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THE MASTER AS I SAW HIM,

BEING PAGES FROM THE LIFE
OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA
BY HIS DISCIPLE NIVEDITA, OF
RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA.

*Author of "the Web of Indian Life";
"Cradle-Tales of Hinduism" &c.*

PUBLISHED BY THE SWAMI SATYAKAMA:
UDBODHAN OFFICE : 12, 13, GOPAL CHANDRA
•NEOG'S LANE, BAGHBAZAR, CALCUTTA. •

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Salutation to Mother !

*In sending out into the world this book—
the tribute of her love and gratitude to
her Guru—Nivedita has the blessings
and good wishes of all his brothers.*

*Bellur Math
Feb. 1st. 1910.*

SARADANANDA.

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APPENDIX A, TO CHAPTER I

NOTES OF A LECTURE DELIVERED IN LONDON

Nov. 16. 1895.

Just as it is necessary for a man to go through symbols and ceremonies first, in order to arrive at the depths of realisation, so we say in India : 'It is good to be born in a church, but bad to die in one.' A sapling must be hedged about for protection, but when it becomes a tree, a hedge would be a danger. So there is no need to criticise and condemn the old forms. We forget that in religion there must be *growth*.

At first we think of a Personal God, and call Him Creator, Omnipotent, Omniscient, and so forth. But when love comes, God is only love. The loving worshipper does not care what God is, because he wants nothing from Him. Says an Indian saint "I am no beggar !" Neither does he fear. Man should not *try* to approach God: to come to God is all he has to do. Anthropomorphic conceptions follow. God is loved as a human being.

Here are some of the systems founded on love.

(1) *Santik*, common, peaceful love, with such thoughts as those of fatherhood and help; (2)

Dasyam, the ideal of service ; God as master or general or sovereign, giving punishments and rewards ; (3) *Vātsalyam*, God as mother or child. In India the mother never punishes.

In each of these stages, the worshipper forms an ideal of God and follows it. Then He becomes (4) *the Friend*. There is here no fear. There is also the feeling of equality and familiarity. There are some Hindus who worship God as friend and play-mate. Next comes (5) *Madhuram*, sweetest love, the love of husband and wife. Of this S. Teresa and the ecstatic saints have been examples. Amongst the Persians, God has been looked upon as the wife, amongst Hindus as the husband. We may recall the great queen Meera Bae, who preached that the Divine Spouse was all. Some carry this to such an extreme that to call God 'mighty' or 'father' seems to them blasphemy. The language of this worship is erotic. Some even use that of illicit passion. To this cycle belongs the story of Krishna and the Gopi-girls. All this probably seems to you to entail great degeneration on the worshipper. And so it does. Yet many great saints have been developed by it. And no human institution is beyond abuse. Would you cook nothing because there are beggars? Would you pos-

ness nothing because there are thieves? "Oh Beloved, one kiss of Thy lips, once tasted, hath made me mad!"

The fruit of this idea is that one can no longer belong to any sect, or endure ceremonial. Religion in India culminates in freedom. But even this comes to be given up, and all is love, for love's sake.

Last of all comes LOVE WITHOUT DISTINCTION, the Self. There is a Persian poem that tells how a lover came to the door of his beloved, and knocked. She asked, "Who art thou?" and he replied "I am so and so, thy beloved!" and she answered only, "Go! I know none such!" But when she had asked for the fourth time, he said "I am thyself, O my Beloved, therefore open thou to me!" and the door was opened.

A great saint said, using the language of a girl, describing love. "Four eyes met. There were changes in two souls. And now I cannot tell whether he is a man, and I a woman, or he a woman and I a man. This only I remember, two souls were. Love came, and there was one."

In the highest love, union is only of the spirit. All love of another kind is quickly evanescent. Only the spiritual lasts, and this grows.

Love sees the Ideal. This is the third angle of the triangle. God has been cause, Creator, Father. Love is the culmination. The mother regrets that her child is humpbacked, but when she has nursed him for a few days, she loves him and thinks him most beautiful. The lover sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt. We do not commonly realise what happens. The brow of Egypt is merely a suggestion : the man sees Helen. His ideal is thrown upon the suggestion and covers it, as the oyster makes sand into a pearl. God is this ideal, through which man may see all.

Hence we come to love Love itself. This love cannot be expressed. No words can utter it. We are dumb about it.

The senses become very much heightened in love. Human love, we must remember, is mixed up with attributes. It is dependent, too, on the other's attitude. Indian languages have words to describe this interdependence of love. The lowest love is selfish ; it consists in the pleasure of being loved. We say in India, 'one gives the cheek the other kisses.' Above this is mutual love. But this also ceases mutually. True love is all giving. We don't even want to see the other, or to do anything to express our feeling. It is enough to give. It is

almost impossible to love a human being like this, but it is possible so to love God.

