effort spent on something not essentially very interesting. Then I 'looked' at it and said to myself, 'But after all,' (I was looking at life as it is, as people ordinarily live it) 'one spends at least 90% of one's life merely to PRESERVE one's body, to keep it going! All this attention and concentration on an instrument which is put to hardly any use.' Anyway, I was looking at it with that attitude, when suddenly all the cells of my body responded, in such a spontaneous and WARM way.... How to say it? Something so... so

moving. They told me, 'But it's the Lord who is looking after Himself in us!' Each one was saying: 'But it's the Lord who is looking after Himself in us!'

It was truly lovely. Then I gave my reason a good poke: 'How stupid can you be! You always forget the essential.'

It was very spontaneous and quite lovely.

So there you are-things like that happen, one thing or another, but it's nothing.

(silence)

This feeling was so warm, so intimate, so... I don't know how to express it. At once so soft and so powerful and so.... Oh, it was concrete! The whole atmosphere, the whole atmosphere became solid – all, all had the taste of the Lord. I don't know how to make it clear. It was quite material, as if you had a mouthful of it, everything was full of it – it was like that. In such a PHYSICAL way! Like.... You might compare it to the most delicious taste you could ever have – it was the sense of touch and of taste – very, very material. It was like closing your hand on something solid – such a warm, soft vibration, and SO STRONG, so powerful, so concrete!

It is evidently proof of an evolution in this direction, within this whole cluster of cells, but....

Finally, we want something else.

Finally, what we want is... *(long silence)* it's something like an absolute in the presence, the action, the consciousness, which annuls this... *(here Mother makes a gesture which – perhaps – expresses a distance, a separation, or an exchange between two distinct things)*. It can hardly be called a duality any more, but all the same there is 'something which sees and which feels.' And that's what is irritating.

I do sense that all, all in me is reaching for ONE thing: 'You, You alone, let there be only You One cannot say 'I'(there is always a misunderstanding with that idiotic 'I'), but it isn't 'You,' it isn't 'I' it is... one single thing. Let THAT be, and nothing else.

As long as it's not THAT, ah!... Yes, we are paving the road.

It's not entertaining to talk about.

Yes, it's important.

(long silence)

It's night and day and day and night, when I see people, when I don't see them....

When I am all alone, it's wonderful! As soon as this body is left all alone, oh!... it melts, it melts. There are no more limits, it is content: 'Oh, at last I can cease to be!'

And then truly, truly it forgets itself; truly it passes on to something else.

But all the rest of the time.... From morning to evening, letters to read, things to organize, people to see. And at night, every time I come out of my trance there is a swarm of things here *(gesture around the head)* waiting to be heard, demanding attention.

Sometimes there are amusing things – if I were to note down all I see! There are things... things which don't appear as they are in ordinary life, but as they ARE when seen with a slightly more clairvoyant eye – it's rather amusing. But it amounts to nothing-a sort of distraction.

And all the time the body says.... You know, it's marvelous-all the time, whenever I grumble or

grouse, it says, 'But it's for Me, it's Me, it's Me, it's for Me...' like that. 'Don't forget, it's for Me, it's Me, it's Me bringing in the people, it's Me organizing, it's Me making them ask things, it is Me....' Very well. So I tweak my ears or pull my hair and say to myself, 'How stupid!'

(silence)

This was the first time I had this experience. It was much more substantial than the physical contact, which, as I told you, I had already had.¹⁵⁵ It was much more material, and related to taste. It was as if the whole atmosphere and all the things in it were a marvelous food... an ecstatic nourishment.

I had already had the experience for the sense of smell – the divine vibration, the vibration of Ananda in odors. Just under my window, you know, Nripendra has his kitchen, where every morning and afternoon food is prepared for the children¹⁵⁶ – it all comes wafting up on gusts of air. And when the Samadhi tree is in flower, the scent wafts up to me on gusts of air; when people burn incense down below, it comes wafting up here on gusts of air – each and every fragrance ('fragrance' – let's say odor). And generally it all comes while I am walking for my japa – an Ananda of odors, each one with its meaning, its expression, its... (how to say it?) its motivation and its goal. Marvelous! And there are no longer any good or bad odors – that notion is gone completely. Each one has its meaning – its meaning and its *raison d'être*. I have been experiencing this for a long time.

But this experience of taste was completely new. It didn't last long, only a few minutes, because it amazed me so! It was as if I had a mouthful of the most marvelous foods one could imagine. And my hands were gathering it up in the atmosphere – it was so funny!

The body is obviously being prepared for something.

But this body is still much too open to people's mental formations, so it has to struggle against... oh!

That's my reproach to it – why does it struggle? Why, suddenly, do I have a terrible fatigue falling over me and have to brace myself? The body, naturally, does only one thing – it automatically repeats the mantra; then all becomes quiet, all is set in order. But why is this effort necessary? It should be done automatically [the sweeping away of bad vibrations]. Why is there a need to remember or to put up a struggle? Oh, a battle!

It's not the body complaining, it doesn't complain at all – I am the one who complains! I think that it's doing its best, but it's thwarted by this type of (one can scarcely speak of a mind) this kind of mind-like activity in matter¹⁵⁷ interfering. It is sordid. I haven't yet been able to eliminate it completely.

There are moments when it's brought to a dead halt. Oh, sometimes while I walk for the japa everything is held like this (*gesture of all being dominated from above and immobilized*), inflexibly.

But then the difficulty is that for the ordinary consciousness – and unfortunately I am surrounded by a lot of people who have a very ordinary consciousness (at least it seems very ordinary to me, although from the human standpoint they are probably rather remarkable people) – for the ordinary consciousness I seem to be in a stupor, a coma, a state of imbecility, of... yes, of torpor. It has all those appearances. Something which becomes immobile, unresponsive, stopped short (*same gesture as*

¹⁵⁵Experience of January 24, 1961.

¹⁵⁶This refers to the Ashram dispensary, managed by Dr. Nripendra.

¹⁵⁷The physical mind.

before); one can no longer think, one can no longer observe, one can no longer react, one can no longer do anything, one is like that (*same gesture*). But all these things keep coming from outside, all the time, coming and trying to interrupt that state; yet if I manage to prevent this, if I can keep this condition, after a while it becomes something so MASSIVE! So concrete in its power, so massive in its immobility, ohh!... It must lead somewhere.

But I could not remain in that state long enough (it would have to go on for HOURS), I could not, due to all these constant interruptions. And then, when the body is pulled brusquely out of it, it seems to lose its balance – it has a few difficult moments.

I understand people who choose to leave! But that's not what is wanted of me! I should have enough flexibility so that the two can exist together (*gesture expressing the interlocking or the fusion of the two worlds*).

(silence)

If you only knew... (because the perception, the conscious perception... I've had it for years and years, but it is becoming more and more keen and precise...), if you could perceive this atmosphere I am made to breathe, *mon petit!* (*gesture around the head*) The foolishness, the stupidity, the nastiness, the inanity. It is full, full of all that – full. One cannot breathe without breathing that!

Not to mention the letters people write.

They say I have become deaf... I believe it's the Lord's grace, because when I make an effort to hear what is being said to me, nine times out of ten it's completely useless and it's absolutely stupid. It's better not to hear!

So there, *mon petit* – and I said I wasn't going to talk! It's always the same thing.

It doesn't matter.

You have to suffer for it (*laughing*), having to listen to all that!

Not at all! It seems bizarre [this atmosphere Mother is made to breathe]... But no, I understand. 'Understand' – I mean I appreciate.

(silence)

When these 'promised things' are achieved, then something like a Power will come – personally I don't consider that I have power. For the moment it's nothing. It is NOTHING. My conception of Power is that when 'this must be' comes into the consciousness, well, it MUST be. But it's not like that now. All the other forces, the other movements of consciousness, enter and interfere,¹⁵⁸ and the usual mess results; there is a little bit of that, a bit of this, a bit of the other – in short, an approximation. Sometimes it works, but then it is....

The movement of *initiating* the action always proceeds in the same way – as something imperatively SEEN. Consequently, it should ALWAYS have an effect; but all kinds of things enter and cause a disturbance. So I don't call that Power – it's too haphazard. But don't worry yourself over all this chatter.

Oh, listen!...

¹⁵⁸Mother is alluding in particular to the physical mind ('this kind of mind-like activity in matter').



May 23, 1961

(Satprem inquires about Mother's health.)

It's obviously a type of filariasis which obstinately refuses to go away, but anyway.... It causes only one inconvenience now: it makes the legs very weak - very weak. I go through what seem like terrible gymnastics to climb the stairs. Other than that it doesn't matter. From time to time it *pricks*, it stings, it bites, it swells up – but it's nothing.

X said it would go away completely. The doctor said, 'It will not go away.' So my body is observing the phenomenon! *(Mother laughs)*

* * *

(Mother reviews some earlier 'Questions and Answers.' In one of them – dated November 14, 1956 – someone had asked if mastery over circumstances depended on self-mastery, citing the case of Vivekananda, who was said to possess great mastery over circumstances even though he could not master his own anger.)

I never knew Vivekananda. I only know what I have heard or read about him, but that isn't what I call knowing. So I can't say anything, and above all I don't want to seem to give credence to all the gossip that has been spread about him. I have had no personal contact with him, neither in the physical nor elsewhere – not with him personally. Naturally I could if I made an effort, but....

To tell the truth, this question seems stupid to me, because one can have mastery over circumstances only if one becomes the Supreme – because the Supreme alone has mastery over circumstances. So the question is senseless.

If you become identified with the Supreme and there is but ONE will – His – then of course you have supreme mastery. Otherwise it's all nothing but illusion. You imagine that by wanting a certain thing you can change circumstances, but you still have to be in total ignorance to believe that the change occurs because YOU want it to – in fact, the Supreme is making use of you. Consequently, you have no mastery at all; you are an instrument used by the Supreme, and that's all.

So all these things [the earlier *Questions and Answers*] seem quite childish to me, quite childish – irrelevant chatter. You are outside the garden talking about what is within. It would be best to delete the whole thing.

(In vain, Satprem protests, complaining that Mother always wants to delete everything.)

* * *

After working, as she is about to leave, Mother remarks:

The atmosphere has lifted slightly. Have you noticed?... No? Not yet....

Yes, it has been a difficult period. I've really had the impression that....

Oh, it was dreadful! Dreadful.



May 30, 1961

After working:

And you? What's new?

I don't know very well where I stand.

Oh, it's best not to know!

Personally I have stopped – I have stopped trying to know. With the stubbornness of a child, I keep repeating to the Lord, 'It's time You change all this!'

There are moments, you know, when you want to weep – which is idiotic! So you surrender it all to the Lord: 'I leave this work to You – do what You will, as You will, when You will.'

And I try to be as tranquil as I can (*Mother makes a gesture of mental immobility*), but when you do so, you become aware of... oh, it's like a swarm of flies coming – from here, from there, from above, from below, oh... coming and coming and coming!

It's probably worse for me than for others because of all these people around me, clinging like leeches. But even for an ordinary being it is... a swarm; it keeps on coming and coming – you would need to spend all your time fanning it away!



June

June 2, 1961

(Regarding an earlier 'Questions and Answers' – March 13, 1957 – where Mother says: 'And finally, isn't the Divine the best friend one could have? The Divine to whom one can tell all, reveal all, because here is the source of all mercy, of all power to efface error when it no longer recurs....' Surprised, Satprem blurts out.)

But there's no more problem when the error no longer recurs! Isn't it when the error recurs that it needs to be effaced?

When one does not repeat one's past mistakes, the divine power, the power of the divine Grace, abolishes their consequences – their karma – in the being. But as long as mistakes are repeated nothing can be abolished, because one re-creates them at every minute. When a person has made a serious error, say, a serious mistake (it can be serious or not, but we are concerned primarily with the serious ones), such mistakes have their consequences in life, a karma which has to be exhausted. The divine Grace, if you call upon it, has the power to abolish that karma, to cut short the consequences – but the Grace can only do this when you, within yourself, don't begin all over again, when the mistake committed is not renewed. The past can be completely purified and abolished, on condition that one does not keep making it into a perpetual present.

I have said it there in one sentence, but I didn't want people to believe that they can continue making the same stupid blunder indefinitely and have the Grace indefinitely annul all the consequences.¹⁵⁹ It isn't like that! The past can be cleansed to the point where it has no effect of any kind on the future, but only on condition that you stop the wrong vibration in yourself, that you don't reproduce the same vibration indefinitely.

I know why I gave no explanations as I was speaking: because of the intensity of the experience. There is something like it in *Prayers and Meditations*. I remember an experience I had in Japan which is noted there.... *(Mother looks through 'Prayers and Meditations' and reads a passage dated November 25, 1917:)*¹⁶⁰

'Thou art the sure friend who never fails,
the Power, the Support, the Guide. Thou art
the Light which scatters darkness,
the Conqueror who assures the victory....'

It was a series of experiences resulting from external circumstances. And then I speak of the tears shed, not for oneself but for others. *(Mother reads a passage dated July 12, 1918.)*

'But a few days ago did I know, did I hear:
If you weep before Me
without restraint, without pretence,

¹⁵⁹In one of the handwritten notes left by Mother, we found the following: 'Sri Aurobindo told me: Never give them the impression that they can do whatever they like, they will always be protected.'

¹⁶⁰With the exception of the second asterisked passage, which was not included in his English version of selected *Prayers and Meditations*, the following translations are Sri Aurobindo's.

many things will change,
 a great victory will be won.
 And that is why, when the tears
 welled up from my heart to my eyes,
 I came to sit before Thee
 and let them flow reverently in offering.
 And how sweet and how comforting
 was this offering!¹⁶¹
 ‘And now, although I weep no longer,
 I feel so near, so near to Thee
 that my whole being quivers with joy.
 ‘Let me stammer out my offering’:
 I have cried too with the joy of a child,

 ‘O Supreme and only Confidant, Thou who
 knowest beforehand all we can say to Thee
 because Thou art its source!
 ‘O Supreme and only Friend, Thou who acceptest,
 Thou who lovest, Thou who understandest us
 just as we are, because it is Thyself
 who hast made us.
 ‘O Supreme and only Guide,
 Thou who never gainsayest our highest will
 because it is Thou Thyself who wilt in it!
 ‘It would be folly to seek elsewhere than in Thee
 for one who will listen, understand, love and guide,
 since always Thou art there
 ready to our call and never wilt Thou fail us!
 ‘Thou hast made me know the supreme,
 the sublime joy of a perfect confidence,
 an absolute serenity, a surrender total and
 without reserve or coloring, free from
 effort and constraint.
 ‘Joyous like a child I have smiled and wept
 at once before Thee, O my Well-Beloved!’

It was under very tragic circumstances.

I was reliving this experience [during the Talks of March 13, 1957] – that is why I didn’t want to comment on it.

Tragic circumstances?

... After that experience the decision was taken to come back to India – only then could I manage to return. There were all sorts of projects and things... we were even on the point of going to China and, oh!... But after that it was decided to come back to India.

* * *

¹⁶¹ ‘Homage’ is used in the original text.

After working:

D. asked me if changing the time of her japa had much importance. I told her she can change the time if she has to, provided she remains sincere – that's the most important thing.

These are small details. I myself am unable to do it at fixed hours; I had always hoped to do it between 5 and 6 in the afternoon, but I usually can't manage to go upstairs before ten to six! So... so I do it from 6 to 7.

Fundamentally, I have noticed one thing: if you yourself are in the right state, the right atmosphere is immediately created. And in addition, I am always in a sort of... not even a conviction – an ABSOLUTE perception that all that happens is the Lord's doing. When He makes me late going upstairs it's because He wants me to be late, and consequently, if I take it well – if instead of closing myself and getting annoyed I say, 'Good, that's fine' – immediately a very interesting atmosphere is created, because at the same time I see all the advantages of this change. But this movement must not be mental – it has to be spontaneous.

Therefore, I have told her (to put it simply): provided you are sincere in your attitude, all is well.

* * *

Later:

Here is something interesting. I am translating the 'Yoga of Self-Perfection.' My first look at it stiffened me – now it's a delight! And I have done nothing in between but simply let it work within; it's so easy!

My translation is poorly written, hardly French at all, but to me it is limpid.

And I see that the translation would go quickly if one moved into another domain. In one domain it is laborious, terrible, difficult, and the result is never very satisfying. But contrary to what I had thought, the domain of comprehension does not suffice, even the domain of experience does not suffice: something else is needed (oh, how to explain it?), a state in which effort is left totally behind. There is a state (which probably must be beyond the mind, because one no longer thinks at all, not at all) where everything is smiling and easy, and the sentences come to you all by themselves. It's peculiar – I read, and even before I finish reading the sentence to be translated I know what's in it; and then without waiting – almost without waiting to know what's in it – I know what to put for it. When it's like that I can translate a page in half an hour.

But it doesn't last – it ought to last. Usually it ends in a trance: I go off into the experience, I am in a beatific state... and ten minutes later I notice that I've been in that state with my pen poised in my hand. It's not favorable to the work! But otherwise it's – I can't even say it's like someone dictating (it's not that, I don't 'hear'); it comes by itself. Oh, the other day there were one or two sentences!... I wrote something and suddenly saw what I was writing – and doing so pulled me out of that state. 'Well,' I said to myself, 'how nicely put!' And plop! (*Mother laughs*) Everything was gone.

Be in that domain, and you will never grow tired.

But to get there, believe me, you must accept to be a total imbecile for quite some time! I am not exaggerating. I have found myself in such states: you no longer understand anything, no longer know anything, no longer think anything, no longer want anything, no longer can do anything – no more power, no more will, no more thought, no more anything – you are... like that. And when I am like that (when I WAS, because now it's beginning to go away), I see the external world, people like those around me, looking at me and thinking, 'Ah! Mother is lapsing into her second childhood'!... Their

vibrations come to me and unfortunately they sometimes have the power to shake me – I have to make a movement to free myself from the thoughts of others.

(silence)

It was an odd thing, it seized me suddenly – I was no longer able to climb the stairs! I didn't know how to do it! It also took hold of me once as I was having lunch – I no longer knew how to eat! This, of course, is what the external world calls 'lapsing into second childhood.' So I considered the problem of the poor old people who are thought to be lapsing into their second childhoods – might they not, by chance, be on the frontier... of liberation?! Perhaps.

My brain is good!! *(Mother laughs)*

It's good, but my skull.... You know, there are people who read your character from the shape of your skull – it would be interesting to have one of them touch mine. Mon petit, it's a mountain range! With peaks and valleys! There are deep hollows, precipices, Himalayan peaks! And it's increasing!

Increasing!

Oh, yes, it's increasing from year to year! The hollows become hollower, the bumps become bumpier! And they are everywhere! It's quite interesting!

For years and years, until I was past forty, my skull was soft here *(Mother touches the front part of her skull)*, something which seems to be absolutely unheard-of. It was soft and becoming more *so (gesture of the skull opening)* and then, when you pressed there.... I didn't bother about it, but then suddenly I noticed that here *(Mother touches the back part of her skull)* it is truly like mountainous scenery – there are bumps everywhere, and hollows, vales – very interesting! It's increasing.

It means it must be getting more and more complicated in there!

I once fell down and dented my head (for a long time it was even painful); and since then the dent has become deeper and deeper and the bump has become larger and larger. I told the doctor about it (he had been called in at the time because it was bleeding profusely and people were upset – it healed in a day) and he told me there had been an accumulation of blood causing the bone to increase in size. But this is a doctor's reason.

It is quite interesting.

(silence)

What is necessary is to abandon EVERYTHING. Everything: all power, all comprehension, all intelligence, all knowledge, everything. To become perfectly nonexistent, that's the important thing. But the very atmosphere makes things difficult – what people expect of you, what they want of you, what they think of you – it's very bothersome. You have to spend all your time fanning it away.



June 6, 1961

(Mother arrives looking weary. Satprem asks if she is tired.)

No.... I had finished reading the Veda and wanted to take up *The Life Divine*, but as I had never read *On Himself*,¹⁶² I chose it instead. I read the first chapter dealing with his life in England and to me it all seemed.... Oh, why speak of all these things in connection with Sri Aurobindo? Why? I know quite well that he himself has replied – or rather rectified inexact things people had said about him – but it made such a painful impression on me! Such a painful impression.

Something must definitely be done which is free of that whole useless jumble about who his father was and so forth – pah! I don't like that sort of thing.

*Yes, it's a grab-bag of odds and ends – very important letters are mixed in with all sorts of pointlessness. Take the ICS. examination, for instance – they seem to be pleading Sri Aurobindo's case! It's ridiculous.*¹⁶³

Yes, I wasn't looking after anything when that was published [in 1953]. It has given me something like a malaise.

* * *

(After the work, Mother remains absorbed for a long time, then speaks:)

What is bewildering is the subtlety of the problem.

Take absolutely identical circumstances: the same outer circumstances, the same inner circumstances – the 'psychological condition' is the same; circumstances of life, the same; events, the same; people, no appreciable difference. Identical circumstances, a few hours – not even a day – apart. And in one case, the body – that is, the cellular consciousness – feels a sort of eurhythmy and general harmony, everything dovetails in such a marvelous way, without rubbing, without friction – everything functions and organizes itself in a total harmony. It's a peace and a joy (without the vital intensity, of course – it's something physical). All, all is so harmonious and truly you feel a sense of the divine organization of everything, of all the cells – all is marvelous and the body feels well. Then in the other case... everything is the same, the consciousness is the same and... something escapes – the perception of harmony is no longer there. For what reason? One doesn't understand anymore. And then the body begins to function wrongly. Yet everything is absolutely identical – mental conditions, vital conditions, physical conditions, all identical – and suddenly it all seems... *meaningless*. One still has the consciousness, the full consciousness of the divine Presence, and... one senses somewhere something escaping, and all becomes... it's like running after something that escapes. Things become meaningless. In absolutely identical conditions – even the movements of the body (functional movements, I mean) may be identical, but they are felt to be disharmonious (these words are much too crude, it's more

¹⁶²Sri Aurobindo's letters on his life, his experience and his yoga.

¹⁶³Sri Aurobindo was not admitted to the Indian Civil Service because he refused to appear at the riding test which terminated the examination.

subtle than that), meaningless, disharmonious. And what escapes? You can't make it out.

What is it?

Yesterday it was all so marvelous! Yet everything was identical, absolutely identical, down to the least detail.

Strangely, it happened after reading that first chapter of *On Himself*; while reading I felt a sort of malaise in my body, so slight that it was almost imperceptible, but still a malaise – and it lasted through the night. Why? Nothing had changed in the consciousness.

More and more I have the impression of – what? How can it be explained? A question of vibrations in Matter. It's incomprehensible, completely eluding all mental law, all psychological law: a self-existent something.

So many question marks!

The more one goes into it in detail, the more mysterious it becomes. One always thinks one has grasped it; when one talks about such things¹⁶⁴ one is being very nice, one seems to know something, one talks... but when it comes to putting it into practice!...

It's so subtle! It could almost be.... It's almost like being on the border between two worlds. It's the same world and it's – is it two aspects of this world? I can't even say that. Yet it's the SAME world; all is the Lord, He and nothing but He, only it's.... And so subtle, so subtle: if you go like this (*Mother tilts her hand slightly to the right*), it's perfectly harmonious; if you go like that (*Mother tilts her hand slightly to the left*), oof! It's... it's at once absurd, *meaningless*, and laborious, painful. But it's the SAME thing! It's all the same thing.

What is it?

There is such a strong impression of facing something which completely escapes comprehension, reason, intelligence, everything mental or intellectual (even the most elevated); it's not that, it's.... And then truly, if you stand back from it and employ big words, you would say, 'All this (*Mother tilts her hand to one side*) is Truth, and all that (*she tilts her hand to the other side*) is Falsehood' – but it's the SAME thing! In one case, you have the sense of being carried – not only the body but the entire world, all circumstances – carried, floating in a beatific light towards an eternal Realization; and in the other case, it's like this (*Mother makes a gesture of being burdened*), deadening, heavy, sorrowful – exactly the same thing! Almost the same material vibrations.

And it's so subtle, so incomprehensible – there's a distinct impression of it TOTALLY eluding even the highest conscious will. What is it? What is it?

If we found that, perhaps we would have it all – the total Secret.

(silence)

That must have been how Truth became Falsehood. But 'how' – what is that 'how'?

(silence)

And why did reading that book [*On Himself*] give me this malaise?

Oh, it was so lovely yesterday! The whole day – and all, all, all was the same as now – all the

¹⁶⁴Mother is alluding to two extracts from *Questions and Answers* (dated June 19 and July 17, 1957) which she has just reviewed for inclusion in the Bulletin. In them she speaks of the causes of illness and of using the conscious will for physical development.

circumstances, the condition of the body, everything. It can't even be said that in one case the body was well and in the other it wasn't – it isn't true, it was all the same thing, all was the same. But in one case you float – you float in a beatific light which carries you for all Eternity; and in the other case you seem to be walking through shifting sands... without seeing clearly, without understanding – deadened, absolutely deadened.

That's why I had difficulty listening to you just now [during the work], because since last night I have been constantly facing this problem, and all morning long I've had to... you know, do like this (*Mother clenches her fist, as though getting a grip on herself*) in order to come here and listen. I didn't feel like seeing anyone, doing anything... only staying like this (*Mother keeps still, her arms at her sides*) until that problem is willing to explain itself.

But if you had seen me yesterday.... I would probably have said nothing, but it was so lovely! Exactly the same thing, the same people, the same circumstances, the same conditions in the body. Everything, everything was the same.

But wasn't it universal waves – wasn't this malaise something cosmic rather than personal?

Yes, of course! It's the universal Problem. That is my sole concern.

Something that veils?

I am up against this fact: how did Truth become Falsehood? I am not asking myself intellectually – that doesn't interest me at all! It is here, in Matter, that the thing must be found.

It is double, it is double.

How did it happen? (But not just 'how' as in a story: the MECHANISM). And how will we get out of it?

You see, all the things that have been told, even all the things Sri Aurobindo has said (he has said the most in Savitri), all that is necessarily... (what can it be called?) mental, the super-intellectual spiritualized mind. But it is not THAT! It's a form, it's an image, it's not... the concrete fact.

(silence)

And with a sort of prescience I see that only the body can know – that's the extraordinary thing!

(silence)

And when the body makes this movement (gesture of stepping back from physical appearances) – what to call it? This movement of fusion (is it 'fusion?'), of no longer being a separate body, of being the Divine – there is something which.... There is a sort of abstraction of something (and even that is putting it too concretely). And sometimes it succeeds, the body floats in the Light; sometimes it's only partial. Sometimes all the inner consciousness is there, full and total – but HERE things remain as they are, stupid, stupid, utterly stupid! Blind, in shifting sands, painful (and it's not a thought, it's not even a sensation; I don't know what it is).

And THERE the conscious will can do nothing. Nothing. All it could do it has done, and it continues to do all it can at each minute, and it's nothing, it is not THAT – what is it??

That is a true Secret. How splendid it will be when it is found.

And at the same time there's a kind of prescience, like a sensation beforehand, of an omnipotence –

the TRUE Omnipotence. And nothing but THAT can satisfy you, nothing else – all the rest is... nothing.

(Mother gets up to leave)

There you are, petit.

Don't worry.

After all, that's what I am here for, isn't it?! It MUST be done, it has to be done.

But it's quite a disgusting job.

All yoga, all the yogas, mon petit, are amusements. Oh, all the disciplines are joys.... But it's not THAT.

It's a nasty job.



June 17, 1961

So far, the meditations with X are much better than last time. Today especially it was very good.

It's a contemplation going right up to the Supreme, with a constant, continuous Descent: something which doesn't waver the whole time ('doesn't waver' – I mean doesn't vary), during the whole meditation. But if I ask him what happened, he'll tell me a little story!

Yesterday I saw N. and he told me, 'Oh! X had an experience during the meditation with you this morning.' 'Ah!' I said to myself, 'This is going to be interesting.' (I was wrong to think so, by the way, even for a quarter of a second.) 'Yes,' he told me, 'he saw what seemed to be a transparent golden veil descending over you; and by your side were flowers like roses, or colored like roses, with the feet of a child upon them.'

All the 'psychics' tell you such stories!

It was the same thing yesterday, the same Experience, only less strong and less continuous. But all these petty imageries don't interest me.

So I don't ask him anything.

Do you mean that different people can see different things under the same circumstances? The phenomenon isn't objective?

Oh, it depends entirely upon the plane in which you find yourself! No, five different people will see five different things. Only when one is in marvelous accord, in an identical vibration, as happened to me with Sri Aurobindo.... But that never took the form of little stories!

Whenever there was a special force descending, or an opening, or a supramental manifestation, we would know it at the same time, in the same manner. And we didn't even need to talk about it; we would sometimes exchange a word or two concerning the consequences, the practical effects on the

work, but that's all. I never had this with anyone except Sri Aurobindo.

There have been times when I did things for people and they sensed exactly what I had done. It has happened. It is rather rare, but still it has happened.

But I see more and more that the realm where my experience is situated is.... Well, it only worked with Sri Aurobindo!

* * *

(At the end of the conversation, Satprem complains to Mother of the tiresome task of eating, and asks her if he couldn't cut it down drastically.)

The time has not yet come when we can stop eating. Never in my life has food interested me; there have been long periods when I ate almost nothing. One day I said to myself, 'Why lose so much time eating?' And the reply was, 'Don't stop yet, wait; that's not your look-out.'

After that I decided I would encourage everyone to eat!



June 20, 1961

(Following a meditation with X.)

We've been having these meditations for four days now and this is the fourth day of total silence – motionless, soundless (I don't know if there is sound outside or not; I don't know anything). A complete immobility right to the end.

When all is immobile like that and nothing seems to happen, is something happening?

Something happening? I don't know. But that state IN ITSELF is something. When the body is conscious of that it means precisely that it has come out of its narrowness – it is the same Infinite as the one you get when out of the body.

What I do now when X comes is take it all (*gesture from below to above*) and do like this (*gesture of offering up*), in an aspiration – and then I let it go. Then all the Immobility, the Silence, the Light, the Peace comes down from above into everything and doesn't move. But that in itself is... very difficult for the body to have, very difficult: something is always vibrating and moving.

It's as if it put everything back in order, but nothing is moved.

Yesterday, when I was in that immobility, suddenly I felt something obliging me to turn my head. I didn't turn my head, but the consciousness turned (*gesture to the left*), and then I saw myself standing there in the corridor (that kind of corridor separating the hall and Sri Aurobindo's room) in my usual

outdoor dress [Indian shirt and light trousers]. I was standing up very straight and holding a globe of light above my head – and such a light! It was shining brighter than those strong electric bulbs – dazzling. My own clothing seemed to be made of golden-pink light. I was standing very straight and carrying this globe (*gesture above the head*). When I saw that I said to myself, ‘Now why on earth is he making me see this?’ And that was all. Nothing else happened except that. But near me there was a figure I didn’t know, and it reminded me of X’s great guru,¹⁶⁵ whom I had already seen once. There he was by my side, a tall figure, and he seemed to be the one who had tugged at me to make me see that vision.

It was a large globe. Although no distinct rays could be seen, it appeared to be projecting innumerable rays like flashes of lightning. It was sparkling all over.

What does it mean?

Don’t know. I didn’t bother much about it. He certainly wanted to make me see it – but what is it? What does it mean? Don’t know.

It was the dress I wear when I go out. Why? It must have had a meaning, although I must say I didn’t exert myself to understand! I simply saw, smiled (it made me smile), and that was all. It was just before the meditation ended.

At any rate, it’s the fourth day of this same silence (*Mother clenches her fists, as if to show a compact mass*). Not only silence – immobility (*same compact gesture*), WITHOUT TENSION, without tension, effortless, without anything; like a kind of eternity – in the body.

I have no trouble getting out of it – I don’t get ‘out’ of it, to tell the truth; it’s not like a trance you have to pull out of, it’s not that. This state seems quite natural to me: I hear the clock chime.

* * *

(Satprem remarks on the gap between the inner realization of certain yogis like X and their outer behavior, which doesn’t always seem up to the mark.)

I truly have the impression of a kind of abyss between the X I can sense, who attracts me, and the outer man.

I don’t know the outer X, I have been very careful not to enter into contact with him! But from the first day I sensed a gap.

It’s odd!

No, it’s the old tradition – you step back from Nature and Nature does whatever she wants. It doesn’t concern you, you have no responsibility, ‘you are not that.’ It’s the old idea.

Sri Aurobindo was completely against it. Somewhere he makes fun of a man who said he was the Supreme and that whatever he did, it wasn’t he himself doing it – and then he was angry when his meal was late! But of course it wasn’t him: the stomach-nature was angry!¹⁶⁶

It’s one of the most ironic things Sri Aurobindo has written.

¹⁶⁵X’s deceased guru. See *Agenda I*, October 4, 1958, pp. 200-201.

I've known that and have always taken great care to avoid it, for it opens the door to all deformations. Lele¹⁶⁷ was like that – Lele did the same thing: he behaved like a lout; he said it wasn't himself, it was Nature – he had nothing to do with it. This is all very well, but still there's a sort of affinity between your physical comportment and what you are inside, isn't there?!

Sri Aurobindo didn't accept this tradition at all.

For instance, X is completely caught up in all his family affairs; he said to Amrita, 'In August the girls will go back home to their husbands, the boy will be at college, and I'll be able to live tranquilly.' But there will be something else! There is always something else, naturally!

Anyway, it doesn't matter – I assure you that for the half-hour he is here with me he is splendid.

Oh, he is splendid! There is such a sweet warmth in him, so good, and a mastery (mastery of inner movements, of the vital movement) and the ability to bring into the physical this peace, this absolute immobility. It's splendid! I have been doing this for something like forty years and you can't imagine how difficult it is, how much effort it takes to achieve it! With him it comes all by itself. That's the tantric mastery.

And to a certain extent it has a healing power (to a certain extent). But it's not that supramental thing Sri Aurobindo had: he would pass his hand like this (*gesture*), and the disorder would be gone completely!

I have never seen anyone but Sri Aurobindo do that.



June 24, 1961

I have received your note¹⁶⁸ and it didn't surprise me, because just about a month ago I received what seemed like an SOS from your mother, telling me your father was rapidly declining. I have done what I could, mainly to bring in some tranquillity, some calm, some inner peace. But I haven't done.... You see, there are always two possibilities when people are so seriously ill: they can be helped to die quickly, or else made to linger on for a very long time. When I have no outer or inner indications, all I ever do is apply the consciousness for the best to happen to them (the best from the soul's standpoint, of course).

Do you know whether your father has expressed any wish?

According to my mother's letter, he says he no longer particularly cares to live, that his days are so miserable....

166See the poem entitled *Self* (*Last Poems*, Cent. Ed., Vol. V, p. 151).

167The tantric guru Sri Aurobindo met in 1907 and from whom he received mental silence.

168Satprem no longer has the text of this letter.

But he still doesn't want to pass away? Is he suffering a great deal?

He's suffering.

(Mother remains silent for a moment, then says:) Over the years I have had a considerable number of experiences in this realm, and my first action is always the same: send the Peace (I do this in all cases, for everyone) and apply the Force, the Power of the Lord, for the best thing to happen. Some people are very sick, sick to the point where there is no hope, where they cannot be cured, where the end is coming; but they sense that their souls must still need to have certain experiences, so they hang on—they don't want to die. In such cases I apply the Force for them to last as long as possible. In other cases, on the contrary, they are weary of suffering, or indeed the soul has finished its experience and desires to be liberated. In such a case, if I am sure of it, sure that they themselves are expressing the desire to depart, it's over in a few hours – I say this with certainty because I've had a considerable number of experiences. There is a certain force which goes out and does what is necessary. I haven't done either of these things for your father – neither to prolong his life (because when people are suffering it's not very kind to prolong their lives indefinitely), nor to finish it, because I didn't know – one can't do either without knowing the person's conscious wish.

As for your mother, she must have been thinking of me, for otherwise she wouldn't have come in that way – she would have come through you (it's different when things come through you). But she came to me directly, so I thought that for some reason she must have remembered me. I don't know. And I looked and said to myself (it came just like that), 'Now that she will be left all alone, why doesn't she come here?' I haven't done anything about that, either, one way or the other.

That's odd – the same thought has been coming to me these last three or four days: why doesn't she come here?

It didn't come from me, you understand; it didn't stem from a construction made by me: it came from outside. 'Why doesn't she come here?' I wondered.

The same thought came to me three or four times.

Then she is thinking about it – perhaps not consciously, but in her subconscious.

It happened some time ago. I even spoke to Sujata about it and said that someone over there was calling you. Did she tell you?

No.

That your mother was pulling on you.

She had Z write to me.

As I said, I have done nothing, neither one way nor the other. So don't do anything. You know, from time to time when people are very sick, something comes out of them to indicate their will. But one has to be present, one has to hear it.

(silence)

There was an experience like that quite recently. A.'s mother was ill – old and seriously ill. Seeing her

declining, A. wrote to me: 'If the time has come, make it happen quickly – don't let her suffer.' Then I saw very clearly that there was still something in her which didn't want to go; and when I applied the Force for the best to happen she suddenly began to recover! It must have coincided with a kind of inner aspiration in her – no more fever, she was feeling well. And A. began preparing to come back here. 'If she's recovering,' he said, 'there's no longer any point in my staying!' The same evening she had a relapse and he sent me a telegram. Meanwhile (it was evening) I had gone upstairs to 'walk'; suddenly The Will came (which is a very, very rare thing), The Will: 'Enough, now it must finish – it's enough as it is.' Within half an hour she was dead.

These things are very interesting. They must form part of the work I have come on earth to do. Because even before encountering Theon, before knowing anything, I had experiences at night, certain types of activities looking after people who were leaving their bodies – and with a knowledge of the process; I didn't know what I was doing nor did I seek to know, yet I knew exactly what had to be done and I did it. I was around twenty.

As soon as I came upon Theon's teaching (even before meeting him personally), and read and understood all kinds of things which I hadn't known before, I began to work quite systematically. Every night, at the same hour, I was working to construct – between the purely terrestrial atmosphere and the psychic atmosphere – a path of protection across the vital, so that people wouldn't have to pass through it (for those who are conscious but without knowledge it's a very difficult passage – infernal.) I was preparing this path, doing this work (it must have been around 1903 or 1904, I don't remember exactly) for months and months and months. All sorts of extraordinary things happened during that time – extraordinary. I could tell long stories....

Then, when I went to Tlemcen, I told Madame Theon about it. 'Yes,' she told me, 'it is part of the work you have come on earth to do. Everyone with even a slightly awakened psychic being who can see your Light will go to your Light at the moment of dying, no matter where they die, and you will help them to pass through.' And this work is constant. Constant. It has given me a considerable number of experiences concerning what happens to people when they leave their bodies. I've had all sorts of experiences, all kinds of examples – it's really very interesting.

Lately it has increased, become more precise.

There is a boy here, V., who is especially interested in what happens at the moment of death (this seems to be one reason why he has reincarnated). He's a conscious boy, a remarkable clairvoyant, and he has a power. And we have had (how to put it?) some quite interesting correlations of experiences concerning people who pass away here. Extremely interesting and extraordinarily precise: he sends word to me, I reply, and at night when the disincarnated person comes he says, 'Mother has done this and says to do that,' and the person does it. And we don't need to speak – such precision!

This happens in sleep?

He might do this work in sleep, or sometimes in meditation, or in a kind of trance he enters into – it depends on the case.

