

The return of the healers

The extraordinary ordinary life
of Eva Goudsmid
Part 1

The return of the healers

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Do you know what to do when you run into a monster?

Sing!

Serge Diaghilev

Preface

This book is the first part of a series of four entitled *The extraordinary ordinary life of Eva Goudsmid*. When I started writing *The return of the healers* in Dutch in 2007, I had no idea of the long journey ahead, a journey through many experiences that led to realization, also known as enlightenment. Fourteen years later, I have had to adjust my idea about achieving realization or enlightenment. I now know that the soul's development never stops because it always wants to gain new experiences.

After realization, I have chosen to remain on Earth as an embodied master for some time. That means that I also remain human with all the challenges that this entails during that time. The only difference is that I, as a human, no longer get entangled in my thoughts and emotions; the master and her pet, the dragon, watch over that. I continue my incredible and magic journey and invite you to travel with me and benefit from my experiences so that your journey may be with fewer detours and bumps. I wish you an inspiring journey!

Joy Ligteringen

1.

My name is of no importance. My job all the more. I am the Beholder of Eva Goudsmid, an honorable position of which I am well aware. My task is to observe and record everything that happens in Eva's life and hold up a mirror to Eva now and then when this is appropriate. I acquit myself thoroughly of this task.

Now that you have been informed about my presence and role in Eva's life, it is time to introduce her to you.

First, I can tell you that a very old soul lives in Eva; she already lived many lives and gained a proportional quantity of experience; she made all human errors that any man can make, but she also did a lot of good. Eva is a woman who often has many doubts about herself and makes herself more petite than she is. In this life, she will start to develop herself beyond any imagination. This is necessary to carry out the task she has taken up. When a soul takes up a world task, all circumstances required to accomplish this task will be created.

At the beginning of the story, Eva is 54 years old. She separated from her second husband some ten years ago and has three adult children. Since a couple of years, Eva has received more help from beyond. However, right now, she has no idea whatsoever of what is ahead of her.

When you ask me to describe Eva's life in short, I would say it is an ordinary life that elapses rather unusually.

Let us join Eva.

Today is September 8th, 2007. Eva is sitting sleepily on the first train of the day. She's on her way to a significant moment in her life: her first soul journey. Right now, Eva does not know how important this undertaking is, and she has no idea about the efforts of her friends on the other side that preceded today's journey. I am outside time and space, and I know what is coming and what has been.

Years ago, one of our loyal instruments, Maria, predicted to her that her life was to take a significant turn, that there sounded a call to which she had to respond. Eva listened to it, thought about it for a little while, picked up the thread of her life again, and then let the message fade away in the realm of oblivion.

Eva doesn't know of signs, of magic, of the infinity of life, of the invisible friends who approached her to wake her up out of her half-sleep. And she also is entirely unaware of the tasks that are awaiting her. Day after day, she struggles through her existence, and she feels far from happy.

After today Eva will no longer be able to glide back into her worn-out pattern of habits, though she will still try several times; after today, she will shake herself to her foundations.

Meanwhile, her invisible friends, her guide, master Lao-Tse and I enjoy this important event.

From now on, I let Eva do the talking.

2. September 2007

The oracle flows from a high source¹

'May I refill your glass,' one of the assistants asks. I shake my head.

'Please, wait for a second,' I hardly manage to say. I feel that my head becomes lighter, and a wave of nausea is coming up. I close my eyes, at the same time, white and blue balls appear. They are coming at me out of the dark from all directions. I feel a slight fear rising because I start losing my grip. I watch the balls, the bells, and the colors and let myself be carried away; this can not be stopped anymore. For a moment, I watch the reassuring presence of the assistants, and then I close my eyes again. Rapidly the white and blue colors change into a rainbow. Surrounded by a kaleidoscope of all these colors, I float to a circus-like environment where balls and bells, roller coasters, and ladders are circling. Between all this, I see clown-like figures fly, who call themselves the Fools. I have no idea how I know this. They are moving together with all these tumbling balls, bells, circles, and ladders without any effort.

