



❖ **From the series titled ' Longing' : By Prabuddha Dasgupta**

Longing : An ongoing journal of memory and experience, based on the everyday... family, friendships, places known, spaces occupied, journeys remembered...revolving around the core of a pivotal love affair. Elements from this affair appear as recurring motifs, establishing the lexicon, which seeks to hold the journal together. All this is seen not in the context of specific time or place, but through the personal, unfixed gaze of dream and memory. With an oblique, non-linear narrative, the work seeks to evoke through the selective memory of personal experience, a journey of the viewer's own.

*"Prabuddha's pictures disorient the person looking at them. They attach themselves deeply to you while, simultaneously floating free of your conscious life and memories, refusing to become part of the documentary or circumstantial record. As evidence they are entirely unreliable and inadmissible. We are in the realm of dreams, and memories - exactly whose is never clear..."*

*Geoff Dyer, 2011*

## ❖ Excerpts from 'The War of Art' by Steven Pressfield

Why have I stressed professionalism so heavily in the preceding chapters? Because the most important thing about art is to work. Nothing else matters except sitting down every day and trying.

Why is this so important?

Because when we sit down day after day and keep grinding, something mysterious starts to happen. A process is set into motion by which, inevitably and infallibly, heaven comes to our aid. Unseen forces enlist in our cause; serendipity reinforces our purpose. This is the other secret that real artists know and wannabe writers don't. **When we sit down each day and do our work, power concentrates around us. The Muse takes note of our dedication. She approves. We have earned favor in her sight.**

**When we sit down and work, we become like a magnetized rod that attracts iron filings. Ideas come. Insights accrete. Just as 'Resistance' has its seat in hell, so 'Creation' has its home in heaven. And it's not just a witness, but an eager and active ally.**

What I call Professionalism someone else might call the Artist's Code or the Warrior's Way. It's an attitude of egolessness and service. The Knights of the Round Table were chaste and self-effacing. Yet they dueled dragons. We're facing dragons too. Fire-breathing griffins of the soul, whom we must outfight and outwit to reach the treasure of our self-in-potential and to release the maiden who is God's plan and destiny for ourselves and **the answer to why we were put on this planet.**

### ***Eternity is in love with the creations of time: -William Blake***

The visionary poet William Blake was, so I understand, one of those half-mad avatars who appear in flesh from time to time-savants capable of ascending for brief periods to loftier planes and returning to share the wonders they have seen. Shall we try to decipher the meaning of the verse above?

What Blake means by "eternity," I think, is the sphere higher than this one, a plane of reality superior to the material dimension in which we dwell. In "eternity," there is no such thing as time (or Blake's syntax wouldn't distinguish it from "eternity") and probably no space either. This plane may be inhabited by higher creatures. Or it may be pure consciousness or spirit. But whatever it is, according to Blake, it's capable of being "in l o v e ." If beings inhabit this plane, I take Blake to mean that they are incorporeal. They don't have bodies. But they have a connection to the sphere of time, the one we live in. These gods or spirits participate in this dimension. They take an interest in it. "Eternity is in love with the creations of time" means, to me, **that in some way these creatures of the higher sphere (or the sphere itself, in the abstract) take joy in what we time bound beings can bring forth into physical existence in our limited material sphere.**

It may be pushing the envelope, but if these beings take joy in the "creations of time," might they not also nudge us a little to produce them? If that's true, then the image of the Muse whispering inspiration in the artist's ear is quite apt. The timeless communicating to the timebound. By Blake's model, as I understand it, it's as though the Fifth Symphony existed already in that higher sphere, before Beethoven sat down and played dah-dah-dah-DUM. The catch was this: The work existed only as potential—without a body, so to speak. It wasn't music yet. You couldn't play it. You couldn't hear it. **It needed someone. It needed a corporeal being, a human, an artist (or more precisely a *genius*, in the Latin sense of "soul" or "animating spirit") to bring it into being on this material plane.** So the Muse whispered in Beethoven's ear. Maybe she hummed a few bars into a million other ears. But no one else heard her. Only Beethoven got it. He brought it forth. He made the Fifth Symphony a "creation of time," which "eternity" could be "in love with." So that eternity, whether we conceive of it as God, pure consciousness, infinite intelligence, omniscient spirit, or if we choose to think of it as beings, gods, spirits, avatars—when "it" or "they" hear somehow the sounds of earthly music, it brings them joy.

In other words, Blake agrees with the Greeks. The gods do exist. They do penetrate our earthly sphere. Which brings us back to the Muse. The Muse, remember, is the daughter of Zeus, Father of the Gods, and Memory, Mnemosyne. That's a pretty impressive pedigree. I'll accept those credentials. I'll take Xenophon at his word; before I sit down to work, I'll take a minute and show respect to this unseen Power who can make or break me.

## THE MAGIC OF MAKING A START

Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation) there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would not otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man would have dreamed would come his way. I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets: "**Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, magic, and power in it. Begin it now.**"

Did you ever see *Wings of Desire*, Wim Wenders's film about angels among us? (*City of Angels* with Meg Ryan and Nicolas Cage was the American version.) I believe it. I believe there are angels. They're here, but we can't see them. Angels work for God. It's their job to help us. Wake us up. Bump us along. Angels are agents of evolution. The Kabbalah describes angels as bundles of light, meaning intelligence, consciousness. Kabbalists believe that above every blade of grass is an angel crying "Grow! Grow!" I'll go further. I believe that above the entire human race is one super-angel, crying "Evolve! Evolve!" Angels are like muses. They know stuff we don't. They want to help us. They're on the other side of a pane of glass, shouting to get our attention. But we can't hear them. We're too distracted by our own nonsense.

Ah, but when we begin, when we make a start.

When we conceive an enterprise and commit to it in the face of our fears, something wonderful happens. A crack appears in the membrane. Like the first craze when a chick pecks at the inside of its shell. **Angel midwives congregate around us; they assist as we give birth to ourselves, to that person we were born to be, to the one whose destiny was encoded in our soul, our *daimon*, our *genius*.** When we make a beginning, we get out of our own way and allow the angels to come in and do their job. They can speak to us now and it makes them happy. It makes God happy. Eternity, as Blake might have told us, has opened a portal into time. **And we're it.**

❖ Two brilliant , young torchbearers of Indian Classical Music

- Kaushiki Chakrabarty sings Thumri in Raga Mishra Charukeshi

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8urYZ1MehE>



- Pushkar Lele sings Bhajan ' Laxmi Vallabha ..... ' ( Written by Saint Tukaram )

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ey8g6lifJs>



• • •

**Acknowledgements:** I would like to thank Rahul Inamdar (<http://rahulinamdar.com>) for introducing me to this wonderful Thumri sung by Kaushiki Chakrabarty

About 'Treasures'

*It's a compilation that I put together every once in a while, of things that I have found to be beautiful and meaningful.*

*Do share it with others who you think will enjoy it.*

*Drop me an email at [shaileshd.email@gmail.com](mailto:shaileshd.email@gmail.com) if you want to add someone to the circulation list.*

**Ownership and copyright of all material belongs to original artists and/or publishers. This compilation has no commercial objective**