I will give you a concrete example, then you'll understand. When I.B. was killed, I had to gather up all his states of being and activities, which had been dispersed by the violence of the accident¹⁶⁹ – it was terrible, he was in a dreadful state of dispersion. For two or two and a half days the doctors fought in the hope of reviving him, but it was impossible. During those two days I gathered up all his consciousness, all of it; I collected it over his body, to the point where, when it had come and formed itself there, such vitality, such life was coming back into his body that after some hours the doctors

¹⁶⁹He was run over by a truck.

believed he would be saved. But it couldn't last (it wasn't possible – a part of the brain had come out). Well, when not only his soul but his mental being, his vital being, and all the rest had been properly collected and organized over his body and had realized that the body had become quite unusable, it was over – they gave up the body and it was over.

I was keeping I.B. near me because I already had the idea of putting him immediately back into another body – his soul was not satisfied, it had not finished its experience (there was a whole combination of circumstances) and it wanted to continue to live on earth. Then, that night, his inner being went to find V., lamenting, saying he was dead and hadn't wanted to die, that he had lost his body and wanted to continue to live. V. was very perplexed. He let me know about it in the morning: 'Here's what has happened.' I sent word to him of what I was doing, that I was keeping I.B. in my atmosphere and that he should stay very calm and not get excited, for I was going to put him back into a body as soon as possible – I already had something in view. The same evening I.B. again went to find V., with the same complaint. V. told him very clearly, 'Here is what Mother says, here is what she is going to do; come now, be calm and don't torment yourself.' And he saw in I.B.'s face that he had understood (the inner being was taking on I.B.'s physical appearance, naturally); his face relaxed, he became content.

He went away and he never came back. That is, he stayed tranquilly with me, until I was able to put him into C's child.

This correlation in the work is very interesting because it has quite practical effects – V. was able to communicate exactly what I had to say to I.B., and I.B. understood better through him than through me directly (because I do the work, but don't have time to deal with all the details, to tell each individual what to do).

I was telling you the other day how vexing it is that we are all on different planes all the time,¹⁷⁰ but on that particular plane it works very well with this boy – on this one point, this tiny, precise point concerning the moment of leaving the body. We can do interesting work this way.

Is one snatched up by the vital zone upon leaving the body?

No, it depends.

It depends entirely upon the way people die: on the way they leave their bodies, on what is around them, on the atmosphere created for them.

If they call me, then it goes well.

There have been very, very few cases, a quite minimal number, when people have called (not very sincerely) and their call hasn't had much effect. But even these people have a protection. There was a woman here, an old woman who was not very sincere (she didn't live here – she only came to visit) and the last time she visited she fell ill and died. Then I saw that she was completely dispersed into all her desires, all her memories, all her attachments... and it had all been scattered here and there, into all sorts of things (one part of her was seeking, seeking where to go and what to do); anyway, it was rather pitiful. Afterwards I was asked, 'How did it happen? She was calling all the time.' I replied that I had not heard her call – it must not have been very sincere, only a formula.¹⁷¹

But it's very rare that people get no response.

Not long ago M.'s sister died (psychologically, she was in a terrible state – she had no faith). Well, on that day,¹⁷² just when I came to know that she was passing away, I remember being upstairs in the bathroom communicating with Sri Aurobindo, having a sort of conversation with him (it happens very

¹⁷⁰Agenda, June 17, 1961.

often), and I asked him, ‘What happens to such people when they die here at the Ashram?’ ‘Look,’ he replied, and I saw her passing away; and on her forehead, I saw Sri Aurobindo’s symbol in a SOLID golden light (not very luminous, but very concrete). There it was. And with the presence of this sign the psychological state no longer mattered – nothing touched her. And she departed tranquilly, tranquilly. Then Sri Aurobindo told me, ‘All who have lived at the Ashram and who die there have automatically the same protection, whatever their inner state.’

I can’t say I was surprised, but I admired the mighty power by which the simple fact of having been here and died here was sufficient to help you to the utmost in that transition.

But there are all sorts of cases. Take N.D., for example, a man who lived his whole life with the idea of serving Sri Aurobindo – he died clasping my photo to his breast. This was a consecrated man, very conscious, with an unflinching dedication, and all the parts of his being well organized around the psychic.¹⁷³ The day he was going to leave his body little M. was meditating next to the Samadhi when suddenly she had a vision: she saw all the flowers of the tree next to the Samadhi (those yellow flowers I have called ‘Service’) gathering themselves together to form a big bouquet, and rising, rising straight up. And in her vision these flowers were linked with the image of N.D. She ran quickly to their house and – he was dead.

I only knew about this vision later, but on my side, when he left, I saw his whole being gathered together, well united, thoroughly homogenous, in a great aspiration, and rising, rising without dispersing, without deviating, straight up to the frontier of what Sri Aurobindo has called ‘the higher hemisphere,’ there where Sri Aurobindo in his supramental action presides over earth. And he melted into that light.

Some time before his heart attack he said to his children: *the gown is old, it must be thrown away.*

(silence)

But people are so ignorant! They make such a fuss over death, as if it were the end – this word ‘death’ is so absurd! I see it as simply passing from one house into another or from one room to another; you take one simple step, you cross the threshold, and there you are on the other side – and then you come back.

Have I told you about the experience I had the day I suddenly found myself in Sri Aurobindo’s home in the subtle physical?¹⁷⁴ Well, it’s as if I took a step and entered a far more concrete world than the physical – more concrete because things contain more truth. I spent a good while there with Sri Aurobindo and then, when it was over, I took another step and I found myself back here... slightly

171 Among Mother’s papers we have found the following, which indicates that a state of dispersion after death is rather frequent (it concerns a disciple’s mother who did not herself live at the Ashram): ‘She has left her body without being at all prepared for the change of condition and has found herself disoriented and rather dispersed. She will need some time to recover from this dispersion before anything useful can be done for her.’

172 May 17, 1959.

173 In Sri Aurobindo’s and Mother’s terminology, ‘psychic’ or ‘psychic being’ means the soul or the portion of the Supreme in man which evolves from life to life until it becomes a fully self-conscious being. The soul is a capacity or grace particular to human beings on earth.

174 Experience of July 24, 1959.

dumbfounded. It took me quite some time to regain my bearings here, because it was this world that seemed unreal to me, not the other.

But it's simply that – you take a step, and you enter another room. And when you live in your soul there is a continuity, because the soul remembers, it keeps the whole memory; it remembers all occurrences, even outer occurrences, all the outer movements it has been associated with. So it's a continuous, uninterrupted movement, here and there, from one room to another, from one house to another, from one life to another.

People are so ignorant! That's what irritates those who have passed to the other side – people don't understand, they shoo them away: 'What does he want? Why does he bother me? He's DEAD!'

* * *

Later, as Mother is about to leave:

I have to go – a high-priest is waiting for me! Yes, the man in charge of all the temples of Gujarat, thoroughly orthodox – he has come to the Ashram for some mysterious reason and he wants to see me. 'Is it really necessary?' I asked. He wanted an interview, he wants to speak to me (naturally he'll be speaking god knows what – Gujarati!). I had him told, 'I can't hear, I'm deaf!' It's very convenient – I'm deaf, I can't hear. If he wants to receive a flower from me (I didn't say make a *pranam*,¹⁷⁵ because that would be scandalous!), he can come and I'll give him a flower. I told him eleven o'clock – it's that time now.

This is all X's work. The most unexpected people, people you'd think would rather be cursed than come to a place like this, are coming from everywhere, from the most diverse milieus – the most materialistic materialists, fanatical communists, as well as all sorts of sannyasis, bhikkus, swamis, priests – oh! People who previously were not at all... they weren't so much disinterested as actually displeased with the Ashram.

We have a disciple here who returns to his birthplace from time to time, and after the first year X began to do his puja to get people interested in the Ashram, he said it was extraordinary. He had previously been looked at askance and had to argue with people, but now everyone came to call on him as soon as he arrived! He wrote that he was completely astonished (he wasn't aware of X's work); hundreds of people came to ask him to hold huge meetings; sadhus, monks and priests came to him for information on the Ashram. Things have developed so rapidly and completely that they now have some land where they have built a center and hold meetings.

And it's like that almost everywhere.

When P. returns from Switzerland, she will have some very interesting stories to tell. She has written me of experiences she had with Swiss children, genuinely interesting experiences. It is going on everywhere, everywhere, everywhere, and in a much more precise and exact way than one would ever believe. Even in America.

Do you know the story of the two simultaneous operations of E. and of T.? T. is that vice-admiral who came here and became quite enthusiastic – he had a kind of inner revelation here. The two of them were operated on for a similar complaint, a dangerous ulcer in the digestive system. He was in one town and she was in another, and they were operated on a day apart – both serious operations. And in each case, after a few days had gone by, the surgeon who did the operation said, 'I congratulate you.'

¹⁷⁵*Pranam*: To bow down.

Practically the same phrase in both cases. And they both protested: ‘Why are you congratulating me?’ (Each one wrote me about this separately; they were living far from one another and only met afterwards.) ‘Why? You did the operation – you should be congratulated for my quick recovery.’ And in both cases the doctor replied, ‘No, no; we only operate, the body does the healing; you have healed yourself in a way which can qualify as miraculous, and I genuinely congratulate you.’ And then the two of them had the same reaction – they wrote to me saying, ‘We know where the miracle comes from.’ And they had both called me. Moreover, E. had written me a remarkable letter a few days before her operation, where she quoted the Gita as if it were quite natural for her, and told me, ‘I know that the operation is ALREADY done, that the Lord has already done it, and so I am calm.’

Things like that, everywhere – and PRECISE! Something quite precise. Of course, to say that I work consciously is almost silly, it’s commonplace. But in many cases one may work consciously for long years without getting that precision in the result – the action enters a hazy atmosphere and makes a kind of stir, and out of it comes the best that can, but no more than that. But now it’s exact, precise – it’s becoming interesting.

And now I know why this sort of impersonalization of the material individuality is so important. It is very important for the exactness of this action, so that it is only – ONLY – the purest divine Will (if it can be put that way), expressing itself with a minimum of admixture. Any individualization or personalization results in admixture. But the divine Will acts like this (*direct gesture*).

Oh, it was magnificent at the balcony this morning!

And then one understands all, all – all the details. Some things can be understood intellectually or psychologically (which is very good, it has an effect and it helps you), but that always seems so hazy; it works through an imprecision. But now the vibration’s mechanism is understood – its MECHANICS; and thus it becomes precise. All these attitudes the yoga recommends – beginning with action done as offering, then complete detachment from the result (leaving the result to the Lord), then perfect equanimity in all circumstances, all these stages which one understands intellectually, feels sentimentally, and has fully experienced – well, all this takes on its TRUE MEANING only when it becomes what could be called a mechanical action of vibration – at that point one understands why it must be like it is.

And these last few days, especially yesterday and this morning, oh! Extraordinary discoveries! We are on the right track.

That’s all, mon petit – now I’m off to see the priest. What a face he’s going to make!

(Mother gets up to leave)

At least fifty people wait for the last days of the month to see me and they imagine.... One thing I have not yet comprehended: what to do to make physical time lose its physical reality?... It may come. As you see, I still have to watch the clock, and when I am late, well, time gets short! Maybe I’ll get the power of (what is it called?)... ubiquity. I believe that’s the solution! To be here, and then there – just like that! It would be very amusing.



June 27, 1961

Aphorism 62 – I heard a fool discoursing utter folly and wondered what God meant by it; then I considered and saw a distorted mask of truth and wisdom.

Is there really no such thing as utter stupidity or absolute falsehood? Is there always a truth behind?

Practically speaking, there can be no absolute falsehood, since the Divine is behind everything.

It's like asking if certain elements will disappear from the universe. What can it mean, the destruction of a universe? Once we are out of our stupidity, what can we call 'destruction'? Only the form is destroyed, the appearance (that, yes – all appearances are destroyed, one after the other). It is also said (it's written everywhere) that the adverse forces will either be converted – that is, become aware of their own divinity and become divine – or be destroyed. But what does 'destroyed' mean? Their form? Their form of consciousness can be dissolved, but what about the 'something' which brings it – and everything else – into existence? How can that 'something' be destroyed? This, *mon petit*, is difficult to comprehend. The universe is a conscious objectification of That which exists from all eternity. Well, how can the All cease to be? The infinite and eternal All, without limits of any kind – how can anything be thrown out of it? There is nowhere to go! (You can rack your brains over it, you know!) Go where? There is only THAT.

And even when we say 'there is only that' we are situating it somewhere – which is perfectly idiotic. It is everywhere – so how can anything be thrown out of it?

Of course, one can conceive of a universe being thrown out of the present manifestation – that, yes; one can conceive of successive universes, with what was in the first universes no longer being in the others – it's even obvious. One can imagine how a whole sum of falsity and untruth (what for us, NOW, is falsity and untruth) may come to no longer belong to the world in its future unfolding; one can comprehend all that. But 'destroy'? Where can it go to be destroyed? When we say something is 'destroyed,' it's only a form which is destroyed (it may be a form of consciousness, it may not be a material form, but it's always a form). But how can the formless be destroyed?

Therefore, to speak of an absolute falsehood disappearing would simply mean that a whole set of things will live eternally in the past but not belong to the coming manifestations, that's all.

You can't get out of THAT, can you? There you are!

But will these things simply remain in the past?

We are told that when you ascend both beyond Nirvana or Nothingness and beyond Existence (the two SIMULTANEOUS and complementary aspects of the Supreme), there is a state of consciousness where all simultaneously and eternally exists. Thus – although God knows, it may be yet another stupidity – we can conceive of a whole set of things passing into Non-Being, and for our consciousness this would be disappearance or destruction.

Is it possible? I don't know. We would have to ask the Lord! But He generally doesn't answer such questions – He just smiles!

You know, there comes a time when, really, you can no longer say anything; you feel that whatever you say is, if not absolute rubbish, then the next thing to it, and that in practice it's best to keep silent. That's the difficulty. And in some of these aphorisms you get the feeling that he has suddenly captured something beyond – beyond anything which can be thought. So what to do?

(silence)

Naturally, when you come back down here you can – oh, you can say many things!

Jokingly you can say (you can always joke, although I hesitate to do so, because people take my jokes so seriously) but you can very well say, without being totally in error, that you sometimes learn much more listening to a madman or a fool than to a reasonable person. Personally, I'm convinced of it! There is nothing more deadening than reasonable people.

At any rate, this simultaneity of past, present and future can't be a physical simultaneity, can it?

Ah, no! Not here.

I've heard about a curious theory which says one could reincarnate into the past.

Reincarnate into the past?

Yes, reincarnate from now, so to speak, into a past epoch of history.

This, too, is a manner of speaking.

Reincarnate? No. One can relive the past; that, yes – very well, very well.

I have had an oft repeated experience of reliving the past¹⁷⁶ (it's a phenomenon of consciousness, possible because everything is preserved and continues to exist somewhere), with a kind of will – which would be the sign of a power – to change it. I don't know, but at the moment of reliving it, instead of reliving the past just as it had been preserved, a power to make it different was introduced. I am not speaking of the power to change the consequences of the past (that is obvious and functions all the time) – it wasn't that; it was the power to change the circumstances themselves (circumstances not quite material but of the subtle physical, with a predominantly psychological content). And since the will was there, from the standpoint of consciousness it actually happened – that is, instead of circumstances developing in one direction, they developed in another. So it must correspond to something real, otherwise I would not have had the experience. It wasn't a product of the imagination; it wasn't something one thinks of and would 'really like to be different' – it wasn't that; it was a phenomenon of consciousness: my consciousness was reliving certain circumstances (which are still quite living and obviously continue to exist within their own domain), but reliving them with the power and the knowledge acquired between that past moment and the present, and with a power to change the past moment. A new power entered the scene and turned the circumstance being relived in a new direction. I have had this experience many times and it has always surprised me – it's not a phenomenon of mental imagination, which is something else entirely.

It opens the door to everything.

But it belongs to the past.

Does the past...? We know it remains present somewhere. Does this fact enable the past to participate in the progressive movement (progressive for us) of universal change within the manifestation? There is no reason why not.

But it remains present through its consequences....

¹⁷⁶Not a past in Mother's present existence.

No., no, no! The past IN ITSELF. In itself. Not through its consequences, that's something else – in itself. And within the TERRESTRIAL atmosphere (not on the most material plane, but very near; very, very near).

I have what could be called a tactile sensation that the contents of the subtle atmosphere are increasing. This atmosphere is not part of material space as we conceive of or see it physically, where one thing has to give place to another (*Mother changes the position of an eraser on the table*) – and even that (*laughing*) I believe is an illusion! It only SEEMS like that to us! It's not on the wholly material plane, but just behind or within (how to put it?), and its contents are increasing. And as it's happening within inner dimensions, it can augment, so to speak, indefinitely; things become more and more interwoven, if you see what I mean – where there was one phenomenon of consciousness there may now be hundreds, interwoven with each other in the inner dimensions; which means, for example, considering only our tiny planet, that the earth is becoming more and more compact and rich with all that has been since the beginning of its formation – because it's all there, it is all still there.

Actually, as soon as one is not totally, totally tied down by the physical sense organs.... For example, I am more and more frequently experiencing changes in the quality of vision. Quite recently, yesterday or the day before, I was sitting in the bathroom drying my face before going out and I raised my eyes (I was sitting before a mirror, although I don't usually look at myself); I raised my eyes and looked, and I saw many things (*Mother laughs, greatly amused*).... At that moment, I had an experience which made me say to myself, 'Ah! That's why, from the physical, purely material standpoint, my vision seems to be a bit *blurred*.' Because what I was seeing was MUCH clearer and infinitely more expressive than normal physical sight. And I recalled that it is with these clearer eyes that I see and recognize all my people at balcony darshan. (From the balcony I recognize all my people.) And it's that vision (but with open eyes!) which.... It is of another order.

I am going to study what Sri Aurobindo says when I come to it in *The Yoga of Self-Perfection*. He says there comes a time when the senses change – it's not that you employ the senses proper to another plane (we have always known we had senses on all the different planes); it's quite different from that: the senses THEMSELVES change. He foretells this change – he says it will occur. And I believe it begins in the way I am experiencing it now.

The CONTENT is different, mon petit. I see... I see, but.... The state of consciousness of the person I'm looking at, for instance, changes his physical appearance – for my PHYSICAL eyes. And this has nothing to do with the banalities of ordinary psychology, where your physiognomy is said to be changed by the feelings you experience. The CONTENT of what I see is different. And then the eyes of the person I am looking at are not the same – it is rather.... I couldn't sketch it, but perhaps if I made a painting it would give some idea (I would need to use a somewhat blurred technique, not too precise). The eyes are not quite the same, and the rest of the face too, even the color and the shape – that's what sometimes makes me hesitate. I see people (I see my people every morning) and I recognize them, and yet they are different, they are not the same every day (some are always, always the same, like a rock, but others are not). And I even... I hesitate sometimes: 'Is it really he? But he is very.... It is indeed he, but I don't quite know him.' This generally coincides with changes in the person's consciousness.

In conclusion: we know nothing.

(silence)

It is the undeniable fact of the... (oh, how to put it!) the constant Presence... but 'Presence' means nothing... (*Mother remains silent for a long time, then gives up trying to explain*).

Oh, the more you try to capture it, the more it slips out of your grasp!

* * *

(After listening to the conversation of June 24, concerning death:)

You know, we are just on the frontier, on the edge: it's as if there were a semi-transparent curtain – one sees things on the other side, tries to grasp them, but as yet cannot. But there is such a sense of proximity!

Sometimes, all of a sudden, I see myself as a FORMIDABLE concentration of power, pushing, pushing, pushing in an inner concentration to pass through. It happens to me anywhere, any time, at any moment – I see a whole mass of consciousness gathered into a formidable power pushing, pushing, pushing to pass to the other side.

When we have passed to the other side, all will be well.



July

July 4, 1961

(Mother remarks in passing that the inspiration coming to her from Sri Aurobindo when she writes is sometimes in French and sometimes in English, and adds:)

Sri Aurobindo told me he had been French in a previous life and that French flowed back to him like a spontaneous memory - he understood all the subtleties of French.

How is your work going?

Tomorrow I'll begin on 'Savitri.'

O lucky man! What joy!

You know, *Savitri* is an exact description – not literature, not poetry (although the form is very poetical) – an exact description, step by step, paragraph by paragraph, page by page; as I read, I relived it all. Besides, many of my own experiences that I recounted to Sri Aurobindo seem to have been incorporated into *Savitri*. He has included many of them – Nolani says so; he was familiar with the first version Sri Aurobindo wrote long ago, and he said that an enormous number of experiences were added when it was taken up again. This explained to me why... suddenly, as I read it, I live the experience – line by line, page by page. The realism of it is astounding.

As for me, I'm now on the second part of *On Himself*; I am beginning to enjoy myself....

(silence)

Last night or the night before you were associated with an experience. Following my reading [*On Himself*] I had a sense of how very small we are and of how to expand. You were associated, very intimately associated with this expansion. Sri Aurobindo was there (you know he has adopted you as his biographer; I have told you this and I repeat it because I have evidence of it all the time), and he was giving a kind of practical demonstration – not intellectual, practical – of how to expand not only the consciousness but the whole being, down to its most material parts. You were there, associated with this, and he was showing you as well as me what had to be done. *(Mother makes a gesture of breaking through limits.)*

This made me very glad.

There you are, petit.



July 7, 1961

(Mother gives Satprem a white zinnia she has named 'Integral Endurance,' then an allamanda or 'Victory,' and finally a flower of 'Supramental Victory.')

Here is an Integral Endurance. But... victory. Victory. And this one is Supramental Victory – that is, victory in ALL details.

It grows in huge clusters of many, many flowers. There.

And I go on reading....

'On Himself'?

Yes – the explanation of his yoga and of what he wants us to realize. After reading it yesterday evening I said to him, 'How do you expect it to be done in this!' *(Mother laughingly indicates her own body.)* 'No, no, no!' he replied, 'That's not it! What is needed now is to learn how to last. We'll speak of this again,' he told me, 'in two or three hundred years.' Ah! *(laughing)* 'Very well!' I said. 'Learn to last,' he told me.

Well, we're going to learn how to last.

That's why I gave you 'Integral Endurance' – it is his message.

(silence)

Unless one is ABSOLUTELY indifferent, truly one cannot last. This is quite clear. That is the way it must be *(gesture of a becalmed sea)*. For suddenly you find yourself in a state which feels like it could last forever – nothing matters, it goes on and on and on *(Mother stretches out her arms, as if floating on a vast, infinite sea)*... like this, forever. I have been in this state very often, and you truly feel that.... But the experience must not be in the head (that can be easily had); it has to be HERE *(Mother slaps her knees)*, here in the body. When the body catches on to this, nothing is either disagreeable or agreeable to it – it takes no pleasure, feels no disgust, no uneasiness, no anything. It's in a state, ah!... *(same gesture of a becalmed sea)*

It's very interesting.

This happens quite often on the balcony, because there I am concentrated on... the descending Light. Then, very often, the body becomes completely still, like this.

That way one can last. Very well. Let's work.

(Mother takes up 'Thoughts and Aphorisms.)

Have you brought a question?

Yes.

Ah! I have seen T., who told me she was finding it too difficult to ask questions [on Sri Aurobindo's *Aphorisms*] because it always seemed to be the same thing! So now she has nothing to ask. We have decided she won't ask any more questions, unless, by chance, something suddenly arouses a question in her. Otherwise, no more questions *(Mother breathes a sigh of relief)*.

63 – God is great, says the Mahomedan. Yes, He is so great that He can afford to be weak, whenever that too is necessary.

64 – God often fails in His workings; it is the sign of His illimitable godhead.

65 – Because God is invincibly great, He can afford to be weak; because He is immutably pure, He can indulge with impunity in sin; He knows eternally all delight, therefore He tastes also the delight of pain; He is inalienably wise, therefore He has not debarred Himself from folly.

Can God truly be said to be weak or to fail? Does this actually happen, or is it simply the Lord's play?

That's not how it is, mon petit! This is precisely how the modern Western attitude has become twisted compared to the ancient attitude, the attitude – it isn't exactly ancient – of the Gita. It's extremely difficult for the Western mind to comprehend vividly and concretely that ALL is the Divine. It is so impregnated with the Christian spirit, with the idea of a 'Creator' – the creation on one side and God on the other! Upon reflection, one rejects this, but... it has entered into our sensations and feelings, and so – spontaneously, instinctively, almost subconsciously – one credits God with all one considers to be the best, the most beautiful, and especially with what one wishes to attain, to realize. (Each individual, of course, changes the content of his God according to his own consciousness, but it's always what he considers to be the best.) And just as instinctively, spontaneously and subconsciously, one is shocked by the idea that things one doesn't like or doesn't approve of or which don't seem to be the best, could also be God.

I am putting this purposely into rather childish terms so that it will be clearly understood. But this is the way it is. I am sure of it because I have observed it in myself for a VERY long time, and I had to.... Due to the whole subconscious formation of childhood – environment, education, and so forth – we have to DRUM into this (*Mother touches her body*) the consciousness of Unity : the absolute, EXCLUSIVE unity of the Divine – exclusive in the sense that nothing exists apart from this Unity, even the things which seem most repulsive.

Sri Aurobindo also had to struggle against this because he too received a Christian education. And these *Aphorisms* are the result – the flowering – of the necessity to struggle against the subconscious formation which has produced such questions (*Mother takes on a scandalized tone*): 'How can God be weak? How can God be foolish? How....' But there is nothing but God! He alone exists, there is nothing outside of Him. And whatever seems repugnant to us is something He no longer wishes to exist – He is preparing the world so that this no longer manifests, so that the manifestation can pass beyond this state to something else. So of course we violently reject everything in us that is destined to leave the active manifestation. There is a movement of rejection.

Yet it is He. There is nothing other than He! This should be repeated from morning to night, from night to morning, because we forget it every minute.

There is only He, there is nothing other than He. He alone exists, there is no existence without Him. There is only He!

(silence)

There are some reflections a little further on... (*Mother leafs through the text and stops at Aphorism 68*). Oh, he has such wonderful things to say!

68 – The sense of sin was necessary in order that man might become disgusted with his own imperfections. It was God's corrective for egoism. But man's egoism meets God's device by being very dully alive to its own sins and very keenly alive to the sins of others.

(Mother laughs) Marvelous!

In any case, there it is – asking that kind of question is still taking the attitude of those who make a distinction between what is Divine and what is not Divine, or rather what is God and what is not God. ‘How can He be weak?’ It’s a question I could never ask.

I quite understand. But when one speaks of the Lila, the divine play, it implies that He in some way remains in the background and doesn’t really ‘get into the act,’ as they say – that He’s no really part of the game, but simply watches.

Yes, yes He is! He is totally involved in it. He Himself is the Play.

It must be remembered that there are all these gradations of consciousness: when we speak of God and his Play we are speaking of God in his transcendent state, beyond everything, beyond all the degrees of matter; when we speak of the Play we are speaking of God in his material state. So we say that God transcendent is watching and playing – in Himself, by Himself, with Himself – his material game.

But all language – all language! – is a language of Ignorance. All means of expression, all that is said and all the ways of saying it, are bound to partake of that ignorance. And that’s why it’s so difficult to express something concretely true; to do so would require extremely lengthy explanations, themselves, of course, fully erroneous. Sri Aurobindo’s sentences are sometimes very long for precisely this reason – he is trying to get away from this ignorant language.

Our whole way of thinking is wrong!

All the believers, all the faithful (those from the West in particular) think in terms of ‘something else’ when they speak of God – He cannot be weak, ugly, imperfect, He is something immaculate – but this is wrong thinking. They are dividing, separating. For subconscious thought (I mean thinking without reflecting, instinctively, out of habit, without observing oneself thinking), what is generally considered ‘perfection’ is precisely what is seen or felt or postulated as being virtuous, divine, beautiful, admirable – but it’s not that at all! Perfection means something in which nothing is missing. The divine perfection is a totality. The divine perfection is the Divine in his wholeness, with nothing left out. The divine perfection is the whole of the Divine, with nothing subtracted from it. For the moralists it is the exact opposite: divine perfection is nothing but the virtues they stand for!

From the true standpoint, the divine perfection is the whole (*Mother makes a global gesture*), and the fact that within this whole nothing can be missing is precisely what makes it perfect.¹⁷⁷ Consequently, perfection means that each thing is in its place, exactly what it should be, and that relationships among things are also exactly what they should be.

Perfection is one way to approach the Divine; Unity is another. But Perfection is a global approach: all is there and all is as it should be – that is to say, the perfect expression of the Divine (you can’t even say ‘of His Will,’ because that still implies something apart, something emanating from Him!).

It could be put like this (but it brings it down considerably): He is what He is and exactly as He wants to be. The ‘exactly as He wants to be’ takes us down quite a few steps, but it still gives an idea of

¹⁷⁷Mother later clarified this point: ‘It is impossible for anything to be missing because it is impossible for anything not to be part of the whole. Nothing can exist apart from the whole. But I am taking this now to its extreme limit of meaning – not down-to-earth, but to the heights, to the extreme limits of meaning. I will explain: everything is not necessarily contained within a given universe, because one universe is only one mode of manifestation – but all possible universes exist. And so I always come back to the same thing: nothing can exist apart from the whole. If we give the whole the name of “God,” for example, then we say that nothing can exist apart from Him. But words are so earthbound, aren’t they?’ (*Mother makes a down-to-earth gesture.*)

what I mean by ‘perfection’!

Divine perfection implies infinity and eternity – all is coexistent beyond time and space.

(silence)

While ‘walking’ in my room, a series of invocations or prayers have come to me¹⁷⁸ (I didn’t choose them – they were dictated to me) in which I implore the Lord to manifest his Perfection (and I am quite aware of how foolish this expression is, but it does correspond to an aspiration).¹⁷⁹ When I say ‘manifest,’ I mean to manifest in our physical, material world – I’m asking for the transformation of this world. And the moment I utter one of these invocations, the sense of the particular approach it represents is there; that’s why I am now able to give such a lecture on Perfection – Perfection is one of these approaches. ‘Manifest this,’ I tell Him, ‘Manifest that, manifest Your Perfection....’ (The series is very long and it takes me quite a while to go through it all.) Well, each time I say ‘Manifest Your Perfection,’ I have *an awareness* of what constitutes Perfection – it is something global.

It’s like the word ‘purity’ – one could lecture endlessly on the difference between divine purity and what people call purity. Divine purity (at the lowest level) is to admit but one influence – the divine Influence (but this is at the lowest level, and already terribly distorted). Divine purity means that only the Divine exists – nothing else. It is perfectly pure – only the Divine exists, nothing other than He.

And so on.

This is the third year [of japa] – so it’s becoming very clear.

* * *

What shall we do now?

Speak about your experience.

I risk repeating myself.

No, never! It’s a new experience each time – it’s never the same.

Yes. I marvel at people who have the same experience several times over, who hold on to their realizations – I have never been able to do so. There was a time when I tried, but I realized it was stupid, so I don’t try anymore. I have never had the same experience twice – never could.

The experience I described the day I said ‘I have something to tell you’ [January 24, 1961] was truly very pleasant and I did try to relive it – but I never could. Whenever I try, whenever something in me insists on recapturing the experience, I always see a Smile and something tells me, ‘No, no! Let go! You’ll see, you’ll see. So I let go. All right, that’s enough-enough for you! And you – what are you doing?’

I’m re-reading ‘Savitri.’

178See ‘Prayers of the Consciousness of the Cells,’ *Agenda I*, pp. 337-350.

179As Mother had previously said that ‘all is as it should be ... the Divine is what He is and exactly as He wants to be,’ one shouldn’t need to ‘implore’ Him to manifest his Perfection.

Lucky man! I would love to read it again.

And the more you read, the more marvelous it becomes.



July 12, 1961

(Regarding the last conversation, where Mother spoke of divine Perfection and of the series of invocations in her japa imploring the Lord to manifest his various aspects.)

... But Perfection is only one side, one special way of approaching the Divine. There are innumerable sides, angles, aspects – innumerable ways to approach the Divine. When I am walking, for example, doing japa, I have the sense of Unity (I have spoken to you of all the things I mention when I am upstairs walking: will, truth, purity, perfection, unity, immortality, eternity, infinity, silence, peace, existence, consciousness – the list goes on). And when one follows a particular tack and does succeed in reaching or approaching or contacting the Divine, one realizes through experience that these many approaches differ only in their most external forms – the contact itself is identical. It's like looking through a kaleidoscope – you revolve around a center, a globe, and see it under various aspects; but as soon as the contact is established, it's identical.

The number of approaches is practically infinite. Each one senses the path which accords with his temperament.

This japa, you know, didn't at all come from here (*Mother points to her head*). It's something I received fully formed, and to such an extent that I couldn't even change the place of a single thing – a will seemed to oppose any change. It's a long series unfolding according to a law that probably corresponds to what is needed to develop this consciousness and the work it has to do (I suppose – I don't really know and I haven't tried to know). But a sort of law makes it impossible to change the position of even a single word, because these are not words – they are fully formed states of consciousness. And the whole series culminates with:

'Manifest Your Love.'

This is the highest summit of the possibility of manifestation.

That's what I wanted to say.



July 15, 1961

Before coming downstairs I felt like writing a few words. These words... are the result of everything now being done. They almost expressed *a protest*. After all, I thought, to be a saint or a sage is not very difficult! (*Mother laughs*) But the supramental transformation is another affair. Oh!

And it has become acute since....¹⁸⁰ No, I don't read these days, because I've had a hemorrhage in this eye. There have been too many letters, and it's difficult for me to decipher handwriting – the result is this hemorrhage. So I have gone on strike. 'All right,' I said, 'I won't read any letters for a week. People can write as much as they please, it's all the same to me – I'm not reading any more.' But just before stopping (I stopped reading for only three days), I read a passage where Sri Aurobindo speaks of his own experience and his own work and explains in full what he means by the 'supramental transformation.' This passage confirmed and made me understand many experiences I had after that experience of the body's ascent [January 24, 1961] (the ascent of the body-consciousness, followed by the descent of the supramental force into the body); immediately afterwards, everything (how to put it?)... outwardly, according to ordinary consciousness, I fell ill; but it's stupid to speak this way – I did not fall ill! All possible difficulties in the body's subconscious rose up en masse – it had to happen, and it surely happened to Sri Aurobindo, too. How well I understood! How well, indeed. And it's no joke, you know! I had wondered why these difficulties had hounded him so ferociously – now I understand, because I am being attacked in the same relentless fashion.

Actually, it springs from everything in material consciousness that can still be touched by the adverse forces; that is, not exactly the body-consciousness itself but, one could say, material substance as it has been organized by the mind – the initial mentalization of matter, the first stirrings of mind in life making the passage from animal to human. (The same complications would probably exist in animals, but as there is no question of trying to supramentalize animals, all goes well for them.) Well, something in there protests, and naturally this protest creates disorder. These past few days I have been seeing.... No one has ever followed this path! Sri Aurobindo was the first, and he left without telling us what he was doing. I am literally hewing a path through a virgin forest – it's worse than a virgin forest.

For the past two days there has been the feeling of not knowing anything – NOTHING at all. I have had this feeling for a very long time, but now it has become extremely acute, as it always does at times of crisis, at times when things are on the verge of changing – or of getting clarified, or of exploding, or.... From the purely material standpoint – chemically, biologically, medically, therapeutically speaking – I don't believe many people do know (there may be some). But it doesn't seem very clear to me – in any case, I don't know. Yogically (I don't mean spiritually: that was the first stage of my sadhana), it's very easy to be a saint! Oh, even to be a sage is very easy. I feel I was born with it – it's spontaneous and natural for me, and so simple! You know all that has to be done, and doing it is as easy as knowing it. It's nothing. But this transformation of Matter...! What has to be done? How is it to be done? What is the path?

Is there a path? Is there a procedure? Probably not.

(silence)

To be in a condition in which all is the Supreme, all is wonderful, all is marvelous, all is marvelous love, all is... all is profound Joy – an unchanging, immutable, ever-present condition. To live in That, and then to have this bodily substance contradict it through every possible stupidity – losing sight, losing strength, pains here, pains there, disorders, weaknesses, incapacities of every type. And at the

¹⁸⁰Since Mother began reading Sri Aurobindo's letters in *On Himself*, which seemed to put her into contact with all the difficulties of the Work.

SAME TIME, the response within this body, no matter what happens to it, is, ‘O Lord, Your Grace is infinite.’ The contradiction is VERY disconcerting.

From experience, I know perfectly well that when one is satisfied with being a saint or a sage and constantly maintains the right attitude, all goes well – the body doesn’t get sick, and even if there are attacks it recovers very easily; all goes very well... AS LONG AS THERE IS NOT THIS WILL TO TRANSFORM. All the difficulties arise in protest against the will to transform; while if one says, ‘Very well, it’s all right, let things be as they are, I don’t care, I am perfectly happy, in a blissful state,’ then the body begins to feel content!

That’s the problem: something totally new is being introduced into Matter, and the body is protesting.

After my ‘interview’ with Nature, when she told me that she would collaborate,¹⁸¹ I thought this difficulty would cease; many things have improved considerably (ONE part of Nature is collaborating), but not this. Plainly and clearly, it comes from the subconscious and the inconscient (wherever there is consciousness, all is well); it’s rising up all the time, all the time, and with – oh, disgusting persistence!

And then of course it’s accompanied by all the usual suggestions (but that’s nothing, it comes from a domain which is easily controlled). Suggestions of this type: ‘Well, but Sri Aurobindo himself didn’t do it!’ (I know why he didn’t. but people in general don’t know.) And every adverse vibration naturally takes advantage of this: ‘How do you expect to succeed where he didn’t!’ But... my answer is always the same: ‘When the Lord says it’s all over with, I will know it’s all over with; that will be the end of it, and so what!’ This stops them short.

But it doesn’t keep them from starting up again! They did so particularly after I read the passage where Sri Aurobindo affirms, ‘THIS time I have come for THAT – and I shall do it.’ The day when I read this I turned towards him, not actually putting the question to him but simply turning towards him, and he told me, ‘Read the book through to the end.’ And I know, I know it’s true – when I have read the book through to the end I will understand what he has done and I will even have the power to reply to all these suggestions. But meanwhile, everything that wants to keep me from doing it, all this obscure and subconscious ill will, tries its best to keep me from reading, including giving me this eye hemorrhage.

Well, since I believe – rightly or wrongly, I don’t know – that the doctor has more experience than I, that from the therapeutic and biological standpoint he knows a bit more, I showed him the eye and asked, ‘Can I read?’ ‘*Better not read until it’s finished,*’ he replied, and told me to wash my eyes with glucose. (It’s a useful piece of information for those with tired eyes: mix the glucose – liquid glucose, the kind that comes in ampoules for injection – with something like the ‘blue water’ we make here, half and half. Open the ampoule, put a third of it in the eye-cup, then add the ‘blue water.’) I have already tried it once and found that it gives a great deal of strength to the eyes. Tomorrow I’m going to start doing it regularly. There you are.

What made Sri Aurobindo stop?

He hasn’t stopped.

Stopped him physically, you mean?

Yes. What made him stop?

¹⁸¹Experience of November 8, 1957. Mother has commented on this experience in ‘Questions and Answers’ of January 1, 1958. See *Agenda I*, p. 131.

He decided he had to go.