Suddenly the Fools seem to spot me, and they come closer very rapidly. Before I know I tumble further together with them, deeper and deeper into the universe.

One of the Fools looks at me, and without words, he lets me know that this is meant to be the life for me and that it is of the utmost importance to choose this. A feeling of joy wells up inside me, and I let myself be carried away further by these infectiously cheerful creatures. When I reach the highest point in the circus - that seems infinite and floating somewhere in the universe-I suddenly realize that I no longer feel my legs and feet. I stop tumbling and look below me.

Far away below me, my legs are tumbling, and they look as if they belong to a rag doll. I know these legs and feet are mine, but I don't feel it. I look at them again, and I don't know how to get to my feet. Staring below me, I try to think about what is going on, why I don't feel my feet, and what I must do to make them a part of me again. There seems to be a big hole or a space between my head and my feet. Starting from my head, I try to find the way that leads to my feet. It is as if I am completely lost in a labyrinth. This is absurd! Ridiculous! There I hang somewhere in the universe, and I cannot find the way to my feet anymore! I cannot hold back laughter, and as I laugh out loud, I suddenly hear a male voice.

'Well,' the voice says, 'now how do you get to your feet?'

'You tell me,' I answer immediately.

'You are in conflict with our energy, the male energy, both in yourself and in the outside world. Sometimes you put in too much of it in the outside world, sometimes too little. You do the same when you are in contact with us, males. This way, it is tough for us to get to know you. When you get into a connection, both in your inner self and in the outside world, you find wholeness. You use your sexual energy, your power of attraction, to keep control of us. By doing so, you derive the attention from what it is all about. That is not the way.'

'Then how should I do it?' I think it is best not to get into any discussion with him, time is too precious, and besides, I don't expect him to provide the information that I would love to get from him. I feel I don't have much time to ask questions; this man is only available for a very short time. The man continues.

'You do need a man for it. A man with whom you get into a divine connection, a man who can reach you, who wants to absorb your energy and has the guts to do so, a man who knows what it means to be a man. Then you'll find wholeness, and you'll automatically find the road back to your feet.'

Then he is gone. I get a glimpse of his looks. It is a gorgeous, brown-tinted man with long, dark hair and an impressive appearance. He looks like an Indian, and he radiates so much authority that he seems to represent all men. I am highly impressed, and I am left stunned. I realize that what he wants me to know is what I have wanted for a very long time, a profound love relationship. A love relationship in which one plus one makes three instead of two. This man shows me that I am not on the right track.

Before I can think about this further, I get carried away again because the Fools invite me to play. I tumble through the universe, and I don't worry about my feet and the man anymore. One of the Fools comes flying towards me and hands me a coat. It's a beautiful coat, made of buffalo skin but incredibly pliable. The interior is like velvet but softer and deep red. The Fool holds the coat in front of me. I slip into it and fly already on.

Suddenly the Indian is back again. He doesn't say anything, but he pushes Bas, my former lover, in front of my nose. I can't believe my eyes. Not Bas, please! The sharp edges of the pain, caused by what happened between him and me, are hardly gone.

'You got it all wrong,' mister Indian,' I call, 'you can take away that man!'

Suddenly the Indian is nowhere to be seen anymore. I feel the pain again, but I also feel a sense of shame through my body, for I lost it completely. The way I said goodbye to Bas was far from elegant. Maybe that was what the Indian meant! First, put in order what you have spoiled; otherwise, I am not worthy of a profound love relationship, or something like that?

I notice I am getting pretty sober, and softly I call one of the assistants to pour me a new glass of ayahuasca². I finish the tea very quickly, for I know that I won't be able to drink the intense bitter tea anymore when I start tasting.

Quite rapidly, I see new images coming. At the same time, Bas appears again.

'What the hell!' I scream, 'can this nonsense please stop?' Instead of one Bas, I am suddenly surrounded by ten Bases. I look from one to the other, and suddenly I know that my feeling of love for him was heartfelt and that I should have honored that love. I was responsible for the lie against this love. Is this love actually over? I don't know anymore. Am I kidding myself? No, surely not. I was so relieved after I shouted at him that I never wanted to see him again; no, I am not kidding myself. Meanwhile, all Bases keep circling around me as if they still have something to say. But I think it has been enough, and I try to push them aside.