In India, there is no idea of blasphemy, if boys fighting in the street use the name of God. We say 'put your hand into the fire, and whether you feel it or not, you will be burnt. So to name the name of God can bring nothing but good.'

The notion of blasphemy comes from the Jews, who were impressed by the spectacle of Persian royalty. The ideas that God is judge and punisher are not in themselves bad, but they are low and vulgar. The three angles of the triangle are: Love begs not. Love knows no fear. Love is always of the ideal.

"Who would be able to live one second,

Who would be able to breathe one moment,

If the Loving one had not filled this universe?"

Most of us will find that we were born for service. We must leave the results to God. If failure comes, there need be no sorrow. The work was done only for God.

In women, the mother-nature is much developed. They worship God as the child. They ask nothing, and will do anything.

The Catholic Church teaches many of these deep things, and though it is narrow, it is religious

in the highest sense. In modern society, Protestantism is broad but shallow. To judge truth by what good it does, is as bad as to question the value of a scientific discovery to a baby.

Society must be outgrown. We must crush law and become outlaws. We follow nature, only in order to conquer her. Renunciation means that none can serve God and Mammon.

Deepen your own power of thought and love. Bring your own lotus to blossom: the bees will come of themselves. Believe first in yourself, then in God. A handful of strong men will move the world. We need a heart to feel; a brain to conceive; and a strong arm to do the work. Buddha gave himself for the animals. Make yourself a fit agent to work. But it is God who works, not you. One man contains the whole universe. One particle of matter has all the energy of the Universe at its back. In a conflict between the heart and the brain, follow your heart.

Yesterday, competition was the law. To-day, co-operation is the law. To-morrow, there is no law. Let sages praise thee, or let the world blame. Let fortune itself come, or let poverty and rags stare thee in the face. Eat the herbs of

the forest one day, for food ; and the next, share
a banquet of fifty courses. Looking neither to the
right hand nor to the left, follow thou on !

APPENDIX B, TO CHAPTER I

NOTES OF A LECTURE DELIVERED IN LONDON
NOVEMBER 23RD, 1895.

THE Swami began by telling, in answer to questions, the story of how Pavhari Baba snatched up his own vessels, and ran after the thief, only to fall at his feet and say—

“O Lord, I knew not that Thou wast there! Take them! They are Thine! Pardon me, Thy child!”

Again he told how the same saint was bitten by a cobra, and when, towards nightfall he recovered, he said “A messenger came to me from the Beloved.”

The greatest force is derived from the power of thought. *The finer the element, the more powerful.* The silent power of thought influences people, even at a distance, because mind is one, as well as many. The universe is a cobweb; minds are the spiders.

The universe equals the phenomena of one-

Universal Being. He, seen through our senses, is the Universe. Jesus or Buddha sees the Universe as God. This is *Maya*. So the world is illusion, that is, the imperfect vision of the Real, a semi-revelation, even as the sun in the morning is a red ball. Thus all evils and wickedness are but weakness, the *imperfect Vision of Goodness*.

A straight line projected infinitely becomes a circle. The search for God comes back to self. I am the whole mystery, God. I am a body, the lower self; and I am the Lord of the Universe.

Why should a man be moral and pure? Because this strengthens his will. Everything that strengthens the will, by revealing the real nature, is moral. Everything that does the reverse, is immoral. The standard varies from country to country, and from individual to individual. Man must recover from his state of slavery to laws, to words, and so on. We have no freedom of the will now, but we shall have, when we are free. Renunciation is this giving up of the world. Through the senses, anger comes, and sorrow comes. As long as it is not yet *there*, self and the passion are different. At last they become

identified, and the man is an animal at once. The instrument within is infinite. Become possessed with the feeling of renunciation.

I once had a body, was born, struggled, and died. What awful hallucinations! to think that one was cramped in a body, weeping for salvation!

But does renunciation demand that we all become ascetics? Who then is to help the others? Renunciation is not asceticism. Are all beggars Christs? Poverty is not a synonym for holiness; often the reverse. Renunciation is of the mind. How does it come? In a desert, when I was thirsty, I saw a lake. It was in the midst of a beautiful landscape. There were trees surrounding it, and their reflections could be seen in the water, upside down. But the whole thing proved to be a mirage. Then I knew that every day for a month I had seen this, and only today, being thirsty, had learnt it to be unreal. Every day for a month I should see it again. But I should never again take it to be real. So, when we reach God, the idea of the universe, the body and so on, will vanish. It will return, afterwards. But next time we shall know it to be unreal.