We tried, oh – myself in particular! I concentrated all my power to prevent him from going, and it made him suffer greatly, because... he WANTED to go, he had decided – ‘he’ – the Supreme Lord had decided that he would go.

Yes, but why exactly was there this halt? He had come for that.

But nothing has stopped! That’s precisely the point – he refuses to acknowledge that anything has stopped. Nothing has stopped. He came for that, and he arranged things to... to give a maximum number of chances (‘chance’ is one way of putting it), of possibilities – to put all the winning cards on our side.

(long silence)

Obviously, were I to leave now I can say there would be a halt, because I don’t see anyone at the moment who could continue. But there’s a good chance that.... We will see....

Yes, we will see.

Everything depends upon the balance (not the equilibrium, the proportion) between the amount of resistance in physical substance, and the Power.

But are these merely material resistances or are they rather hostile forces?

No; outside Matter, the hostile forces don’t have even a BIT of power: NONE.

Their power is in Matter?

In Matter; practically inconscient Matter.

They are in inconscient Matter?

More accurately, they represent the unconsciousness of Matter. Hostile – we say ‘hostile,’ but of course this is just a manner of speaking.

You see... (*Mother is about to say something, then decides not to*). Now is not the time to speak of these things.

We will see.

(silence)

For example, as I was saying at the beginning, the body’s formation has a very minimal, a quite subordinate importance for a saint or a sage. But for this supramental work, the way the body is formed has an almost crucial importance, and not at all in relation to spiritual elements nor even to mental power: these aspects have no importance AT ALL. The capacity to endure, to last is the important thing.

Well, in that respect, it is absolutely undeniable that my body has an infinitely greater capacity than Sri Aurobindo’s had.

That was the basic problem – because the identification of the two [Sri Aurobindo and Mother] was almost child’s play, it was nothing: for me to merge into him or him to merge into me was no problem,

it wasn't difficult. We had some conversations on precisely this subject, because we saw that... (there were many other things, too, but this isn't the time to speak of them) the prevailing conditions were such that I told him I would leave this body and melt into him with no regret or difficulty; I told him this in words, not just in thought. And he also replied to me in words: *Your body is indispensable for the Work. Without your body the Work cannot be done.* After that, I said no more. It was no longer my concern, and that was the end of it.

This was said in... 1949, just a little more than a year before he left.

(silence)

And that's really how it is.

But now I am set face-to-face with the fact... the immensity, or the... something.... This work is so formidable!

In the final analysis, everything obviously depends upon the Supreme's Will because, if one looks deeply enough into the question, even physical laws and resistances are nothing for Him. But this kind of direct intervention takes place only at the extreme limit; if His Will is to be expressed in opposition, as it were, to the whole set of laws governing the Manifestation – well, that only comes... at the very last second. Sri Aurobindo has expressed this so well in *Savitri*, so well! At least three times in the book he has expressed this Will that abolishes all established laws, all of them, and all the consequences of these laws, the whole formidable colossus of the Manifestation, so that in the face of it all, That can express itself – and this takes place at the very last 'second,' so to speak, at the extreme limit of possibility.

I must say that there was a time when, as Sri Aurobindo had entrusted his work to me, there was a kind of tension to do it (it can't be called an anxiety); a tension in the will. This too has now ended (*Mother stretches her arms into the Infinite*). It's finished. But there MAY still be something tense lurking somewhere in the subconscious or the inconscient – I don't know, it's possible. Why? I don't know. I mean I have never been told, at any time, neither through Sri Aurobindo nor directly, whether or not I would go right to the end. I have never been told the contrary, either. I have been told nothing at all. And if at times I turn towards That – not to question, but simply to know – the answer is always the same: 'Carry on, it's not your problem; don't worry about it.' So now I have learned not to worry about it; I am consciously not worried about it.

(silence)

Oh, it's measured out with such wisdom! I mean the... *awareness* – not exactly consciousness, but a state between consciousness and perception – the awareness of the stupendous difficulty of the 'thing' is given to me drop by drop... so that it won't be crushing.

But there has evidently been some rather considerable progress, because lately the enormity of the thing has been shown to me far more... concretely, oh!... I tell you, it has reached the point where all spiritual life, all these peoples and races who have been trying since the beginning of the earth, who have made so many efforts to realize something – it all seems like nothing, like child's play. It's nothing: you smile and then... you are joyous. It's nothing at all, nothing at all!...

To put things in ordinary terms, mon petit, this work is without glory! You get no results, no experiences filling you with ecstasy or joy or wonder – none of that. It is... hideous, a hideous labor.

If there weren't this clear vision and constant aspiration within – oh, it's so dreary and exasperating... so dull, so gray... ugh!

(silence)

Some months ago, when this body had once again become a battlefield and was confronting all the obstacles, when it was suspended, asking itself whether... it wasn't wondering intellectually, but asking for a kind of perception, wanting to touch something: it wondered which direction it was taking, which way things were going to tilt. And suddenly, in all the cells, there was this feeling (and I know where it came from): 'If we are dissolved out of this amalgam, if this assemblage is dissolved and can no longer go on, then we shall all go straight, straight as an arrow' – and it was like a marvelous flame – 'straight to rejoin Sri Aurobindo in his supramental world, which is right here at our door.' And there was such joy! Such enthusiasm, such joy flooded all the cells! They didn't care at all whether or not they would be dissociated.... 'Oh,' they felt, 'so what!'

This was truly a decisive stage in the work of illuminating the body.

All the cells felt far more powerful than that stupid force trying to dissolve them; what is called 'death, left them entirely indifferent: 'What do we care? We shall go THERE and consciously participate in Sri Aurobindo's work, in the transformation of the world, one way or the other – here, there, like this, like that – what does it matter!'

This came more than a year ago, I think. It has never left. Never. All anxiety and all conscious tension have gone.

Only – there is an 'only' in all this – if there were a more liberal proportion between the 'refreshing' (if I may say so) freedom of solitude and the necessity for collective work, there would probably be fewer difficulties.... Towards the end of the first year after I retired upstairs¹⁸² (perhaps even before, but anyway, some time after I began doing japa while walking), I recall having such sessions up there!... Had there been a personal goal, this goal was clearly attained; it is indescribable, absolutely beyond all imaginable or expressible splendor.

And that was when I received the Command from the Supreme, who was right here, this close (*Mother presses her face*). He told me, 'This is what is promised. Now the Work must be done.'

And not individual but collective work was meant. So naturally, because of the way it came, it was joyously accepted and immediately implemented.

But when I remember that experience and consider what I have now....

(silence)

Well, what Sri Aurobindo did by leaving his body is somewhat equivalent, although far more total and complete and absolute – because he had that experience, he had that, he had it; I saw him, I saw him supramental on his bed, sitting on his bed.

(silence)

He has written: I am not doing it individually, for myself, but for the whole earth. And it was exactly the same thing for me – but oh, that experience! Nothing counted for me anymore: people, the earth – even the earth itself had absolutely no importance.

(*The clock strikes.*)

¹⁸²End of 1958.

* * *

Later, just before leaving:

But you know, this present state gives me the feeling that actually we know nothing at all, at all, at all – nothing at all. Everything else, everything leading to the spiritual life, to liberation and so forth – well, yes, it's all very well, all very well. But compared to what one must know to do this work....

Perhaps it's better not to know.

Because evidently I can't say that my experiences are the result of a mental aspiration or will or knowledge – I don't know, I don't know at all. I don't know how it should be, nor what it should be, nor anything at all. I don't know what should be done, I don't know what should not be done – nothing. It's truly a blind march (*gesture of groping along*), in a desert riddled with all possible traps and difficulties and obstacles – all this heaped together. Eyes blindfolded, knowing nothing (*same gesture of groping blindly*), one plods on.

The only thing to do is to be like this (*Mother turns her hands towards the Heights in a gesture of abandonment*). Provided you don't fall asleep! You mustn't enter into a beatific state where you.... No, we must keep moving on.

I don't know what to do. It's not easy.

(Mother rises)

Ah, I have something for you, but I forgot to bring it! (*Mother laughs*)¹⁸³

It's part of an experience.... I was told that NOTHING joyful should be rejected – but it's an entirely different kind of 'joy,' it has nothing to do with what is called joy when one lives in the vital – nothing of that! (*Laughing*) It's a funny kind of joy!



July 18, 1961

66 – Sin is that which was once in its place, persisting now it is out of place; there is no other sinfulness.

I don't feel any inspiration.

Do you have a question?

Sin is said to be something no longer in its place. But has something like cruelty, for example, ever had a 'place'?

Exactly what came to me – I receive all the questions people ask. The question arises immediately: if

¹⁸³If memory serves, it was a tin of foie gras!

one kills out of cruelty, for instance, or inflicts pain out of cruelty, did that ever have a place?... For even though deformed in appearance, it is nevertheless (we always come back to the same thing) an expression of the Divine.

What lies behind, tell me?

Sri Aurobindo always said that cruelty was one of the things most repugnant to him, but he explained it as the deformation of an intensity. We could almost call it the deformation of an intensity of love – something not satisfied with half-measures, something driven to extremes (which is legitimate) – it's the deformation of the need for extremely strong sensations.

I have always known that cruelty, like sadism, is the need to cut through a thick layer of totally insensitive *tamas*¹⁸⁴ by means of extremely violent sensation – an extreme is needed if anything is to be felt through that *tamas*. I was always told, for example (in Japan it was strongly emphasized to me), that the people of the Far East are very tamasic physically. The Chinese in particular are said to be the remnants of a race that inhabited the moon before it froze over and forced them to seek refuge on earth (this is supposed to account for their round faces and the shape of their eyes!)... Anyway (*laughing*), it's a story people tell! But they're extremely tamasic; their physical sensibility is almost nil – appalling things are required to make them feel anything! And since they naturally presume that what applies to them applies to everyone, they are capable of appalling cruelty. Not all of them, of course! But this is their reputation. Have you read Mirbeau's book? (I believe that's his name.) I read it sixty years ago – something on Chinese torture.

Yes, it's well-known.

Very well-known.

But the Chinese are also great artists.

Yes. When I read that book (it was very well written), I understood the problem, and my understanding was confirmed when I went to Japan. Many Japanese also have a blunted sensibility ('blunted' in the sense that to feel anything they need extremely violent stimuli). Perhaps an explanation could be found along these lines.

But behind it all, the original problem remains unresolved: 'Why has it become like this? Why this deformation? Why has it all been deformed?...' There are some very beautiful things behind, very intense, infinitely more powerful than we ourselves can even bear, marvelous things. But why has it all become... so dreadful here? That's what comes up immediately – it's why I told you I had no inspiration.

It is....

The notion of sin is something I don't understand, that I have never understood. To me, original sin seemed to be one of the most monstrous ideas people have ever had – sin and I just don't go together!

So, of course, I fully agree with Sri Aurobindo when he says there's no such thing as sin – that's understood, but....

Certain things can be called 'sin,' if you like, such as cruelty. Well, the only explanation I see for such things is the deformation of the need or taste for extremely strong sensations. I have noticed that cruel people experience an Ananda in their cruelty – they find an intense joy in it. It is thereby legitimized. Only it's in such a deformed state that it's repugnant.

¹⁸⁴*Tamas*: the principle of inertia and obscurity.

The idea that things are not in their place, *mon petit*, is something I understood even as a youngster, and it was eventually explained to me by Theon.

In his cosmogony, Theon accounted for the successive *pralayas*¹⁸⁵ of the different universes by saying that each universe was an aspect of the Supreme manifesting itself: each universe was built upon one aspect of the Supreme, and all, one after the other, were withdrawn into the Supreme. He enumerated all the successively manifested aspects, and what an extraordinarily logical sequence it was! I have kept it some place, but I no longer know where. Nor do I remember exactly what number this universe has in the sequence, but this time it was supposed to be the universe which would not be withdrawn, which would, so to speak, follow an indefinite progression of Becoming. And this universe is to manifest Equilibrium, not a static but a progressive equilibrium.¹⁸⁶ Equilibrium, as he explains it, is each thing exactly in its place: each vibration, each movement, each... and so on down the line – each form, each activity, each element exactly in its place in relation to the whole.

This is quite interesting to me because Sri Aurobindo says the same thing: that nothing is bad, simply things are not in their place – their place not only in space but in time, their place in the universe, beginning with the planets and stars, each thing exactly in its place. Then when each thing, from the most colossal to the most microscopic, is exactly in place, the whole Will PROGRESSIVELY express the Supreme, without having to be withdrawn and emanated anew. On this also, Sri Aurobindo based the fact that this present creation, this present universe, will be able to manifest the perfection of a divine world – what Sri Aurobindo calls the Supermind.

Equilibrium is the essential law of this creation – it is what permits perfection to be realized in the manifestation.

In line with this idea of things 'in their place,' another question comes to me: with the descent of the Supermind, what exactly are the very first things that the supramental force will want to or is trying to dislodge?

The first things it will dislodge?

185*Pralaya*: The destruction of a universe at the end of a cycle. According to Hindu cosmology, the formation of each universe begins with an 'age of truth' (*satya-yuga*) which slowly degenerates, like the stars, till there is no truth left at all; it becomes a 'dark age' (*kali-yuga*) like ours, and ends with a cataclysm. Then a new universe is reborn out of this cataclysm and the cycle begins again. There is a correspondence here with a modern cosmological theory according to which a phase of contraction, of galaxies collapsing upon themselves, follows a phase of expansion and precedes a new explosion ('Big Bang') of the 'primal egg' – and so on, in a recurring and apparently endless and aimless series of cosmic births which, like our own human births, develop, attain some sort of 'summit,' then collapse, always to begin again. According to Theon, our present universe is the seventh – but where is the 'beginning'?

186Note that modern astronomy is divided between the theory of endless phases of contraction-explosion-expansion, and the theory of a universe in infinite expansion starting with a 'Big Bang,' which seems quite as catastrophic, since the universe is then plunging at vertiginous speed into an increasingly cold, empty, and fatal infinity, like a bullet released from all restraints of gravity, until... until what? According to astronomers, an exact measurement of the quantity of matter in a cubic meter of the present universe (one atom for every 400 liters of space) should enable us to decide between these two theories and learn which way it will be best for us to die. If there is more than one atom per 400 liters of space, this quantity of matter will create sufficient gravitation to halt the present expansion of galaxies and induce a contraction, ending with an explosion within an infinitesimal space. If there is less than one atom per 400 liters of space, the quantity of matter and thus the gravitational effect will be insufficient to retain the galaxies within their invisible net, and everything will spin off endlessly – unless we discover, with Mother, a third position, that of a 'progressive equilibrium,' in which the quantity of matter in the universe proves in fact to be a quantity of consciousness, whose contraction or expansion will be regulated by the laws of consciousness.

Yes, individually and cosmically, so that everything is in its place.

Will it dislodge anything?... If we accept Sri Aurobindo's idea, it will put each thing in its place, that's all.

One thing must inevitably cease: the Deformation, the veil of falsehood covering Truth, because all we see existing here is due to that. If the veil is removed, things will necessarily be completely different, completely: they will be as we experience them when we emerge individually from that deformed consciousness. When one comes out of that consciousness and enters the Truth-Consciousness, one is incredulous that such things as suffering, misery and death can exist; it's amazing, in the sense that (when one is truly on the other side)... one doesn't understand how all this can be happening. And, although this state of consciousness is habitually associated with the experience of the unreality of the world as we know it, Sri Aurobindo tells us that this perception of the world's unreality need not exist for the supramental consciousness: only Falsehood is unreal, not the world. And this is most interesting – the world has its own reality, independent of Falsehood.

I suppose this will be the first effect of the Supermind – perhaps even its first effect in the individual, because it will begin in individuals first.

This state of consciousness¹⁸⁷ probably has to become constant, but that would pose a problem: how could one then keep in contact with the world as it is in its deformation? Because I have noticed that when this state is very strong in me, very strong, so strong that it can withstand everything bombarding it from outside, people don't understand a thing I say, NOTHING! Therefore, it would seem to cut off a useful contact.

What would it be like, for instance, to have a small supramental creation as a nucleus of action and influence radiating upon earth (to limit it to the earth)? Is it possible? It's easy to conceive of a superhuman nucleus – a creation of supermen, that is, of men who by virtue of evolution and transformation (in the true sense of the word) have succeeded in manifesting the supramental forces; yet since their origin is human, there is inevitably a contact; even if everything is transformed, even if their organs are transformed into centers of force, a sort of human coloration still remains. These are the beings who, according to tradition, will discover the secret of direct, supramental creation, bypassing the process of ordinary Nature. Then through them the true supramental beings will be born, who will necessarily have to live in a supramental world. But how would contact be made between these beings and the ordinary world? How to conceive of a transformation of nature sufficient to enable this supramental creation to take place on earth? I don't know.

Of course, we know that such a thing will require a considerable amount of time to be done, and it will probably go by stages, by degrees, with faculties appearing that at the moment we can't know or imagine, and which will change the conditions of the earth – this is looking ahead a few thousand years.

There is still this problem: is it possible to make use of the notion of space – I mean space on the planet earth?¹⁸⁸ Is it possible to find a place where the embryo or seed of the future supramental world might be created?

What I myself have seen... was a plan that came complete in all details, but that doesn't at all conform in spirit and consciousness with what is possible on earth now (although, in its most material

¹⁸⁷When the veil of falsehood has gone: the supramental consciousness.

¹⁸⁸Questioned later about the meaning of this sentence, Mother laughed, 'I said that from the other side! It was spoken from a dimension where the notion of space is no longer so concrete.'

manifestation, the plan was based on existing terrestrial conditions). It was the idea of an ideal city, the nucleus of a small ideal country, having only superficial and extremely limited contacts with the old world. One would already have to conceive (it's possible) of a Power sufficient to be at once a protection against aggression or bad will (this would not be the most difficult protection to provide) and a protection (which can just barely be imagined) against infiltration and admixture.... From the social or organizational standpoint, these problems are not difficult, nor from the standpoint of inner life; the problem is the relationship with what is not supramentalized – preventing infiltration or admixture, keeping the nucleus from falling back into an inferior creation during the transitional period.

(silence)

All who have considered the problem have always imagined some place like a Himalayan gorge, unknown to the rest of humanity, but this is no solution. No solution at all.

No, the only solution is occult power. But that.... Before anything at all can be done, it already demands a certain number of individuals who have reached a great perfection of realization. Granting this, a place is conceivable (set apart from the outside world – no actual contacts) where each thing is exactly in its place, setting an example. Each thing exactly in its place, each person exactly in his place, each movement in its place, and all in its place in an ascending, progressive movement without relapse (that is, the very opposite of what goes on in ordinary life). Naturally, this also means a sort of perfection, it means a sort of unity; it means that the different aspects of the Supreme can be manifested; and, necessarily, an exceptional beauty, a total harmony; and a power sufficient to keep the forces of Nature obedient: even if this place were encircled by destructive forces, for example, these forces would be powerless to act – the protection would be sufficient.

It would all require the utmost perfection in the individuals organizing such a thing.

(long silence)

It must be similar to what happened when the first men appeared.

Have we ever really known how the first humans were formed, the first mental realization? Were they isolated individuals, or were they in groups – did the phenomenon take place in a collective milieu or in isolation? I don't know. It may be analogous to the case of the coming supramental creation.

It isn't difficult to conceive of an individual in the solitude of the Himalayas or in a virgin forest beginning to create around himself his miniature supramental world – this is easy to imagine. But the same thing would be necessary: he would need to have attained such perfection that his power would act automatically to prevent any outside intrusion.

Because such beings would automatically become the target of outside attacks?

They would need to be automatically protected; that is, any foreign or opposing element should be kept from approaching.

There are stories like this, you know, about people who lived in an ideal solitude, and it's not at all impossible to imagine. When one is in contact with this Power, when it is within you, you can see that such things are... child's play! It even reaches the point where there is the possibility of changing certain things, of influencing vibrations and forms in the surrounding environment by contagion, so that automatically they begin to be supramentalized. All that is possible – but confined to the individual scale. While if we take the example of what is happening here, where the individual remains right in the midst of all this chaos.... That's the difficulty! Doesn't this very fact make a certain perfection in

realization impossible to attain? But the other case, the individual isolated in the forest, is always the same thing – an example giving no proof that the rest will be able to follow; while what's happening here should already have a much broader radiating influence. At some point this has to happen – it MUST happen. But the problem still remains: can it happen simultaneously with or even before the supramentalization of the single individual?

(silence)

The realization under community or group conditions would clearly be far more complete, integral, total and probably more perfect than any individual realization, which is always, necessarily – necessarily – extremely limited on the external material level, because it's only one way of being, one mode of manifestation, one microscopic set of vibrations that is touched.

But for the facility of the work, I believe there's no comparison!

(silence)

But the problem remains: Buddha and all the rest have FIRST realized, then resumed contact with the world. That makes it very simple. But for the total realization of what I envisage, isn't it indispensable to remain in the world?...

(Mother is absorbed for a while, gazing into the distance)

I am constantly seeing images! Not images, living things – like answers to questions. A magnificent peacock was taking shape (it's the symbol of victory here in India) and its tail opened out, and on it a construction appeared, like this construction of an ideal place.... It's a pity this subtle world can't be photographed! There ought to be photographic plates sensitive enough to do it. It has been tried. It would be interesting because it moves, it's like a movie.

All right, then. What did you want to ask?

I think you've already answered!

No, I don't remember; I went off – wandering.

I asked you about your Force, or the supramental Force; what initial action is it taking now?

Ah yes.

Is it putting things in their places?

In my experience, it is; and it has come to the point where the more concentrated the Force, the more things turn up at the very moment they ought to, people come just when they should and do just what they ought to be doing, the things around me fall into place naturally – and this goes for the LEAST little detail. And simultaneously it brings with it a sense of harmony and rhythm, a joy – a very smiling joy in organization, as if everything were joyously participating in this restructuring. For example, you want to tell someone something and he comes to you; you need someone to do a particular work and he appears; something has to be organized – all the required elements are at hand. All with a kind of miraculous harmony, but nothing miraculous about it! Essentially it's simply the inner force meeting with a minimum of obstacles, and so things get molded by its action. This happens to me very often,

VERY often; and sometimes it goes on for hours.

But it's rather delicate, like a very, very delicate clockwork, like a precision machine, and the least little thing throws everything out of gear. When someone has a bad reaction, for instance, or a bad thought, or an agitated vibration, or an anxiety – anything of this nature is enough to dissolve all the harmony. For me, it's translated straight-away into a malaise in my body, a very particular type of malaise; then disorder sets in, and the ordinary routine returns. So again I have to gather up, as it were, the Presence of the Lord and begin to infuse it everywhere. Sometimes it goes quickly, sometimes it takes longer; when the disorganization is a little more radical, it takes a little longer.

This eye [hemorrhage], for instance, resulted from such a disorder, a very dark force that someone allowed to enter, not deliberately, not knowingly, but through weakness and ignorance, always mingled, of course, with desire and ego and all the rest. (Without desire and ego, such things would find no access – but desire and ego are very widespread.) At any rate, that was plainly the cause and I sensed it immediately. Sometimes when it comes, it creeps up like this (*Mother brings her hand to her throat*), a black shadow strangling you. Yet inwardly nothing is affected at all, to such an extent that if I didn't pay attention to the purely external reaction, I wouldn't know anything had happened (it's the great Play); but externally the indication is immediate: half an hour later I had this eye hemorrhage. I was struggling against a wholly undesirable intrusion, and I knew it – although from an outer point of view, the cause was insignificant. It's not always the events we consider serious or important that produce the most harmful effects – far from it. Sometimes it's an altogether INSIGNIFICANT intrusion of falsehood, for some quite insignificant reason – what is commonly labeled a stupidity. This stems from the fact that the adverse forces are always lying in wait, ready to rush in at the least sign of weakness.

The incomprehension generated by doubt (the kind of doubt that always results from an egoistic movement) is very dangerous. Very dangerous. It's not even necessary to be in a psychic consciousness – even for an enlightened vital consciousness, it produces no effect; but HERE, in this material swarm....

But I don't see how all this work could be done in the solitude of the Himalayas or the forest. There's a great risk of entering into that very impersonal, universal consciousness where things are relatively easy – the material consequences are so far below that it doesn't much matter! One can act directly only in the MIDST of things.

Anyway, at the moment I have no choice – and I am not looking for any. Things are what they are and as they are; and taking them as they are, the work has to be done. The manner of working depends on the way things are.

But it's so lovely when this Harmony comes. You know, puttering about, arranging papers, setting a drawer in order.... It all sings, it's lovely, so joyous and luminous... so delightful! And all, all, all.... All material things, all activities, eating, dressing, everything becomes delightful when this harmony is there, delightful. Everything works out smoothly, it's so harmonious, there's no friction. You see... you see a joyous, luminous Grace manifesting in all things, ALL things, even those we normally regard as utterly unimportant. But then, if this Harmony withdraws, everything – exactly the SAME conditions, the SAME things, the SAME circumstances – becomes painful, tiresome, drawn out, difficult, laborious, oh!... It's like this, and like that (*Mother tilts her hand from side to side as on a narrow frontier*) like this, like that.

It makes you sense so clearly that things in themselves don't count. What we call 'things in themselves' are of no true importance! What really counts is the relationship of consciousness to these things. And there's a formidable power in this, since in one instance you touch something and drop or mishandle it, while in the other it's so lovely, it works so smoothly. Even the most difficult movements are made without difficulty. It's an unheard-of power! We don't give it importance because it has no

grandiose effects, it's not spectacular. Yes, there are indeed states of grace when one is in the presence of a great difficulty and suddenly has all the power needed to face it – yes, but that's something else. I am speaking of a power active in ordinary life.

There was an instance of this the other day: someone in a completely detestable mood wrote me a letter; it was impossible, I couldn't reply – I didn't know what to say. I simply applied the Force and remained like this (*gesture of an offering to the Light*). I said, 'We shall see.' Several hours later (I knew I was going to see this person) I didn't even know if I was going to say I had read the letter – or rather if what I was going to say would result from having read it. I had come to that point – nothing. But that very morning a little circumstance occurred that... changed everything! And when I met the person I knew immediately what had to be said, what had to be done, and everything worked out.

That is ONE example. I mention it because it happened the day before yesterday, but this goes on all the time.

I have made it a habit to always do this (*gesture of abandonment to the Light*). When a problem comes up, I offer it to the Lord and then leave it. And the moment the solution is required, it comes – it comes in facts, in deeds, in movements.

I would be satisfied only if.... Can one ever be satisfied? At any rate, I would begin to be satisfied only if this were a constant and total condition, active in all circumstances and at every moment, day and night. But is it possible with this INUNDATION pouring in from outside? Constantly! While walking this morning I was (how to put it?) something of a witness, watching what was coming in from outside. One thing after another, one thing after another – what a mixture! From all sides, from everyone and everything and everywhere. And not only from here, but from far, far away on the earth and sometimes from far back in time, back into the past – things out of the past coming up, presenting themselves to the new Light to be put in their place. It's always that: each thing wanting to be put in its place. And this work has to be done constantly.... It's as if one keeps catching a new illness to be cured.

A fresh disorder to be straightened out.

Actually, we are very lazy.

Sri Aurobindo wrote that he was very lazy – that consoled me! We are very lazy. We would like (*laughing*) to settle back and blissfully enjoy the fruit of our labors!

So there, mon petit; it's time to go.



July 26, 1961

(Satprem reads several passages from the July 15th conversation where Mother says that Sri Aurobindo left before saying what he had been doing, and that it was a path through a virgin forest: 'Eyes blindfolded, knowing nothing, one plods on....')

It's still true.

When shall we see the end? In a hundred years?

(For an instant Mother remains pensive)

It came fleetingly: twenty years.

I give it to you for whatever it's worth!



July 28, 1961

Here is something important. Sri Aurobindo says that everything is involved down here – the mind, the vital, the supermind – and that what is involved evolves. But if everything is involved, including the supermind, what is the need for a ‘descent’? Can't things evolve by themselves?

Ah! He has explained this somewhere.

But I don't remember seeing anything that satisfied me.

Isn't it in the *Essays on the Gita*? He explains what Krishna says and how the two [descent and evolution] are combined. I read it not long ago because I was interested in this very question. And I even said something myself about the difference between what evolves (what emerges from this involution) and the Response from what already exists above in all its glory.

We'll have to find this passage.

There are two lines in the ancient traditions, two ways of explaining this. One says it is by the 'descent' of what already exists in all its perfection that what is involved can be awakened to consciousness and evolution. It's like the old story: when what Sri Aurobindo calls the universal Mother or the Shakti (or *Sachchidananda*¹⁸⁹) realized what had happened in Matter (that is, in what had created Matter) and that this involution had led to a state of Inconscience, total unconsciousness, the ancient lore says that at once the divine Love descended straight from the Lord into Matter and began to awaken what was involved there.

Other traditions speak of the Consciousness, the divine Consciousness, instead of Love. One even finds accounts full of imagery depicting a Being of prismatic light lying in deep sleep in the cave of the Inconscient; and this Descent awakens him to an activity which is still (how to put it?) inner, an immobile activity, an activity by radiation. Countless rays issue from his body and spread throughout the Inconscient, and little by little they awaken in each thing, in each atom, as it were, the aspiration to Consciousness and the beginning of evolution.

I have had this experience.

I have had the experience of being 'missioned,' so to speak, in a form of Love and Consciousness combined – divine Love in its supreme purity, divine Consciousness in its supreme purity – and

¹⁸⁹*Sachchidananda* is the Supreme Consciousness in its triple aspect of Existence (*Sat*), Consciousness (*Chit*) and Bliss (*Ananda*).

emanated DIRECTLY, without passing through all the intermediate states, directly into the nethermost depths of the Inconscient. And there I had the impression of being, or rather of finding a symbolic Being in deep sleep... so veiled that he was almost invisible. Then, at my contact, the veil seemed to be rent and, without his awakening, there was a sort of radiation spreading out.... I can still see my vision.¹⁹⁰

(silence)

There is always what could almost be called a popular way of presenting things. Take the whole Story of the Creation, of how things have come about: it can be told as an unfolding story (this is what Theon did in a book he called *The Tradition* – he told the whole story in the Biblical manner, with psychological knowledge hidden in symbols and forms). There is a psychological manner of telling things and a metaphysical manner. The metaphysical, for me, is almost incomprehensible; it's uninteresting (or interesting only to minds that are made that way). An almost childish, illustrative way of telling things seems more evocative to me than any metaphysical theory (but this is a personal opinion – and of no great moment!). The psychological approach is more dynamic for transformation, and Sri Aurobindo usually adopted it. He doesn't tell us stories (I was the one who told him stories! Images are very evocative for me). But if one combines the two approaches.... Actually, to be philosophical, one would have to combine the three. But I have always found the metaphysical approach ineffective; it doesn't lead to realization but only gives people the IDEA that they know, when they really know nothing at all. From the standpoint of *push*, of a dynamic urge towards transformation, the psychological approach is obviously the most powerful. But the other [the symbolic approach] is lovelier!

In *The Hour of God*, there's a whole diagram of the Manifestation made by Sri Aurobindo¹⁹¹ : first comes this, then comes that, then comes the other, and so forth – a whole sequence. They published this in the book in all seriousness, but I must say that Sri Aurobindo did it for fun (I saw him do it). Someone had spoken to him about different religions, different philosophical methods – Theosophy, Madame Blavatski, all those people (there was Theon, too). Well, each one had made his diagram. So Sri Aurobindo said, 'I can make a diagram, too, and mine will be much more complete!' When he finished it, he laughed and said, 'But it's only a diagram, it's just for fun.' They published it very solemnly, as if he had made a very serious proclamation. Oh, it's a very complicated diagram!

But the trouble is that people will say: what's the need for a 'descent' if all is involved and then evolves? Why a descent? Why should there be an intervention from a higher plane?

I beg your pardon, but what was built up through this involution had to be unbuilt. The CAUSE of this involution had to be undone.

The way Theon told it, there was first the universal Mother (he didn't call her the universal Mother, but Sri Aurobindo used that name), the universal Mother in charge of creation. For creating she made four emanations: Consciousness or Light; Life; Love or Beatitude and (*Mother tries in vain to remember the fourth*)... I must have cerebral anemia today! In India they speak only of three: Sat-Chit-Ananda (Sat is Existence, expressed by Life; Chit is Consciousness, expressed by Power; Ananda is Bliss, synonymous with Love). But according to Theon, there were four (I knew them by heart). Well,

¹⁹⁰See the addendum following this conversation for a transcription of Mother's vision as she noted it down for publication in Theon's *Cosmic Review* in 1906.

¹⁹¹Cent. Ed., Vol. XVII, p. 28 ff.

these emanations (Theon narrated it in such a way that someone not a philosopher, someone with a childlike mind, could understand), these emanations, conscious of their own power, separated themselves from their Origin; that is, instead of being entirely surrendered to the supreme Will and expressing only.... Ah, the fourth emanation is Truth! Instead of carrying out only the supreme Will, they seem to have acquired a sense of personal power. (They were personalities of sorts, universal personalities, each representing a mode of being.) Instead of remaining connected, they cut the link – each acted on his own, to put it simply. Then, naturally, Light became darkness, Life became death, Bliss became suffering and Truth became falsehood. And these are the four great Asuras: the Asura of Inconscience, the Asura of Falsehood, the Asura of Suffering and the Asura of Death.

Once this had occurred, the divine Consciousness turned towards the Supreme and said (*Mother laughs*): ‘Well, here’s what has happened. What’s to be done?’ Then from the Divine came an emanation of Love (in the first emanation it wasn’t Love, it was Ananda, Bliss, the Delight of being which became Suffering), and from the Supreme came Love; and Love descended into this domain of Inconscience, the result of the creation of the first emanation, Consciousness – Consciousness and Light had become Inconscience and Darkness. Love descended straight from the Supreme into this Inconscience; the Supreme, that is, created a new emanation, which didn’t pass through the intermediate worlds (because, according to the story, the universal Mother first created all the gods who, when they descended, remained in contact with the Supreme and created all the intermediate worlds to counterbalance this fall – it’s the old story of the ‘Fall,’ this fall into the Inconscient. But that wasn’t enough). Simultaneously with the creation of the gods, then, came this direct Descent of Love into Matter, without passing through all the intermediate worlds. That’s the story of the first Descent. But you’re speaking of the descent heralded by Sri Aurobindo, the Supramental Descent, aren’t you?

Not only that. For example, Sri Aurobindo says that when Life appeared there was a pressure from below, from evolution, to make Life emerge from Matter, and simultaneously a descent of Life from its own plane. Then, when Mind emerged out of Life, the same thing from above happened again. Why this intervention from above each time? Why don’t things emerge normally, one after another, without needing a ‘descent’?

You may as well ask why everything has gone wrong!

No, with experience it becomes easy to understand.

Take the experience of Mind, for example: Mind, in the evolution of Nature, gradually emerging from its involution; well – and this is a very concrete experience – these initial ‘mentalized forms,’ if we can call them that, were necessarily incomplete and imperfect, because Nature’s evolution is slow and hesitant and complicated. Thus these forms inevitably had an aspiration towards a sort of perfection and a truly perfect mental state, and this aspiration brought the descent of already fully conscious beings from the mental world who united with terrestrial forms – this is a very, very concrete experience. What emerges from the Inconscient in this way is an almost impersonal possibility (yes, an impersonal possibility, and perhaps not altogether universal, since it’s connected with the history of the earth); but anyway it’s a general possibility, not personal. And the Response from above is what makes it concrete, so to speak, bringing in a sort of perfection of the state and an individual mastery of the new creation. These beings in corresponding worlds (like the gods of the overmind,¹⁹² or the beings of

¹⁹²In Sri Aurobindo’s terminology, the ‘Overmind’ represents the highest level of the mind, the world of the gods and origin of all the revelations and highest artistic creations – the world that has ruled mental man till now. In his gradations of the worlds, Sri Aurobindo speaks of two hemispheres, the upper hemisphere and the lower. The Overmind is the line between these two hemispheres, ‘This line is the intermediary overmind which, though luminous itself, keeps from us the full indivisible supramental Light, but in receiving it divides, distributes, breaks up into separated aspects, powers, multiplicities of all kinds.’ In the words of the Upanishad, ‘The face of the Truth is covered by a golden lid.’

higher regions) came upon earth as soon as the corresponding element began to evolve out of its involution. This accelerates the action, first of all, but also makes it more perfect – more perfect, more powerful, more conscious. It gives a sort of sanction to the realization. Sri Aurobindo writes of this in *Savitri* – Savitri lives always on earth, with the soul of the earth, to make the whole earth progress as quickly as possible. Well, when the time comes and things on earth are ready, then the divine Mother incarnates with her full power – when things are ready. Then will come the perfection of the realization. A splendor of creation exceeding all logic! It brings in a fullness and a power completely beyond the petty shallow logic of human mentality.

People can't understand! To put oneself at the level of the general public may be all very well¹⁹³ (personally I have never found it so, although it's probably inevitable), but to hope that they will ever understand the splendor of the Thing.... They have to live it first!

I myself would NEVER try to deal with the 'why'; I would always say 'this is how it is.' When people ask me, 'Why did it happen like this? Why is the world so unhappy? Why does it have to be dark before growing luminous? Why has there been this "accident" (if it can be called an "accident")? Why did the Lord permit You can say it's because of this, because of that – there are fifty thousand replies and they're all worthless.

It's like this because that's the way it is!

It wasn't so much a question of the 'why' as of the process.

The process? I am giving you an historical process that I know through experience.

Both are needed.

Yes. The earth is a representative and symbolic world, a kind of crystallization and concentration of the evolutionary labor giving it a... more concrete reality. It has to be taken like this: the history of the earth is a symbolic history. And it is on earth that this Descent takes place (it's not the history of the universal but of the terrestrial creation); the Descent occurs in the individual TERRESTRIAL being, in the individual terrestrial atmosphere.

Let's take *Savitri*, which is very explicit on this: the universal Mother is universally present and at work in the universe, but the earth is where concrete form is given to all the work to be done to bring evolution to its perfection, its goal. Well, at first there's a sort of emanation representative of the universal Mother, which is always on earth to help it prepare itself; then, when the preparation is complete, the universal Mother herself will descend upon earth to finish her work. And this She does with Satyavan – Satyavan is the soul of the earth. She lives in close union with the soul of the earth and together they do the work; She has chosen the soul of the earth for her work, saying, 'HERE is where I will do my work.' Elsewhere (*Mother indicates regions of higher Consciousness*), it's enough just to BE and things Simply ARE. Here on earth you have to work.

There are clearly universal repercussions and effects, of course, but the thing is WORKED OUT here, the place of work is HERE. So instead of living beatifically in Her universal state and beyond, in the extra-universal eternity outside of time, She says, 'No, I am going to do my work HERE, I choose to work HERE.' The Supreme then tells her, 'What you have expressed is My Will.'... 'I want to work HERE, and when all is ready, when the earth is ready, when humanity is ready (even if no one is aware of it), when the Great Moment comes, well... I will descend to finish my work.'

¹⁹³Mother is referring to the book Satprem will write on Sri Aurobindo, which prompted the questions posed in this conversation.

That's the story.

So if people ask 'why,' we can tell them, 'I don't know, but that's how it is.' Why? (*Mother shrugs her shoulders*) How can a small human brain understand why! When you live it, you know! There's no problem, it's clear; it's like that because it's like that. It had to be that way – that's how it is.