'Go away, you; I am here for entirely different things. I am here to find my inspiration again.' With a shock, I realize that it's precisely what is shown to me. I lost the road to my feet, my inspiration lies in wholeness, and the connection is broken off. It appears that ayahuasca leads me directly to my truth.

Whatever I do, one Bas keeps me company during the remaining time; he follows me as if he was my own shadow. Finally, after some efforts to get him off my mind, I gave up.

Suddenly I see myself very busy working, arranging all sorts of things, and worrying about my children while all three of them are adults. It seems as if I always want to keep control of all that happens and of all I do. From the spot where I am -who is this I? I look at the other I, and I know that what this person I am does is of no importance. The real I is the one who is looking at the other I.

'Stop it,' the real I cries out. I see she thinks that what she does is not good enough, just like she believes she is not good enough. But, above all, I see how exhausted and sick this woman is. An overwhelming feeling of love and compassion flows inside of me. I start crying hard; it hurts me so much to watch what is

happening with me out there. The woman over there is sincere, her doubts are unnecessary, and besides, this woman is not meant to do what she's doing. She is one of the Fools; she must play, doesn't she know that?

'Stop,' I cry out again inside of me. 'Have faith that it can be done. Stop, take a rest, recover, go out and play and live; what you're doing now has nothing to do with living. Stop now, not later! That later never comes, it will be later again and again, and it will never be now. Just come to me, come.' I rock her gently back and forth. She doesn't notice it and goes on with what she's doing. But wait, what is that mark on her back? I try to touch the broad, brown, rough-granular line that goes from her shoulder blade to the left half of her brain, but I can't. How is it possible that such a visible mark is invisible on an x-ray? Doctors should see this, and it would be the end of the nonsense that something that cannot be proven doesn't exist. Insurers that refuse to pay their clients for that reason should also have a glass of ayahuasca once and a while. Whiplash doesn't exist? Ladies and gentlemen, come and look for yourself!

The image fades away, and very fastly creatures that look like caterpillars march through the cells of my body. They are gold-green and consist of little squares. Each square has a black dot. It seems like a well-drilled army that marches round in rigid, connected rows through my cells with incredible speed. Suddenly I realize that they are parasites that cause Lyme's disease. Hell, do you see, I was right, that's why I am so tired, it has not been cured at all. Fascinated, I keep looking at the rows and rows of gold-yellow little creatures that go by.

Suddenly I float in a beautiful basin. I look around me, and I see flowers floating everywhere, one even more beautiful than the other. I lie on my back, and I feel that a loving energy carries me. Then the images slowly fade away, and I fall asleep.

The next day on the train on my way home, Bas still keeps me company during the one-and-a-half-hour journey. The possibility that all this will repeat itself freaks me out. Meanwhile, I have no peace with the way I kicked Bas out of my life. I look out the window and try to focus my thoughts on something else, and by doing so, to silence the fragile voice that urges me to do something about it. I fail.

When I get back home, I take my laptop and write a letter with apologies to Bas. Then, I pray 'let this lead to peace,' and I press the button Send.

¹The text above each chapter comes from *I Tjing voor de 21e eeuw* by Han Boering.

²Ayahuasca is a drink made from plants that grow in the Amazone area. It is considered to be one of the essential plant teachers. Shamans use ayahuasca to come into contact with spirits and with divine guidance. It is perfectly safe, provided you use it under the supervision of an experienced, honest person.

Also, ayahuasca is not meant as a trip, a party drug, or a shortcut into realization, but as a way to contact your soul, your essential self, and your real destination on Earth, just like shamans use it. It enables you to be in harmony again with your true self.

3. September 2007

No meeting, missed each other. The flying bird is trapped in the net. Accident. This means disaster and blunders.

Slowly the night goes by, as many previous nights. I see the sickle of the moon through a chink of the curtains. Keep looking, keep looking, I think, eventually, you'll fall asleep. A fly is buzzing around my head. When he flies into my ear and then into my mouth, I almost explode. I see the time slowly passing by; one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock. Just a glance at the clock makes me feel discouraged.

