

## *Chapter 3*

# *I Discover Paramahansa Yogananda*

### **My Beloved Cat Pappy: A Gift from God**

It was now the spring of 1985. The painting business had not worked out. It did not make any money, not even a penny, absolutely nothing. We were broke and had to move out from the one-bedroom apartment. Young talked with a Korean couple who were owners of a local Quality Inn in Anaheim, California. They were gracious enough to let us stay at their inn until we could afford a place to stay, and we would pay them back later. While we stayed at the inn I cooked cheap ramen noodle soup using an electric Chinese wok we had, and that was what we mostly lived on.

Everything in life with Young was an adventurous experience for me still, but now I began to feel some stress because of our difficult situation. Young had come home one late night. I saw that he had a little kitten in his hand, white and light brown, very tiny, only slightly larger than a mouse. "Oh, what a cute kitten!" I thought. Young put the kitten in front of me. I was lying on the bed, leaned down and made eye contact with his big round eyes.

"Hi Pappy!" I said.

The name Pappy just came to me out of the blue. I loved the name. "How did you get the kitten?" I asked Young.

Young answered: "I was with my friend walking on Venice Beach, and I saw this girl with a kitten in her arms. I walked toward her and told her how cute it was." Then she asked me, "Do you want him?" "Sure," I said.

Young continued quoting the woman who had given him the kitten, "Two men

before you asked if they could have my kitten, but I said no. I did not feel they would give a nice home to my cat. But I feel you will. My house is being purged of termites by an exterminator, so we had to vacate. I wanted to find a nice home for my kitten.”

Every morning I would ride to the office with my beloved cat, Pappy. I always kept him in my arms. As he got bigger, Pappy sometimes had wild moods, as kittens do. He would stretch his body upward, moved sidewise, ears up, eyes wide open and run toward me playfully “attacking” me. No matter what Pappy did or might have done, I just could not help but love him. I thought of Pappy as a gift from God. I had no idea that Pappy was going to play such an important role in my life. I was soon to experience some of the most powerful adventures in my life with him.

### **I Discover Paramahansa Yogananda**

One of Young’s friends agreed to have us temporarily move into his office. It was a small office with only a desk and television. Not having much money, Young, Pappy and I moved out of the Quality Inn and made that little office our new home. We slept on the carpeted floor. Every night Pappy came between the two of us and crawled all the way down by our feet under the blanket and sleep there.

The television set came in handy. One sunny afternoon I watched an interview with two ladies about past life therapy. That really got my attention. I was always interested in metaphysics, past lives, and the beyond. I quickly wrote down the phone number shown on the screen. I immediately called the number and made an appointment. It was in West Covina, about an hour’s drive away.

When we went there, I did not even know why I had come. I rang the doorbell, and a short old Mexican lady opened the door. She politely welcomed us into her house. However, Young chose to wait outside.

Our séance started. Her whole body started shaking. Then her demeanor changed completely, the way she talked, her gestures — everything. An entity with a cheerful voice came through. The cheerful voice said, “Greetings, my dear. My name is Pepe. I was a hunchback who lived in France.” Pepe was humorous and talked quite a bit, but I was not interested in what he said. I listened anyway, but

his words did not make much sense to me.

Then I thought that it would be nice if I could communicate with a Master. So I promptly said, "I want to communicate with a Master!" Then a different voice began speaking in a calm, solemn, and articulate voice. (Maybe it was the Invisible Master himself? It was definitely not Pepe's personality anymore.):

"YOGANANDA," the voice said

"Yogananda? Who is Yogananda?" I asked. "Indian," the voice said.

"Indian or American Indian?" I asked. "India Indian," the voice answered.

"India? Indian? Hmmm..." I murmured to myself. I had never thought about India before. It had not ever come to mind. Then the medium opened her eyes, and the session was over.

Shortly thereafter, Young got his job back at the Garden Grove Koreatown newspaper. We moved out of Young's friend's office, got a small studio apartment in Anaheim in the same complex where we lived before. About a week after I had gone to see the Mexican medium, Young brought me a Korean translation of *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda. There was only one bookstore in Garden Grove Koreatown, and Young told me that it was the first and last copy at that bookstore. It was volume II of the Korean edition. That is where Paramahansa Yogananda talked about the omnipresent Guru, Yogi-Christ Mahavatar Babaji. The moment I held the book in my hands and saw the name Yogananda, I immediately felt that he was whom the entity had told me about. I told Young, "I just know that this is the person that the medium lady referred to. This is the same Yogananda."