You can find all sorts of explanations for it: consciousness would never have been so complete, joy would never have been so full, the realization would never have been so total, if one had not passed through... all that. But these explanations are just to satisfy the mind. When you live in it, there's no need for explanations.

As for hoping to make people understand!... The only thing that really matters is that they read your book with interest. Let them read it with interest; each one will imagine he has understood (and of course he will have 'understood'!), and through (I was going to say *under*) their interest, well, something will be awakened in their consciousness, a kind of first aspiration towards the need to realize – that's all. If you do that, good Lord, you have done a great thing!

Make them understand! How to understand? As long as one is there [at the mind level], one does not understand. One can imagine all sorts of things, explain all sorts of things, but... with a pinch of common sense, you see very well that you don't explain a thing.

* * *

ADDENDUM

(Extract from the 'Cosmic Review' of 1906)

A VISION

(of Mother's)

From sleep, I now emerge awakened.

I slept upon the westward waters and now I plunge into the ocean to fathom its depths. Its surface is the green of beryl, silvered by moonbeams. Below, the water is the blue of sapphire and already faintly luminous.

Reclining on the waves' silken folds, I descend; rocked from one undulating wave to another in a gentle rhythm, I am borne straight towards the west. The deeper I go, the more luminous the water becomes, great silvery currents coursing through it.

Cradled from wave to wave, for a long while I descend deeper, ever deeper.

All at once, as I gaze above me, I glimpse something roseate; I draw nearer and discern what appears to be a shrub, as large as a tree, held fast to a blue reef. The denizens of the waters glide to and fro, myriad and diverse. Now I find myself standing upon fine, shining sand. I gaze about me in wonder. There are mountains and valleys, fantastic forests, strange flowers that could as well be animals, and fish that might be flowers – no separation, no gap is there between stationary beings and mobile. Colors everywhere, brilliant and shimmering, or subdued, but always harmonious and refined. I walk upon the golden sands and contemplate all this beauty bathed in a soft, pale blue radiance, tiny,

luminous spheres of red, green and gold circulating through it.

How marvelous are the depths of the sea! Everywhere the presence of the One in whom all harmonies reside is felt!

Ever westward I advance, without weariness or hesitation. Spectacle succeeds spectacle in incredible variety; here upon a rock of lapis lazuli stretch fine and delicate seaweed like long blond or violet tresses; here great, rose-hued fortress walls, all streaked with silver; here flowers seem chiseled from enormous diamonds; here goblets, as beautiful as if carved by the most gifted sculptor, are filled with what appear to be droplets of emerald, alternately vibrant with light and shadow.

Presently I find myself between two rock walls of sapphire blue, upon a path flecked with silver; and the water becomes ever purer and more luminous.

A sudden turn in the path and I come to a grotto which seems fashioned of crystal, scintillating in prismatic radiance.

Standing there between two iridescent pillars is a very tall figure; his face, framed in short blond curls, is that of a very young man; his eyes are sea-green; he is clad in a pale blue tunic, and like wings upon his shoulders are great, snow-white fins. Beholding me, he steps aside against a pillar to let me pass. Scarcely have I crossed the threshold when an exquisite melody strikes my ears. The waters are all iridescent here, the ground aglow with glossy pearls; the portico and the vault, hung gracefully with stalactites, are opaline; delectable perfumes hover everywhere; galleries, niches and alcoves open out on all sides; but directly ahead of me I perceive a great light and towards it I turn my steps. There are great rays of gold, silver, sapphire, emerald and ruby, radiating outward in all directions, born from a center too distant for me to discern; to this center I feel drawn by a powerful attraction.

Now I see that these rays emanate from a recumbent oval of white light encircled by a superb rainbow, and I sense that the one whom the light hides from my view is plunged into a profound repose. For long I remain at the outer edge of the rainbow, trying to pierce through the light and see the one who is sleeping encircled by such splendor. Unable to discern anything, I enter the rainbow, and thence into the white and shining oval. Here I see a marvelous being: stretched on what seems to be a mass of white eiderdown, his supple body, of incomparable beauty, is garbed in a long, white robe. His head rests on his folded arm, but of that I can see only his long hair, the hue of ripened wheat, flowing over his shoulders. A great and gentle emotion sweeps through me at this magnificent spectacle, and a deep reverence as well.

Has the sleeper sensed my presence? For now he awakens and rises in all his grace and beauty. He turns towards me and his eyes meet mine, mauve and luminous eyes with a gentle, an infinitely tender expression. Wordlessly he bids me a sublime welcome and my whole being joyously responds. Taking my hand, he leads me to the couch he has just left. I stretch out on this downy whiteness, and his harmonious visage bends over me; a sweet current of force enters wholly into me, invigorating, revitalizing each cell.

Then, wreathed by the splendid colors of the rainbow, enveloped by lulling melodies and exquisite perfumes, beneath his gaze so powerful, so tender, I drift into a beatific repose. And during my sleep I learn many beautiful and useful things.

Of all these marvelous things, understood without the noise of words, I mention only one.

Wherever there is beauty, wherever there is radiance, wherever there is progress towards perfection, whether in the Heaven of the heights or of the depths, there, assuredly, is found the form and similitude of man-man, the supreme terrestrial evolutor.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴‘Evolutor’: a word coined by Mother.



August

August 2, 1961

When one descends into the subconscious, a time comes when it's no longer personal – the whole world is there! Then what can we do? I'm not speaking of you, but what can people like us do to change it? It's a Sisyphean labor! Vibrations from the whole world keep coming in at each instant. How can we change it?

No, you have to approach the problem from the other direction.

Evolution begins with the Inconscient, complete Inconscience; and from this Inconscient a Subconscious gradually emerges – that is, a half or quarter-consciousness.... There are two different things here. Consider life on earth (because the process is slightly different in the universe); earth-life begins with total Inconscience and little by little what was involved within it works out and changes this Inconscience into semi-consciousness or subconsciousness. At the same time, there is an individual working that awakens the INDIVIDUAL inconscient to an individual semiconsciousness, and here, of course, the individual has control – although it's not actually individualized because individualization begins with consciousness. The subconscious of plants or animals, for example, isn't individualized; what we call an animal's behavior doesn't arise from individualization but from the genius of the species. Consequently, the individual subconscious is something already evolved out of the general Subconscious. But when one descends to accomplish a work of transformation – to bring Light into the different layers of life, for instance – one descends into a cosmic, terrestrial Subconscious, not an individual Subconscious. And the work of transformation is done within the whole – not through individualization, but through the opposite movement, through a sort of universalization.

No, what I mean is that as we progress, we automatically become universalized....

Yes, necessarily.

And we are told that we have to change the Subconscious, to bring Light into it; but being universal it has no end! New vibrations keep coming in at every instant...

No!

...vibrations from the outside, from here, there – it's endless. How can we change it?

No, it isn't endless – it's limited to the earth's atmosphere.

That's already quite a lot!

Yes, but not endless.

Then how can we act upon it – all these vibrations that keep pouring in from all over the world, from the whole earth?

It isn't difficult – the minute you become universalized you act upon the whole.

Even Buddha said that if you have a vibration of desire, this vibration goes all around the terrestrial atmosphere. The opposite is what's impossible! It's impossible to separate yourself. You can have the idea of being separate, but you can't be separate in reality. In fact, if you are trying to eliminate the Subconscious in yourself your movement must necessarily be general; it can't be personal, you would never get anywhere.

Yes, of course, but these vibrations are ceaselessly re-created.

No, they are not re-created.

But there are people having wrong movements at every instant, so...?

So it all keeps circling round and round in the earth's atmosphere. But compared to the universe, the earth's atmosphere is a very tiny thing. Well, all this keeps circling around within it. And in fact, because of the movement of evolution, there is a progress. The present Inconscient is not as unconscious as the initial Inconscient, and the present Subconscious is not as subconscious nor as generalized as it was at the beginning. This is the meaning of terrestrial evolution.

But if, as you say, it keeps circling around in the earth's atmosphere, doesn't this mean that vibrations are ceaselessly re-created?

Not re-created – they keep circling around, which is not the same thing!

A re-creation would mean that a new contingent of the Inconscient and Subconscious would come in from other spheres, or from the Supreme – well, this isn't the case. We consider the Inconscient to be an 'accident': if it happened, it happened; but it's not part of an infinite and eternal creation.

Then are our vibrations of consciousness effective for changing these general vibrations?

Ah, yes!

In fact, we are the first possible instruments for making the world progress. For example (this is one way of putting it), the transformation of the Inconscient into the Subconscious is probably far more rapid and complete now than it was before man appeared upon earth; man is one of the first transformative elements. Animals are obviously more conscious than plants, but WILLED (and thus more rapid) progress belongs to humanity. Likewise, what one hopes (more than hopes!), *what one expects is* that when the new supramental race comes upon earth, the work will go much more swiftly; and man will necessarily benefit from this. And since things will be done in true order instead of in mental disorder, animals and everything else will probably benefit from it also. In other words, the whole earth, taken as one entity, will progress more and more rapidly. The Inconscient (oh, all this comes to me in English, that's the difficulty!) is *meant to go* and necessarily the Subconscious will go too.

Broadly speaking, does this mean that physical Matter will become conscious?

Yes, in a certain way. It will become receptive. The mode of life won't necessarily change, but the form of life will change. Matter will become *responsive*. Do we say that in French?

Receptive?...

No, receptive is one thing and responsive is another. To respond: Matter will respond to the conscious will. Indeed, this is why there is hope – how else could there be a transformation? Things would always remain as they are! What kind of earth would it be for the supramental race to live on if no Matter gave response, if Matter did not begin to vibrate and respond to the Will? The same difficulties would always be there. And it isn't limited: for instance, even if we imagine a power over the body making corporeal life different, this new corporeal life still has to exist within an environment – it can't remain hanging in thin air! The environment must respond.

It's quite obvious that the Inconscient, the Subconscient and the semi-conscient are accidental; they are not a permanent part of the creation, so are bound to disappear, to be transformed.

Years ago, when Sri Aurobindo and I descended together from plane to plane (or from mode of life to mode of life) and reached the Subconscient, we saw that it was no longer individual: it was terrestrial. The rest – the mind, the vital and of course the body – is individualized; but when you descend below this level, that's no longer the case. There is indeed something between the conscious life of the body and this subconscious terrestrial life – elements are thrown out¹⁹⁵ as a result of the action of individual consciousness upon the subconscious substance; this creates a kind of semiconsciousness, and that stays. For example, when people are told, 'You have pushed your difficulty down into the subconscious and it will resurface,' this does not refer to the general Subconscient, but to something individualized out of the Subconscient through the action of individual consciousness and remaining down there until it resurfaces. The process is, so to speak, interminable, even the personal part of it.

Every night, you know, I continue to see more and more astounding things emerging from the Subconscient to be transformed. It's a kind of mixture – not clearly individualized – of all the things that have been more or less closely associated in life. For example, some people are intermingled there. One relives things almost as in a dream (although these are not 'dreams'), one relives it all in a certain setting, within a certain set of symbolic, or at any rate expressive, circumstances. Just two days ago I had to deal with someone (I am actively at work there and I had to do something with him), and upon seeing this person, I asked myself, 'is he this one or that one?' As I became less involved in the action and looked with a more objective consciousness, the witness-consciousness, I saw that it was simply a mixture of both persons – everything is mixed in the Subconscient.... Already when I lived in Japan there were four people I could never distinguish during my nighttime activities – all four of them (and god knows they weren't even acquainted!) were always intermingled because their subconscious reactions were identical.

In fact, this is what legitimizes the ego; because if we had never formed an ego, we would have lived all mixed up (*laughing*), now this person, now another! Oh, it was so comical, seeing this the other day! At first it was a bit bewildering, but when I looked closely, it became utterly amusing: two little people with no physical resemblance, yet of a similar type – small and... in short, a similarity. It's like the four men I used to see in Japan: there was an Englishman, a Frenchman, a Japanese and one more, each from a different country; well, at night they were all the same, as if viewed one through the other, all intermingled – very amusing!

But individualization is a slow and difficult process. That's why you have an ego, otherwise you would never become individualized, but always be... (*Mother laughs*) a kind of public place!

In the end, individualization – and the consequent necessity for the ego – exists for the return to Divine Consciousness to be conscious and willed, with full, conscious participation.

Speaking of individualization, there's a question I've been wondering about: when one speaks of

195I.e., they are cast aside or eliminated from the individual Subconscient.

the 'central being,' this central being is not something here in physical life, is it?... It's above....

It is above and within and everywhere! *(Mother laughs)*

No, unless you learn to think at all times with the fourth dimension, you will never understand anything.

But Sri Aurobindo says that this central being is 'unborn.' I would like to know whether it is something individual – whether each person has a central being.

The one is not separate from the other.

The one is not separate from the other? In what sense? The central being isn't separate from the Divine, it's one with the Divine. But does each person have a particular, individual central being, or is there one central being for everyone?

It becomes personal in our consciousness. It is a phenomenon of consciousness.

But it's not separate – never separate.

Yes, it isn't separate, but does it have an individuality?

It's never separate, neither from the Center (if it can be called a 'center'!) nor from the whole. And as soon as one is in touch with it, this problem no longer arises: it's plain that it can't be otherwise!

Because when one loses his ego and finds this central being, Sri Aurobindo says that an individuality remains – it isn't a dissolution – one retains a personality.

Yes, a personality remains.

Then this is the personality of the central being, the True Personality.

Yes.

Then after all, it's an individual, not an impersonal self.

Individual in action, in manifestation.

This is where the problem arises. Sri Aurobindo says it's permanent, while all the ancient traditions say it disappears with the body.

A permanent individual self?

Otherwise there could be no permanent material life – for this [individuality] is the very nature of materialization. Were it destined to disappear, then the phenomenon of physical dissolution would become permanent, and there would never be physical immortality; because, after exhausting a certain... basically, a certain number of illusions or disorders or falsehoods, one would return to the Truth. But according to Sri Aurobindo, it isn't like that: this individualization, this individual personalization is the Truth, a real, authentic divine phenomenon – the only falsehood is the deformation of consciousness. Well, when we rediscover the true consciousness of Unity – that Unity which is both in and above the manifest and the non-manifest ('above' in that it contains both the

manifest and non-manifest equally), well, this Truth includes material personalization, otherwise that¹⁹⁶ could not exist.

But each individual has a different personality.

Yes... perhaps not in the present state of disorder! But in principle.

Every conscious being?

Yes, in principle – each TRUE soul.

True, meaning formed?

Yes, ‘formed’ if you consider it from below. But if you consider it from above... (*Mother laughs*).

Each individual represents something of the Divine?

It could be expressed like that, but it’s still a separative way of putting it.

But then what is this ‘personality’!?

It’s a mode of being.

It’s what makes one being different from the other.

A mode of being, yes, in a way, in its essence – in its essence, because in the manifestation all this is destined to disappear. Yes, they are modes of being – like those first four modes of being¹⁹⁷ created at the first manifestation.

But in our case, would there be innumerable modes of being, each representing one particular aspect?

Yes, the multitude – otherwise there can be no Play.

I just translated a passage where Sri Aurobindo speaks of the enjoyment and possession of the One by the multitude, of the multitude by the One, and of the multitude by the multitude.¹⁹⁸ Such a play must then involve an innumerable diversity – innumerable!

¹⁹⁶‘That’ seems to refer to physical immortality.

¹⁹⁷Consciousness or Light, Life, Love or Bliss, and Truth, which then became the first four asuras or demons.

¹⁹⁸See *Thoughts and Glimpses*: ‘What then was the commencement of the whole matter? Existence that multiplied itself for sheer delight of being and plunged into numberless trillions of forms so that it might find itself innumerable.... And what is the end of the whole matter? As if honey could taste itself and all its drops together and all its drops could taste each other and each the whole honeycomb as itself, so should the end be with God and the soul of man and the universe.’

(Cent. Ed. Vol. XVI, p. 384)

Then why have those who had realizations in the past, who found the true Self, all said it meant the dissolution of the individual, that no personality remained?

Not all! only those who went off into Non-existence said this.

In the Vedas, for example, it's plain that the 'forefathers' spoken of were men who had realized immortality upon earth. (Who knows, they may still be alive!) Their conception of things was similar to Sri Aurobindo's.

The other tradition – Theon said it was the origin of both the Kabbala and the Vedas – also held the same concept of divine life and a divine world as Sri Aurobindo: that the summit of evolution would be the divinization of everything objectified, along with an unbroken progression from that moment on. (As things are now, one goes forward and then backwards, then forward and backwards again; but in this divine world, retrogression won't be necessary: there will be a continuous ascent.) This concept was held in that ancient tradition – Theon spoke to me very clearly of it, and Sri Aurobindo hadn't yet written anything when I met Theon. Theon had written all kinds of things – not philosophy, but stories, fantastic stories! Yet this same knowledge was behind them, and when asked about the source of this knowledge he used to say that it antedated both the Kabbala and the Vedas (he was well-versed in the Rig-veda).

But Theon had no idea of the path of *bhakti*,¹⁹⁹ none whatsoever.

The idea of *surrender* to the Divine was absolutely alien to him. Yet he did have the idea of the Divine Presence here (*Mother indicates the heart center*), of the immanent Divine and of union with That. And he said that by uniting with That and letting That transform the being one could arrive at the divine creation and the transformation of the earth.

Theon was the first one to give me the idea that the earth is symbolic, representative – symbolic of concentrated universal action allowing divine forces to incarnate and work concretely. I learned all this from him.

In this respect, you say somewhere that the gods too must incarnate to become fully conscious.

Yes, because....

How is this possible? Aren't the gods already fully conscious?!

No, they have no psychic being, so that whole side of life does not exist for them.

In all the traditions here in India (and in other countries and other religions as well), most of the time these gods behave impossibly! This is simply because they have no psychic being. The psychic being is the one thing belonging specifically to terrestrial life; it has been given as a grace... to repair, to undo what had been done.

Yes, but aren't the gods conscious of the Divine?

Listen, mon petit, they are conscious of their own divinity, and of that above all!

They are connected with the Divine, yes, but I know from experience that they haven't the faintest notion of what *surrender* is!

I had a VERY interesting experience – it was last year or the year before, I don't recall, but after I

¹⁹⁹Devotion, love for the Divine.

retired to my room upstairs....²⁰⁰ You know that during *pujas* these goddesses come all the time – they don't enter the body and tie themselves to it, but they do come and manifest. Well, this time – I think it must have been for last year's puja – Durga came (she always arrives a few days in advance and remains in the atmosphere; she is present, like this – *gesture as if Durga were walking up and down with Mother*). I was in touch with her during my meditations upstairs, and this new Power in the body was in me then as it is in me now, and... (how to put it?) I made her participate in this concept of *surrender*. *What* an experience she had, *mon petit!* An extraordinary experience of the joy of being connected with That. And she declared, 'From now on, I am a *bhakta* of the Lord.'

It was beautiful.

This formidable Power, you see – a universal Power, an eternal and formidable Power – well, she had never had such an experience before, she had only experienced her OWN power. She was used to receiving and obeying Commands, but in an automatic way. Then all at once, she felt the ECSTASY of being a conscious instrument.

Truly... it was truly beautiful.

I knew how it was with her because I remember the days when Sri Aurobindo was here and I used to go downstairs to give meditations to the people assembled in the hall. There's a ledge above the pillars there, where all the gods used to sit – Shiva, Krishna, Lakshmi, the Trimurti, all of them – the little ones, the big ones, they all used to come regularly, every day, to attend these meditations. It was a lovely sight. But they didn't have this kind of adoration for the Supreme. They had no use for that concept – each one, in his own mode of being, was fully aware of his own eternal divinity; and each one knew as well that he could represent all the others (such was the basis of popular worship,²⁰¹ and they knew it). They felt they were a kind of community, but they had none of those qualities that the psychic life gives: no deep love, no deep sympathy, no sense of union. They had only the sense of their OWN divinity. They had certain very particular movements, but not this adoration for the Supreme nor the feeling of being instruments: they felt they were representing the Supreme, and so each one was perfectly satisfied with his particular representation.

Except for Krishna.... In 1926, I had begun a sort of overmental creation, that is, I had brought the *Overmind* down into matter, here on earth (miracles and all kinds of things were beginning to happen). I asked all these gods to incarnate, to identify themselves with a body (some of them absolutely refused). Well, with my very own eyes I saw Krishna, who had always been in rapport with Sri Aurobindo, consent to come down into his body. It was on November 24th, and it was the beginning of 'Mother.'²⁰²

Yes, in fact I wanted to ask you what this realization of 1926 was.

It was this: Krishna consented to descend into Sri Aurobindo's body – to be FIXED there; there is a great difference, you understand, between incarnating, being fixed in a body, and simply acting as an influence that comes and goes and moves about. The gods are always moving about, and it's plain that

200After 1958.

201Each devotee of a particular cult knows perfectly well that his god is simply one way of representing something that is One.

202From 1926, Sri Aurobindo officially introduced Mother to the disciples as the 'Mother'; previously he often called her 'Mirra.'

we ourselves, in our inner beings, come and go and act in a hundred or a thousand places at once. There is a difference between just coming occasionally and accepting to be permanently tied to a body – between a permanent influence and a permanent presence.

These things have to be experienced.

But in what sense did this realization mark a turning point in Sri Aurobindo's sadhana?

No, the phenomenon was important FOR THE CREATION; he himself was rather indifferent to it. But I did tell him about it.

It was at that time that he decided to stop dealing with people and retire to his room. So he called everyone together for one last meeting. Before then, he used to go out on the verandah every day to meet and talk with all who came to see him (this is the origin of the famous 'Talks with Sri Aurobindo'²⁰³ ... – *Mother is about to say something severe, then reconsiders – anyway...*) I was living in the inner rooms and seeing no one; he was going out onto the verandah, seeing everyone, receiving people, speaking, discussing – I saw him only when he came back inside.

After a while, I too began having meditations with people. I had begun a sort of 'overmental creation,' to make each god descend into a being – there was an extraordinary upward curve! Well, I was in contact with these beings and I told Krishna (because I was always seeing him around Sri Aurobindo), 'This is all very fine, but what I want now is a creation on earth – you must incarnate.' He said 'Yes.' Then I saw him – I saw him with my own eyes (inner eyes, of course), join himself to Sri Aurobindo.

Then I went into Sri Aurobindo's room and told him, 'Here's what I have seen.' 'Yes, I know!' he replied (*Mother laughs*) 'That's fine; I have decided to retire to my room, and you will take charge of the people. You take charge.' (There were about thirty people at the time.) Then he called everyone together for one last meeting. He sat down, had me sit next to him, and said, 'I called you here to tell you that, as of today, I am withdrawing for purposes of sadhana, and Mother will now take charge of everyone; you should address yourselves to her; she will represent me and she will do all the work.' (He hadn't mentioned this to me! – *Mother bursts into laughter*)

These people had always been very intimate with Sri Aurobindo, so they asked: 'Why, why, Why?' He replied, 'It will be explained to you.' I had no intention of explaining anything, and I left the room with him, but Datta began speaking. (She was an Englishwoman who had left Europe with me; she stayed here until her death – a person who received 'inspirations.') She said she felt Sri Aurobindo speaking through her and she explained everything: that Krishna had incarnated and that Sri Aurobindo was now going to do an intensive sadhana for the descent of the Supermind; that it meant Krishna's adherence to the Supramental Descent upon earth and that, as Sri Aurobindo would now be too occupied to deal with people, he had put me in charge and I would be doing all the work.

This was in 1926.

It was only... (how can I put it?) a participation from Krishna. It made no difference for Sri Aurobindo personally: it was a formation from the past that accepted to participate in the present creation, nothing more. It was a descent of the Supreme, from... some time back, now consenting to participate in the new manifestation.

Shiva, on the other hand, refused. 'No,' he said, 'I will come only when you have finished your work. I will not come into the world as it is now, but I am ready to help.' He was standing in my room that day, so tall (*laughing*) that his head touched the ceiling! He was bathed in his own special light, a

²⁰³*Evening Talks*, noted by A.B. Purani.

play of red and gold... magnificent! Just as he is when he manifests his supreme consciousness – a formidable being! So I stood up and... (I too must have become quite tall, because my head was resting on his shoulder, just slightly below his head) then he told me, ‘No, I’m not tying myself to a body, but I will give you ANYTHING you want.’ The only thing I said (it was all done wordlessly, of course) was: ‘I want to be rid of the physical ego.’

Well, *mon petit (laughing)*, it happened! It was extraordinary!... After a while, I went to find Sri Aurobindo and said, ‘See what has happened! I have a funny sensation (*Mother laughs*) of the cells no longer being clustered together! They’re going to scatter! He looked at me, smiled and said, *Not yet*. And the effect vanished.

But Shiva had indeed given me what I wanted!

Not yet, Sri Aurobindo said.

No, the time wasn’t ripe. It was too early, much too early.

(silence)

I had it two years ago.²⁰⁴ But now there is something else – things are different now.

So, I still haven’t answered your questions.

Oh, yes, you’ve answered all sorts of questions!



August 5, 1961

(Mother gives Satprem some flowers.)

This is Skill in Works.²⁰⁵

And Mahalakshmi,²⁰⁶ which means success.

Tomorrow I’m going downstairs.

Oh, yes?

²⁰⁴Again, the dissolution of the physical ego.

²⁰⁵Phlox.

²⁰⁶*Nymphaea* (Water Lily), pure white with golden center.

You didn't know? Tomorrow is Sunday, I'm distributing saris and napkins.

So, mon petit, do you have any questions?

*Not many more. Some small details.*²⁰⁷

Could you hand me a fan? The mosquitoes are a nuisance. Well then?

First of all, in the 'Questions and Answers' you speak of the 'reversal of consciousness.' Is this synonymous with the psychic realization? Because in one Conversation you connect the two things: the reversal of consciousness and the discovery of the psychic being.

It's the result of this discovery. In fact, it's the result of union with the psychic being.

Another detail. In several places, Sri Aurobindo speaks of the 'circumconscient' or 'environmental consciousness' through which we enter into contact with the external world. Is this the same as the 'subtle physical,' the subtle envelope? What is this circumconscient?

It's the encircling consciousness. Isn't it called the 'milieu' in French?

No, the milieu isn't personal.

Does he speak of it as being something personal?

Yes, there is subconscient, conscient, subliminal and circumconscient.

Oh!

Perhaps I should bring you the passage where he speaks about it.

Yes, because I don't quite understand.

You see, the subtle physical extends a long way beyond the body.

Then comes what Theon called the 'nervous sub-level,' which lies between this subtle physical and the vital. And it acts as a protection: if it is stable, harmonious and strong, it protects you – it protects you even physically – from contagious diseases, for instance, and even from accidents. I experienced it when I was living at Val-de-Grâce. It was the year I resolved to attain union with the psychic being and I was concentrated on this from morning to night and night to morning. Every day I spent some time in the Luxembourg Gardens. They were right near the house, but to get there I had to go all the way down Rue du Val-de-Grâce and cross Boulevard Saint Michel, where there were streetcars, automobiles, buses – the whole circus. I would remain in my concentration the whole time, and once, while crossing the boulevard, I felt a shock about this far from my body [slightly more than arm's length], so spontaneously I jumped back – just enough for the streetcar to pass by. I hadn't heard anything; I was totally absorbed, and without that warning I would surely have been run over; instead, I jumped back just in time, and the streetcar sped by. I understood then that this nervous sheath was something entirely concrete, because what I had felt was not an idea of danger but a shock – a material SHOCK.

So it's true that as long as this envelope is strong and undamaged, you are protected. But for instance, if you are over-tired or worried or flustered – anything that brings disorder into the

²⁰⁷For the preparation of Satprem's book on Sri Aurobindo.

atmosphere seems to make holes in this envelope, and all kinds of things can enter.

Perhaps this is what Sri Aurobindo is speaking of.

But isn't this the subtle physical?

It surrounds the subtle physical.

First there is the subtle physical and then the circumconscient?

Yes; the subtle physical is visible – visible. You have seen heat vibrations when it's very hot, haven't you? That's the subtle physical – one form of it.

The subtle physical is right here (*gesture on the surface of the skin*). Some people are sensitive in the subtle physical; you move your hand near them and they feel it immediately. Others don't even notice – it depends on the subtle physical's sensitivity. And the circumconscient surrounds it like an envelope. If there are no tears in it, this envelope is a magnificent protection.²⁰⁸ And it's not dependent on any spiritual or intellectual rationale, but on a harmony with Nature and life, a kind of stability in the material being. People with strong envelopes are almost always in good health and succeed in what they do. It isn't something mental – when they do a work it comes out nicely, if they want to meet someone, they meet him. Things of this nature.

The circumconscient must be that.

Is it through this envelope that we come into contact with others?

Ah, yes, I should think so! When you are sensitive, *mon petit*, it becomes almost unbearable to be in a tightly packed crowd – it's all mixed up, and it's horrible. There is a suffocating sense of intrusion, as if you were inside things you hadn't chosen to have near you!

Is that all?

Another detail. Is there a difference between sleep and death, or are they the same?

Death and sleep? Oh, no!

They are not the same.

No.... Are you thinking of Buddha? (Ah, I thought of this two or three days ago; it came suddenly and I wondered why!) I remembered that before Buddha left his home, he passed through the rooms of the palace and saw his wife and parents sleeping and it felt to him as though they were dead. That's where we hear of sleep being like death.

But isn't it like death?... When you are asleep, you aren't in your body: everything else goes out

208We are not sure, finally, if this envelope and the circumconscient are one and the same thing, but this is how Sri Aurobindo speaks of it: 'The first thing one sees when one has broken the barrier is the vital-physical body. It is around the physical body and with the physical it forms as it were the "nervous envelope." The force of a disease has to break through it to reach the body – except for the attacks on the most material parts. You can then feel the disease coming and also feel in the nervous envelope the part of the body which it is going to, or intending to, attack because what is in the nervous envelope has a material counterpart in the body. Thus it is the vital-physical which is first attacked and then the force takes the form of a disease in the system. I had myself the experience of fever all around the body.' (A.B. Purani, *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Volume I, p. 232)

just as it does at the time of death, doesn't it?

Oh, no! Not at all. No. The cataleptic state of trance is like death, yes, except for the link that remains – only a link remains, but otherwise one has entirely gone out. Actually, the body becomes cataleptic only when one has entirely gone out; otherwise everything that is most material in the vital remains.

I mean, aren't the places you go to in sleep the same as the ones you go to in death?

No, no, no. Most of the time in sleep, with very few exceptions, one is in contact with all that rises up from the subconscious: a cerebral subconscious, an emotive subconscious, a material subconscious; this is what produces ninety-nine percent of the dreams people have. Sometimes – usually – the mind goes wandering, but ninety-nine and a half percent of the time, one remembers nothing when it returns, because the link is not properly established.

The purpose of sleep is to re-establish contact with the consciousness of *Sachchidananda*. But I don't think one person in a hundred does so! They enter into unconsciousness far more than into *Sachchidananda*.

Yet no two sleeps are the same, mon petit! And it's the same with deaths, no two are the same. But sleep and death are different because... they are different STATES. As long as you have a body, you are not in the same state as when you are 'dead.' There is a period of seven days after the doctors declare you 'dead' when you are still in an intermediary state; but the actual state of death itself is completely different BECAUSE there is no longer this physical base.

Once when I was at Tlemcen with Theon (this happened twice, but I'm not sure about the second time because I was alone), my body was in a cataleptic state and I was in conscious trance.... It was a peculiar kind of catalepsy in the sense that my body could speak, though very slowly – Theon had taught me how to do it. But this is because the 'life of the form' always remains (this is what takes seven days to leave the body) and it can even be trained to make the body move – the being is no longer there, but the life of the form can make the body move (in any case, utter words). However, this state is not without danger, the proof being that while I was working in trance, for some reason or other (which I no longer remember, but obviously due to some negligence on the part of Theon who was there to watch over me), the cord – I don't know what to call it – went snap! The link was cut, malevolently,²⁰⁹ and when it was time and I wanted to return, I could no longer re-enter my body. But I was still able to warn him: 'The cord is cut.' Then he used his power and knowledge to help me come back – but it was no joke! It was very difficult.²¹⁰ And this is when I had the experience of the two different states, because the part that had gone out was now without the body's support – the link was cut. Then I knew. Of course, I was in a special state; I was doing a fully conscious work with all the vital power, and I was in control not only of my surroundings but.... You see, what happens is a kind of reversal of consciousness: you begin to belong to another world; you feel this quite distinctly. Theon

²⁰⁹Through Theon's malevolence, in fact.

²¹⁰Satprem remembers that a few years earlier Mother had told him about the circumstances of this incident: during her work in trance, Mother discovered the location of the 'mantra of life' – the mantra that has the power to create life (and to withdraw it, as well). Theon, an incarnation of the Asura of Death, was of course quite interested and told Mother to repeat this mantra to him. Mother refused. Theon became violently angry and the link was cut (the link that connected Mother to her body). When he realized the catastrophe his anger had caused, Theon grew afraid (for he knew who Mother was) and he then, as Mother recounts, made use of all his power to help her re-enter her body. Later, Mother gave this mantra to Sri Aurobindo... who let it quietly sink into oblivion. For it is not through a mantra that the secret of life (or death) is to be mastered, but through knowledge of the true Power – in other words, ultimately, knowledge of the reality of Matter and the mechanism of death: it is the whole cellular yoga of Sri Aurobindo and Mother.

instantly told me to concentrate (I was finding it all interesting – Mother laughs – I was making experiments and getting ready to go wandering off, but he was terribly scared that I would die on him!). He begged me to concentrate, so I concentrated on my body.

When I re-entered, it hurt terribly, terribly – an excruciating pain, like plunging into a hell.

Into a...?

Into a hell (*Mother laughs*).

It was frightful. It doesn't last long.

He made me drink half a glass of cognac (he always made me take some every day after the trance because I would work in trance for more than an hour, which is generally a forbidden practice). Still, I am quite sure that with anybody but me and him, this would have been the end. I would not have reentered.

So I know a little bit, even in my outermost consciousness. A little bit, that's all.

No, sleep is something else. Yes, something else. It's more like a relapse into Inconscience – a sort of invasion of *tamas*.²¹¹

We all know, of course, that the Divine Consciousness is there in the depths of the Inconscient; but even so, sleep appears to be a fall, and there are people who fall almost completely back into the Inconscient and come out of their sleep far duller than when they entered it. But for some reason, probably due to the necessities of the Work, I have never to my knowledge had a fully unconscious sleep.

There was another thing (laughing): even as a young child, I would all of a sudden, right in the middle of an action or a sentence or anything at all, go into trance – and nobody knew what it was! They would all think I had gone to sleep! But I remained conscious, with an arm raised or in the middle of a word – and poof! No one there (*Mother laughs*). No one there outwardly, but inwardly quite an intense, interesting experience. That used to happen to me even when I was very young.

I remember once (I must have been ten or twelve years old at the time), there was a luncheon at my parents' house for a dozen or so people, all decked out in their Sunday best – they were family but all the same it was a 'luncheon' and there was a certain protocol; in short, one had to behave properly. I was at one end of the table next to a first-cousin of mine who later became director of the Louvre for a while (he had an artistic intelligence, a rather capable young man). So there we were, and I remember I was observing something rather interesting in his atmosphere (mind you, although the faculties were already there, I knew nothing about occult things; if someone had spoken to me of 'auras' and all that... I knew nothing). I was observing a kind of sensation I had felt in his atmosphere and then, just as I was putting the fork into my mouth, I took off! What a scolding I got! I was told that if I didn't know how to behave, I shouldn't come to the table! (*Mother goes into peals of laughter*)

It was during this period that I used to go out of my body every night and do the work I've spoken of in *Prayers and Meditations* (I only mentioned it in passing).²¹² Every night at the same hour, when the whole house was very quiet, I would go out of my body and have all kinds of experiences. And then my body gradually became a sleepwalker (that is, the consciousness of the form became more and more conscious, while the link remained very solidly established). I got into the habit of getting up –

²¹¹*Tamas*: inertia, obscurity.

²¹²February 22, 1914.

but not like an ordinary sleepwalker: I would get up, open my desk, take out a piece of paper and write... poems. Yes, poems – I, who had nothing of the poet in me! I would jot things down, then very consciously put everything back into the drawer, lock everything up again very carefully and go back to bed. One night, for some reason or other, I forgot and left it open. My mother came in (in France the windows are covered with heavy curtains and in the morning my mother would come in and violently throw open the curtains, waking me up, brrrr!, without any warning; but I was used to it and would already be prepared to wake up – otherwise it would have been most unpleasant!). Anyway, my mother came in, calling me with unquestionable authority, and then she found the open desk and the piece of paper: ‘What’s that?!’ She grabbed it. ‘What have you been up to?’ I don’t know what I replied, but she went to the doctor: ‘My daughter has become a sleepwalker! You have to give her a drug.’

It wasn’t easy.

I remember once.... She scolded me quite often (but it was very good, a very good lesson), she scolded me very, very often – for things I hadn’t even done! Once she came down on me for something I had done but which she hadn’t understood (I had done it with the best of intentions); I had given something to someone without her permission, and she reproached me for it as though it were a crime! At first I stiffened and said, ‘I didn’t do it.’ She started to say I was lying. Then all at once, mutely, I looked at her and felt... I felt all this human misery and all this human falsehood, and soundlessly the tears began to fall. ‘What! Now you’re crying!’ she said. At that, I became a bit *fed up*. ‘Oh, I’m not crying about myself,’ I told her, ‘but about the world’s misery.’

‘You’re going mad!’ She really believed I was going mad.

It was quite funny.

It’s strange.... I say ‘strange’ because it’s due to her that I took birth in this body, that it was chosen. When she was very young she had a great aspiration. She was exactly twenty years older than I; she was twenty when I was born and I was her third child. The first was a son who died in Turkey when he was two months old, I think – they vaccinated him against smallpox and poisoned him, (*laughing*) god knows what it means! He died of convulsions. Next was my brother who was born in Egypt, at Alexandria, and then me, born in Paris when she was exactly twenty years old. At that time (especially since the death of her first child) she had a kind of GREAT aspiration in her: her children had to be ‘the best in the world.’ It wasn’t an ambition, I don’t know what it was. And what a will she had! MY mother had a formidable will, like an iron bar, utterly impervious to all outside influence. Once she had made up her mind, it was made up; even if someone had been dying before her eyes, she wouldn’t have budged! And she decided: ‘My children will be the best in the world.’

One thing she did have was a sense of progress; she felt that the world was progressing and we had to be better than anything that had come before – and that was sufficient.

It’s strange, but that was sufficient.

Did I tell you what happened to my brother? No?... My brother was a terribly serious boy, and frightfully studious – oh, it was awful! But he also had a very strong character, a strong will, and there was something interesting about him. When he was studying to enter the Polytechnique, I studied with him – it interested me. We were very intimate (there were only eighteen months between us). He was quite violent, but with an extraordinary strength of character. He almost killed me three times,²¹³ but when my mother told him, ‘Next time, you will kill her,’ he resolved that it wouldn’t happen again –

213On another occasion, Mother told Sujata more about these three times her brother almost killed her: ‘One day we were playing croquet, and either because he got beaten or for some other reason, he flew into a rage and struck me hard with his Mallet; fortunately I escaped with only a slight scratch. Another time, we were sitting in a room and he threw a big chair towards me – I ducked just in time and the chair passed over my head. A third time, as we were descending from a carriage, he pushed me down under it; luckily the horse didn’t move.’

and it never did. But what I wanted to tell you is that one day when he was eighteen, just before the Polytechnique exams, as he was crossing the Seine (I think it was the *Pont des Arts*), suddenly in the middle of the bridge... he felt something descend into him with such force that he became immobilized, petrified; then, although he didn't exactly hear a voice, a very clear message came to him: 'If you want, you can become a god' – it was translated like that in his consciousness. He told me that it took hold of him entirely, immobilized him – a formidable and extremely luminous power: 'If you want, you can become a god.' Then, in the thick of the experience itself, he replied, 'No, I want to serve humanity.' And it was gone. Of course, he took great care to say nothing to my mother, but we were intimate enough for him to tell me about it. I told him, 'Well (*laughing*), what an idiot you are!'