I park my car, ring the doorbell, and am in the hall of a tiny house a few moments later. I sit down in a chair in the lobby and wait. Inside I hear Bas' voice and that of a woman. It must be one of his daughters. The door opens. Bas walks into the hall; he wears an old, worn-out dressing gown. I see he just got out of bed. Suddenly I knew I didn't hear the voice of one of his daughters, but that of another woman. Bas looks worn out and grey. He looks a lot older and skinnier and doesn't seem thrilled to see me. I don't understand, wasn't it him that invited me?

With a jerk, I get upright. Once more, I let the images pass my mind, and I wonder if what I am doing is the right thing. Wouldn't it have been better to keep silent for a while? Did I understand what the Indian was trying to say? I don't know anymore.

Bas has a tiny house, which means that he doesn't have much space in his inner self, and he indeed won't have much room

for me. And why does Bas look older and skinnier than in my dream?

'My goodness, Eva, fool that you are!' I feel a blush coming up. 'Now listen to what you said yourself during your soul journey: "he follows me as my own shadow!" He represents your shadow, and your shadow is your fear'.

Still blushing with embarrassment, I think of my big fear of being abandoned, to have to go through life all by myself, never to be desired by anyone anymore, to die lonely and to be found only weeks or even months later in a state of extreme decomposition. I see health care people removing my body with clothes over their mouths, their faces full of disgust.

'And that worn-out dressing gown, that being older and skinnier, that must be clear too. So the situation is worn out.'

I nod. That's what the Indian tried to tell me. Bas reflects my fear, and that fear is in the way of a happy relationship. That's all! Now what? My message has gone. So the only thing I can do is go along with what I created myself.

The following day, my heart is pounding when I check my mailbox. No reply from Bas. Damn! Eva, stop it; you're leaking energy that you need for other things. Bas is not your man, period. But when I know Bas is not my man, why do I get so worried about his reply? Oh, I know, I know: I shared a wonderful experience with him, that's why I can't let him go.

I think back to a Sunday morning, already some six months ago, and I see us lying again in a total entanglement, the sun brushing gently over our bodies in an enchanted way. Off and on, we fell asleep, and when we woke up again. I looked at Bas and felt an overwhelming love, and I felt fulfilled; it was as if I had obtained everything I ever wanted in my life. I had never experienced such a fulfilling feeling before, not even with my two husbands. Then, finally, I understood the meaning of being

fulfilled in love. But on the height of my feeling of happiness, I perceived something in Bas' eyes; I looked at him with a quizzical look in my eyes.

'Aren't you losing yourself in me?' he asked

All that followed, I experienced as a movie. I retreated with a jerk and slid to the edge of the bed. My heart was raging furiously, and tears filled my eyes. I slipped out of bed rapidly, unable to utter one word. While I was sitting on the toilet, many thoughts crossed my mind, one after another. I wanted to leave, but I couldn't yet believe that there could exist such a tremendous difference in our experience.

'Eva, do you want an egg for breakfast?'

For a moment, I kept silent.

'Sure,' I said.

'Anything wrong?' Bas asked.

'I would not know.'

I heard Bas moving away and switched on the shower. I kept standing under the shower until I felt able to look at Bas again.

'Ah, there you are at last,' Bas said when I sat down at the table. He folded the newspaper and grabbed a sandwich.

'How about a walk? It's such gorgeous weather.'

'No,' I answered, 'I'm going home.'

'What's the matter with you?'

'I am in pain. That's the matter with me.'

'What sort of pain?'

'It's your bluntness; it hurts me.'

'That's ridiculous,' Bas said.

'Ridiculous? Do you call it ridiculous when a woman is shocked when someone asks her: 'Aren't you losing yourself in me? after she has completely surrendered to him? I call that insensitive and harsh. Good heavens, Bas!'

'Eva, you know my position in this relationship. I just have a 25-years marriage behind me. I don't want any attachment to someone right away. Don't say you don't know that.'