At the time, I knew nothing about the book, yet an enormous joy arose in me and flowed all over me. I opened the book, and as I began reading it captured my total attention, sentence after sentence. It deeply penetrated my mind, and an incredible unknown joy vibrated in my heart. "Yes! This is the book I have been waiting for all my life," I said to myself with absolute trust. I knew it! On every page, I was discovering many things that I had not known before. The moment I held the book in my hand and began reading it, I knew an invisible something or someone was in the room at that very moment, watching and observing my reactions, and guiding me in a yet unknown journey. I could not see it with my physical eyes, but I

sensed its presence. It was so real. When I told Young, he just listened.

I stayed up all night reading the book. I just could not put it down. The next day I was inspired to call the Mexican medium. I said, "My husband bought a book about Yogananda. I just know this is the person you were telling me about. Yes?" I do not think she remembered what she had said on the day she channeled the voice of Yogananda for me. It was not her saying it. She told me that she and her daughter were going to Self Realization Fellowship (SRF) founded by Paramahansa Yogananda.

"Ah ha! That's why! The invisible Guru was with her at the time to tell me the name Yogananda. That's why I was led to meet her. It was for me to discover Yogananda and more," I said to myself with amusement and joy. I knew something or some being was guiding me, whatever I called it. My inner trust increased, and I became more convinced about the value of discovering what Yogananda described in his book. I knew something was happening in my life. It was turning point.

### **Self Realization Fellowship**

When I was reading the part of the book where Yogananda wrote about Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) and his vision before he came to the United States, I thought that was something I could find out immediately. I quickly called information and got the SRF phone number. I dialed, and someone answered. "I want to visit your center," I said. The man on the phone said they were closed that day, but that they would be open for Sunday service at 10:00 a.m. I said, "Okay." But after the phone call, I thought, "Why wait until Sunday?" Perhaps Invisible Master was talking to me through my heart. "Let's check out the place right now," I said to Young.

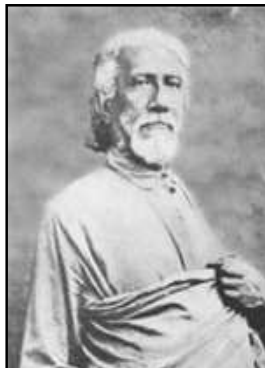
We got directions, and on Friday we drove there. It seems that when the student is ready the Master appears. SRF was in Fullerton, only fifteen minutes away from where we lived. We drove there and stopped in front of a white building. I got out of the car, went to the door, and knocked. A dark-skinned man named Curtis opened the door. He was tall, slim, calm, gentle, and very nice. He said he was living on the East Coast when he found out about SRF, and soon afterward simply packed his bags and moved to California.

“I just learned about this place today, and I just had to come,” I said. “Okay, please come in,” he said.

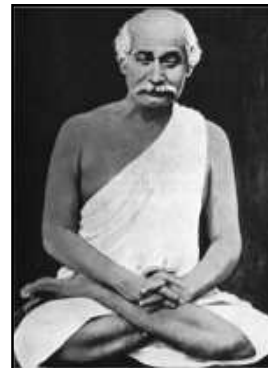
Then he showed us the premises. Curtis walked along some aisles of several hundred seats, just like a movie theater. On the stage an altar wall displayed six pictures of the SRF Masters: Paramahansa Yogananda, Sri Yukteswar, Lahiri Mahasaya, Mahavatar Babaji, Lord Krishna, and Jesus Christ. I looked for a moment at each picture. I felt peace looking at the pictures.



Paramahansa Yogananda



Sri Yukteswar



Lahiri Mahasaya



Mahavatar Babaji



Lord Krishna



Jesus Christ

Curtis then walked towards the entrance where he lay down on the carpet and showed us how to relax from head-to-toes. I learned later that he taught Hatha Yoga to those who came to SRF. He also passed the donation basket after each Sunday morning service.

I think the Invisible Master had him teach us the relaxation technique, especially for Young. Young had gone through much stress lately, moving back and forth, traveling thousands of miles, and in his career as a reporter. Young often fell into deep sleep for hours during the day. I knew he was catching-up on needed rest.

He needed all that sleep to recharge his batteries for the mental existence he lived. Intuitively I knew that the Invisible Master was guiding him as well while he was sleeping, although he may not have been aware of it consciously.

On Sunday, Young and I went to the 10 a.m. SRF service. We took a pair of corner seats. The service officer began with the following prayer:

*“Heavenly Father, Heavenly Mother, Heavenly friends, and beloved God, Jesus Christ, Bhagwan Krishna, Paramahansa Yogananda, Sri Yukteswar, Lahiri Mahasaya, Mahavatar Babaji and saints of all religions, we humbly bow to you all.”*

The audience stood up with their hands together in prayer. As I heard the officer recite that wonderful universal prayer, I approved in my mind, “Yes, that's IT! They are not stuck here. They are not discriminating against other religions or creeds. They are only surrendering to holy beings, regardless of religion. Yes! This is the way it should be!” I was very satisfied.