That's the story.

At that moment he could have had a spiritual realization: he had the right stuff.

Three years later I had that experience – I've told you about it – of the Light piercing through me; I physically saw it enter into me. It was obviously the descent of a Being – not a past incarnation, but a Being from another plane. It was a golden light – the incarnation of a divine consciousness. Which proves that she succeeded for both her children.

But she...

She was down on her knees before my brother. My mother scorned all religious sentiments as weakness and superstition and she absolutely denied the invisible. 'It's all brain disease,' she would say! But she could say just as well, 'Oh, my Matteo is my God, he is my God.' The devil knows why, but in Alexandria she gave him the Italian name Matteo! And she truly treated him like a god. She left him only when he married, because then she really couldn't continue to follow him around any longer.

But what's interesting, for instance, is that when her father died she knew it; she saw him. She thought it was a dream – 'a stupid dream.' But he came to let her know he was dead and she saw him. 'It's nothing,' she said, 'a dream!' (*Mother laughs*)

When my grandmother died.... My grandmother had the occult sense. She had made her own fortune (a sizeable fortune) and had had five children, each one more extravagant than the other. She considered me the only sensible person in the family and she shared her secrets with me. 'You see,' she told me, 'these people are going to squander all my money!' She had a sixty year old son (she had married in Egypt at the age of fifteen, and had had this son when she was quite young). 'You see this boy, he goes out and visits impossible people! And then he starts playing cards and loses all my money!' I saw this 'boy,' I was there in the house when he came to her and said very politely, 'Good-bye, mother, I'm going out to so-and-so's house.' 'Ah, please don't waste all my money, and take an overcoat – it's getting chilly at night.' Sixty years old! It was comical.... But to return to my story, after my grandmother died (I took a lot of care over her), she came to my mother (my mother was with her when she died; they embalmed her – she had gotten it into her head that she wanted to be burned, and since she died at Nice they had to embalm her so she could be burned in Paris). I was in Paris. My mother arrived with the body and told me, 'Just imagine, I'm constantly seeing her! And what's more, she gives me advice! "Don't waste your money!" she tells me.' 'Well, she's right, one must be careful,' I replied. 'But look here, she's dead! Dead! How can she talk to me! She's dead, I tell you, and quite dead at that!' I said to her, 'What does it mean, to die?'

It was all very funny.

There was another reason.... My father was wonderfully healthy and strong – well-balanced. He wasn't very tall, but stocky. He did all his studies in Austria (at that time French was widely spoken in Austria, but he knew German, he knew English, Italian, Turkish...), and there he had learned to ride horses in an extraordinary manner: he was so strong that he could bring a horse to the ground simply by pressing his knees. He could break anything at all with a blow of his fist, even one of those big silver

five-franc pieces they had in those days – one blow and it was broken in two. Curiously enough, he looked Russian. I don't know why. They used to call him Barine. What an equilibrium – an extraordinary physical poise! And not only did this man know all those languages, but I never saw such a brain for arithmetic. Never. He made a game of calculations – not the slightest effort – calculations with hundreds of digits! And on top of it, he loved birds. He had a room to himself in our apartment (because my mother could never much tolerate him), he had his separate room, and in it he kept a big cage... full of canaries! During the day he would close the windows and let all the canaries loose....

And could he tell stories! I think he read every novel available, all the stories he could find – extraordinary adventure stories, for he loved adventures. When we were kids he used to let us come into his room very early in the morning and, while still sitting in bed, tell us stories from the books he had read – but he told them as if they were his own, as if he'd had extraordinary adventures with outlaws, with wild animals.... Every story he picked up he told as his own. We enjoyed it tremendously!

But one day when my brother had disobeyed him (Matteo must have been ten or eleven, and I perhaps nine or ten), I came into the dining room and saw my father sitting on a sofa with my brother across his knees; he had pulled down his trousers and was spanking him, I don't know what for. It wasn't a very serious spanking, but still.... I came in, drew myself up to my full height and said, 'Papa, if you ever do that again, I am leaving this house!' And with such authority, mon petit! He stopped and never did it again.

Some very funny stories!

Anyway, I think that's enough for now. How I have chatted away! You always make me chat!



August 8, 1961

X has written expressing his 'gratitude for all the revelations OF THE SUPREME' he has had during his meditations with me.

This is something new he has accepted, because the Supreme doesn't usually appear in tantrism – they are in contact with the Shakti and don't bother about the Supreme. But here he has come to accept it.

He has tried very hard to understand. But his spiritual conception has remained like this: one can – one MUST – master life, and in life, to some extent, a certain adaptation to the higher forces can be achieved; but there is no question of transformation: the physical world remains the physical world. It can be a little better organized, more harmonious, but there is no question of something else, of divinization – no question at all.

And this is probably why there are things he can't make out in his contact with me, because he simply doesn't understand. For example, these physical disorders baffle him, they seem incompatible with my realization. As long as the question of transformation does not come into play, the realization I had was sufficient to establish a kind of very stable order – reaction against the transformative will is what causes these disorders. And this he does not understand – to him something seems not to be

functioning properly. He must feel a contradiction between certain things he perceives in my consciousness and my contact with the material world. ‘This being this,’ he thinks, ‘that ought to be like that; so why...?’ He doesn’t understand.²¹⁴



August 11, 1961

(Regarding the book on Sri Aurobindo that Satprem was preparing to write.)

Again this morning, between 3 and 4 o’clock, Sri Aurobindo seemed to be showing me around the world of expression. I see a host of people I don’t know (and some I do). There are immense rooms – not libraries (there are no books) yet everything is there, arranged and organized, in great open roofless rooms. And I walk along with Sri Aurobindo as he passes from one person to another, one group to another, one place to another, one room to another – and he coordinates it all. To some he says a few words; others show him things. And it’s all for the *background* of your book, for it to be filled with all this – not explicitly, but potentially – for the Force to be there.

And the clarity! It is limpid-an atmosphere so transparent, so limpid, so clear! There are people of today, people of times past, people of forever. They are like living intelligences gathering together the earth’s memories. Day after day, day after day, Sri Aurobindo has been showing this to me.

* * *

(A little later Mother begins to sign some 300 books. She remarks:)

I have a convenient signature....



214X’s astonishment raises an extremely important point, drawing the exact dividing line between all the traditional yogas and the new yoga of Sri Aurobindo and Mother. To a tantric, for example, it seems unthinkable that Mother, with a consciousness so powerful as to scoff at the laws of nature and command the elements (if she wishes), could be subjected to absurd head colds or an eye hemorrhage or even more serious disorders. For him, it is enough to simply lift a finger and emit a vibration which instantly muzzles the disorder – yes, of course, but for Mother it is not a question of ‘curing’ a head cold by imposing a higher POWER on Matter, but of getting down to the cellular root and curing or transforming the source of the evil (which causes death as easily as head colds, for it is the same root of disorder). It is not a question of imposing oneself on Matter through a ‘power,’ but of transforming Matter. Such is the yoga of the cells.

Your signature takes wing!

Oh, yes – it's a bird!

It's the Bird of Grace descending from heaven. The dot at the end is very important. The dot is the seeing consciousness: the eye. There's a tail, a wing, another wing, and the eye-the seeing consciousness.

Mind you, I didn't think of it in advance! The awareness came later – I looked and said, 'Ah!...

* * *

Later

What shall we do?

There's some work if you like.

Oh no, nothing doing! What's marvelous is that I haven't a single idea in my head – nothing. Not 'idea'; I never have many of them! (*laughing*) No words, mon petit, nothing. I have two of T.'s notebooks here – I read them, said 'Ah!', and put them away. They've already stayed there for two weeks or... I don't know how long. NOTHING, completely *blank*. But on the lowest plane, some interesting things: suddenly (not from time to time, but all the time, or almost all the time), all the body's cells suddenly seem to participate in a movement of force, a sort of circular movement containing all the vibrations – physical vibrations – right from the most material sensation (*Mother touches the skin of her hands*) to all the feelings of strength, power and comprehension (especially from an active standpoint, the standpoint of actions, movements, influences). It's not at all limited to the body; it's like that, like that, like that... (*Mother makes a gesture stretching to infinity*). It has neither beginning nor end. The body itself is starting to feel how Energy behaves.

It's very interesting.

At any moment, if I just pay a little attention, it's like that. And then the body has no more limits – more and more, they seem to disappear.

And for the least little things, the least little things; and... all taking place within the Supreme, with the ecstasy of His Presence. For the tiniest, tiniest little things: how the Force behaves when you're arranging objects, when you're moving something... for everything, for food, for....

And it is strangely indifferent to any scale of values or circumstances. Sometimes when I am meeting and speaking with someone, when I am seeing someone, this great universal Light of a perfect whiteness comes streaming in. Well, I must admit, this also occurs for the merest trifles, when I'm tasting some cheese somebody has sent me, for example, or arranging objects in a cupboard, or deciding what things I'm going to use or have to organize. It doesn't come in the same massive way as when it comes directly. When it comes directly it's a mass, passing through and going out like that (*Mother shows the Light descending directly from above like a mass and passing through her head in order to spread out everywhere*). In these small things it's pulverized, as though it came through an atomizer, but it's that same sparkling white light, utterly white. Then, whatever I'm doing, there's a sensation in the body that's like lying on a sea of something very soft, very intimate, very deep and eternal, immutable: the Lord. And all the body's cells are joyously saying, 'You, You, You, You....'

That's my present condition.

The moments of forgetting are brief – plunk! A knock from someone or something – the shock of

the ordinary vibration. It's unimportant, you turn your head and push it away. But I don't want that either, it [the movement of rejection] must go away entirely.

From a practical, concrete, effective standpoint, there are some results. Even when they don't write, people are beginning to receive my response very clearly, very precisely. People I don't know at all have written, and they receive my reply even before I write back (they tell this to intermediaries). I had another example only today. It's having results.

The earth is tiny.

(Mother gets up to leave)

That's all, petit. Once again I've bored you with my stories instead of speaking with you about your book....

Ah, no!

Perhaps it's better I don't talk to you about it....

You're the one who knows!

Because this kind of creative Power coming from on high, from up, up, up on the highest heights, beyond all forms of manifestation, mon petit, it's like... something tremendous... held behind a floodgate. And sometimes (*Mother smiles*) there's a temptation to open the floodgate a little.

When it pours out... that will be something.

I'm starting to say stupidities – I'm leaving!



August 18, 1961

(Satprem began his book on Sri Aurobindo on August 15.)

Have you been working?

Yes.

Ah!... Good.

Here (*Mother gives some flowers*), this is the Generosity²¹⁵ of inspiration, and this is the crowning

²¹⁵Balsam. Also called 'Impatiens' because of the fruit's irritability: the instant it is touched, it explodes and projects its seeds far and wide.

achievement [Divine Love²¹⁶].

So, petit, everything all right?... Yes?

A little difficult.

That (*pointing to the forehead*) must remain silent....

Well, yes.

... Let it come from here (*pointing to the heart*).

I am fully confident.

Even if there is some trouble with the continuity (at times you do have to link sections together), it will work out on the second reading. I am fully confident.

Your health is all right?

Yes, yes, it's all right.

Good.

People aren't sending me any more cheese!²¹⁷

I still have some, you know.

Oh! How can that be?

Sometimes I forget to eat it, so it's left over.

Well, so much the better, because I don't have much left!

I have quite a supply right now.

You better cut it up in smaller pieces. In the meantime, I'll send you some more.

But Mother, I still have enough for at least a week!

Ah, all right. That should last until the next time I see you. So, petit, you have nothing to ask?

No, Mother....

Then everything is going all right.

It's not flowing well.

That doesn't matter. Don't worry – it will come. I don't even need to ask you: I'm sure of it.

²¹⁶*Punica granatum* (Pomegranate flower).

²¹⁷Each time they met, Mother used to give Satprem a little bit of food: cheese, dried soups, etc.

It's not the ideas – I can feel and see the ideas – it's rather the expression. There is something slightly frozen.

Ah!...

There's a thickness....

Warmth is missing.

A thickness that hinders the flow.

It must come from here (*the heart*). That's what I was told: it must come from here. Not there (*the head*), not even there (*above the head*); HERE (*the heart*). Usually expression comes from above, but it's not there: it is here (*same gesture to the heart*). It's a spontaneous little something coming all at once....

(silence)

Yesterday I had an experience. It didn't last long, no more than an hour or an hour and a half, but it was interesting.... Experiences always take place here for me now, on the completely material plane. Well, in action, in relation to the world and things (it was quite a general feeling, in any case terrestrial – not universal, terrestrial), there was no more center. From the standpoint of sensations and reactions, exchanges – no more center. Everything was dispersed like that, everywhere. There was only ONE center, the highest Center (highest or deepest) – the sole Center. All sensations, all contacts, all exchanges – everything was like that.

It was rather interesting in that I wasn't expecting it; it came suddenly when I was walking in my room in the evening – the feeling... not positively that the body no longer existed, since it kept walking, but that there was no more center. I can't put it any other way – there was no more center. There was only one Center. It was all, all the same thing, and from the absolutely material standpoint, the standpoint of sensations – material sensations, exchanges, vibrations – everything. At one point it even became so strong that something laughed and said, 'Ah! So that's how to no longer exist!'

It was very interesting. However, the experience could not last because... after a while I wasn't alone anymore. Actually, it was dinner time. Not that I couldn't eat in that state – it makes no difference (I can eat very easily through others, for instance: it has happened quite frequently that someone else eats and I am satisfied; there's no need to put anything inside, it's very convenient! These are experiments.) But this was... it was the almost total annihilation of the center. It didn't last because of the people (four, as always) bringing in dinner, serving the plates, etc. – their concentration weakened the experience: it faded. The feeling of 'I'm eating' returned a little – not 'I'! That notion disappeared a long time ago! Not my true 'I' – my true 'I' has been settled up above for a very long time, and it doesn't move from there. But 'this body is eating'; this body which has been put at the disposal of the work is eating (it didn't come in so many words and sentences, but still!). In short, the experience faded with the sensation of eating and I was unable to know its effect.

But I would like to know the effect it must have on the body's functioning. It would be interesting to know if the functioning becomes wholly harmonious or... what?... We will probably see. But the experience must last; it must last for at least one day, or even two or three – then the result would be interesting to see.

Well, petit....

Now your cheese is going to run out! (*Mother laughs merrily*)

If you have anything to ask, just write.

Oh, there's nothing.

No, if for some reason or other you need something, tell me – I'm not making a fixed rule, it's simply so as not to disturb you in your work.

Besides, it goes without saying that I am there [with you] quite consciously – and I am not alone!

There you are, petit.



August 25, 1961

(*Mother gives flowers*) This is Alchemy.²¹⁸ And here! (*Mother hands Satprem some cheese*)

I still have plenty, you know!

It doesn't matter, mon petit, this is the last of it. I may have one or two boxes left, but that's all.

How is the work going?

I don't know.

It doesn't matter.

You must know how it's going!

(*Mother laughs*) Yes! And I say: 'It doesn't matter if you don't say anything!' I knew you wouldn't! But it's going all right, it's all right.

Anyway, X has written to me (and to M. also), telling me he will be here on the 29th, but will have to leave on the 10th, so it won't be for very long – all because of various ceremonies....²¹⁹ He writes me that he's going to train someone to replace him for all these ceremonies so he can be freer to come here for longer periods. But to M. (the devil knows what M. wrote to him), he says something like, 'Yes, there is a very sorry situation in the Ashram and people's jealousy and envy are increasing more and more.' Yet nevertheless he feels so drawn by 'the Mother's' presence that he will come.

I admit I didn't like this letter. But I don't hold him responsible because.... When people tell him things, he believes them. God knows what story M. told him!

²¹⁸*Hymenocallis* (Spider Lily).

²¹⁹Tantric ceremonies in the temple of Parvati.

(silence)

Three or four years ago I had to make a little effort to meditate or give a meditation to someone in a very bad condition. But now... absolutely no more effort. No effort at all. And I don't notice a bit when X is having difficulty, not a bit. I prepare myself as usual before he comes and as soon as he arrives, all I have to do is call (although generally that's not necessary); I call, and then I become blissful. And I haven't found more difficulties in certain cases than in others – I DON'T FEEL THE RESISTANCE, neither in the atmosphere nor in people. The Force is imperative. That's why I was so astounded those other times when he began to say he needed at least ten minutes to put himself into meditation – it seemed fantastic to me! He said so himself, otherwise I would never have believed it.²²⁰

Well, we shall see.

What else, mon petit?

The book isn't progressing very quickly, you know.

It's not progressing quickly.... Did you begin at the beginning?

Yes.

Ah!... Did that work?... Yes, I know it did... I'm not asking you for a declaration!

I can't say that I'm satisfied.

Hmm!...

* * *

A little later:

Oh, again last night... some delightful things.

Nowadays I always spend a part of the night in the realm of expression, a realm where generally I never used to go at all. It's a very lovely place, very human in the sense that it's not a scene from Nature: there are huge rooms and great, highly intellectual arrangements; yet it's very lovely, with such a clear and limpid atmosphere – all in clear shades... (*Mother gives up trying to describe it*). Oh, it's so luminous and lovely, very well organized, as far as the eye can see; it seems as big as the earth. The rooms are roofless, just imagine! Huge roofless rooms flooded with light, and transparent partitions. And the people inside seem very, very aware – not a lot of people, but extremely studious and attentive, and they are creating arrangements of things. They must be people writing books. They are making compositions – oh, if you knew how lovely it was! It's as if they were taking colors and more or less geometrical forms and placing them in relation to one another. There are huge pigeonholes where everything is in order, and yet without doors, not closed up – wide open and still completely protected. An interesting place. I don't usually go there – I've gone maybe two or three times in my life, without paying much attention – but lately, because of this book you are writing, Sri Aurobindo is taking me there all the time.

²²⁰In fact, it was not X who said this, but one of his acolytes, N., who would later throw a great confusion into X's relations with both Mother and Satprem. The hunt for tantric powers was on.

And there are people with no country – he takes me to a place where the people have no country, no race, no special costume – they seem very universal. And they move around harmoniously, silently, as though they were gliding – and with precision, everything is extremely precise. Some of them have even shown me things: there were some lovely colored papers! But these colors are unearthly, somehow transparent. They were arranging it all, demonstrating and explaining to me how it has to be arranged to give the maximum effect.

I have seen you there several times. You were wearing something similar to what you are wearing now [dhoti]: not European – they wear the costume of no particular country. It's usually white, but not made of cloth. It's all on a VERY luminous, very orderly, very clear mental plane-no objects lying around, only things like sheets of paper, which seem to be ideas or compositions of ideas, but no clutter. It's vast, vast, so vast you can see no end to it! And up above it's wide open, and a light is constantly descending. What you walk on is a little more solid, but not much more. It's an interesting place.

I go there almost every night for half or three-quarters of an hour, and Sri Aurobindo shows it all to me. Some people are waiting for him – in certain corners everything is ready and waiting and when he comes they show him what they have done. Then he explains: a word, a gesture, not much, and then, ah! It takes a form. It's an interesting place. I am putting you in touch with it all the time, all the time, every day – it doesn't matter if you don't remember, it's not important....

(Satprem doesn't seem to agree)

After all, remembering is merely an amusement. I have come to the conclusion that it's amusing and personally satisfying but not necessary at all. I see that MOST Of My work is done – and done with great precision – without needing to be recorded here; it's quite unnecessary. I am fully conscious when I'm doing the work, but I would really rather not remember it.

That's all, petit.

You really don't need anything?

No, Mother, I have all I need.

Tell me if you need anything. You must take care of yourself while you're working.

I'm quite all right.

Good-bye, mon petit.



September

September 3, 1961

(The beginning of this conversation has unfortunately disappeared. It dealt with the book that Satprem was writing on Sri Aurobindo, and he spoke to Mother of his dream of writing automatically, without even needing to think, letting the writing flow along by itself.)

...You would like to carry thought into higher domains, beyond the province of thought itself!... This is something practically impossible.

You understand, if I were British and writing in English, I could try to do a book on Sri Aurobindo using 'Savitri' alone. With quotations from Savitri one can maintain a certain poetical rhythm, and this rhythm can generate an opening. But in French it isn't possible – how could it be translated?

Yes, that's what I mean-but even in English....

In English it should be possible. But after all, it's intended for the general public – Id better not drown them!

It's not so much a question of the reading public as a question of language. As for the readers... you know, at any level whatsoever it is possible to suddenly touch a soul, anywhere. The level doesn't matter, and fundamentally if one reaches one or two souls with a book like this, it's a fine result. It opens the way to people intellectually, and those who want to can follow along.

I don't think your book will hold any surprises for me when I have it! Sometimes I listen to whole sections of it. Last night it was almost as if you were reading the book to me – not exactly with words but... I woke up and Sri Aurobindo was there and – as though you had been reading something – he approved of it, saying, 'Yes, it's fine like that, *it's all right.*'

(silence)

There you are, mon petit.

One whole week to go without seeing each other.... We remain very close. Very close – you don't even need to feel it!

(Satprem makes a face)

...to feel it is a luxury. That will come later.

Good-bye.



September 10, 1961

(Concerning the tantric guru:)

Has A. spoken to you about this?... X told him that you were the bridge between him and me (he even spoke in English): 'Oh, Satprem was the bridge.' *(Mother smiles)* And a second later he added, 'But now we don't need it anymore!' *(Mother laughs merrily)* I was much amused!

* * *

(A little later, regarding the book on Sri Aurobindo:)

Anything one can write is so flat, so flat in comparison with what one perceives!

Yes, in comparison with Sri Aurobindo's contact (the vibration that comes from him, if you like), it always seems meager, always flat. Even the most... you know, spiritual experiences that have been described, experiences that others have had – well, even experiences that are stronger, clearer, more powerful, more complete than any of those seem... when you make contact with Sri Aurobindo, oh, how thin they all seem, so thin!

Besides, as a means of expression.... writing is hard labor, you know. It's not pleasant, it's not like composing music or painting.

No indeed!

Oh, let me tell you....

It's hard.

It's hard. I would rather have been a musician – it would have changed my life completely. I feel I have always lacked something to open up....

No. Perhaps....

I don't know, but Sri Aurobindo spoke of it at the end of the book on the Vedas, in the chapter on the origin of languages. He seems to be saying that it's better if one goes back to the origin of the vibrations. Ultimately, as a language grows more intellectual, it hardens and dries up. Perhaps when we had only sounds (the A's and the O's; the O's especially are very flexible, the whole gamut of O's), perhaps it was more... supple.

I feel this so often now. How to put it.... I always try not to talk – talking bothers me. Yes, it's a real nuisance. When I see someone, the first thing I do is to avoid talking. Then, when the Vibration comes, it's good; there is a sort of communication, and if the person is the least bit receptive, what comes is like a... it's subtler than music; it's a vibration bringing its own principle of harmony. But people usually get impatient after a while and, wanting something more 'concrete,' oblige me to talk. They

always insist on it. Then, being in a certain atmosphere, a certain vibration, I immediately feel something going like this (*gesture of a fall to another level*), and then hardening. Even when I babble (you see, the very effort of trying to be more subtle makes me babble), even my babblings (*laughing*)... become dry by comparison. There are all sorts of things that are so much fuller – full, packed with an inner richness – and as soon as this is put into words, oh!...

The night before last, around 3 in the morning, I was in a place where there were a lot of people from here (you were there), and I was trying to play some music, precisely in order to SAY something. There were three pianos there, which seemed to be interlocked into each other, so I leaned over sideways to get at one of the three and began playing on it. It was in a large hall with people seated at a distance, but you were just at my left alongside a young lady who was a symbol figure (that is, the vibration or impression I received from her and the relationship I had with her could be applied as well to four or five persons here: it was like relating to an amalgam – something that is very interesting and often happens to me). Anyway, I was leaning over one of the keyboards and trying... trying to work something out, to illustrate how ‘this’ would translate into ‘that.’ Finally I realized that playing half-standing, half-leaning was unnecessary acrobatics, because a grand piano was right there in front, so I sat down before it. Well, the most amusing part of it was that the keys (there were two keyboards) were all blue – like the marbled paper we are making now, all blue, and with every possible marbled effect. Black keys, white keys, high keys, low keys (all of them were the same width, quite wide, like this), all seemed to be coated – but it wasn’t paper – with this blue. Facing the piano I said to myself, ‘Well now, this can’t be played with physical eyes – it has to be played FROM ABOVE.’

While I was playing, I kept telling myself, ‘But this is what I’ve tried to do with music all my life – play on the blue keyboard!’

It was great fun, you know.

Suddenly, along came a SOUND! Not physical, but so complete, so full, as if... as if something exploded, like a.... I don’t know what, much more resounding than an orchestra – something exploding. It was overwhelming!

I was so sorry to have to get up. Because (*laughing*) I thought, ‘At least I would have heard something good for once!’ It was such an outburst of sound! So extraordinary and so powerful that.... But it was 4 o’clock and time to get up.

Maybe this is what you were thinking of – what you would like to express in your book. It occurred in a place similar to the realm of expression where, as I told you, I have frequently been going lately. It is very, very vast, very open, but this time there were no walls. No ceiling, no walls. There was only a kind of ground – very pale, luminous, vast and... very empty, empty. People were seated but I didn’t see any chairs. Only the pianos were visible, and they were quite odd: you could hardly see anything but the keyboards, which were sort of overlapping. In front was a grand piano, and over here was a somewhat bigger one – the one I had been leaning over sideways to play on – and then there was one turned to the other side. And then this grand piano, right in front – but with only the keyboard visible! ‘Well, why shouldn’t I be comfortable!’ I said to myself, and I sat down. Then everything became blue – great, blue notes. ‘How am I going to play?’ I wondered. I tried to play as usual and then: ‘It doesn’t work, it doesn’t work,’ I said. ‘Ah! It has to be played from above – it has to be played from above!’ So I place my hands on the keys, I concentrate... and brrff! It was like some... not violent, not loud and noisy, but – oh, overwhelming! Three, four – not notes: sounds, harmonies... I don’t really know what.

But this must be what you were thinking of, what you would like to use for your book.²²¹

221 Strangely enough, some years earlier, when Satprem was writing *L’Orpailleur*, Sujata had a vision in which she saw him typing, and from the typewriter came, not typewritten lines, but music!

Yes, I would certainly like to....

It will come. Ah, it will come!

It's time for me to leave now.

So there you are, petit; it will come.



September 16, 1961

(Satprem complains of his difficulties in writing the book on Sri Aurobindo. He says in particular that he has a feeling of being 'blocked')

I have asked Sri Aurobindo to help you.

You know, we are surrounded by complications, but there is always a place where it all opens out simple and straight – this is a fact of my experience. You go around in circles, seeking, working at it, and you feel stuck; then something in the inner attitude gives way, and all of a sudden it opens out – quite simply.

I have had this experience very often. So I have asked Sri Aurobindo to give it to you.

And he says repeatedly, insistently: *Be simple, be simple. Say simply what you feel. Be simple, be simple*, insistently. These are only words, but as a matter of fact, when he spoke these words it was like a path of light opening up, and everything became very simple: 'Just take one step after another, that's all we have to do!' – that's how it seemed to me.

It's curious, all the complications seemed to be there (*Mother touches her temples*), very complicated and very difficult to adjust; and then when he said, *Be simple* – how strange – it was like a light coming from his eyes, as if one had suddenly emerged into a garden of light.

It gave that impression – like a garden bathed in light.

Such great insistence on the simple thing: say simply what you see or what you know – simple, simple. A simplicity... it was altogether the impression of a joyous garden.

Be simple, be simple.

The complications are there (*same gesture*), it is hard and complicated – and then a door opens: *Be simple*.

As if there were too much mental tension: something here at the temples.

(silence)

I have to face a similar difficulty, mind you, although it's on another level. There is such a tremendous accumulation of people to see, things to do, questions to be resolved – everything. The accumulation is

So TIGHTLY packed – so compact! Too compact for the life – for the hours, the time, the forces – of an ordinary body. Yet behind it all, there is a sort of constant ‘active immobility,’ in the sense that the consciousness has the impression of being immobile, of being borne along on the stream of progress and evolution. But this immobility... If I should try to do what I have to do, you know, everything I have to do, well... it becomes impossible, things clog up, it gets painful. And here his answer is the same: *Be simple, be simple.*

This morning when I was ‘walking,’ the program of the day and the work ahead of me was so formidable that I felt it to be impossible. And yet simultaneously there was this... immobile inner POSITION in me; as soon as I stop my movement of formation and action, it becomes like a dance of joy: all the cells vibrating (there is a sort of vivacity, and an extraordinary music), all the cells vibrant with the joy of the Presence – the divine Presence. But when I see the outside world entering and attacking, well... this joy doesn’t exactly disappear, but it retreats. And the result is that I always feel like sitting down and keeping still – when I can do that it is marvelous. But of course, all the suggestions from outside come in: suggestions of helplessness and old age, of wear and tear, of diminishing power, all that – and I know positively that it’s false. But calm in the body is indispensable. Well, for me also Sri Aurobindo’s answer is always the same: *Be simple, be simple, very simple.*

And I know what he means: to deny entry to regimenting, organizing, prescriptive, judgmental thought – he wants none of all that. What he calls being simple is a joyous spontaneity; in action, in expression, in movement, in life – *be simple, be simple, be simple.* A joyous spontaneity. To rediscover in evolution that condition he calls divine, which was a spontaneous and happy condition. He wants us to rediscover that. And for days now he has been here telling me (and the same goes for your work): *Be simple, be simple, be simple.* And in his simplicity was a luminous joy.

A joyous spontaneity.

What’s terrible is this organizing mind. It’s terrible! It has us so convinced that we can’t do without it that it’s very difficult to resist. Indeed, it has convinced all humanity. The whole so-called elite of humanity has been convinced that nothing worthwhile can be achieved without this mental organizing power.

But Sri Aurobindo wants us to have the same simple joy as a blossoming rose: *Be simple, be simple, be simple.* And when I hear it or see it, it’s like a rivulet of golden light, like a fragrant garden – all, all, all is open. *Be simple.*

So you see, mon petit...

These last two or three days I have been constantly seeing this for you. Then this morning it came for me, because the accumulation of work has become so tremendous that I would need ten times more time than I have merely to bring things up to date. So there I was, feeling a bit cornered; there was even a force wanting me to stop in the midst of my walk and RELAX, and I was resisting it with all my will – until I realized I was doing something foolish. It was the same thing, he said the same thing for me. I relaxed – and immediately everything was fine.

Essentially, we live with too much tension, don’t we?

There you have it, mon petit, my message for the week.

What to do about it? Oh, that will come. But it’s true, we are always too tense – always. And I know that as long as we are controlled by that admirable mind, we feel that to relax means to fall into *tamas* and unconsciousness. All these old notions remain, prolonging themselves; and there’s something like the residue of one of those marvelous censors, telling you: ‘Be careful, *tamas*, *tamas*! Be careful, you are dozing off – very bad, very bad.’ And it’s idiotic, because *tamas* is neither joyous nor luminous, while this is an immediate joy and light.

* * *

A little later:

I am still unable to write a line, except when someone needs a reply; then it comes straight-away, without reflecting, a few lines – that's all right. But to read a question and then answer, oh! It's not lassitude, it's a refusal to budge.

Yes, but you are besieged by so many people who really don't...

Oh, mon petit, it's disgraceful.

Yes.

It's disgraceful.

I don't know, I only get echoes from Sujata, I don't really know what's happening, but I get the impression that a lot of your time is being uselessly taken up.

Oh, it's awful. Imagine, nowadays I go upstairs at 6:30 or 7 in the evening.

Well, yes, that's what Sujata told me. It isn't good.

It's awful. And WHY?

Sri Aurobindo says, in one of the letters quoted in *On Himself*, 'All the same, you would not expect us to spend all our time acting like the head of the family and reconciling all your stupid quarrels.....'

Yes!

'... and busying ourselves with your stupid affairs.' He is very frank, you know, he doesn't mince words; he states it very clearly: *It is idiotic*. That cheered me up! (*Mother laughs*)

Listen, here is a letter I have written to one of the teachers at the School (*Mother reads*): '*We are not here to do only a little better what the others do, we are here to do what the others CANNOT do, because they do not have even the idea that it can be done. We are here to open the way of the Future to children who belong to the Future. Anything else is not worth the trouble and not worthy of Sri Aurobindo's help.*'

That's what I wrote.

It is Sri Aurobindo, of course, because it came in English.

(Mother gets up to leave)

There you are, petit. Now if I can pass this vision along to you, your book will come easily.



September 23, 1961

I have the right to 150 pages! The publisher is giving me 150 pages in his collection.... Terrible.... But in this 'Sri Aurobindo,' you understand, I would like to make his whole poetic aspect stand out, that poetry which is like the Veda, like a revelation, so a bit of space is required: it can't be squeezed into a few lines, or reduced to a skeleton.

This analogy between the ancient form of spiritual revelations and *Savitri*, this blossoming into poetry of his prophetic revelation is... what could be called the most exceptional part of his work. And what is remarkable (I saw him do it) is that he changed *Savitri*: he went along changing it as his experience changed.

It is clearly the continuing expression of his experience.

There were whole sections he redid completely, which were like descriptions of what I had told him of my own experiences. Nolini said this. When I recently reread *Savitri*, some phrases were very familiar and I said to Nolini, 'How odd, these are almost my very words!' And he replied, 'But this has been changed, it was written differently; it has BECOME like this.' As the thing became more and more concrete for him, he changed it. The breath of revelatory prophecy is extraordinary! It has an extraordinary POWER!

What struck me is that he never wanted to write anything else. To write those articles for the *Bulletin*²²² was really a heavy sacrifice for him. He had said he would complete certain parts of *The Synthesis of Yoga*,²²³ but when he was asked to do so, he replied, 'No, I don't want to go down to that mental level!' *Savitri* comes from somewhere else altogether. And I think that *Savitri* is the most important thing to speak about.

From time to time I use a line from 'Savitri,' placing it in the book like an open window. That's all I can do.

* * *

(A little later, concerning Sri Aurobindo's biography, Mother remarks.)

All those details have always horrified me.

If anyone ever wanted to write about me, the first thing I would say is: NOT ONE WORD about my personal life – not a word.

²²²Mother had asked Sri Aurobindo to write something for the Ashram 'Bulletin.' It was later published as *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*.

²²³The third section, 'The Yoga of Self-Perfection,' which was never completed.



September 28, 1961

(Letter to Mother from Satprem)

Sweet Mother,

I feel completely abandoned to myself. This book is a real SUFFERING. I don't see where I am going, I am groping in all directions. Mother, do help me. Where lies the fault? I am suffering, you know. I would like to do it well, but it comes only in fits and starts, nothing coherent. Sometimes I feel quite incapable of carrying out this task properly.

What should I do?

Your child,
Signed: Satprem

(Mother's reply)

Thursday

Satprem, my dear child,

If you agree, here is what we could do: read aloud to me what you have written; perhaps seeing it in my consciousness will help you.

If you think this could be useful, I will see you on Saturday at 10 o'clock.

With all my tenderness,
Signed: Mother



September 30, 1961

(Mother gives Satprem a flower she has recently named 'Unostentatious Certitude': Platycodon grandiflorum)

This is the complete negation of ‘bluff.’ I find it very beautiful. When I saw this flower, it struck me as something very profound, very calm – absolutely sure, immobile. I don’t know why, but the longer I looked at it, the more it gave that impression and when I was asked its significance, I said, ‘Unostentatious Certitude.’ It’s what one might call a superlative good-taste in the realm of spiritual experience: something with greater content than it expresses.

* * *

(Following the letter Satprem had written to Mother the previous day regarding the book on Sri Aurobindo.)

I had a clear vision of the two kinds of opposites in nature (not only in nature but in life) which almost everyone carries within himself: one is the possibility of realization, the other is the path chosen to attain it. There is always (it’s probably inevitable) the stormy path of struggle, and then there is the sunlit path. After much study and observation, I have had a sort of ‘spiritual ambition’ (if it can be called that) to bring to the world a sunlit path, to eliminate the necessity for struggle and suffering: something that aspires to replace this present phase of universal evolution with a less painful phase.

It greatly interested me when I read your letter. I was looking at why you have so many difficulties; twice in your note you wrote that it [writing] is a ‘suffering.’ You have very often written this word, very often spoken it, and it seems dominant in one aspect of your being – while in the other is the glory of a supreme joy, the very stuff of the future realization.

These are what could be called the two modes, not of your character, but of your soul.²²⁴

(silence)

Sri Aurobindo told me, *He has all the necessary stuff.*

This book is self-existent and you have only to follow it along, with simplicity, the way you would follow a path that has already been blazed that is already THERE, automatically brought into being by its own necessity. *(For a long while Mother gazes in front of her)...* Don’t be alarmed, I’m just looking!

You don’t need to suffer; it’s not necessary.

That’s what I want to tell you.

The difficulties all stem from the fact that you think they are there.

Good-bye, mon petit. Do you want to see me a day ahead of time?

I don’t want to take up your time uselessly.

Mon petit, I am doing absolutely nothing. I have an avalanche of letters, a pile this high (*gesture*) that I

²²⁴This letter to Mother is, with a few others, the sole survivor of thirteen years of correspondence. All the rest, all Satprem’s correspondence with Mother since 1960, was confiscated by the Ashram after the Mother’s departure, for its own reasons. His letters of 1960, already published in Volume I, escaped the destruction because Mother herself had kept them. It makes a big hole in this Agenda, not only for him – because he had poured out his heart, his questions and doubts and difficulties into these letters – but also from an historical point of view, for many of these conversations with Mother were invisibly oriented by his own condition. In fact, he was intimately linked with the flow of this Agenda, which thus stands mutilated. Need we add that we had to prepare the first two volumes as fugitives, and it required Mother’s miraculous help to avert even more serious mutilations than the auto-da-fé of Satprem’s correspondence.

haven't answered; I haven't written a word – nothing. I'm not doing anything except seeing people, and that is neither important nor interesting.



October

October 2, 1961

I was holding one of these flowers [Integral Generosity²²⁵] in my hand when I saw Z, and I explained to him what I meant by ‘integral generosity.’ The effect of the ego, I told him, is to shrivel the being. It’s the cause of aging, it dries you up – the being shrivels under it like a withering flower. And as I was speaking to him, the experience came; all I remember now is the idea, but the idea is nothing – the experience itself was there.

I know that at a certain moment I was making the distinction between the two states, between the person – the individual, personal being – turning towards the Lord, imploring Him to reveal His Will, and then this experience of becoming – by extending oneself, by opening, by enlarging, by merging into the creation – of BECOMING the Will of the Lord, the Supreme’s Will. No longer any need to implore Him, to ‘know’ His Will and receive it like something foreign to you – you become that Will.

The experience was there at that moment, and it was eloquent enough.