'That's a completely different thing. I know you don't want that. You know damned well I don't ask for any attachment.'

'I saw how you looked at me,' Bas said, 'when I see that look, I know what time it is.'

'Bas, you are an idiot. You are playing with fire, and you don't have the faintest idea what I'm talking about. I'm leaving.'

'That's too bad. But please yourself. Go.'

Everything went black before my eyes. I grabbed the first thing I could lay my hands on and threw it on the ground. The plate busted into hundred pieces.

'You son of a bitch!' I shouted and slammed the door behind me.

Again my heart is raging furiously. Once more, I try to shake off the memory.

Days go by, but Bas doesn't respond to my message. Finally, after four days, the tension decreases.

I am busy clearing away the mess in the living room. Now and then, I see fragments of my soul journey again. I remember I've read that ayahuasca sometimes works for several weeks. When I cleared the mess, I started vacuuming when the Indian appeared out of nowhere. I stand stock-still and stare at his impressive figure. He doesn't say a word, just stares at me. He doesn't have to say anything; his whole being is talking. It is as if everything he wants to tell me is poured into me. Instantly reality changes. I see the Indian takes a life-size book, and before I know what's happening, I am lying on the ground, rolled in the book, like the stuffing of an egg roll. It's completely dark around me. Finally, after a lot of struggling, I made it back on my feet again. I don't

dare to take one step, fearing I'll bump into something. I keep standing still, and then the book slowly becomes transparent. The Indian is nowhere to be seen. Carefully I take some steps. With every step, the book rolls with the movement of my body. I try to read the text in the book, but I only see some faint stripes. With the book moving around me, I walk carefully through the room. I understand it has to contain a message, but what message? Then gradually, it becomes clear to me, and the impressive figure appears again at the exact moment—the Indian looks at me probingly, his gaze pins on mine.

'Write your story, you'll understand yourself better, and maybe it is beneficial to others too.'

He's gone again. Then I began to understand what more he wanted to let me know during the soul journey. It is not only my contact with men that has room for improvement but also my inner balance between the male, and the female side leaves much to be desired. I focus too much on the outside world; therefore, my male side does not connect to my inner world, my female side. I attach too much importance to the judgment and the expectations of others. The Indian tried to tell me that I was living too much from my mind and neglected my female qualities. Therefore I am unable to listen to my heart, and I smother my intuition.

Again I see images of Bas wandering through my mind, and I don't know what I have to think about all this anymore. Is it possible he's the man after all?

Suddenly I remember what Maria once said - a psychic and a medium I see now and then to refill my hope again. 'Soon, you'll meet a man who belongs on the path of your life, but he won't stay for a long time. He teaches you to choose for yourself. You have a message for him too, but he won't understand it in the time you are together. Only years later, when you have reached your destination, he will realize what you wanted to say to him. Then

he will try to get in touch with you again. He will feel regret. He will have to walk alone for a while. Don't try to save him. He will get there.'

So Bas belongs on my path. But not for long. Bas is not my man, and Maria told me that too. 'You already know him. You've had to do with him before. You'll meet him again through your work or his.' I had forgotten, so I didn't have to worry about Bas. But my nagging fragile voice doesn't sound satisfied. It wants a response from Bas.

When I get a reply five days later, I'm deeply disappointed.

Eva, I have no need whatsoever for contact. I want nothing to do with your emotions. Besides, my feeling tells me I should keep a significant distance from you; I don't want new dramas in my life. I just got divorced. If yet there should be some contact again, you will have to respect my lifestyle.

Bas

Not a word about my apologies! And what a strange last sentence. I read again and again, and I don't understand it at all. I almost forgot what the reason was for seeking contact again. Suddenly I'm done with it, and I clap my laptop.

4. October 2007

Fluttering, fluttering. When he has no wealth, he gets it from his fellow man. Boundless faith.

In the nick of time, I walk into the room where a workshop and a channeling about Work and Spirituality will be held. With the sweat on my back, I plump down on the only empty chair. The two counselors, a woman, and a man, sit in the front of the stage and nod kindly towards me. When I am seated, the door of the room is closed.