During the service, the congregation joined together singing:

*“In the vale of sorrow a thousand years or until tomorrow, in the vale of sorrow a thousand years or until tomorrow, I will wait to see only You, You, You, just You. My heart is aflame and my soul is fire. My heart is aflame and my soul is fire, just for You, My Lord. How I want to see only You, just You, My Lord. How I want to see only You.”*

What a beautiful heart song! As I listened to its lyrics, it expressed exactly how I felt in my heart. It was a divine love song for my dear Lord. As my heart listened, I felt as if the Invisible Master had inspired the group to play that song just for me on that day. I now understood that all the years of sadness and longing for true love were really a yearning for union with God. It was God who I longed for. I had forgotten that most precious realization for so long while being caught up in the web of *maya* (illusion). However, now I was starting to remember, or I may have always known it, yet somehow did not realize it.

My heart was silently singing that divine song, and tears were profusely flowing down my cheeks. My eyes were flooded with tears. My heart and my soul were completely soaked in tears. I had a runny nose, and my tears dampened the front of my shirt! I was aware of the people around me and tried hard not to cry out loud despite my overwhelming feeling. I barely managed to murmur to Young, who sat

next to me, "Please go and get me lots of tissues." He got up, went to the restroom and snatched a small pile of tissues for me. My whole being was in tears.

After the service, we drove back to our apartment in Anaheim. On our way home Young had a splitting headache. I asked him why. He told me what he had experienced when I was soaked in tears. He said, "I was transported above the mountain where the Hollywood sign is, and looking down I saw everything below so small. People looked like ants." Then I thought, "Why are people living in misery and despair by so much attachment to materialism?" The Invisible Master not only helped me to understand what I was waiting for all these years, but he was also guiding Young.

After that experience, I went every Sunday to the SRF service. Often a brother or priest would share the teachings of Yogananda. The service was about our goal in life: *Self-Realization*. My contact with SRF was truly nourishing my soul. I was learning how to worship and love the Divine. At some point in my participation with SRF, I prayed, "Please help us with ... (this and that). Help my husband have job security." I was praying for all our earthly concerns. I wanted to see our situation get better. However, as I repeated the same prayers over and over again, I would lose my inner peace.

Then one day I thought, "Why is my mind getting so befuddled? It doesn't seem right. Why am I asking for this and that repeatedly in my prayers? Once or twice should be enough. This is not the experience I want. Can't I do better?"

The answer quickly came from my heart. I rose to a higher consciousness and said to God within: "*WHATEVER YOUR WILL IS, LET IT BE DONE THROUGH ME. I SURRENDER TO YOUR WILL.*"

After hearing myself say that, I realized, "Oh, yes, now it feels right! My mind is at peace now. I know that everything will be taken care of. Invisible Master and God know all of my needs and desires."

I attended chanting and meditation services at SRF on Sundays or Thursday evenings. I always went with Young. We only had one car, and I did not have a driver's license yet, so he drove me to there. I noticed we were the only Asians in attendance. During the services the congregation chanted Indian bhajans (the repetition of God's many names), followed by meditation. After hearing the chants

a few times, I could chant along with the group. The words were simple and repeated over and over again. During meditation, everyone closed their eyes while sitting in their seats.

### **Out On a Limb**

One day Young and I were at home together, and I was suddenly inspired to turn on the television. A program had just begun. I asked Young to watch it with me. I felt that it was an important program.

The program was called *Out on a Limb*. It was about the true spiritual life experience of Shirley MacLaine, the well-known Hollywood movie star. The program showed that the turning point in her life came when she met a new lover, a married man from England. She was guided on a spiritual journey, although at first she was not fully conscious of it. She met spirits through mediums who were working for the Light. Later she met a man named David, her twin soul, who had a "close encounter" with an extraterrestrial woman from the Pleiades.

David took Shirley to the Andes Mountains in Peru. There he shared his wisdom, knowledge, and truth with her. At first, she resisted, but David helped her open her mind and heart, and she came to realize that certain circumstances and experiences had been provided for her for the sake of her spiritual awakening. Shirley's story captured my attention. I kept watching with intense interest. My soul understood what it was all about: It was a message for humanity.

I felt love and kinship with Shirley and her twin soul, David. After the show, I went into deep thought. "I believe every story she told us. Of course, these things are real. I know something is coming, a change of some kind," I thought to myself, sensing the unknown in humanity's future. I felt that I was meant to watch the show. I felt that Invisible Masters were guiding me.