And I was giving him the example of BEING the thing you manipulate and so – since you ARE the thing – having not only the joy of perfect knowledge of manipulation, but the joy of collaboration as well (not collaboration: rather a participation from the thing being utilized). And this from the smallest thing (objects you put in order, for example) right up to the universal transformation that comes with the new Creation – and it’s all the same movement of abolishing limits, the movement of expansion, of a generosity that abolishes limits. It begins with self-giving, it ends in identification.

(silence)

I am investigating the consequences of an experience that was truly very interesting. It was one of those concrete experiences of something already ‘known,’ something one has the knowledge of... but what is knowledge! It’s only a VERY SMALL part of it. When one is the experience of the thing, then it becomes interesting.... I am in search of exactly what constitutes the Falsehood of the world.

The story began with an entirely concrete and material incident very amusing; this is not the first time it has happened, but it was so concrete and so precise that it became interesting. Someone was complaining of being ill, quite a serious, psychological illness: periodic possession by a spirit of falsehood, recurring regularly every month, of more or less long duration. This person comes to see me, and the moment she’s here there’s an upwelling of that profound Compassion of Love, with a considerable, concentrated Power to drive away the possession; and all of this accompanied, even outwardly, by quite an affectionate gesture. This person leaves and within half an hour I receive a letter: ‘Now I know: you hate me, you want me to be ill and you want me to die because I disgust you.’

It was interesting because it was so concrete. I was conscious of my movement of compassion and love and of what it had become in the other person’s consciousness!

It’s very easy to explain: she was already more than half possessed, and of course this spirit of falsehood hardly felt comfortable! And the identification²²⁶ (not only mental but sensory, vital) was so complete that she felt this love as a movement of hatred. When I saw the two phenomena, I also saw that this is exactly what happens in the world! It’s exactly what EVERYONE is.

²²⁵*Impatiens balsamina.*

I must add that the experience came after I had been concentrating for three days (concentrating almost constantly) on finding an explanation for this: why has it become this way? It is impossible to find the ‘why’ because it’s the reason asking and this goes beyond reason – but what is the MECHANISM? Finding the mechanism would already be something – to have the experience of the mechanism. And then came this CONCRETE superposition of the vibration of Love and the reception of hate. ‘But this is exactly what happens!’ I said. ‘The Lord is All-Love, All-Truth, All-Bliss, All-Delight – He is CONSTANTLY like that – and the world, especially the human world, constantly receives him in the other way.’ And the two things are superposed (*Mother covers her left hand with her right*).

Words don’t convey anything; it was the experience. I made... contact. It was very interesting. It lasted a long time, some two or three days. Since it was also linked to a state of health – a headache that had to be cured – it bore its consequences: a crystal clear explanation of illness came.... But I must again add something that preceded this.

This concentration on finding the mechanism sprang from the fact that there were disorders in the body which were vanishing and then reappearing – permanent cure seemed impossible. So I told myself, ‘Somewhere, probably in the subconscious, something must be justifying their presence.’ Then, after concentrating and searching and concentrating some more, suddenly a memory rose up from the subconscious (a memory which is a kind of continued existence under a certain form), the memory of a particular set of movements and actions (not physical movements, but attitudes) that go back many years and had never attracted my attention. None of it had ever been included in the general clearing-out because, like so many other things, it all seemed to be due to normal, ongoing circumstances. But that’s just where I saw (what to call it?) *the hue*, the taint of Falsehood. It’s very subtle. These are very subtle things. But suddenly, oh!... It caught hold of me and created a revolution in the whole being. All those vibrations were cast up and transformed – an extraordinary thing. It stirred up much more commotion and revolution than I had ever expected. And... ah!... A relief. Something was clarified, bringing a brilliant, new comprehension, and then quite interesting physical results. Before this, I was really feeling rather poorly, extremely tired, with the impression of a decline into decrepitude – relatively speaking! (It was in a very superficial part of the being, but it was enough to be disagreeable.) And all of it – pfft! Gone in a single stroke.

And that very day, I had this experience with the possessed person – it all came together. And then afterwards, a sort of mastery over the problem and the impression of a breakthrough – an opening up of the WAY to change, which is this enlargement. First, the movement of generosity (not that shriveling movement, but its exact opposite – the movement of expansion), and from there you go on to universality, and from universality to Totality.

It makes a whole set of interesting experiences.

Then there is a doctor, V., who comes here twice a year to give a check-up to all who take part in the physical education program and all the children. He is an extremely honest and sincere man who believes in the mission of medical science. Each time he comes, I write something in his diary on the day of his departure (his whole diary is full of things I’ve written – they usually appear in the *Bulletin* or somewhere). On that very same day I learned that V. was leaving, and it suddenly came to me – so clearly! Falsehood in the body – that sort of juxtaposition of contraries, the inversion of the Vibration (only it doesn’t really invert – it’s a curious phenomenon: the vibration remains what it is but it’s received inverted) – this falsehood in the body is a falsehood in the CONSCIOUSNESS. The falsity of the consciousness naturally has material consequences... and that’s what illness is! I immediately made an experiment on my body to see if this held, if it actually works that way. And I realized that it’s true!

When you are open and in contact with the Divine, the Vibration gives you strength, energy; and if you are quiet enough, it fills you with great joy – and all of this in the cells of the body. You fall back into the ordinary consciousness and straightaway, without anything changing, the SAME thing, the SAME vibration coming from the SAME source turns into a pain, a malaise, a feeling of uncertainty, instability and decrepitude. To be sure of this, I repeated the experiment three or four times, and it was absolutely automatic, like the operation of a chemical formula: same conditions, same results.

This interested me greatly.

And then, from a purely external and practical standpoint, I said, ‘Illnesses are the falsehoods of the body’ (there is no question of *lie* here, it is a matter of *falsehood*; in French we have only the one word “mensonge”) ‘and each doctor...’ (here, of course, one would have to insert a little qualification: each sincere, honest doctor who truly wants to cure), ‘...each true doctor is a soldier in the great army of those who fight for Truth.’²²⁷

That was the sentence I wrote for my doctor. And that’s the story of these last two days.

* * *

(Towards the end of the conversation, Satprem once again complains of his difficulties in writing his book. Mother proposes that he try to unblock the way by reading his manuscript to her.)

You know, it [Mother’s consciousness] is an immobile mirror that projects things from below upwards and receives things from above to transmit them below. This mirror is two-surfaced, and absolutely immobile, not adding any vibration to what is received or transmitted: a perfect neutrality. In this mirror, therefore, you would be able to see your book a little more impersonally, outside yourself and your own creative power.

(Satprem makes a face; he feels shy about reading his text aloud)

Yes, you can find out if it’s consistent with your state of consciousness and your manner of working!

If you give it to me to read when it’s all finished, as you did with the other one [*L’Orpailleur*], that’s how it will be received; it won’t pass through the mind at all. It will be reflected in the mirror and from the mirror it will go above. That’s the way I saw the other book, and I was shown many things about you I hadn’t known. So you can do it either way; I mean you can use the mirror before finishing the book – not for what I may think of it, because that has no importance at all, but for the effect it might have on your work. It’s up to you.

It’s not quite ready. I still have a lot to correct.

Correct?... Many doors are open, and through these open doors things immeasurable for you can act through what you have written, bringing infinitely more to the reading than you think you have put there. People will be brought into contact with the thing, and each one, according to his receptivity, will catch hold of something. And this is very important – it must not be touched.²²⁸

²²⁷Here is the exact text of Mother’s message: *Truth is supreme harmony and supreme delight. All disorder, all suffering is falsehood. Thus it can be said that illnesses are the falsehoods of the body, and consequently doctors are soldiers of the great and noble army fighting in the world for the conquest of Truth.*

I don't mind reading it, but it will take up your time....

No, no! As soon as I listen, everything is silenced, it all keeps quiet. I really become an immobile mirror.

But some people I don't hear at all! I see lips moving, but there is nothing, nothing, not even an ordinary thought! When people are capable of a little clear-thinking, I hear everything. But with others, it's like oo-oo-oo.... Just recently there was something really comical! I no longer know who it was, but someone came to see me and when he began to talk... I understood nothing! All I heard was noise. What to do?... This person was asking me questions (he came here for sadhana, mind you, not for external matters; it was a serious visit), and all that came out was oo-oo-oo-oo, nothing else. So I concentrated and put myself in contact with his soul, which was the only thing I could contact. It took some time. I kept silent, and finally so did he, since he saw that I was not replying. Then suddenly it came, so clearly, like drops of water falling from above: ready-made sentences. I began to tell him all sorts of things about what his soul wanted, what he had to do in the world.... It was a revelation! 'Ah!' he said, 'I have been waiting to hear this all my life!'

But it took some time, because first of all he had to stop talking, and then I had to concentrate.

And I never did find out what he said to me!

* * *

(As she is leaving, Mother asks for some papers left by Pavitra for her to examine: some proposals for school reforms.)

Give me that stuff.

I am their despair because I always tell them, 'It doesn't make any difference! Do it like this or do it like that, it all comes down to the same thing.' They are indignant: 'What do you mean it all comes to the same thing!' *(Mother laughs wholeheartedly)*

So there we are.



October 15, 1961

(During the two preceding meetings, Satprem read to Mother several fragments of his manuscript on Sri Aurobindo.)

You have brought me a very strange experience.

228It took Satprem fourteen years to lose the habit of correcting.

The first time you read your manuscript, I called Sri Aurobindo to hear it. He was in the subtle physical and he listened. Yesterday when I sat down to listen, I thought, 'It would be much better if he entered my brain because that way....' In fact, I called him; he entered my brain. It took some time; all through the beginning of the reading we were still two; then he came in more and more, more and more, more and more.... My head – my physical head – seemed to be swelling up! There was no longer space for anyone but him. It was the light... that dark blue light of mental power (but true mental power) in the physical – the tantrics use it, you always see it with X's action, but I've never seen it this way before! My head was full, you know – full, full, not an atom of space to spare – I could feel it swelling up!

And this light was absolutely immobile – vibrationless, totally compact and... coherent. When I see X's light, for example, there are always vibrations in it; it vibrates, vibrates, things are shifting about; out with this, not a single vibration, not one movement: a MASS that seemed eternally immobile but which was (how to put it?) attentive, listening. It was a volume with the form of the head, as if 'that' had wholly taken over the head. It was full, so full, yet with no feeling of tension or of anything resisting, none at all; there was only a kind of immobile eternity – and COMPACT, compact, absolutely coherent, no vibrations. And it increased, increased more and more, it became heavy, but with a very particular heaviness – not a weight, the feeling of a mass.

And within all this, I no longer existed. I seemed to vanish into a kind of trance, yet I was conscious – not 'I': the consciousness was conscious of what Sri Aurobindo was conscious of. And he was following the reading. But I couldn't remember anything; at the time, it was impossible to observe. I can only describe it all to you now because the experience remained for at least an hour and a half afterwards; when I left here, I began to objectify it, to see what it was – aside from that, it was merely a STATE I found myself in. But in this state there was an awareness of what he was hearing, and at two or three places in your reading he seemed to be saying (I can't be exact, I can only give the impression), *Not necessary*. In fact, that's what made me call this passage 'too philosophical' (although when you first asked my opinion I was in a peculiar condition, nothing was active in me). With him, it was very clear, it was almost as if there were a certain number of words about which he said, *That, not necessary. That, not necessary*. Not many, not often, but once in a while. Especially at the end (he was still there inside my head while you were talking), when you were saying that it's necessary 'to explain' to people; there he very clearly said, *No, not necessary*.

But I was incapable of remembering or of registering anything – the only head present there was his.

It's the first time this has happened to me.

Receiving his thought (thinking his thought, for instance) happens all the time, all the time, but this was different; it was a PRESENCE – A presence in the skull. And my skull seemed to gradually grow bigger and heavier, heavy with an unaccustomed power. And this stayed with me; oh, it stayed for a long, long time! Never before have I had this physically, never this kind of power, a material power of thought-force – material thought-force in the brain.

One sees glimpses of it. I told you I've often seen it with X. I also saw it with another tantric who came here (someone said to be greatly renowned in the North) – this sort of very well organized mental power, a mental-physical power. But it was always vibrating or intermittent or partial, passing flashes or fluctuating formations. Here it wasn't that; it was a feeling of eternity.

Normally one would have said that my body was in trance; yet it could move, it could speak – since I did speak to you; but nevertheless, it was a peculiar feeling (which I still have somewhat), like having a head too large for my body. It's not painful or disagreeable, but I'm not used to it.

After our meeting yesterday, as soon as I saw clearly and could objectify it, I immediately 'sent' all

this to you (I didn't write because I had no time, but I 'told' it all to you), for I felt that, not knowing what had happened, you might have thought I wasn't listening, or I don't know what!

No, no! I felt that what I had written wasn't 'it.'

But it was a formidable experience! Formidable. And really proof that this book interests him.

But I have to do all last week's work over.

Why? Don't you like it?

The thread is missing. It's not 'it.'

You know, he was so pleased the first day you read to me! I was seeing his force, his power inside it, and it was golden; a kind of power of propulsion was there. But of course, I know nothing at all about what you read to me yesterday; I was a bit overwhelmed by this experience! It's the first time I've had it.

For a long, long time I have been asking for.... When I would say, 'Lord, take possession of this brain,' I expected something of the sort, but I was expecting it with the supramental light (which, partially and momentarily, I have had). But this! It was really.... I don't know what he did with my brain – not brain, my mental power. Probably during that period he absorbed it (I suppose that's what happened because there was no sense of difference). My impression was that as a result of this the physical cells were going to develop materially and be transformed (I think it will happen – I had a sort of assurance that it will). Because now, as I'm talking to you, I'm looking at it and I see – the effect is still there: no longer with the same overwhelming power, but the effect is there and it gives a sort of... (it can't be compared to anything physical)... a sort of warmth; it's not *heat*, but *warmth*. Everything is seized by it, both ears (*Mother touches her head*), everything – here, there, all around! Tremendous. And this immobility! As soon as one stops, it is immor... (*Mother cuts off her word*), it is eternity.

It is truly bringing THAT down here [into Matter].

Well then, are you going to read the rest to me or not?

No, Mother, I feel I have to do it all over. I don't have the thread. I just have scraps here and there, bits and pieces – I don't have the thread.

But is this thread so very necessary? Because the last time you read (I can't pinpoint exactly where), Sri Aurobindo seemed to intervene each time any of those habitual coherences of reason intruded, things you probably inserted precisely in order to join passages together and make them comprehensible. It was at these junctures (I can't remember them exactly) where he would occasionally say, *Not necessary, not necessary. That can go, that can go.*

Afterwards, I tried to understand (I tried to identify enough to be able to understand) and I got the feeling that he finds it will be much more powerful if you don't follow normal logical lines (I'm elaborating a bit – it wasn't quite like this); rather, if you like, it is better to be prophetic than didactic – fling abroad the ideas, ploff! Then let people do what they can with them. I felt he was viewing this not only from the essential standpoint, but from the standpoint of the public, and he wanted to ensure that it doesn't become tiresome – at all costs, don't let it be tiresome. It can be bewildering, but not tiresome. Let them be hurled right into things... strange and unknown things, perhaps, but.... For instance (this is my own style, you can take it for what it's worth), it would be better for people to say, 'He's a madman,' than to say, 'He's a boring sermonizer.' And all this was coming with his sense of humor,

the way he has of saying, for example, that folly is closer to the Divine than reason!

I don't know, I didn't hear the beginning, but certainly everything dealing with physical events [of Sri Aurobindo's life] will be expressed in a very reasonable and normal style so that there will be no danger of people saying, 'He's a half-cracked visionary!' I don't know, the first part of what you read to me was so good! Gusts of golden light kept coming. Perhaps you wanted to explain too much. You don't know what happened?

Yes, it's precisely this need to explain.

He seems to find it unnecessary!

Above all, he would like the end to be brief. That's something I felt from the very first day – let the end surge up and leave you in suspense; above all, don't try to be reasonable. An upsurge of light like a door bursting open onto a very luminous and unknown future, but with no attempt to make it tangible and approachable. I am sure of this – this impression of a closed door (people live behind doors, you know), and then abruptly the door is flung wide-open on an explosion of light and... you are left there: sit down, look, contemplate – and wait for the moment to be ripe for venturing forth.

Above all, have no ambition to make anyone understand anything whatsoever.

But you have to make people understand the work of Sri Aurobindo – what he came to do, what his work is!

But this really is what he came to do – it's like... an upside-down volcano.

An eruption, an explosion.

He casts forth the seeds; and then, for those who can gather them up, comes the slow and lengthy labor.

(silence)

When one follows the curve of his last writings, one sees very clearly that after having sown the seeds (yes, it's like a great seeding of light) and even after having said, 'This is to be realized now,' well, the further he went on in his work, the more he continued to work towards this realization, the more he saw all the stages that had to be crossed, the more he... saw all that, well, the more he used to say, 'Don't imagine this will happen to you all at once. Don't think this path is an instant miracle.'

After speaking of the descent of the Supermind, he said that an INTERMEDIARY must be prepared between our present mental state (even the most elevated higher mind) and the supramental region, because if one entered directly into Gnosis, well, it would produce such an abrupt change that our physical constitutions would be unable to support it – an intermediary is needed. The experiences I've had make me absolutely convinced of it; twice the supramental world took veritable possession of me and both times it was as if the body – truly the physical body – was going to completely disintegrate, due to... what you could almost call the opposition of the two conditions.

And yesterday again I clearly saw... (*Mother touches this mass in her head*). My eyes are full of it... my eyes are full, you know, and I see that as it works to settle itself in here, it produces this little vibration – a twinkling of vibrations – which seems to be indispensable for it to enter into this Matter.

But what's interesting is that it produced neither headache, nor malaise, nor anything of the kind; yet neither was there any great joy or satisfaction. It is... the words we use always take on a pejorative tone and spoil it, but the difference between our habitual way of functioning and this new way is

something so tremendous and overwhelming that an adaptation is evidently required. And he always said that the adaptation would at first be a diminution, and that only gradually could one regain the original purity. That's just how it is.

But it's not the time to say all this, mon petit!

For example, I have nothing for the next *Bulletin*; I could have given something from those things you've transcribed [for the *Agenda*], but it's not possible, it CANNOT be done! This can't be made public, it's impossible; it's not the moment, not the moment. People don't understand even the simplest things I say! I've seen that even Nolini sometimes hesitates; he doesn't get it. So you can imagine, the public!...

(silence)

What he has actually done is this: he seems to have poured over the world – with the power of the Origin – the new Possibility; 'The time has come for THIS,' ploff!... Now let us be quiet and see how things evolve.

(silence)

Indeed, he is so very much HERE.

Two or three days ago, in one of those moments when you feel a little stupid ('little' is an understatement!), I said to myself, 'Yes, how good it was when I used to feel him with me all the time. In this period now, I no longer feel him.' Then he told me so clearly, so positively, *You don't feel me because I am you.*

And I saw that it was true, that the identification was established in such a... detailed way, one could say, that there is no longer the joy – a joy of feeling like this (*gesture of being embraced*).

(silence)

Now I understand! He used to tell me, *You alone have the endurance*, and oh, mon petit, what endurance it takes!

But how to speak of all this to people! How to speak of it? They are a million miles away.

Simply awaken hope in them – the Hope. A hope based on the certainty of an experience. You know, if they could imagine the Supreme Himself coming and saying, 'Listen now, I'm here to tell you that this is the way it is, get ready.'

Always, always, the first reaction of people on earth has been to say, 'He's mad.'

But what of it!

And precisely because a large part of the book is reasonable enough, artistic, well-expressed and well-presented, it can afford a few pages (there need not be many), a few pages that are like a leap into sheer madness!

I SEE, I am looking at all that, sparkling....

So if you want to read something to me, I'm listening – I have come to hear.

No, Mother, I have to catch hold of the thread.

You have to catch hold... yes.

Well then, concentrate, call it! Make an invocation, call it in – it is THERE, contact it. That is the thread to catch – not in the head.

But that's just it, you see-before working I always become completely silent and in that silence there is NOTHING. I could stay like that for hours!

Yes, indeed, mon petit!

But nothing comes!

Well?

Well, after a certain length of time – because after all, time passes – I have to work...

Ah, but perhaps that's not the way!

Then, obviously, I catch hold of some idea – sometimes it's the right idea, sometimes it isn't.

It's not so much a question of an idea being right or not but of the vibration of the Force.

If I say all this it's because I see to what extent Sri Aurobindo views this book as an important tool for world-wide work – from the beginning he has taken it seriously. And he is so very much HERE that it seems to me... not at all impossible that he HIMSELF is stimulating the expression.

It's not so much a question of ideas, because all that is quite fine.

Read your final page to me. I don't care about the coherence of ideas. Read the final page for me to see whether I feel that same Force in it.

Yes, but I will have to redo all that precedes it.

You are going to do it all over? But it doesn't matter. You know what the logic of a book means to me!

You see, when I want a TRUE impression of a book, I open it at random; then I look at the first page, the last page – sometimes I read the ending, then I go back to the beginning – it doesn't matter where. What I want to know is whether the Force is there.

Ordinary logic... Read! Anywhere, the middle of a sentence, it doesn't matter!

(after the reading)

I would like to go over it all again.

But isn't what you call the 'thread' going to make the whole thing heavy?

A thread is missing. I don't know, some people can write in bits and pieces, here and there, but not me. If I don't feel that everything behind me is completed, I can't go ahead. I need to have a flow.

Listen, think it over.... Because I'm not so sure. When I see, I see segments: a blank, another segment, a blank (*Mother seems to sketch a kind of diagram in space*), then an apotheosis at the end – your ending is magnificent.

It's not necessary for the whole book to proceed in the same way.

The most revelatory part can be in segments (you know, just as it comes). The thread is an invisible one – the link of a Presence – otherwise it comes in bursts, and that has a lot of force.

All you've read to me now is quite fine, and it would certainly be less fine if something were there connecting it all up.

To me it's clear that some segments are unsuitable.

Unsuitable or incomplete?

Unsuitable.

Well, then take them out! Why not? It may be contrary to logic, even to higher logic, but what do we care!

I will try to see.... If I catch the thread, it will be all right – but I must catch it.

You have to concretely feel that Sri Aurobindo's full Power of expression is there (I don't mean the words, it's not a question of words), but the power to transmit knowledge (not mental knowledge, experience). It's constantly there. So... an attentive silence – but be very patient, because as soon as the Force comes, something begins to stir in the mental regions. Then there is also a sort of *eagerness* to seize hold – and it ruins the thing.

I have noticed that the true inspiration doesn't come when one is very, very anxious, nor even when you have a very intense aspiration, but (how to put it?)... when you succumb in a smile, and it all goes blank. Then there's nothing; but if you know how to curb impatience (simply delighting in His beatitude, even if ages pass – delighting in His beatitude), then suddenly, when you least expect it – flash! That's IT!

This has happened to me very, very often – suddenly, poff! And with such certainty!

Mother, give me one single indication. Don't you think I should cut out what I read to you yesterday? It would be a relief if you told me.

I don't think so, mon petit! I don't think so. I can't tell you for sure because I'm not the one who heard it – you know what I mean? No memory is operating. Were you to ask me to repeat a single word of what you have written, I couldn't do it – yet I listened to you.

I have a sort of vision in my head of parts of sentences, three or four words where the impression was what I told you: *Not necessary*. But it was a very minor thing. It was more an attitude, an attitude in the expression. But it wasn't disturbing.

I keep feeling that Sri Aurobindo wants the conclusion to be swift; and I myself (probably not with his power of comprehension) have a vision, a sort of feeling coming from a great height above, that the most important part of the book should be very abrupt – like breaking through a door, flinging it wide-open, and emerging in a rush of light. That's all. Now keep quiet and see what happens.

* * *

(Mother gets up to leave)

We are too much the slaves of time.

It's not always when you think you're wasting your time that things go slowest. I have found out that there's a certain attitude – an attitude of openness towards eternity, to be precise – that makes things happen more quickly. Much more quickly.



October 30, 1961

(The day before and at the beginning of this conversation, Satprem read aloud some passages of his manuscript relating to the Veda. Then Mother chose the photograph of Sri Aurobindo for the frontispiece. She speaks slowly, as though from a great distance, in a semi-trance.)

That's how I first saw him, at the head of the staircase.

(silence)

I had an experience while listening to you read; it was as if I heard, 'The beginning of the legend... the beginning of the legend....'

It's rather strange.

He is there and the atmosphere is full of a sort of concentration of force, and there are these two things: 'This is how legends come into being... how legends begin.... The beginning of the legend....' I hear this. And there is also a kind of analogy to the old stories of Buddha, of Christ.... It's strange.

I seemed to be looking back into the present from some thousands of years ahead (it's no longer now, but as if I were propelled somewhere several thousand years ahead, looking backwards) and it's the beginning of the legend.

And the photo adopted by the legend is this full-face one of him as a young man. It was made in France from an old snapshot (a poor one, and only the bust was kept); that photo of me wearing a veil was done at the same time.

A strange impression....

And Sri Aurobindo is ever the same.

What I would have liked at the beginning of the book is my vision – how I see him now. But it's untranslatable.

(silence)

It's so compact.

Curious, this impression – the feeling of the body and the atmosphere when I was propelled into the future. It's something more... more compact, denser than the physical: the New Creation. One always

tends to think of it as something more ethereal, but it's not! Theon spoke of it, but he didn't express himself very well; his way of speaking didn't have the power of revelation (it was based on experience, but the experience wasn't his, it was Madame Theon's. She was a marvelous woman from the standpoint of experience – unique – but with no real intelligence... oh, she was intelligent and cultivated, but no more than that, and it didn't amount to much). But they really had come as *forerunners*, and Theon always insisted, 'It will have a greater density.' Scientifically, this seems like heresy, for 'density' is not used in that sense – but this was what he said, 'A greater density.' And the impression I get of this atmosphere is of something more compact – more compact and at the same time without heaviness or thickness. All this is evidently absurd scientifically – yet there is a feeling of compactness.

It was like that yesterday – something so... solid was with me (*Mother touches her head*); how to put it?... It's solid, but not in the way we usually speak of solidity! It's not like that.

And my head became heavy.

But he was there the whole time you were reading (and now again it's the same thing, he is there). In his consciousness, all this was already past – I was transported forward, the present moment was behind me – and then, 'Ah, here is the beginning of the legend.'

So there will be a legend.

I got the impression of there being the same difference between the physical fact of Christ or the physical fact of Buddha – and everything we know and say and think and feel about them today – as there is between what we now know of Sri Aurobindo and what will be known of him in the time I was propelled into.

This book was like the *initiator* of the legend. Sri Aurobindo was there, Sri Aurobindo as I know him now – the eternal Sri Aurobindo I know now.

And it was all so solid! oh, so cohesive, SO MASSIVE, and at the same time... I don't know, it's something completely different from anything you might expect. You can't imagine it.

It stayed all day long – something compact and undivided.

Yesterday afternoon and evening, my head seemed soft when I touched it! That's the amazing thing (*Mother touches her head*). It feels soft when I touch it, as if the head has become soft! And at the same time, it's a compact mass.

What is it?

They'll lead me off to a padded cell!

Well, mon petit, here's an experience for your birthday!

When I began to see this yesterday, I said, 'Ah, we've struck gold!' I don't even know why, but it was the way you presented the thing, the way you explained that the most unconscious and the most conscious meet.²²⁹ That was the... the thread or the key, I don't know. Then I followed the thread and came to this experience. And it's still going on today.

I mean that there's a feeling of being on the wrong track: ordinarily, when seeking the Supermind, one looks for it on the heights. But that's not it! That's not it. And one always imagines a sort of subtilization, something etherealized, but it's not that.

All right, you don't need to keep a record of this [for the *Agenda*]. They'll lock me up, I'm telling you!

²²⁹The day before, Mother had listened to the passage of the manuscript concerning 'The Secret of the Veda.' Several extracts from it are included in the Addendum to this conversation.

I said to myself this morning, ‘if I go on like this, I’ll soon have to stop talking – otherwise they’ll put me in an asylum!’ Don’t you agree?...

No, Mother, it seems very....

No danger? (*Laughter*)

Oh, I’m not afraid of anything!

There you are, mon petit. So, have a good year – it’s off to a good start, your year!

* * *

ADDENDUM

The Secret of the Veda

(Extracts from the passage in ‘Sri Aurobindo and the Transformation of the World’ read to Mother by Satprem. This unpublished manuscript would become the first rough draft of ‘The Adventure of Consciousness’)

Since the time of Adam, it seems we have been choosing to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, and there can be no half-measures or regrets along this way, for if we remain prostrate in a false humility, our noses in the dust, the titans or the djinns among us will know all too well how to snatch the Power left unclaimed; this is in fact what they are doing – they would crush the god within us. It is a question of knowing – yes or no – whether we want to escape once again into our various paradises, abandoning the earth to the hands of Darkness, or find and seize hold of the Power to refashion this earth into a diviner image – in the words of the Rishis, ‘make earth and heaven equal and one.’

There is obviously a Secret, and all the traditions bear witness to it – the Rishis, the Mages of Iran, the priests of Chaldea or Memphis or Yucatan....

.....

When he first read the Vedas – translated by Western Sanskritists or Indian pandits – they appeared to Sri Aurobindo as ‘an important document of [Indian] history, but seemed of scant value or importance for the history of thought or for a living spiritual experience.’²³⁰ Fifteen years later, however, Sri Aurobindo would reread the Vedas in the original Sanskrit and find there ‘a constant vein of the richest gold of thought and spiritual experience.’²³¹ Meanwhile, Sri Aurobindo had had certain ‘psychological experiences of my own for which I had found no sufficient explanation either in European psychology or in the teachings of Yoga or of Vedanta,’ and which ‘the mantras of the Veda illuminated with a clear and exact light....’²³² And it was through these experiences of his ‘own’ that Sri Aurobindo came to

²³⁰*The Secret of the Veda*, Cent. Ed., Vol. X, p. 34.

²³¹*Ibid.*, p. 38.

²³²*Ibid.*, p. 37.

discover, from within, the true meaning of the Vedas (and especially the most ancient of the four, the Rig-veda, which he studied with special care). What the Vedas brought him was no more than a confirmation of what he had *received directly*. But didn't the Rishis themselves speak of 'Secret words, clairvoyant wisdoms, that reveal their inner meaning to the seer' (Rig-veda IV, 3.16)?

It is not surprising, therefore, that exegetes have seen the Vedas primarily as a collection of propitiatory rites centered around sacrificial fires and obscure incantations to Nature divinities (water, fire, dawn, the moon, the sun, etc.), for bringing rain and rich harvests to the tribes, male progeny, blessings upon their journeys or protection against the 'thieves of the sun' – as though these shepherds were barbarous enough to fear that one inauspicious day their sun might no longer rise, stolen away once and for all. Only here and there, in a few of the more 'modern' hymns, was there the apparently inadvertent intrusion of a few luminous passages that might have justified – just barely – the respect which the Upanishads, at the beginning of recorded history, accorded to the Veda. In Indian tradition, the Upanishads had become the real Veda, the 'Book of Knowledge,' while the Veda, product of a still stammering humanity, was a 'Book of Works' – acclaimed by everyone, to be sure, as the venerable Authority, but no longer listened to. With Sri Aurobindo we might ask why the Upanishads, whose depth of wisdom the whole world has acknowledged, could claim to take inspiration from the Veda if the latter contained no more than a tapestry of primitive rites; or how it happened that humanity could pass so abruptly from these so-called stammerings to the manifold richness of the Upanishadic Age; or how we in the West were able to evolve from the simplicity of Arcadian shepherds to the wisdom of Greek philosophers. We cannot assume that there was *nothing between the early savage and Plato or the Upanishads*.²³³

.....

Nor was it insignificant that fire, *Agni*, was the core of the Vedic mysteries: *Agni*, the inner flame, the soul within us (for who can deny that the soul is fire?), the innate aspiration drawing man towards the heights; *Agni*, the ardent will within us that sees, always and forever, and remembers; *Agni*, 'the priest of the sacrifice,' the 'divine worker,' the 'envoy between earth and heaven' (Rig-veda III, 3.2) 'he is there in the middle of his house' (1.70.2). 'The Fathers who have divine vision set him within as a child that is to be born' (IX.83.3). He is 'the boy suppressed in the secret cavern' (V.2.1). 'He is as if life and the breath of our existence, he is as if our eternal child' (I.66.1). 'O Son of the body' (III.4.2), 'O Fire, thou art the son of heaven by the body of the earth' (III.25. 1). 'Immortal in mortals' (IV.2. 1), 'old and outworn he grows young again and again' (11.4.5). 'When he is born he becomes one who voices the godhead: when as life who grows in the mother he has been fashioned in the mother he becomes a gallop of wind in his movement' (III.29.11). 'O Fire, when thou art well borne by us thou becomest the supreme growth and expansion of our being, all glory and beauty are in thy desirable hue and thy perfect vision. O Vastness, thou art the plenitude that carries us to the end of our way; thou art a multitude of riches spread out on every side' (II. 1. 12). 'O Fire... brilliant ocean of light in which is divine vision' (III.22.2), 'the Flame with his hundred treasures... O knower of all things born' (I.59). [360]

But the divine fire is not our exclusive privilege – *Agni* exists not only in man: 'He is the child of the waters, the child of the forests, the child of things stable and the child of things that move. Even in the stone he is there...' (1.70.2).

.....

But we have not yet reached the heart of the Vedic secret. The birth of *Agni*, the soul (and so many men are still unborn) is merely the start of the voyage. This inner flame seeks, it is the seeker within us, for it is a spark of the great primordial Fire and will never be satisfied until it has recovered its solar

²³³*Ibid.*, p. 25.

totality, ‘the lost sun’ of which the Veda incessantly speaks. Yet even when we have risen from plane to plane and the Flame has taken successive births in the triple world of our lower existence (the physical, vital and mental world), it will still remain unsatisfied – it wants to ascend, ascend further. And soon we reach a mental frontier where there seems to be nothing to grasp any longer, nor even to see, and nothing remains but to abolish everything and leap into the ecstasy of a great Light. At this point, we feel almost painfully the imprisoning carapace of matter all around us, preventing that apotheosis of the Flame; then we understand the cry, ‘My kingdom is not of this world,’ and the insistence of India’s Vedantic sages – and perhaps the sages of all worlds and all religions – that we must abandon this body to embrace the Eternal. Will our flame thus forever be truncated here below and our quest always end in disappointment? Shall we always have to choose one or the other, to renounce earth to gain heaven?

Yet beyond the lower triple world, the Rishis had discovered ‘a certain fourth,’ *touriyam svid*; they found ‘the vast dwelling place,’ ‘the solar world,’ Swar: ‘I have arisen from earth to the mid-world [life], I have arisen from the mid-world to heaven [mind], from the level of the firmament of heaven I have gone to the Sun-world, the Light’ (Yajur-veda 17.67). And it is said, ‘Mortals, they achieved immortality’ (Rig-veda 1. 110.4). What then was their secret? How did they pass from a ‘heaven of mind’ to the ‘great heaven’ without leaving the body, without, as it were, going off into ecstasies?

The secret lies in matter. Because *Agni* is imprisoned in matter and we ourselves are imprisoned there. It is said that *Agni* is ‘without head or feet,’ that it ‘conceals its two extremities’: above, it disappears into the ‘great heaven’ of the supraconscious (which the Rishis also called ‘the great ocean’), and below, it sinks into the ‘formless ocean’ of the unconscious (which they also called ‘the rock’). We are truncated. But the Rishis were men of a solid realism, a true realism resting upon the Spirit; and since the summits of mind opened out upon a lacuna of light – ecstatic, to be sure, but with no hold over the world – they set upon the downward way.²³⁴ Thus begins the quest for the ‘lost sun,’ the long ‘pilgrimage’ of descent into the unconscious and the merciless fight against the dark forces, the ‘thieves of the sun,’ the *panis* and *vrstras*, pythons and giants, hidden in the ‘dark lair’ with the whole cohort of usurpers: the dualizers, the confiners, the tearers, the COVERERS. But the ‘divine worker,’ *Agni*, is helped by the gods, and in his quest he is led by the ‘intuitive ray,’ *Sarama*, the heavenly hound with the subtle sense of smell who sets *Agni* on the track of the ‘stolen herds’ (strange, ‘shining’ herds). Now and again there comes the sudden glimmer of a fugitive dawn... then all grows dim. One must advance step by step, ‘digging, digging,’ fighting every inch of the way against ‘the wolves’ whose savage fury increases the nearer one draws to their den – *Agni* is a warrior. *Agni* grows through his difficulties, his flame burns more brilliantly with each blow from the Adversary; for, as the Rishis said, ‘Night and Day both suckled the divine Child’; they even said that Night and Day are the ‘two sisters, Immortal, with a common lover [the sun]... common they, though different their forms’ (1. 113.2,3). These alternations of night and brightness accelerate until Day breaks at last and the ‘herds of Dawn’²³⁵ surge upward awakening ‘someone who was dead’ (1. 113.8). ‘The infinite rock’ of the unconscious is shattered, the seeker uncovers ‘the Sun dwelling in the darkness’ (111.39.5), the divine consciousness in the heart of Matter.... In the very depths of Matter, that is to say, in the body, on earth, the Rishis found themselves cast up into Light – that same Light which others sought on the heights, without their bodies and without the earth, in ecstasy. And this is what the Rishis would call ‘the Great Passage.’ Without abandoning the earth they found ‘the vast dwelling place,’ that ‘dwelling place of the gods,’ *Swar*, the original Sun-world that Sri Aurobindo calls *the Supramental World*: ‘Human beings [the

²³⁴In the preceding conversation, Mother was alluding particularly to this passage.

²³⁵Reminiscent of Homer and the ‘herds of Helios.’

Rishis emphasize that they are indeed men] slaying the Coverer have crossed beyond both earth and heaven [matter and mind] and made the wide world their dwelling place' (1.36.8). They have entered 'the True, the Right, the Vast,' *Satyam, Ritam, Brihat*, the 'unbroken light,' the 'fearless light,' where there is no longer suffering nor falsehood nor death: it is immortality, *amritam*.

.....

All is reconciled. The Rishi is 'the son of two mothers': son of *Aditi*, the luminous cow, Mother of infinite Light, creatrix of the worlds; and son as well of *Diti*, the black cow, Mother of 'the tenebrous infinite' and divided existence – for when *Diti* at last reaches the end of her apparent Night, she gives us divine birth and the milk of heaven. All is fulfilled, The Rishi 'sets flowing in one movement human strengths and things divine' (IX.70.3), he has realized the universal in the individual, become the Infinite in the finite: 'Then shall thy humanity become as if the workings of these gods; it is as if the visible heaven of light were founded in thee' (V.66.2). Far from spurning the earth, he prays: 'O Godhead, guard for us the Infinite and lavish the finite' (IV.2.1 1).

The voyage draws to its close. *Agni* has recovered its solar totality, its two concealed extremities. 'The inviolable work' is fulfilled. For *Agni* is the place where high meets low – and in truth, there is no longer high nor low, but a single Sun everywhere: 'O Flame, thou goest to the ocean of Heaven, towards the gods; thou makest to meet together the godheads of the planes, the waters that are in the realm of light above the sun and the waters that abide below' (111.22.3). 'O Fire... O universal Godhead, thou art the navel-knot of the earths and their inhabitants; all men born thou controllest and supportest like a pillar' (1.59.1). 'O Flame, thou foundest the mortal in a supreme immortality... thou createst divine bliss and human joy' (1.31.7). For the world's heart is Joy, Joy dwells in the depths of all things, 'the well of honey covered by the rock' (11.24.4).