A couple of moments later, I hear one of the counselors say: 'Duality also plays a role in work. Work is a form that the soul, the spirit, needs to experience something of itself on Earth. Just like all energy needs a form, like a man needs a woman, the day cannot do without the night to be known.'

A promising start. I haven't yet looked at it this way. Who knows, maybe here I get an answer to my question of how I can escape from my perilous position.

'Therefore,' the counselor continues, 'so many people get stressed because of their work. Their heart and soul don't recognize themselves in the form the job offers, and they respond with inner anxiety as a signal. If work corresponds with the soul, you can speak of love made visible, as Kahlil Gibran says so beautifully in his book *The Prophet*. This requires being in balance, letting the male and the female nature be in balance' -yes, there it was again- 'to bring ratio and intuition in balance, as well as expertise and involvement.'

The second counselor takes over.

'I want to ask you to close your eyes and to let yourself be taken along during a guided meditation. Imagine walking in a fairy-tale-like environment, for example, in a forest with gorgeous flowers, trees and bushes. You walk through this forest, hear the birds chirp, the flies buzzing, and the sun shining upon your skin. Look around you, what do you see? Do you feel the warmth of the sun, do you hear the sounds of the birds and the buzzing of the flies? Become aware of the thoughts and the wishes that are now living within you. Name them for yourself.'

The desires and the information are pouring into me. Now I am pretty sure that I have to quit working. No more new contracts and no more new clients. My body is crying out for rest. Only thinking about it makes me happy. I see the brown line towards my head in a flash, which I also noticed during my soul journey. But I also remember the book the Indian rolled me into and that I haven't given attention anymore. The counselor ends the meditation.

'I propose we take a break. My colleague will go on with channeling in fifteen minutes. She will make contact with Jeshua, whom most of you know as Jezus. Through her, you can ask him questions.'

I am thrilled by this idea, and I get up to get a cup of coffee. But, among all these people, I feel like an island. I cannot bring myself to start a conversation with someone. I am too tired.

'I think everyone is back again, so now we can continue. I ask you to allow me to make contact with Jeshua.'

There was a deep hush. Then, with close attention, I look at the female counselor who sits motionlessly in her chair, her eyes closed.

'Who wants to start?'

It remains silent; nobody reacts. Looking around me, I wait for a second, not a hand is raised. I raise my hand.

‘Go ahead,’ the counselor says.

‘How do I make the change from old work to new work? I need money, so I keep doing work for which I lost every inspiration. I also feel exhausted, and I suffer from the consequences of a car accident some years ago and the afterpains of Lyme disease. My previous work costs me too much energy, so much that I have nothing left to develop my new work. I want to write, but in most cases, writing doesn’t bring in money right away. Sometimes it never does.’

For a moment, it is silent while the counselor makes contact. It doesn’t take long before she starts channeling. ‘The old and the new are like communicating vessels. When your energy goes to the old, it is pulled away from the new; that’s why the new can not unfold itself. First, feel deep inside of yourself what it means to lose so much energy in the previous work. Herewith you create the inner willingness to let it go. You are afraid that you won’t have enough money. Know there is enough money for you. Laying down the new work is laying down yourself. Have the courage to let go. Only when you dare to jump into the deep, you obtain new experiences, and creativity can get a place in your life. Now is the time. Have faith that the universe supports you as soon as you let go definitely. Then you allow the cosmos to come to your rescue. Sticking to the past is stopping the flow.

You have something to offer to the world. It comes from very deep. And that is the part that wavers because you wonder if you are big enough to do it. The process is ongoing; go with the flow. Say really “yes” to it, and things will come to you. The things that make you waver date from a long time ago. You took a lot of grief of others upon you. That has begun to resonate with you. By nature, you are a shaman, a light worker. You feel many things, but you make no distinction between what is yours and what is not. You need to make this distinction and let the things that are

not yours flow through you, but you also must let them get away from you. If you don't do that, you take sorrow upon you that doesn't belong to you, and you'll lose your decisiveness and your courage. It will look as if you are not allowed to be happy when others have difficult things to deal with. Taking upon energies of others upon yourself also confuses you. You don't know the difference between your wishes and desires and those of others anymore. You seem to be hopping on two legs as if you are not sure if you are allowed to follow the path of joy. One part of you sympathizes strongly with the heart energy and the creativity you have inside you.

