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You dance inside my chest where no one sees you but me.

Cassandra. Sensitive, relentless, precious Cassandra. Universal wonder love, vulnerable to Reality and your deceptive senses, you knew how easy it was to manipulate Reality. To change the plan we wrote together in our star home. Dolores warned us, but I'm not sure I ever believed her.

Now Desirée and Dolores have joined their energies on the astral plane while you and I wander separately alone on this one. You— teacher, lover and mentor— three streams flowing from the same river, meandering through the countryside toward the eternal sea. Me— delusional, disoriented, my raft drifting on that selfsame river, listening to your rejuvenating, splashing waters for all these years, never realizing you were *right there*. Wanting desperately for you to find and reclaim me one last time.

The path I hiked to reach Tiger's Nest was a long and arduous one. I took my first steps with the sunrise thirty years ago, when my memories of us dancing under the imagined Bodhi tree were fresh and clear in my mind— when my Love for you was all-consuming and deafened me to my own thoughts; when the Spirit moved me as it never has since. I came here because of you, and to wait for you. This was the sanctuary you promised me would open my mind and cleanse my heart. This is where you said I would always be able to find you. Oh, beautiful woman-child, I would have followed you to the ends of the Universe, down the timeless path to the realm of dreams, to the paradise we once imagined together. If only I had been more aware; if only you hadn't let go of my hand.

You taught me that daytime is an illusion, and that when I imagine anything— if I live in the end, not in the desire itself —what I desire will come to be. You said that what I am, who I'm with, and everything that happens in my life is a manifestation of what I've already imagined. But if that's true, why did things turn out the way they did? I don't remember imagining this ending.

I wonder how different our life might have been if I had surrendered to the Light of God sooner. Would the Light have carried me beyond the limits of my imagination? Would I have delighted my soul by skimming along the Milky Way, teasing the stars and flitting from one galaxy to the next before I called it a lifetime and returned to you, happily exhausted?

I'll never know.

Instead, you hover in the dusk's afterglow, a three dimensional vision between the land and the sky. The rising moon and descending sun paint sweeping sky fall colors across the horizon and bathe this sanctuary in ambitious luminescence; they irradiate your eyes with a color that hasn't got a name yet. Love glows all around you, and memories linger like butterflies. I see the spiritual garden we built and shared back home in Tennessee, yes, but far more vivid is my vision of the garden where Dolores said the two of you sat and talked. It wasn't some spiritual bamboo hideaway on the other side of forever, she said, or a secret make-believe garden that never was. It was the garden that is, the garden hovering in the wrinkles of time between the monastery balcony I'm sitting on and the mountains of home. Tell me, Cassandra, have you learned to travel across time and planes at last? Across dimensions?

I'm sorry, I can't help it. The loneliness gets to me. Sometimes the only comfort I feel comes when I gaze up at the Universe and recognize our home, the star cluster that lies just to the left of Orion's Belt and just below that smudge of Milky Way— that oh-so-familiar neighborhood of stars, so faint, so much easier to see in peripheral sight than looking directly at it (like the full Pleiades). The place where we outlined this lifetime and where I knew we would reunite forever once we'd finished this life experience. I was hoping we would return there together, but apparently we had a different idea in mind. Dolores warned us that the Spirit Mate journey could be a long and painful one and could be interrupted by many years of separation. I just wish I could remember why we planned this particular ending. Why would I have agreed to living so much of my life without you? It doesn't make sense.

Still, as sad as it makes me feel to know that I *have* to go on alone, if I watch the moon and the planets glide across the night sky it's easy for me to imagine that I'm with you out there among them, you teaching me how to waltz with the angels. I see us floating face-to-face, you laying your hand behind my neck while you take hold of my free hand and say, "that's right, place it on my back. Yes. Now step forward with your left foot as I step back with my right— that's good —now your right foot— my left, yes —and then bring your feet together. Simple. One-two-three. One-two-three." The Universe plays its music all around us, and all at once I'm gliding gracefully, flawlessly across the vastness of space with the one I love above all others. With you.

One, two, three. One, two, three.

My heart is pounding, Cassandra. Are you near? Will we reunite soon? How soon, Cassandra? How soon? Return to me, *please*!

Ah, yes. You *are* near. Yes, I feel you picturing me in your mind this very minute. I feel your energy. You're imagining, as I am, the two of us here at Tiger's Nest. Oh! I knew you would! I knew you could! All we have to do now is manifest the narrative. Begin with the end in mind and create the story from its beginning— pull it into the here and now. Feeling is the secret. Cassandra, we lived in paradise once. We can live there again.

Dear Henry,

First, let me say that it was heart-breaking to learn that you had lost your beloved Cassandra. I had no idea what had happened until you contacted me in your garden. It seems so long ago that she introduced you to me at the Beefeater restaurant and so wrong that you should lose her. But if the predominant ache now is wondering if she is all right, well, you came to the right person to find out, even though you didn't know that I could help.

You see, I have mentally-projected dozens of times for people, to check on someone in the physical as well as the etheric realms for them. I have also guided many, many Earth-bound souls to the Temple of Light on the astral plane where they can be instructed by their guides and set on the gentle path. I have found, and I have also been told by other etherics, that someone from the Earth such as you finds it far more difficult to get the attention of distant souls than we do. I guess I have to attribute my surprising successes to that.

And so, of course, after learning that your lovely Cassandra had left you and that her spirit might be found wandering somewhere here among us, I directed my mental projection to her. I was not sure I could find her, but after a couple of tries I did *find her walking in a garden.*

Tradition has it that Guru Padmasambhava flew here to Taktshang Goemba— Tiger's Nest — on a tigress's back in the 8th century when evil spirits were everywhere and wreaking havoc among the people. Guru Padmasambhava, so the story goes, destroyed the demons and then meditated here for three months. Now I, too, visit the Tiger's Nest, always in this time of summer solstice, always to vanquish the demons that torture me. Ever since you first told me about this extraordinary monastery, I have come to this isolated, beautiful place to honor our dream, to remember our life, and to meditate on my lives to come. I invoke

the Light and try to warm my frozen heart in the hope that somehow I'll be able to lure you back to me . . . if only for a single, astonishing moment.

> *Cassandra was pacing, unaware or unconcerned with my presence at first. After a time, though, I was able to get her to answer my questions. I reminded her that you and she were still on the Reality plane. I mentioned you and your love several times. Then she remembered all that had transpired and warmed to our conversation.*
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> *I asked her if she knew she had developed the ability to leave the Reality plane and that that was how we were meeting now. She said no, she couldn't have left because she was still in her body and she had no recollection of leaving it. She thought she might be dreaming or hallucinating. I convinced her that she had transcended the physical world and had arrived in a very beautiful place. I asked her if I could call on my guides to come and teach her, as they often teach me. She agreed. I called for them, but then I had to leave. I promised her I would return and that her own guides were still very much with her.*

Do you remember that winter's night when I asked you about the handwritten poem I found that marked your place in the book you were reading? You burrowed your way under the comforter beside me and whispered, as if I should have already known the truth of it, "Remember, Henry— my world is not yours."