November

November 5, 1961

(Mother would prefer Satprem not to mention Paul Richard by name in his book on Sri Aurobindo.)

I have done my best, all these years, to try to keep him at a distance. He has a power – a terrible asuric power. Between you and me, I saw him like that from the start – that’s why I became involved with him. I never intended to marry him (his family affairs made it necessary), but when we met, I recognized him as an incarnation of the ‘Lord of Falsehood’ – that is his ‘origin’ (what he called the ‘Lord of Nations’); and in fact, this being has directed the whole course of world events during the last few centuries. As for Theon, he was....

It was not by choice that I met all the four *Asuras* – it was a decision of the Supreme. The first one, whom religions call Satan, the Asura of Consciousness, was converted and is still at work. The second [the Asura of Suffering] annulled himself in the Supreme. The third was the Lord of Death (that was Theon). And the fourth, the Master of the world, was the Lord of Falsehood; Richard was an emanation, a *vibhuti*,²³⁶ as they say in India, of this Asura.

Theon was the *vibhuti* of the Lord of Death.

It’s a wonderful story, a real novel, which will perhaps be told one day... when there are no more Asuras. Then it can be told.

Anyway, it was because of Theon that I first found the ‘Mantra of Life,’ the mantra that gives life, and he wanted me to give it to him, he wanted to possess it – it was something formidable! It was the mantra that gives life (it can make anyone at all come back into life, but that’s only a small part of its power). And it was shut away in a particular place,²³⁷ sealed up, with my name in Sanskrit on it. I didn’t know Sanskrit at that time, but he did, and when he led me to that place, I told him what I saw: ‘There’s a sort of design, it must be Sanskrit.’ (I could recognize the characters as Sanskrit). He told me to reproduce what I was seeing, and I did so. It was my name, Mirra, written in Sanskrit – the mantra was for me and I alone could open it. ‘Open it and tell me what’s there,’ he said.

(All this was going on while I was in a cataleptic trance.) Then immediately something in me KNEW, and I answered, ‘No,’ and did not read it.

I found it again when I was with Sri Aurobindo and I gave it to Sri Aurobindo.

But that’s yet another story....

(silence)

As soon as you enter the occult world, it’s fantastic what can exist and be lived there – but that’s for later, when the time comes to speak of such things.

²³⁶Indian tradition makes a distinction between a direct ‘incarnation’ (*avatar*) and a simple ‘emanation’ (*vibhuti*) coming from the consciousness of a god – or a devil.

²³⁷Not a physical place. See conversation of November 7, p. 380.

At any rate, you understand that I'm not very keen on having Richard introduced into the book – the simple fact of mentioning him attracts him.²³⁸

He was a pastor at Lille, in France, for perhaps ten years; he was quite a practicing Christian, but he dropped it all as soon as he began to study occultism. He had first specialized in theological philosophy in order to pass the pastoral examinations, studying all the modern philosophy of Europe (he had a rather remarkable metaphysical brain). Then I met him in connection with Theon and the *Cosmic Review*, and I led him into occult knowledge. Afterwards, there were all sorts of uninteresting stories.... He became a lawyer during the early period of our relationship and I learned Law along with him – I could even have passed the exam! Then the divorce stories began: he divorced his wife; they had three children and he wanted to keep them, but to do so he had to be legally married, so he asked me to marry him – and I said yes. I have always been totally indifferent to these things. Anyway, when I met him I knew who he was and I decided to convert him – the whole story revolves around that.

As a matter of fact, the books he wrote (especially the first one, *The Living Ether*) were based on my knowledge; he put my knowledge into French – and beautiful French, I must say! I would tell him my experiences and he would write them down. Later he wrote *The Gods* (it was incomplete, one-sided). Then he became a lawyer and entered politics (he was a first-class orator and fired his audiences with enthusiasm) and was sent to Pondicherry to help a certain candidate who couldn't manage his election campaign single-handed. And since Richard was interested in occultism and spirituality, he took this opportunity to seek a 'Master,' a yogi. When he arrived, instead of involving himself in politics, the first thing he did was announce, 'I am seeking a yogi.' Someone said to him, 'You're incredibly lucky! The yogi has just arrived.' It was Sri Aurobindo, who was told, 'There's a Frenchman asking to see you....' Sri Aurobindo wasn't particularly pleased but he found the coincidence rather interesting and received him. This was in 1910.

When Richard had finished his work, he returned to France with a poor photograph of Sri Aurobindo and a completely superficial impression of him, yet with the feeling that Sri Aurobindo KNEW (he hadn't at all understood the man that Sri Aurobindo was, he hadn't felt the presence of an Avatar, but he had sensed that he had knowledge). Moreover, I think he always held this opinion, because he used to say that Sri Aurobindo was a unique intellectual giant... without many spiritual realizations! (The same type of stupidity as Romain Rolland's.) Well, my relationship with Richard was on an occult plane, you see, and it's difficult to touch upon. What happened was far more exciting than any novel imaginable.

But he was a man who....

He isn't dead and he's still terribly dangerous because of what's behind him [the Lord of Falsehood].

You didn't record that, did you?

Yes.

Ah, no! It must all be erased. Simply put a note in your book: 'Paul Richard, who met Sri Aurobindo for the first time in 1910....' And you can mention that he was a theological writer or something of the sort to explain how he prompted Sri Aurobindo to write.

When he returned, he told me he would take me there as soon as he could.

The *Arya* began in June 1914, and the first issue was scheduled to come out on August 15, Sri

²³⁸Richard died in the United States in 1967, then made a vain attempt to reincarnate in Auroville. Thus the danger of 'attracting him,' at least under this form, seems remote.

Aurobindo's birthday; and the war broke out before the first issue appeared – on August 3, I believe – a very interesting point. June 21 was Paul Richard's birthday,²³⁹ so on that day we announced the coming publication of the *Arya* and that the first issue would appear on August 15. Between June 21 and August 15, the war broke out. But since everything was ready we went ahead and published it.

*I wrote in my book that Paul Richard intended to bring out simultaneously in Paris a 'Review of the Great Synthesis.' Is this true?*²⁴⁰

No, it's not true! This was never intended, never! The *Arya* was bilingual, one part in French and one in English, but it was one and the same magazine published here in Pondicherry. There was never any question of publishing anything in France; this is incorrect, entirely false – a myth. Besides, it was I who translated the English into French, and rather poorly at that!

I have noticed that as soon as one speaks of Richard one is unwittingly led to tell lies. That's why I am so terribly careful to avoid the subject.

The first issue began with *The Wherefore of the Worlds* (the English following the French), and in it Richard attributed the origin of the world to Desire. They were in perpetual disagreement on this subject, Richard saying, 'It is Desire,' and Sri Aurobindo, 'The initial force of the Manifestation is Joy.' Then Richard would say, 'God DESIRED to know Himself,' and Sri Aurobindo, 'No, God had the joy of knowing Himself.' And it went on and on like that!

When Richard went to Japan, he sent his manuscripts to Sri Aurobindo, including *The Wherefore of the Worlds* and *The Eternal Wisdom*, and Sri Aurobindo continued to translate them into English.

Frankly, it was a relief for Sri Aurobindo when we left; he even wrote to someone or other (but in a totally superficial way) that Richard's departure was a great relief for him.

When we returned to France, Richard got himself declared unfit for military service on health grounds – a yogic heart ailment! But life in France was impossible; and my presence there was dangerous because monstrous things were going on, monstrous; as Sri Aurobindo said, my sitting at home all alone was generating revolutions – armies were revolting.²⁴¹ I saw that happening and I didn't want the Germans to win, which would have been even worse, so I said, 'I had better go.' Then Richard managed to have himself sent to Japan on business (an admirable feat!), representing certain companies. People didn't want to travel because it was dangerous – you risked being sunk to the bottom of the sea; so they were pleased when we offered and sent us to Japan.

Once there (this would also make a great novel), Richard continued writing and sending his manuscripts to Sri Aurobindo. Finally, when the Peace Treaty was signed and it was possible to travel, the English said that if we tried to return to India they would throw us in jail! But it all worked out miraculously, almost becoming a 'diplomatic incident': the Japanese government decided that if we were put in prison they would protest to the British government! (What a story – I could write novels!)

²³⁹On June 28, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated at Sarajevo.

²⁴⁰Satprem no longer remembers the source of this false information.

²⁴¹Mother is alluding to the following aphorism of Sri Aurobindo: 'If when thou sittest alone, still and voiceless on the mountain-top, thou canst perceive the revolutions thou art conducting, then hast thou the divine vision and art freed from appearances.' This aphorism is completed by another: 'If when thou art doing great actions and moving giant results, thou canst perceive that THOU art doing nothing, then know that God has removed His seal on thy eyelids.' (Cent. Ed., Vol. XVII, p. 92)

In short, Richard returned here with me. And that's when the tragi-comedy began....

I will tell you about it one day – fantastic!

It was certainly Sri Aurobindo's power that made Richard decide to leave. For twelve years I had been Richard's 'guru' (that's where our relationship stood), but I hadn't succeeded in converting him, and when we came back here I said, 'I'm through with it. I've tried and I've failed. I've failed completely. Ask Sri Aurobindo.' When Sri Aurobindo took him in hand, that was another story.... He couldn't take it – he left.

But the whole affair was diabolic, you know; it had turned into something fantastic.

Finally he left.

This man clearly led a rather loose life. Right after he left here he spent some time in the Himalayas and became a Sannyasi. Then he went to France and from France to England. In England he married again – bigamy! I didn't care, of course (the less he showed up in my life, the better), but he was in a fix! One day I suddenly received some official letters from a lawyer telling me I had 'initiated divorce proceedings against Richard.' it seems I had a lawyer over there! A lawyer I had never asked for, whose name I didn't know, a lawyer I didn't even know existed – 'my lawyer'! The trial was taking place at Nice, and 'I' was accusing Richard of abandoning me without any means of support! (That was nothing new – I had paid all the expenses from the first day we met! But anyway....) Naturally, he couldn't plead that he was a bigamist; nor could he have me accuse him of being a bigamist, because it was true! So it seemed he hadn't been paying my expenses; but then I wasn't claiming anything from him in the case, no alimony – a little incoherent, all that.... After a few months I was finally informed that I was divorced, which was rather convenient for me as far as the bank was concerned. I had a marriage contract stipulating that our properties were separate; since I was the one with the money (he had nothing), I wanted to be free to do with it as I pleased. But the French were impossible in such matters: the woman was considered the minor party, so even if the money was the wife's and not the husband's, she couldn't withdraw it without his authorization. I don't know if it's still like that, but in those days the husband always had to countersign – an annoying situation! I got around this in Japan (the banker there found the rule stupid and told me to ignore it), but the bank here can be a pain in the neck, so it was good to get this cleared up.

He remarried two or three more times. By now (I believe) he is the father of quite a large family, with grandchildren and perhaps great-grandchildren. He lives in America. Someone once told me he was dead, but I could sense that he wasn't. Then, out of the blue, E. arrived, full of admiration, telling me she had met Richard and how stunningly he could preach to people....

He had quite a life, you know!

I don't like to talk about these things, though – they don't interest me. As Sri Aurobindo said, I lived my whole life absolutely free. I watched myself living through events like watching a movie. I had an inner vision, an inner will, and my inner reason for doing things was an Order received, an Order I was conscious of; but outwardly – fantastic!... Naturally – how else could it have been?

Here in Pondicherry, those last days might have become tragic (but of course it was impossible). There was the great argument (for he was perfectly aware of who I was): 'But after all,' he would tell me, 'since you are the eternal Mother, why have you chosen Aurobindo as Avatar? Choose me! You must choose me – me!' It was the Asura speaking through him. I would smile and not discuss it. 'That's not how it's done!' I would tell him (*laughing*). Then one day he said, 'Ah, so you don't want to.... (*gesture to the throat*) Well, if you don't choose me, then....' He was a strong fellow with powerful hands. I kept quite calm and said inwardly, *My Lord, my Lord*.... I called Sri Aurobindo and I saw him come, like that (*gesture enveloping Mother and immobilizing everything*). Then Richard's hands loosened their grip.

There were marks on my neck.

A few days later, it was the same scene again. It was always the same scene.... Then he would take the furniture (it wasn't ours, we had rented a furnished apartment) and start throwing it out the window into the courtyard!

A novel....

(silence)

And you understand, it wasn't the struggle of a man against a god, but the struggle of a god against a god. And when he was like that, he clearly had a formidable, formidable Power! He forced everybody to obey him – but it was Falsehood. And he preached an ascetic spirituality,²⁴² you can't imagine! He was incredibly convincing, but he couldn't see a petticoat without.... Boys, girls, nothing got by him!

Fantastic.²⁴³

He wrote 'The Lord of Nations'.... And I saw him, oh! I saw this Lord of Nations. During the last war [World War II] I had some dealings with him again, but not through Richard – directly. The being who used to appear to Hitler was the Lord of Nations. An incredible story!... And I knew when they were going to meet (because after all, he's my son!²⁴⁴ That was the funniest part of it); and on one occasion I substituted myself for him, became Hitler's god and advised him to attack Russia. Two days later he attacked Russia. But upon leaving the 'meeting' I encountered the other one [the real Asura] just as he was arriving! He was furious and asked me why I had done that. 'It's none of your business,' I said, 'it's what had to be done.' 'You will see,' he replied, 'I KNOW, I know you will destroy me, but before being destroyed I will wreak just as much havoc as I can, you can be sure of that.'

When I returned from my nocturnal promenades I would tell Sri Aurobindo about them.

What a life!... People don't know what goes on. They know nothing – nothing. But it's fantastic.

Occasionally some people were slightly conscious. For instance, during the last war I spent all my nights hovering above Paris (not integrally, but a part of myself) so that nothing would happen to the city. Later it came out that several people had seen what seemed to be a great white Force with an indistinct form hovering above Paris so that it wouldn't be destroyed.

Throughout the war Sri Aurobindo and I were in such a CONSTANT tension that it completely interrupted the yoga. And that is why the war started in the first place – to stop the Work. At that time there was an extraordinary descent of the Supermind; it was coming like that (*massive gesture*), a descent! Exactly in '39. Then the war broke out and stopped everything cold. For had we personally continued [the work of transformation] we were not sure of having enough time to finish it before 'the other one' crushed the earth to a pulp, setting the whole Affair back... centuries. The FIRST thing to be done was stop the action of the Lord of Nations.

242It is remarkable that throughout Indian tradition Asuras are depicted as great ascetics. They try to wrest Power by dint of asceticism and austerities. But in fact, human beings are incapable of perceiving and seizing true power – true power is transparent.

243According to Mother's wishes, the tape was erased up to this point. But years passed and circumstances changed, and when Satprem found the transcription of this conversation among his papers, he deemed it worthwhile to preserve the major portion of it for its historical interest. Mother's difficulties are always the difficulties of the 'Terrestrial Work'; and this particular Asura, who disturbed the earth in such a particular way, could hardly be passed over in silence.

244See conversation of July 28, p. 279.

The Lord of Falsehood....

You don't believe he is going to begin again?

(silence)

X is convinced that it's going to begin again.

We are trying.

We are trying.

Sri Aurobindo said that if we can hold on until 1967, then it will be over.... Could be.

But the 'ifs'.... There is a domain where no more 'ifs' exist, and when I am 'there,' I still don't find any signs of... inevitability. The place X looks from is all mixed up. I have had a certain number of visions, but not THE vision of inevitable war.

Not that they aren't trying!

(silence)

Well, petit, when will you have finished?

??

Ever since I've known that Sri Aurobindo attached importance to this book, I have been doing a great deal of 'looking.' I told you what I saw the other day, didn't I?... You asked my advice in choosing the photos and you had picked the one of him in 'meditation' [Sri Aurobindo on his bed after he left his body]. Earlier, I had seen the photo of him young; and while I was looking at it, Sri Aurobindo was there and he suddenly took me thousands of years into the future – I've told you about this – and said to me, *The beginning of the legend*. Then I understood that this was the right photo for the book.

Evidently he is making your book the *starting point* for all that will be thought and said and done upon earth on the intellectual plane. And I assure you that I am helping you and he is helping you!

You must ask him.

If that (*Mother indicates the head*) could only keep quiet! There is tremendous tension there (*the temples*). When you have problems that need solving, if you could just raise your consciousness and receive the indication, receive the inspiration from above. And keep that (*the head*) quiet, quiet, quiet – this tension is what tires you out!

You know, two or three minutes of silence can do a lot, and it doesn't take much time.

You don't have time now or I would bring up a problem.... It can wait for another occasion.

Which problem?

About the discovery of the Supermind in the Veda and by Sri Aurobindo. There is something I don't quite grasp.

Because in the Veda it's incomplete.

No, they had a *hint*, like a vision of the 'thing,' but there is no proof that they realized it. What's

more, had they realized it, it seems to me that we would certainly have found some traces – but no traces remain.

Theon knew something about it, and he called it ‘the new world’ or ‘the new creation on earth and the glorified body’ (I don’t remember his exact terminology); but he knew of the Supermind’s existence – it had been revealed to him and he announced its coming. He said it would be reached THROUGH the discovery of the God within. And for him, as I told you the other day, this meant a greater density – which seems to be a correct experience. Well, on my side, I have made investigations and had innumerable visions concerning the earth’s history, and I spoke about it a good deal with Sri Aurobindo....

(silence)

According to what Sri Aurobindo saw and what I saw as well, the Rishis had the contact, the experience – how to put it?... A kind of lived knowledge of the thing, coming like a promise, saying, ‘THAT is what will be.’ But it’s not permanent. There’s a big difference between their experience and the DESCENT – what Sri Aurobindo calls ‘the descent of the Supermind’: something that comes and establishes itself.

Even when I had that experience [the ‘first supramental manifestation’ of February 29, 1956], when the Lord said, ‘The time has come,’ well, it was not a complete descent; it was the descent of the Consciousness, the Light, and a part, an aspect of the Power. It was immediately absorbed and swallowed up by the world of Inconscience, and from that moment on it began to work in the atmosphere. But it was not THE thing that comes and gets permanently established; when that happens, we won’t need to speak of it – it will be obvious!

Although the experience of ‘56 was one more forward step, it’s not.... It’s not final.

And what the Rishis had was a sort of promise – an INDIVIDUAL experience.

Anyhow, there’s a problem I want to ask you about, but you don’t have time now.

Would you like to write it to me?



November 6, 1961

(Letter to Mother from Satprem.²⁴⁵)

Sweet Mother,

When I read the Veda I thought I understood that the Rishis, finding the passage blocked above (since they would fall into ecstasy and lose their hold over the body), set out to find the Supermind by

245This letter survived because Mother returned it with her reply written on the reverse.

the downward path.

But reading Sri Aurobindo, I seemed to understand the opposite: that FIRST he rose up, and then made the Light redescend to open the passage, and that the pressure of the Light from above is what opens the doors below, in Matter.

I would like to understand the process.

With all my love,
Signed: Satprem

(Mother's reply)

It is by rising to the summit of consciousness through a progressive ascent that one unites with the Supermind. But as soon as the union is achieved, one knows and one sees that the Supermind exists in the heart of the Inconscient as well.

When one is in that state, there is neither high nor low.

But GENERALLY it is by REDESCENDING through the levels of the being with a supramentalized consciousness that one can accomplish the permanent transformation of physical nature.

There is no proof that the Rishis used another method, although, to effect this transformation (if they ever did), they must necessarily have fought their way through the powers of inconscience and obscurity.



November 7, 1961

(Regarding Satprem's letter to Mother on the Veda:)

This has confronted me with a problem....

You are asking about the process, aren't you?

Yes.

My impression from the Veda is not the same as yours. You say that when they reached the heights they went into trance and then tried the other method. When I read the Veda... at least what Sri Aurobindo translates for us, because otherwise I have no direct knowledge....

But they say nothing about this.

I know my own experience and I can speak of it in detail; and according to what Sri Aurobindo told me, it was the same for him – although he NEVER wrote of it anywhere. But since it has been my

experience, I naturally feel that it's the simplest method.

There is also what Theon and Madame Theon used to say. They never spoke of 'Supermind,' but they said the same thing as the Vedas, that the world of Truth must incarnate on earth and create a new world. They even picked up the old phrase from the Gospels, 'new heavens and a new earth,'²⁴⁶ which is the same thing the Vedas speak of. Madame Theon had this experience and she gave me the indication (she didn't actually teach me) of how it was to be done. She would go out of her body and become conscious in the vital world (there were many intermediary states, too, if one cared to explore them). After the vital came the mental: you consciously went out of the vital body, you left it behind (you could see it) and you entered the mental world. Then you left the mental body and entered into.... They used different words, another classification (I don't remember it), but even so, the experience was identical. And like that, she successively left twelve different bodies, one after another. She was extremely 'developed,' you see – individualized, organized. She could leave one body and enter the consciousness of the next plane, fully experience the surroundings and all that was there, describe it... and so on, twelve times.

I learned to do the same thing, and with great dexterity; I could halt on any plane, do what I had to do there, move around freely, see, observe, and then speak about what I had seen. And my last stage, which Theon called '*pathétisme*,'²⁴⁷ a very barbaric but very expressive word, bordered on the Formless – he sometimes used the Jewish terminology, calling the Supreme 'The Formless.' (From this last stage one passed to the Formless – there was no further body to leave behind, one was beyond all possible forms, even all thoughtforms.) In this domain [the last stage before the Formless] one experienced total unity – unity in something that was the essence of Love; Love was a manifestation more... 'dense,' he would always say (there were all sorts of different 'densities'); and Love was a denser expression of That, the sense of perfect Unity – perfect unity, identity – with no longer any forms corresponding to those of the lower worlds. It was a Light!... An almost immaculate white light, yet with something of a golden-rose in it (words are crude). This Light and this Experience were truly wonderful, inexpressible in words.

Well, one time I was there (Theon used to warn against going beyond this domain, because he said you wouldn't come back), but there I was, wanting to pass over to the other side, when – in a quite unexpected and astounding way – I found myself in the presence of the 'principle,' a principle of the human form. It didn't resemble man as we are used to seeing him, but it was an upright form, standing just on the border between the world of forms and the Formless, like a kind of standard.²⁴⁸ At that time nobody had ever spoken to me about it and Madame Theon had never seen it – no one had ever seen or said anything. But I felt I was on the verge of discovering a secret.

Afterwards, when I met Sri Aurobindo and talked to him about it, he told me, 'It is surely the prototype of the supramental form.' I saw it several times again, later on, and this proved to be true.

But naturally, you understand, once the border has been crossed, there is no more 'ascent' and 'descent'; you have the feeling of rising up only at the very start, while leaving the terrestrial consciousness and emerging into the higher mind. But once you have gone beyond that, there's no notion of rising; there's a sense, instead, of a sort of inner transformation.

And from there I would redescend, re-entering my bodies one after another – there is a real feeling

246II Peter 3.13.

247A word coined by Theon, which might roughly translate as 'the sublime.'

248By 'standard,' Mother means a sort of model or archetype.

of re-entry; it actually produces friction.

When one is on that highest height, the body is in a cataleptic state.

I think I made this experiment in 1904, so when I arrived here it was all a work accomplished and a well-known domain; and when the question of finding the Supermind came up, I had only to resume an experience I was used to – I had learned to repeat it at will, through successive exteriorizations. It was a voluntary process.

When I returned from Japan and we began to work together, Sri Aurobindo had already brought the supramental light into the mental world and was trying to transform the Mind. ‘It’s strange,’ he said to me, ‘it’s an endless work! Nothing seems to get done – everything is done and then constantly has to be done all over again.’ Then I gave him my personal impression, which went back to the old days with Theon: ‘It will be like that until we touch bottom.’ So instead of continuing to work in the Mind, both of us (I was the one who went through the experience... how to put it?... practically, objectively; he experienced it only in his consciousness, not in the body – but my body has always participated), both of us descended almost immediately (it was done in a day or two) from the Mind into the Vital, and so on quite rapidly, leaving the Mind as it was, fully in the light but not permanently transformed.

Then a strange thing happened. When we were in the Vital, my body suddenly became young again, as it had been when I was eighteen years old!... There was a young man named Pearson, a disciple of Tagore, who had lived with me in Japan for four years; he returned to India, and when he came to see me in Pondicherry, he was stupefied.²⁴⁹ ‘What has happened to you!’ he exclaimed. He hardly recognized me. During that same period (it didn’t last very long, only a few months), I received some old photographs from France and Sri Aurobindo saw one of me at the age of eighteen. ‘There!’ he said, ‘That’s how you are now!’ I wore my hair differently, but otherwise I was eighteen all over again.

This lasted for a few months. Then we descended into the Physical – and all the trouble began.²⁵⁰ But we didn’t stay in the Physical, we descended into the Subconscious and from the Subconscious to the Inconscious. That was how we worked. And it was only when I descended into the Inconscious that I found the Divine Presence – there, in the midst of Darkness.

It wasn’t the first time; when I was working with Theon at Tlemcen (the second time I was there), I descended into the total, unindividualized – that is, general – Inconscious (it was the time he wanted me to find the Mantra of Life). And there I suddenly found myself in front of something like a vault or a grotto (of course, it was only something ‘like’ that), and when it opened, I saw a Being of iridescent light reclining with his head on his hand, fast asleep. All the light around him was iridescent. When I told Theon what I was seeing, he said it was ‘the immanent God in the depths of the Inconscious,’ who through his radiations was slowly waking the Inconscious to Consciousness.

But then a rather remarkable phenomenon occurred: when I looked at him, he woke up and opened his eyes, expressing the beginning of conscious, wakeful action.

I have experienced the descent into the Inconscious many times (you remember, once you were there the day it happened – it had to do with divine Love²⁵¹); this experience of descending to the very bottom of the Inconscious and finding there the Divine Consciousness, the Divine Presence, under one form or another. It has happened quite frequently.

But I can’t say that my process is to descend there first, as you write. Rather, this can be the process

²⁴⁹Pearson came to Pondicherry in April 1923.

²⁵⁰In January 1925, mother had an inflammation of the knee. On May 25 of the same year, Sri Aurobindo noted in a letter, ‘The condition here is not very good. I am at present fighting the difficulties on the physical plane.’ (Cited by A.B. Purani, *Life of Sri Aurobindo*, p. 203.) Note that in 1925 the Nazi Party was founded.

only when you are ALREADY conscious and identified; then YOU DRAW DOWN the Force (as Sri Aurobindo says, 'one makes it descend') in order to transform. Then, with this action of transformation, one pushes [the Force into the depths, like a drill]. The Rishis' description of what happens next is absolutely true: a formidable battle at each step. And it would seem impossible to wage that battle without having first experienced the junction above.

That is MY experience – I don't say there can't be others. I don't know.

One can realize the Divine in the Inconscient rather quickly (in fact, I think it can happen just as soon as one has found the Divine within). But does this give the power to TRANSFORM DIRECTLY? Does the direct junction between the supreme Consciousness and the Inconscient (because that is the experience) give the power to transform the Inconscient just like that, without any intermediary? I don't think so. I simply haven't had that experience. Could all these things I've been describing be happening now if I didn't have all those experiences behind me? I don't know, I can't say.

One thing is certain – as soon as one goes beyond the terrestrial atmosphere, beyond the higher mind's 'highest' region, the sensation of 'high' and 'low' totally vanishes. There are no longer movements of ascent and descent, but (*Mother turns her hand over*) something like inner reversals.

I think the problem arises only when you try to see and understand with the mental consciousness, even with the higher mind.

I am telling you this because, as soon as I got your letter, I replied with what I'll read to you now; then I was immediately faced with something I couldn't formulate, the kind of thing that gives you the feeling of the unknown (all I knew was my own experience). So I did the usual thing – became 'blank,' turned towards the Truth; and I questioned Sri Aurobindo – and beyond – asking, if there were something to be known, that it be told to me. Then I dropped it, I paid no more attention. And only as I was coming here today was I told – I can't really use the word 'told,' but anyway, what was communicated to me concerning your question was that the difference between the two processes [the Rishis' and the present one] is purely subjective, depending upon the way the experience is registered. I don't know if I can make myself clear.... There is 'something' which is the experience and which will be the Realization; and what appears to be a different, if not opposite, process is simply a subjective mental notation of one SINGLE experience. Do you follow?

That's what I was told.

Now I'm going to read you my reply – it's the first reaction (when something comes, I stay immobile; then an initial reaction comes from above my head, but it's only like the first answering chord, and if I remain attentive, other things follow; what I have just told you is what followed). My immediate written response is based upon my own experience as well as upon what Madame Theon told me and what Sri Aurobindo told me. (*Mother reads:*)

'It is by rising to the summit of consciousness through a progressive ascent...' (that's what I meant just now by 'leaving the body,' but without going into details), 'that one unites with the Supermind. But as soon as the union is achieved, one knows and one sees that the Supermind exists in the heart of the Inconscient as well. When one is in that state, there is neither high nor low. But GENERALLY,' (I emphasized this to make it clear that I am not making an absolute assertion) 'it is by REDESCENDING through the levels of the being with a supramentalized consciousness that one can accomplish the permanent transformation of physical nature.' (This can be experienced in all sorts of ways, but what WE want and what Sri Aurobindo spoke of is a change that will never be revoked, that

251 We aren't sure, but this may refer to the experience of July 12, 1960, or to that of November 5, 1958, 'the almighty spring' (in fact, they are probably one and the same experience) which gave rise to the 1959 New Year Message: 'At the very bottom of the Inconscient, most hard and rigid and narrow and stifling, I struck upon an almighty spring that cast me up forthwith into a formless, limitless Vast, vibrating with the seeds of a new world.'

will persist, that will be as durable as the present terrestrial conditions. That is why I put ‘permanent.’) ‘There is no proof that the Rishis used another method, although, to effect this transformation (if they ever did) they must necessarily have fought their way through the powers of inconscience and obscurity.’

Yes, the Rishis give an absolutely living description of what you experience – and experience continually – as soon as you descend into the Subconscient: all these battles with the beings who conceal the Light and so on. I experienced these things continually at Tlemcen and again with Sri Aurobindo when we were doing the Work – it’s raging quite merrily even now!

As soon as you go down there, that’s what happens – you have to fight against all that is unwilling to change, all that dominates the world and does not want to change.

Ignore the spelling mistakes!

Now, if there’s something else you want to ask me, perhaps it will come....

(silence)

After reading your letter, I had a very strong feeling that you put the problem like that because you were considering it from a mental plane, which is the only plane where it exists; if you go beyond, there are no more oppositions or problems. These things are subtle, you know, and as soon as you try to formulate them, they elude you – formulation deforms.

What I mean is that it’s not necessarily in trance, in another world, that one gets the supramental consciousness....

No.

It’s something the Rishis realized with eyes wide open, in day to-day life, if I understand rightly.

I don’t know how they did it....

But I myself have never had it in trance, and neither did Sri Aurobindo – neither of us ever had trances! I mean the kind of trance where contact with the body is lost. That’s what he always said, and one of the first things I told him when we met was, ‘Well, everybody talks about trance and samadhi and all those things, but I have never had them! I have never lost consciousness.’ ‘Ah,’ he replied, ‘it’s exactly the same for me!’

It depends upon the level of development, that’s what Theon used to say: ‘One goes into trance only when certain links are missing.’ He saw people as made up of innumerable small ‘bridges,’ with intermediary zones. ‘If you have an intermediary zone that is undeveloped,’ he said, ‘a zone where you are not conscious because it’s not individualized, then you will be in trance when you cross it.’ Trance is the sign of non-individualization – the consciousness is not awake and so your body goes into trance. But if your consciousness is wide awake you can sit, keeping full contact with things, and have the total experience. I could go out of my body with no need of trance, except when Theon wanted me to do a particular work. That was a different business – the vital force (not the consciousness, the vital force) had to go out for that work, so the body had to go into trance. But even then.... For instance, very often when I am ‘called’ and go to do something in response, my body does become still, but it’s not in trance; I can be sitting and, even in the middle of a gesture, suddenly become immobile for a few seconds.²⁵² But I was doing another type of work with Theon – dangerous work, at that – and it would

²⁵²Seconds that could last for half an hour!

last for an hour. Then all the body's vital energy would go out, all of it, as it does when you die (in fact, that's how I came to experience death).

But it isn't necessary to have all those experiences, not at all – Sri Aurobindo never did. (Theon didn't have experiences, either; he had only the knowledge – he made use of Madame Theon's experiences.) Sri Aurobindo told me he had never really entered the unconsciousness of samadhi – for him, these domains were conscious; he would sit on his bed or in his armchair and have all the experiences.

Naturally, it's preferable to be in a comfortable position (it's a question of security). If you venture to do these kinds of things standing up, for instance, as I have seen them done, it's dangerous. But if one is quietly stretched out, there is no need for trance.

Besides, according to what I've been told (not physically), I believe that the Rishis practiced going into trance. But I suppose they wanted to achieve what Sri Aurobindo speaks of: a PHYSICAL transformation of the physical body permitting one to LIVE this consciousness instead of the ordinary consciousness. Did they ever do it?... I don't know. The Veda simply recounts what the *forefathers have done*. But who are these *forefathers*?

*But surely this supramental consciousness is something to be found in the body?*²⁵³

When one has these experiences, like the ones I've had in the subtle physical, for example, the body is certainly in trance – but the part having the experience doesn't AT ALL feel deprived or lacking in anything. The experience comes with a fullness of life, consciousness, independence, individuality. It's not like going out in trance to accomplish a work and feeling linked to the body – it's not that: the body no longer exists nor has any reason to! It's simply not there. And it's a nuisance to go back into it – 'what is this useless burden!' you wonder. As a result, if this experience becomes permanent, you live in a world that's just as concrete, just as real and just as TANGIBLE as our physical world, with the same qualities of duration, permanence and stability.

It's very difficult to express, because as soon as we notice it....

While having this experience, you are free (as I said, the body no longer exists, it has even no reason to exist, and you don't think of it), and you have just as concrete an OBJECTIVE functioning – even more so! It is more concrete because you have a MUCH CLEARER and more tangible perception of knowledge than ordinary physical perception; our ordinary way of understanding always seems so hazy in comparison. It's not the same phenomenon as going off into trance and being linked to the body, depending upon it for expression, and so forth.

But a certain work [of adaptation] is required to express this experience, and the first impression upon returning is that there's no way to do it. It simply doesn't correspond to anything.²⁵⁴



²⁵³Mother does not reply directly to this question (although she would probably have answered in the affirmative, since the point is indeed to LIVE this supramental consciousness), but she does reply directly to what is BEHIND Satprem's question – that is, this fundamental, deep-rooted assumption that physical life is the sole, concrete reality.

²⁵⁴This conversation was interrupted before Mother could conclude.

November 12, 1961

(Mother improvises on the harmonium to 'say' something, or perhaps to calm Satprem's nerves, then continues:)

Sri Aurobindo was telling me, 'Satprem has a headache and is tired because he's trying to do an unnecessary work.'

No, it's not me, I didn't think that myself, but it came to me several times. So I wondered if inspiration was coming, after all, but you were fighting against it. That would be more than enough to make you tired!

But you see, I'd been struggling for four or five days with no results. Well, this morning.... I was angry yesterday, angry with you...

(Unperturbed) Yes.

... because it wasn't coming.

Yes *(laughing)*, that's all right with me!

Well, this morning, you see....

It came nicely. After you got angry, it finally came!

No, it was simply a question of linking certain things up.

But is it necessary to 'link up'? I doubt it. It was an extremely mental idea.

No, I don't really mean 'linking,' rather.... Take what came this morning, for instance; it showed me (I think) that something really had to be changed. I have that feeling....

(Mother nods her head.)

And in the whole last part, there are at least twenty pages like that, with things that need to be perfected. It's a matter of a few little details – if I knew what to do with them, everything would fall into place.

You don't have an example?... Haven't you brought your text?

It's like a puzzle, with bits and pieces that aren't in their places yet. It has all come in such a fragmentary way, you see, that I've been forced to make repetitions, links. That's the snag: it indicates to me that something isn't going right. For if it were really THAT, there wouldn't be repetitions.

You haven't brought anything?

Yes, I have some things here, if you want....

What?

(Unenthusiastically) You want me to read some things?

Yes, read to me.

(Unconvinced) Yes, I can read them to you.

(after the reading, Mother comments:)

With me it's happening all the time: tzzt! Just like a foil-thrust. That's the only way it comes.

Writing seems a very poor means of expression to me.²⁵⁵

But how else can people understand! We must *(laughing)* make a concession to present terrestrial conditions.

Of all the means of expression, it seems the poorest.

Perhaps.

Perhaps, because it has the greatest pretensions to precision, which naturally shrinks everything down. There's an impression of paucity, of an absence of depth.

Yet in Vedic times they spoke of 'The Word' – the creative Word [*Vak*]. This is the idea behind the mantra. Too bad a book can't be written using mantras!

???

It would be interesting, if it were possible – that's precisely what I mean when I say: no links, no train of logic, no continuity; these are always, always mental. An inspiration, an intuition, a revelation always comes, 'poff!', leaving a score of things unsaid – gaps to be filled in with spiritual experience.

If you start to explain, it falls flat – there's no help for it.

So I wonder, after all, if there aren't many revelations in your book which **MUST NOT** be explained; then it's left up to each one's capacity to muse over it, to fill in the gaps with his imagination.

In the end, it would be a very interesting attempt: a stimulant for people's intuitive capacities, instead of taking them all for donkeys and spoon-feeding them, going yum-yum-yum-yum-yum so that they'll digest it!

(silence)

I have the feeling.... You know, Sri Aurobindo is trying to make me understand something, and it gives me a very strong feeling that you are creating unnecessary difficulties for yourself, and if... if only you could let go of something (I don't know what), then suddenly it would be: ah! It's done, it's all done,

²⁵⁵Not including poetry.

there it is!

Maybe in a few minutes – in any case not more than a few days – it would be finished. And ORIGINAL. The main impression is that it would be something new, original, unexpected, and that's just what's needed: something unexpected, unlike anything ever done before. Something sudden. At the risk of... being a bit bewildering – that doesn't matter! It doesn't matter. With all those pictures it will always be accessible to everyone. Especially each time you express this fatigue, this difficulty, what Sri Aurobindo seems to be saying comes back to me: 'But of course! He is banging up against something that shouldn't even be there!'

(Laughing) Perhaps that's why you were angry with me! Because I insist! Upstairs [in Mother's room, during japa], it keeps coming all the time, all the time: 'Go on – take the plunge! Clear the hurdle, take the plunge, cross to the other side.' Constantly, constantly.

You see, in what you've just read to me, every place where something rushes in from above is VERY good. Then suddenly something in me begins to... (words are much too crude), begins to grow bored or tired (that's too crude, it's only a slight uneasiness). And I invariably notice that what bothers me are the explanations – I'm exaggerating.

Actually, one always says too much. Always too much.

The art of good writing consists in knowing how to be silent. The things you don't say are far more important than the things you do.



November 16, 1961

In the middle of my walk, I go into trance, something that has never happened to me before! I find myself standing, immobilized, entirely surrounded by white light, in total silence, with absolutely nothing in my head – nothing.