Besides, some pieces cover you and make you hesitate. That is the reason the situation of the communicating vessels arises. But now, there is a continuously growing desire to deal with your issues differently. Therefore, what belongs to you demands more and more from you. So put your energy into what is yours. Then, what belongs to you has the independence you need to be who you are by nature.'

The rest of the day passes by quickly. Jeshua's words keep echoing on the way home, and they make me both happy and afraid. It's time for the new; let go. And where did I hear before that I am a light worker? Ah, wait, that also came from Maria. Maria's voice sounds like an echo from the past. 'You get the warning to make a distinction between what is good for you and what is not. Make a real choice now, especially concerning your work and your relationship with men. You came on Earth to experience the divine love within a relationship. Don't forget this and don't go for less! But, first, you will have to be in harmony with yourself, with your male and female side. You are a light worker, do you know that?'

5. October 2007

You get protection from heaven. Nothing is without advantage.

For days it's singing in my head, 'let go, just let go.' How? Call my clients and say: 'I quit?' Then what? An empty bank account? No, that's unthinkable; I keep working for now.

When I look in the mirror in the morning, I want to go back to bed right away. Fear drives me to my work. When I am back at my front door in the evening, I rarely remember how I got there. Night after night, I dream all sorts of things together.

'Chicken,' I say to myself, looking at my remainders in the mirror, 'the worst that can happen is that you go bankrupt; you wouldn't be the only one.'

The very idea!

'But you saw how ill you are during that soul journey,' Sofia, my best friend, says one night when I pour my heart out to her 'come on, woman, Take the risk! There is always such a thing as Social Security.'

'Welfare? Never!'

'Okay, it's your life. But I think you're better off with Social Security than by continuing to ruin your health.'

'I am going to see Maria once more.'

'For heaven's sake, do what every reasonable person would do: go back to your physician,' Sofia says.

'What would I be looking for there? I have the whole medical circus behind me. Must I do it again? Must I become someone who always keeps whining at the doctor's desk: 'Oh, doctor, I am not feeling well, tell me what to do? Yech Sofia, no, thank you very much, I'll sort it out myself.'

'My dear girl, what a coincidence, someone just called off. Is this afternoon all right with you? Maria says when I call her for an appointment.

'This afternoon? Wonderful. The gods must have arranged this. I'll be there.'

'I'm allowed to let you make a wish,' the first thing Maria, shining as ever, says. 'A wish that will come true. 'This comes from above.'

I look at her, surprised. Then, despite myself, I start shining too. Finally, without hesitation, I make my silent wish: a beautiful and fulfilling relationship.

A few moments later, Maria shuffles the cards, and then she gives them to me to shuffle. Then she lays the cards into the pattern I know so well.

'The great happiness is coming,' she says. 'When it comes, don't show off. You may talk about it, but don't shout it from the rooftops. I know it won't be easy for you to keep silent about it, but it's the best thing you can do because a dark-haired woman will be sickly jealous, and she will try to disturb your happiness. But she belongs on your path. You'll obtain more insight, and you'll learn to ignore gossip. It looks like you have a deep-rooted fear for power; this fear is connected to fear of what people say about you behind your back and against which you cannot defend yourself. You have already experienced this in previous lives. This is something you have to conquer. Because of your fear of this phenomenon, you've talked people into their mouths more than once. Don't ever do that again; it affects your nature.'

'Shoot, Maria, is that what I have to deal with again? I always become scared out of my wits of jealous and gossiping people; I don't know how to handle them. It is so complicated. Besides, I only recognize jealousy when I find myself in the middle of all sorts of intrigues.'