Standing up in that state is rather dangerous, so I lie down on my bed. And it continues – I hear nothing, see nothing but this white light. No more thought, not one idea in my head, nothing at all, to such an extent that if anyone enters noiselessly, I don't know it. But I do feel the pressure of someone watching me; I can sense it, so I open my eyes and there is actually someone there.

But work, mon petit... I can't work. I can't remember even the simplest things I am supposed to remember! I wanted to tell you when my free days were, but I no longer recall them.

Yet it produces an extraordinarily keen perception of what is behind things. For instance, I've just seen the [school] children;

I'm more or less familiar with them all, and I can see – not with images – their inner natures much more clearly than usual. The inner perception, the perception of what people are feeling and thinking, is very acute, so much so that I see thoughts and feelings more than I see physical appearances.

But work – not a stroke. Ah, yes, I am translating *The Synthesis of Yoga* and it seems much easier. I go slower, a certain tension has disappeared, and the meaning is far clearer than usual. In other words, I'm interiorized – there you have it.

But it's deplorable from an external viewpoint! Unread letters are piling up; I don't reply to people, I forget everything – I don't even try to remember. From an external point of view, I'm pretty worthless.

It will last just as long as it lasts.

And of course, as always, there's an accumulation of people, of visitors asking to see me.... There is always this external contradiction.

But a day more or less doesn't matter!

I'm already late... *(Mother gets up hastily).*



November 16, 1961

(Letter from Mother to Satprem on the occasion of his manuscript being sent to Paris:)

11-16-61

Satprem, my dear child,

You were scheduled for the 21st and the Italian 'delegate' for the 23rd. I have switched it around, so on the 23rd you take the place of this lady, whom I will now see on the 21st.

I find the book VERY BEAUTIFUL.

With all my tenderness,
Signed: Mother



November 23, 1961

I'm going to play you ten minutes of music. I have taken a vow of silence. It is very good; it does me

good! Bring me a stool.

(music)



December

December 16, 1961

(Mother comes in with a rolled-up paper.)

Here's my original manuscript – although it's not very 'original.'

It's a message for the first of January.

One day... (I'm translating the last section of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, 'The Yoga of Self-Perfection' – it plunges you into bottomless gulfs...) and one day (I think I've told you this), I had a vision of the gap between... not even what ought to be, because we probably haven't the slightest idea of that, but between our concept of what we would like to be and what is. And it was so dreadful that the body was thrown into, oh... an anguish, a horror; and along with it an intensity of aspiration, a prayer. The gap seemed so tremendous: 'Is it possible?'

That's how it felt.

So to calm the body I took a pencil and wrote: 'My being thirsts.' (to tell the truth, I wanted to write 'this body thirsts...') '... for perfection, not this human perfection...' (I should tell you that all the things I am translating are simultaneously accompanied by a set of external circumstances OBVIOUSLY arranged in detail to illustrate the translation: a whole set of quite unpleasant circumstances, besides, serving simultaneously as backdrop and illustration. That's what brought on the anguish...). 'This body thirsts for perfection, not this human perfection which is the perfection of the ego...' (it was so clear to me that everything human beings conceive of as perfection is simply the ego wanting to magnify itself for its own greater glory) '... not this human perfection which is the perfection of the ego and bars the way to the divine Perfection, but that one perfection...' (these repeated 'perfections' are deliberate: it's like a litany) '...but that one perfection which has the POWER to manifest upon earth the eternal Truth.'

It was this need, this need... All the body's cells began to vibrate with a more and more intense vibration – it was much more than a need; it was a necessity, a necessity to vibrate in unison with Truth. The cells seemed to be sensing the vibration of Truth, and so the entire body was in a state of total tension – not 'tension' in the ordinary sense, but... it was like trying to find a note that rings true. That's what it was: to make the cells' vibration ring true to the Vibration of Truth.

But you can't get that down on paper!

The experience was extremely intense, so I didn't do anything with my note, I put it aside. Then recently someone mentioned the first of January. 'What the devil am I going to read to them?' I wondered... (I usually read them a message). And I thought of this text: 'I'll change this scribble a bit, "humanize" it and bring it down a few rungs (*smiling*); then it will do.' So I wrote: 'WE thirst for perfection..., etc.' In the experience it was only the BODY, you understand (the other part of the being is quite all right) – the body is in this state. All the rest is very happy – very happy, in perpetual joy and eurythmy (*gesture of great waves*), feeling divine Love (not Love as such... I don't know how to say it): this Love without object, this Love which is neither 'originated' nor 'received' – without object, without cause or origin. It's the feeling of floating in something.

That's all very fine. But the body remains miserable.

And if I tell that to people, they go wide-eyed. It makes no sense to them – to even have the idea of a perfection existing somewhere, an attainable perfection, is already quite a lot for them! So I wrote: *We thirst for perfection, not this human perfection which is the perfection of the ego and bars the way to the divine Perfection, but that ONE perfection which has the power to manifest upon Earth the eternal Truth.*²⁵⁶

The English version is stronger than the French. That's because it first came in English and then I made a patch-up job in French!

(silence)

I continue to be incredibly lazy!

There, mon petit... we haven't done anything!

There's the next 'Bulletin.'

Did you bring something?

The 'Bulletin,' if you like.

Wouldn't you like a little music?

(In a low voice) Yes.

Ah, let's see – we'll play 'preferences'! Which do you prefer? Frankly, quite frankly.

From what point of view?

(Laughing) Bulletin or music.

Ah! Which do I prefer?

Yes!

Well, obviously... dutifully, the 'Bulletin'; spontaneously, the music.

Ah, so that's it! But 'dutifully' doesn't count! The sense of duty is not what I call 'preference'!

(Mother gets up to go to the organ) Between you and me, what I call preference is... a kind of very... very tranquil inclination of the soul: 'this would be best.' But I believe... I ask you but I can

²⁵⁶When Mother was asked for a New Year message, the first inspiration that came to her when she began to 'look' at the coming year was this:

'If the Lord wills that a calamity befall you,
why should you protest?
Take it as a blessing
and in fact it will become one.'

Then Mother thought that this message might not be too comforting and she put it aside (after asking the opinion of two disciples). Finally she chose the text of the experience which is the subject of this conversation. But the coming year, 1962, would be marked by the first great turning-point in Mother's yoga and a rather calamitous ordeal for the body.

sense that it's music! *(laughter)*

The *Bulletin* is a bit boring, isn't it?

No, it's not boring! It's something else. (Laughter)

The sense of duty.... There is nothing more irksome than the sense of duty!

(Mother sits at the organ, plays, then turns halfway around on her stool and says:)

I shut my eyes (that's how I hear best) but then sometimes my fingers make mistakes; they slip. Because I see... with other eyes; and when I do see with those other eyes, the music comes much better. When I open my eyes it doesn't come. It's always with eyes closed that I hear clearly, clearly. But then my fingers sometimes slip.

All the time, it comes and it comes, all the time *(Mother shapes great waves)*. Someone is playing to me; so if my hands are ABSOLUTELY docile, it goes well.

But the slightest hesitation can make my fingers slip and hit a false note.

Right now it's wide open and flowing *(gesture of waves streaming in)*.

And it's saying something all the while.

I don't know WHO comes.

Last year there was a conflict between Krishna on one side (he came, I saw him), and some kind of spirit coming from Shiva; Krishna was playing, and the two of them were constantly quarreling! One wanted it to be like this, with roseate colorations, and the other wanted it all in blues and silvers. And then suddenly, as I was playing (in fact, it was the last time I played and it had started off entirely with Krishna and was going quite well) but suddenly something came like the blow of a fist *(gesture of a blow to the arm)*, wham! I completely lost my balance – really I almost....

But then here I am, watching it all, enjoying myself immensely! It's very interesting.

(To Sujata) Look, I almost have a bruise on my arm!

My hands are a little too conscious – from time to time their own consciousness creeps in and wreaks havoc! I'm not much of a medium – it would be a lot better if I were!

(Mother runs her hands over the keyboard)

There was a hand there... and two kinds of trumpets going O-Oh! *(Mother plays)*

It's quite interesting.

(Mother seems about to get up...)

Well, then. Now we haven't done anything – but there's nothing more pleasant than doing nothing!

(.. then she plays again for a long while, until...)

There. Enough.

When is our next idle moment? *(laughter)*

Oh, there's nothing wrong with a bit of fun, is there?

It's so monotonous out there (*gesture beyond the door where people are waiting*).
We have to have a little fun.
I don't know if you enjoy it, but I do!



December 18, 1961

(Letter to Mother from Satprem)

Sweet Mother,

A long letter from the publisher.

He has understood NOTHING, felt nothing in this book, finding it 'too abstract.' In a word, they won't accept it without extensive modifications and 'explanations.'

May your will be done,
With love,
Signed: Satprem

(Mother's reply affixed to Satprem's letter.)

This was to be expected.

But don't go and spoil your book just to make it digestible for them.

We shall publish it here, taking out the unnecessary pictures – having only a few will make the book more interesting.

I suppose you can return their money and cancel the contract – but reserve the right to print the book yourself, changing the presentation to avoid any confusion with their collection.



December 20, 1961

(Satprem reads Mother some extracts from the letter he has just received from his publisher in Paris.)

I'm skipping over the carefully phrased introduction....

'Dear Sir... I must begin by telling you that although this text is an excellent essay, it is not, in its present form, a book for the "Spiritual Masters" series. Let us enumerate the reasons for this. First of all, the general impression is of an ABSTRACT text. I can straight-away imagine your reaction to this and I dread misunderstandings! But putting myself in the reader's place, since, once again, it does involve a collection intended for a wide public that we are beginning to know well, I can assure you that this public will not be able to follow page after page of reflections upon what one is bound to call a philosophical and spiritual "system." Obviously this impression is caused primarily by the fact that you have begun with twenty-one pages where the reader is assumed to already know of Sri Aurobindo's historical existence and the content of the Vedas and the Upanishads, plus I don't know how many other notions of rite, truth, divinity, wisdom, etc., etc.... In my view, and the solution is going to appear cruel to you, for you certainly value these twenty-one pages [on the Secret of the Veda], they should purely and simply be deleted, for everything you say there, which is very rich in meaning, can only become clear when one has read what follows. There are many books in which readers can be asked to make the effort entailed in not understanding the beginning until they have read the end: but not books of popular culture. One could envisage an introduction of three or four pages to situate the spiritual climate and cultural world in which Sri Aurobindo's thought has taken place, provided, however, that it is sufficiently 'descriptive,' and not a pre-synthesis of everything to be expounded upon in what follows. In a general way... you are going to smile, finding me quite Cartesian! But the readership we address is more or less permeated by a widespread Cartesianism, and you can help them, if you like, to reverse their methodology, but on the condition that you make yourself understood right from the start. Generally, you don't make enough use of analysis and, even before analysis, of a description of the realities being analyzed.... That is why the sections of pure philosophical analysis seem much too long to us, and, even apart from the abstract character of the chapter on evolution (which should certainly be shorter), one feels at a positive standstill! After having waited patiently, and sometimes impatiently, for some light to be thrown on Sri Aurobindo's own experience, one reads with genuine amazement... that "one can draw on energies from above instead of drawing on them from the material nature around oneself, or from an animal sleep," or that "one can modify his sleep and render it conscious... master illnesses before they enter the body." All of that in less than a page; and you conclude that "the spirit that was the slave of matter becomes again the master of evolution. " But how Sri Aurobindo was led to think this, the experiences that permitted him to verify it, those that permit other men to consider the method transmittable, the difficulties, the obstacles, the realizations – doesn't this constitute the essence of what must be said to make the reader understand?... Once again, it is the question of a pedagogy intimately tied in with the spirit of the collection.... Let me add as well that I always find it deplorable when a thought is not expressed purely for its own sake, but is accompanied by an aggressive irony towards concepts which the author does not share. This is pointless and harms the ideas being presented, all the more so because they are expressed in contrast with caricatured notions: the allusions you make to such concepts as you think yourself capable of evoking – the soul, creation, virtue, sin, salvation – would only hold some interest if the reader could find those very concepts within himself. But, as they are caricatured by your pen, the reader is given the impression of an all too easily obtained contrast between certain ideas admired and others despised. Whereas it would be far more to the point if they corresponded to something real in the religious consciousness of the West.... I have too much esteem for you and the spiritual world in which you live to avoid saying this through fear of upsetting you....'

Amen.

(silence)

Yesterday night Sri Aurobindo told me, 'They wouldn't have been satisfied unless they had been given a good pack of dubious miracles.'

That's exactly what they want – tales about miracles.

I don't believe your book can be changed – it's meaningless to snip at it. If you really want to know what I would do, I would write another one, putting myself in their place: something showing a comprehensible Sri Aurobindo – almost a congenial Sri Aurobindo – that is, only the constructive side of his teaching, in its most external form, leaving out... not the philosophical notions, but the truly spiritual ones, for that is completely sealed to their understanding.

They are not ready! They are not ready.

(silence)

Seen from the European angle, Sri Aurobindo represents an immense spiritual revolution, redeeming Matter and the creation, which to the Christian religion is fundamentally a fall – it's really unclear how what has come from God could become so bad, but anyway, better not be too logical! it's a fall. The creation is a fall. And that's why they are far more easily convinced by Buddhism. I saw this particularly with Richard, whose education was entirely in European philosophy, with Christian and positivist influences; under these two influences, when he came into contact with Theon's 'cosmic philosophy' and later Sri Aurobindo's revelation, he immediately explained, in his *Wherefore of the Worlds*, that the world is the fruit of Desire – God's desire. Yet Sri Aurobindo says (in simple terms), 'God created the world for the Joy of the creation,' or rather, 'He brought forth the world from Himself for the Joy of living an objective life.' This was Theon's thesis too, that the world is the Divine in an objective form, but for him the origin of this objective form was the desire to be. All this is playing with words, you understand, but it turns out that in one case the world is reprehensible and in the other it is adorable! And that makes all the difference. To the whole European mind, the whole Christian spirit, the world is reprehensible. And when THAT is pointed out to them, they can't stand it.

So the very normal, natural reaction against this attitude is to negate the spiritual life: let's take the world as it is, brutally, materially, 'short and sweet' (since it all comes to an end with this short life), let's do all we can to enjoy ourselves now, suffer as little as possible and not think of anything else. Having said that life is a condemned, reprehensible, anti-divine thing, this is the logical conclusion. Then what to do?... We don't want to do away with life, so we do away with the Divine.

That's it exactly.

They can't take it – even those who are very intelligent (and this man is very intelligent): they immediately close up.

I feel that this man himself is the obstacle and that if the book came out, it would be understood – not everywhere, but it would be understood. Not by those shut up in Catholicism (there's nothing to do for them), but I'm sure it's accessible to all who couldn't care less about that, who don't have Christian prejudices.

But I know that if we publish it here it will have a wide public in Europe and America swallowing it down like holy bread, and it will do a magnificent work. IF it comes from here. Not because of what they think of us [the Ashram], but because of what will be in it.

They want to 'tidy up' your book, do they! They can't take it. I saw this when the book was sent off: they can't take it, they just can't. They put up a barrier; they can't receive what is in it, and so they

will do all they can to annul its effects.

Coming from here, of course, it will take much more time to touch the general public, but I see how things work in the universe: it will go far more surely and directly to those who are ready to receive it. And we mustn't believe that only an 'elite' public of especially intelligent and refined people will be touched: among very simple, open-hearted people there is a deep intelligence that understands and responds to these things far better than very cultivated people do – far better – because they feel, they feel the vibration of this profound Hope, this profound Joy, something corresponding to the intense need of their being. While the others begin to reason and sophisticate, which takes away half the power.

From the practical standpoint, I would much prefer the book to be printed here and for us to make the necessary effort for it to go out and touch as many people as possible. The publisher may be a handy and less troublesome channel, but he's not at all the best one – far from it. THAT I know, because I am constantly seeing your book with Sri Aurobindo's perception, and I am absolutely positive that he likes it very much; he has put a lot into it and he sees that it can be an enormous help – but not in the short run. There is always the sense of it needing a hundred years to have its full effect. With your publisher, on the other hand, the effects are far more violent, more external and noisy, but they fade far more quickly.

And I feel it's rather essential to change all the emphasis on pictures. I let them go because there was nothing else to do, but I must say I wasn't too happy about it.²⁵⁷ it was not a deep understanding, a soul-understanding, that chose the pictures, but a very developed intellect.

A few pictures, very few, simply giving an opening for the soul, is quite sufficient.

(silence)

One more thing. Despite their blockage from the deep spiritual viewpoint, they evidently represent a certain goodwill which can be utilized and should be recognized – it must be given a place. That's why I was telling you to write a book on a much less elevated level, a book... like the one I would write, if I ever wrote one!

But Mother....

You know how I write – it's always unexpected; you always feel...

No one but you can write like that!

No. No, I don't believe it. It's only a question of attitude, that's all.

No, Mother, it's a question of experience. One's writing must always well up from a deep and constant experience.

Yes!

Yes, but I don't have that! I have a kind of awareness, but not the true experience.... But I'll try, Mother, if you believe I can do it.

I do believe it!

²⁵⁷Satprem did not choose these pictures.

My book, of course, would be: *What I have known of Sri Aurobindo* – and on his supreme level. *What I have known of Sri Aurobindo is...* what I have been able to perceive of the Avatar. What he represents. That's how I see him. So, *what I have known of Sri Aurobindo*, expressed 'spontaneously,' with a minimum of external events, the very minimum, but with all the experiences of our meetings: at that time, this opened that; at that moment, I realized this or saw that or felt something else... ; and then I was able to do such and such – and all of it was Sri Aurobindo.

I know it would create a furor if I wrote this book! Because any fool could read it like a story and feel perfectly satisfied – and he wouldn't even notice it taking hold of him inside and changing him.

A philosophical book?... No. A spiritual book?... No, not at all! Just a nice, little commonsense book – that's what they would see!

I don't have time.

I could possibly scribble a few things down and have you write a book with them, but... I don't have the time and... anyway, I just thought of it this minute. I hadn't an inkling of it ten minutes ago.

I am seeing this book now. I see it. But when I leave here, with that whole throng around me and all that work to do, it will fade away. I would need to be very quiet, have nothing to do, and just write when it comes to me; because I cannot do things in a logical fashion – I have never been able to, never. The experience must come suddenly – a memory, an experience – then I note it down, put it aside and leave it. And when another comes, the same thing. In this way there would be (*smiling*) no plan to the book! It would be very simple: no plan of ideas, no plan of development, nothing; simply a story.

For example, the importance of the departure²⁵⁸ : how he was present the whole time I was away; how he guided my entire life in Japan; how.... Of course, it would be seen in the mirror of my own experience, but it would be Sri Aurobindo – not me, not my reactions: him; but through my experience because that's all I can speak of.

There would be interesting things even for....

But I have two very serious objections. One, it would be a major occult revelation (there would be a lot of occultism – what people term 'miracles' or things of that nature), a major revelation. I hesitate to do that because I don't think it's time yet. Mainly that. And then, in spite of everything, it would inevitably be far too personal, even if it weren't written along personal lines – far too personal. And now isn't the time for that.

There would inevitably be far too much of the physical person in it, and that isn't interesting. It would only be interesting if the Person, with a capital P, came to express Itself. That would be tremendous.

I feel that it will be done one day – when that Person does the writing. But now there is still too much mixture, too much of this (*Mother touches her body*), this collection of little... there's still too much reaction from the small physical person – not in what I might say but in the BRAIN that would have to transcribe it.

But something else could be done.... It's a great pity you never met him.... Perhaps it's best. It's very difficult to rise above appearances.²⁵⁹

Here, just to give you an example: when I first began to work (not with Theon personally but with

258In 1915, when Mother left Pondicherry for France and later Japan.

259Actually, Satprem did see Sri Aurobindo in 1946 or 1947.

an acquaintance of his in France, a boy²⁶⁰ who was a friend of my brother), well, I had a series of visions (I knew nothing about India, mind you, nothing, just as most Europeans know nothing about it: ‘a country full of people with certain customs and religions, a confused and hazy history, where a lot of “extraordinary things” are said to have happened.’ I knew nothing.) Well, in several of these visions I saw Sri Aurobindo just as he looked physically, but glorified; that is, the same man I would see on my first visit, almost thin, with that golden-bronze hue and rather sharp profile, an unruly beard and long hair, dressed in a dhoti with one end of it thrown over his shoulder, arms and chest bare, and bare feet. At the time I thought it was ‘vision attire’! I mean I really knew nothing about India; I had never seen Indians dressed in the Indian way.

Well, I saw him. I experienced what were at once symbolic visions and spiritual FACTS: absolutely decisive spiritual experiences and facts of meeting and having a united perception of the Work to be accomplished. And in these visions I did something I had never done physically: I prostrated before him in the Hindu manner. All this without any comprehension in the little brain (I mean I really didn’t know what I was doing or how I was doing it – nothing at all). I did it, and at the same time the outer being was asking, ‘What is all this?!’

I wrote the vision down (or perhaps that was later on) but I never spoke of it to anyone (one doesn’t talk about such things, naturally). But my impression was that it was premonitory, that one day something like it would happen. And it remained *in the background of the consciousness*, not active, but constantly present.

As for Theon, he was European and wore a long purple robe that wasn’t at all like the one in my vision. (I’m not sure, but I think he was either Polish or Russian, but more probably Russian, of Jewish descent, and that he was forced to leave his country; he never said anything about this to anyone, it’s only an impression.) When I saw him I recognized him as a being of great power. And he bore a certain likeness to Sri Aurobindo: Theon was about the same size (not a tall man, of medium height) and thin, slim, with quite a similar profile. But when I met Theon I saw (or rather I felt) that he was not the man I saw in my vision because... he didn’t have that vibration. Yet it was he who first taught me things, and I went and worked at Tlemcen for two years in a row. But this other thing was always there in the background of the consciousness.

Then when Richard came here he met Sri Aurobindo (he was haunted by the idea of meeting the ‘Master,’ the Guru, the ‘Great Teacher’). Sri Aurobindo was in hiding, seeing no one, but when Richard insisted, he met him, and Richard returned with a photograph. It was one of those early photos, with nothing in it. It was empty, the remnants of the political man, not at all resembling what I had seen – I didn’t recognize him. ‘It’s strange,’ I said to myself, ‘that’s not it’ (for I saw only his external appearance, there was no inner contact). But still, I was curious to meet him. At any rate, I can’t say that when I saw this photograph I felt, ‘He’s the one!’ Not at all. He impressed me as being a very interesting man, but no more.

I came here.... But something in me wanted to meet Sri Aurobindo all alone the first time. Richard went to him in the morning and I had an appointment for the afternoon. He was living in the house that’s now part of the second dormitory, the old *Guest House*.²⁶¹ I climbed up the stairway and he was standing there, waiting for me at the top of the stairs.... EXACTLY my vision! Dressed the same way, in the same position, in profile, his head held high. He turned his head towards me... and I saw in his eyes that it was He. The two things clicked (*gesture of instantaneous shock*), the inner experience immediately became one with the outer experience and there was a fusion – the decisive shock.

²⁶⁰The manly.

²⁶¹Rue François Martin.

But this was merely the beginning of my vision. Only after a series of experiences – a ten months' sojourn in Pondicherry, five years of separation, then the return to Pondicherry and the meeting in the same house and in the same way – did the END of the vision occur.... I was standing just beside him. My head wasn't exactly on his shoulder, but where his shoulder was (I don't know how to explain it – physically there was hardly any contact). We were standing side by side like that, gazing out through the open window, and then TOGETHER, at exactly the same moment, we felt, 'Now the Realization will be accomplished.' That the seal was set and the Realization would be accomplished. I felt the Thing descending massively within me, with the same certainty I had felt in my vision. From that moment on there was nothing to say – no words, nothing. We knew it was THAT.

But between these two meetings he participated in a whole series of experiences, experiences of gradually growing awareness. This is partly noted in *Prayers and Meditations* (I have cut out all the personal segments). But there was one experience I didn't speak of there (that is, I didn't describe it, I put only the conclusion) – the experience where I say 'Since the man refused I was offering participation in the universal work and the new creation and the man didn't want it, he refused, and so I now offer it to God....'²⁶²

I don't know, I'm putting it poorly, but this experience was concrete to the point of being physical. It happened in a Japanese country-house where we were living, near a lake. There was a whole series of circumstances, events, all kinds of things – a long, long story, like a novel. But one day I was alone in meditation (I have never had very profound meditations, only concentrations of consciousness – *Mother makes an abrupt gesture showing a sudden ingathering of the entire being*); and I was seeing.... You know that I had taken on the conversion of the Lord of Falsehood: I tried to do it through an emanation incarnated in a physical being [Richard²⁶³], and the greatest effort was made during those four years in Japan. The four years were coming to an end with an absolute inner certainty that there was nothing to be done – that it was impossible, impossible to do it this way. There was nothing to be done. And I was intensely concentrated, asking the Lord, 'Well, I made You a vow to do this, I had said, "Even if it's necessary to descend into hell, I will descend into hell to do it...." Now tell me, what must I do?...' The Power was plainly there: suddenly everything in me became still; the whole external being was completely immobilized and I had a vision of the Supreme... more beautiful than that of the Gita. A vision of the Supreme.²⁶⁴ And this vision literally gathered me into its arms; it turned towards the West, towards India, and offered me – and there at the other end I saw Sri Aurobindo. It was... I felt it physically. I saw, saw – my eyes were closed but I saw (twice I have had this vision of the Supreme – once here, much later – but this was the first time)... ineffable. It was as if this Immensity had reduced itself to a rather gigantic Being who lifted me up like a wisp of straw and offered me. Not a word, nothing else, only that.

Then everything vanished.

The next day we began preparing to return to India.

It was after this vision, when I returned from Japan, that this meeting with Sri Aurobindo took place, along with the certainty that the Mission would be accomplished.

262Mother is probably alluding to this passage in *Prayers and Meditations* (September 3, 1919): 'Since the man refused the meal I had prepared with so much love and care, I invoke the God to take it.'

263See conversation of November 5, 1961.

264Perhaps Mother is alluding to this passage from *Prayers and Meditations* (October 10, 1918): 'My Father smiled at me and gathered me into his powerful arms....'

(silence)

This can all be narrated in a very simple way; these things are not metaphysical. It involves occultism, of course, but it's utterly concrete and simple: things a child could understand.

And these are the real milestones of the whole Story.

I feel it will be told one day. But first of all, this (*Mother touches her body*) must be sufficiently changed. Then the story will take on its full value.

You understand, none of my certitudes – none, without exception – have EVER come through the mind. The intellectual comprehension of each of these experiences came much later. Little by little, little by little, came the higher understanding of the intellectual consciousness, long after the experience (I don't mean philosophical knowledge – that's nothing but scholarly mumbo-jumbo and leaves me cold). Since my earliest childhood, experiences have come like that: something massive takes hold of you and you don't need to believe or disbelieve, know or not know – bam! There's nothing to say; you are facing a fact.

Once, during those last difficult years, Sri Aurobindo told me that this was precisely what gave me my advantage and why (how to put it?) there were greater possibilities that I would go right to the end.

I still don't know. The day I do... it will probably be done. Because it will come in the same manner, like a massive fact: it will be LIKE THAT. And only much later will the understanding say, 'Ah! So that's what it is!'

First it comes, afterwards we know it.

For the moment, it's not here.

(silence)

A book like that (sufficiently veiled, of course), written in the simplest way possible (like I wrote 'The Science of Living,' I believe) – and it's fine, you speak to people in their own language. Above all, no philosophy! None! You simply tell some extraordinary stories in the same way you would tell an ordinary story. But the Story is there, that's the most important thing.

It started in my infancy – the Story was already there.

But it never passed through my head first, never, never, never! Experiences came in my childhood that I didn't understand until Sri Aurobindo told me certain things; then I said, 'Ah, so that's what it was!...' But I never had that kind of curiosity, I never cared to understand with the head, I wasn't interested. I was interested in the result, in the inner change: how my attitude towards the world changed, my position relative to the creation – that interested me from my infancy; how what seemed to be quite ordinary incidents could so completely change my relationship with that whole little world of children. And it was always the same thing: instead of feeling burdened, with a weight on your head, and just plodding on like a donkey, something would lift (*gesture*) and you would be on top of it – you could smile and begin to change. See that thing that's out of place?... Why not set it right! Like arranging things in a drawer.

Why? How? What does it all mean?... What do I care! Setting it right is what's important!

It began when I was five, almost eighty years ago.

If God wills and we reach the end, then we will simply tell our story, that's all – NO TEACHING.

There you are, mon petit.

Think it over. I would like us to publish your book exactly as it is, with its full force, with all that Sri Aurobindo has put into it; and we will give it a bit of help to go and do its work. And you should

come to an understanding with these people.... But first you should write just a simple book, quite simple and quite positive: the constructive aspect – very constructive, very simple. No attempt to convince, no big problems – no, no, no! Sri Aurobindo has come to tell the world that man is not the final creation, that there is another creation; and he said this not because he knew it but because he felt it. And he began to do it. And that's all.

It needn't be long.

You want me to write a book again!?

Yes... if it's not too much trouble! (*Mother laughs*) Spontaneously, simply – if you want to, if you feel like it. You know what I mean: a book that is TRUE, in the sense that you won't say anything not perfectly true, but accessible... not only accessible to the 'superior' man, but to the honest man who finds that life really isn't good or pleasant and is wondering if there isn't some way to make it better.

Without... without great speculations.

There are many things like that in Sri Aurobindo's book, *On Himself*, many things.

Just see if you feel like it, mon petit.

If you get a feeling....

Write it in a relaxed way, spontaneously. And we will give them some pretty little photos... magazine photos! It would be a very fine way to reply: 'Ah, that's what you want! Well, by all means! But I retain the right to publish my original manuscript – I won't be competing with you since we will publish it here in India. So please return my manuscript and we will prepare something very nice for you.'

And mind you, it can be very beautiful in its simplicity, a beauty sorrowful people can feel, people who are tired of life, people whose heads are sick of all these arguments and dogmas – people who are tired of thinking too many great thoughts.

And I am the first among them! Nothing tires me more than philosophers.



December 23, 1961

(Concerning the Sri Aurobindo manuscript, Mother advises against replying to the publisher too hastily, because she sees a possibility that could change the situation.)

There is something deeper. And within this deeper thing there was: quiet, quiet, quiet, we will wait; and the impression (but vague, distant and uncertain) of some attempt being made to introduce a very good possibility into the atmosphere. I never see on the purely physical plane, you know (it's always on the subtle physical, the plane of possibilities – that's more real to me; the purely physical generally eludes me, but I see the subtle physical clearly), and I was seeing... I don't know, it was like something higher, from above, trying to make someone enter the field of possibilities, a brain that would suddenly be

touched by the book and reverse the situation. I don't know who, I don't know what, I don't know how.... Ah, you know that yellow rose I just gave you? It's fringed in pink. Well, what came was like a slender pink fringe winding through the atmosphere of this situation.

It's possible – all is possible!

I can see from the publisher's letter that he has been touched much more than he thinks. His outer mentality may have responded the way it did, but something was vibrating within – I felt it as soon as you read me his letter. And he is violently denying it of course! It would disturb him a good deal, so he defends himself violently; but this just might give him the idea of having others read it – and it could touch someone. I don't know, I am giving you an explanation of what I saw, of the sensation it gave me: 'Wait, don't move.' And then: 'You will be informed when it is necessary to act.' So let the first of the year go by, and then we will see.

Well then. And you?

*Me?.... Not much progress.*²⁶⁵

Within it is going very well, as you will notice in a while! But it takes time. It takes time and occasionally it takes on bizarre appearances. I can see that this whole peculiar period I've been passing through was a tremendous progress... and I didn't know it. I am not at the end yet, but now I understand what it is. And it's something of capital importance.

Yes, I felt you were going through a strange period.

Now I know the outcome, and that's what I didn't see before. But it will take time. For the moment it seems.... You know, it wasn't pleasant: everything appears useless, impossible in that condition.... But that's very good! (*Mother laughs*) Very good. But while these things are happening, we shouldn't speak of them. So... nonetheless, we still need a *Bulletin!*

(For the next 'Bulletin,' Satprem reads to Mother from 'Questions and Answers,' dated January 4, 1956.)

'... And so a time comes when one would be incapable of saying, "This is divine and that is not...."'

Oh, that's a wonderful thing – at times it's truly stupendous!... But go on, continue – it would take too long to go into that!

'...Because there comes a time when one perceives the entire universe in such a total and comprehensive way that, in truth, it is impossible to remove anything from it without disturbing everything. And going a couple of steps further, one knows for certain that things which shock us as contradictions of the Divine are simply things out of place. Each thing must be exactly in its place, and what's more, be supple enough, plastic enough, to admit into a harmonious, progressive organization all the new elements constantly being added to the manifest universe. The universe is in a perpetual movement of internal reorganization, and at the same time it's growing: it's becoming more and more complex, more and more complete, more and more integral – indefinitely. And as the new elements manifest, the whole reorganization must be built on a new basis, and thus there isn't a second when ALL is not in

²⁶⁵Satprem did not keep the full text of his reply, still under the erroneous impression that his personal questions had no place here.

perpetual movement. And when the movement is in accord with the divine order, it's harmonious, so perfectly harmonious that it's almost imperceptible.... Now, if you descend from this consciousness towards a more external consciousness, you begin naturally to have a very precise feeling of what helps you attain the true consciousness and what bars the way or pulls you backwards or even fights against your progress. And so the perspective changes and you are obliged to say: this is divine or a help towards the Divine; and that goes against the Divine, it's the Divine's enemy. But this is a pragmatic standpoint, geared to action, to movement in material life – because you haven't yet attained the consciousness surpassing all that; because you haven't reached that inner perfection where you no longer have to fight, since you have gone beyond the field or the time or the utility of struggle. But before reaching that state in your consciousness and action, there is necessarily struggle; and if there is struggle, there is choice; and to choose, you need discrimination.'

(Mother remains silent)

* * *

(Satprem again reads from the same 'Questions and Answers' of 1956.)

'All things are attracted to the Divine. Are the hostile forces also attracted to the Divine?' You know, I can say one thing about this.... There's a type of woman I have met more or less periodically throughout my life. These beings are under the influence, or are incarnations of, or in any case are responsive to forces which Theon called 'passive' – not exactly feminine forces, but on the *Prakriti*²⁶⁶ side of the universe: the dark Prakriti side (there is an active dark side, the asuric forces, and a passive dark side). And these are terrible beings, terrible! They have wreaked havoc in life. They represent one of the creation's biggest difficulties. And they are attracted to me!

Mon petit, they adore me, they detest me, they would like to destroy me – and individually they CANNOT do without me! They come to me like... like fireflies to light. And they hate me! They would like to crush me. That's how it is.

I have met five women like that, the last two here (they were the most terrible). It's a phenomenon of hate and rage mixed with love's greatest power of attraction – no sweetness, of course, no tenderness, nothing like that – but NEED, love's greatest power of attraction, mixed with hate. And they cling, you know, and then... what fun!

I had a session like that some days ago – it's a work I'm pursuing. (Likewise, I have constantly been with the adverse force I once told you about,²⁶⁷ who keeps incarnating especially to harass me – so there's also this phenomenon, amiably passing from one being to another!) Anyway, not long ago I had given an appointment to this woman and had decided not to say anything – because there was nothing to be done (the most beautiful things go rotten, there's nothing to do). So I remained silent, indrawn, fully in contact with the Supreme Presence, with the external personality annulled (this experience, in fact, lasting almost one hour, is what gave me the key to everything that has been happening lately).

²⁶⁶*Prakriti*: Nature or the executive force, as opposed to *Purusha*, the conscious Soul which sees, knows and creates through its vision. These are the two principles, feminine and masculine, of the universe.

²⁶⁷See *Agenda* of March 26, 1959 (Vol. I, p. 288): the Titan sent especially to attack Mother's body, and who uses the people around her for this purpose.

There was only the Supreme, nothing else – the Supreme THERE, in that very body, mon petit, in that whole agglomeration and in that apparently absolutely anti-divine influence – HIS Presence was there!

It was a truly stupendous experience, petty though the object is (she is insignificant, without any great substance or power – a very minor incarnation; she does have certain not quite human capacities, but they are so veiled by a tiny human personality that scarcely anyone but I can see them).

And in the experience there was no difference between my physical and my inner being (actually, it's that way more and more for me); even physically, externally, there was a kind of love full of adoration, and so spontaneous – not even any sense of wonder! And there was such a formidable Power in it, formidable from the standpoint of the entire earth.... It lasted one hour. After an hour, the experience slowly began to fade (it had to fade – for purely practical reasons). But it left me so confident of a radical change – not a total change, for it wasn't permanent – but so radical that even outwardly, way down below in me, something was saying, 'Ah, how will the meditations with X be now?' I caught Myself... not thinking, not 'myself': someone thought like that, somewhere way down below. This pulled me out of the experience and I wondered, 'That's strange, who's thinking like that?' It was one of the personalities²⁶⁸ (in terms of work, it's the one that gives each action its proper place), someone way down below, spontaneously feeling: 'But that's going to change the meditations! What will they be like now?' When I returned and began to look at things with the usual discernment, I told myself that perhaps there actually will be a change.

But truly, EVERYTHING was changed at that moment: something was achieved. It was the perception of Power – the Power that comes from Love (what Love is to the Supreme Consciousness, which has nothing to do with what we usually mean by the word 'love'). And it was... it was simple! None of those complications resulting from thought, intellect, understanding – all that was gone, all gone. A formidable Power! And it made me understand one thing, that the state I had been put in (by the Lord of Yoga, in fact) was for obtaining the particular power that comes through an identity with all material things, a power possessed by certain persons – not always yogis, certain mediums, for instance. I saw it with Madame Theon: she would will a thing to come to her instead of going to the thing herself; instead of going to get her sandals when she wanted them, she made the sandals come to her. She did this through a capacity to radiate her matter – she exercised a will over her matter – her central will acted upon matter anywhere, since she WAS THERE. With her, then, I saw this power in a methodical, organized way, not as something accidental or spasmodic (as it is with mediums), but as an organization of Matter. And so... I began to understand: 'With this comes the power to put each thing in its place!'... provided one is universal enough.

Well, I have understood. And now I know where I stand.

Far from the goal, but at least the way ahead is clear.

And if to this material capacity of identification, of exercising the will, is added that Something which was there during my experience and is truly the expression.... I don't know if it's the supreme expression, but for the time being it's certainly the highest I know of. (It's far superior to pure Knowledge through identity, to knowing the thing because one IS it – it's infinitely more powerful than that.) it's something formidable! It has the power to change everything – and how!

One IS simply That – one vibration of THAT.

(silence)

Since this experience (three or four days ago, five days, I'm not sure), there has been a constant

²⁶⁸One of Mother's personalities.

multiplication of FACTS of identification (one is it, and so one DOES it), for all the small things of Matter, the most trivial things in the material world.

(Mother gets up)

But it will take a long time. We mustn't imagine that it will be done in the blink of an eye – I am ready to spend years on it (if it comes quicker, so much the better).

But it's the key. The key.

And when it becomes permanent, people will have to watch out when they're with me! *(Mother laughs)*

This Power... is it Love?

Well... yes.... It is the essence of Love.

It translates itself into Love. And of course I am not at all speaking of the human, physical quagmire; I am speaking of the most wonderfully beautiful and pure Love imaginable. This Power is the origin of that Love, and it is in the Supreme.

(Mother sits at the organ)

And it has always been said that That and That alone could bring the adverse forces to a halt.

(Music)