‘You are naive; you let yourself be kidded. Don’t listen to what people say, but perceive what your intuition and your heart tell you. It would help if you put more confidence in yourself, then you will be able to handle situations like this. You still are suffering from a big humiliation from the time you were a 12 or 13-year-old kid. Something snapped within you then. Since that time, you moved mountains, and now a lot of obstacles are behind you. You get more and more enlightened. When you came here, it was as if a thick fog was hanging around you. You have changed a lot since you have come to me; it is as if the light shines more through you. You are a real late-developer. There is still some old grief you will have to deal with; you haven’t done that enough.’

‘I did a lot of crying lately,’ I say, ‘are there still more things I have to come to terms with?’

Maria doesn’t answer and goes on. ‘What are you going to do now? Write a book?’

‘That’s precisely why I wanted to see you. I would love to write, but I spend all my energy on my work. I don’t dare to let it go. Even when I am exhausted, I have no idea how to survive without my work earnings.’

‘My dear girl, do have confidence in yourself!’

When I hear the words girl, I feel I am becoming a child again, as if Maria is nursing me for a little while.

‘The book that you want to write will be published. I see three people within the publishing house working on it. Now little money comes in, but that is going to change. You will make much more money, both commercially and privately. Have faith! But you must be careful! A man wants you to sign something, something that isn’t good for you. Be very careful when you are asked to sign something!’

It’s not the first time Maria has told me this. Every time I hear it, I get skittish. The fantastic news that my book will be

published drives the thought rapidly to the background. I don't doubt this prediction because so far, everything she told me appeared to be true. I think of the accurate predictions she made before, especially concerning relationships. Every time I spoke enthusiastically about my new lover, Maria sighed and shook her head. Also, Bas didn't get off too well the last time I was with Maria.

'He doesn't know what love is; he hasn't yet really experienced love in his life. When will you stop with these useless flirtations? You don't need that anymore. Listen to me carefully: you came in contact with men that confuse changing partners with freedom. These men feel suffocated within their relationship. They have the feeling that their partner has them by their throat. Ha, ha, the fact is that most men have themselves by their throat; the relationship demands something that scares them off, and when that happens, it should be looked at right away. Running away from it is the biggest mistake you can make. True freedom means true commitment; true freedom is realizing that the partner you have chosen is your mirror and that, when you tend to get away from it, you tend to get away from yourself, from your fear. But, of course, there are situations in which you have to decide to let go of your partner. For example, when a relationship causes so much pain that there is no space left.'

The words that Maria said are still echoing in my head. I return rapidly to what Maria is saying now.

'Your man is close by; he is in line with you. He stands more or less right before your nose. When he is there, and that will be very soon, both of you will still have something to overcome. He has an inner battle to fight. There still is a mountain before him. You left most of the mountains behind you. Besides, you are both pigheaded persons. Sometimes he has a tougher time than you do. This man is good; make sure you don't lose him.'

'All that sounds very nice, but there is not yet anything to hold on to; meeting him first seems a good idea.' Maria doesn't respond to this remark; she puts the cards away.

When I am outside again, I feel much better already. I drive back home singing.

6. October 2007

A temple on top of a mountain; exaltation. A monk, a man, and a spirit; dedication to spiritual issues. An armed deity; protection from heaven.

Before I drive home, I decide to go by the mailbox first. Still softly humming, I take the mail out and look through the pile. Then, with a jerk, I stand still. A letter with a familiar logo stares at me: Max Tan, attorneys and solicitors. Max Tan. The lawyer who tried to get my second husband, Mahmood, out of trouble. What is the meaning of this?

I get back in the car and quickly open the envelope. Something wakes up. Suddenly I have forgotten everything around me. In a split second, all pieces of the puzzle fall into place. Max is the man Maria has been talking about for a long time. I completely forgot about him. For a while I keep staring at the letter, then I start reading it. A few moments later, I lower the letter and stare in front of me. I know one thing for sure: it won't end here by far when I decide to agree to Max's request to get in touch with him, to go through an old issue that has become actual again.

When I am back home, I reread the letter. Then, without hesitation, I take the phone.

'Max Tan.'

Max's warm voice immediately sets my mind at ease.

'This is Eva Goudsmid.'

For a moment, it is silent. Then I go on: 'I was surprised by your letter. It has been a long time since I talked to you.'