The history of the world is the history of

Buddha and Jesus. The passionless and unattached do most for the world. Picture Jesus in the slums. He sees beyond the misery, "You, my brethren, are all divine." His work is calm. He removes causes. You are only able to work for the good of the world, when you know for a fact that this work is all illusion. The more unconscious this work, the better, because the more super-conscious. Our search is not for good or evil; but happiness and good are nearer to truth than their opposites. A man ran a thorn into his finger, and with another thorn took it out. The first thorn is Evil. The second thorn is Good. The Self is that Peace which passeth beyond both evil and good. The universe is melting down: man draws nearer to God. For one moment, he is real—God. He is re-differentiated—a prophet. Before him, now, the world trembles. A fool sleeps, and wakes a fool. A man, unconscious and super-conscious, returns with infinite power, purity, and love—the God-Man. This is the use of the super-conscious state.

Wisdom can be practised even on a battle-field. The Gita was preached so. There are three states of mind: the active, the passive, and the serene. The passive state is characterised by slow vibra-

tions; the active, by quick vibrations, and the serene by the most intense vibrations of all. Know that the soul is sitting in the chariot. The body is the chariot; the outer senses are the horses; and the inner senses the charioteer. So man crosses the ocean of Maya. He goes beyond. He reaches God. When a man is under the control of his senses, he is of this world. When he has controlled the senses, he has renounced.

Even forgiveness, if weak and passive, is not true: fight is better. *Forgive* when you could be being legions of angels to the victory. Krishna, the charioteer of Arjuna, hears it said, "The general will forgive," and answers "You speak the words of wise men, but you are not a wise man, but a coward." As a lotus-leaf, living in the water yet untouched by it, so should the soul be, in the world. This is a battle field, fight your way out. This world is a poor attempt to see God. Make your life a manifestation of will strengthened by renunciation.

We must learn to control all our brain-centres consciously. The first step is happiness. Asceticism is fiendish. To laugh is better than to pray. Sing. Get rid of misery. Don't for heaven's sake infect others with it. Never think God sells-

a little happiness and a little unhappiness. Surround yourself with flowers and pictures and incense. The saints went to the mountain tops to enjoy nature.

The Second Step is Purity.

The third is full training of the mind. Reason out what is true from what is untrue. See that God alone is true. If for a moment you think you are not God, great terror will seize you. As soon as you think *I am He*, great peace and joy will come to you. Control the senses. If a man curse, see in him God, whom through my weakness I see as curser, as tiger, as chair. The poor to whom you do good, are extending a privilege to you. He allows you, through His mercy, to worship Him thus.

The history of the world is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the divinity within. You can do anything. You fail, only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man, or a nation, loses faith in himself, death comes.

There is a divine within, that cannot be overcome, either by church dogmas or by black-guardism. A handful of Greeks speak, wherever

there is civilisation. Some mistakes there must always be. Do not grieve. Have great insight. Do *not* think "What is done is done. Oh that 'twere done better!" If man had not been God, humanity would by this time have become insane, with its litames and its penitence.

None will be left, none destroyed. All will in the end be made perfect. Say, day and night, 'come up, my brothers! You are the infinite Ocean of Purity! Be God! Manifest as God!"

What is civilisation? It is the feeling of the divine within. When you find time, repeat these ideas to yourself, and desire freedom. That is all. Deny everything that is not God. Assert everything that is God. Mentally assert this, day and night. So the veil grows thinner.

I am neither man nor angel. I have no sex nor limit. I am knowledge itself. I am He. I have neither anger nor hatred. I have neither pain nor pleasure. Death or birth I never had. For I am Knowledge Absolute, and Bliss Absolute. I am He, my soul, I am He!

Find yourself bodiless. You never had a body. It was all superstition. Give back the divine consciousness to all the poor, the down-trodden, the oppressed, and the sick.

Apparently, every five hundred years or so, a wave of this thought comes over the world. Little waves arise, in many directions: but one swallows up all the others, and sweeps over society. That wave does this, which has most character at its back.

Confucius, Moses, and Pythagoras; Buddha, Christ, Mahomet; Luther, Calvin, and the Sikhs; Theosophy, Spiritualism, and the like; all these mean only the preaching of the Divine-in-Man.

Never say man is weak. Wisdom-Yoga is no better than the others. Love is the ideal, and requires no object. Love is God. So even through devotion we reach the subjective God. I am He! How can one work, unless one loves, city, country, animals, the universe? Reason leads to the finding of unity in variety. Let the atheist and the agnostic work for the social good. So God comes.

But this you must guard. Do not disturb the faith of any. For you must know that religion is not in doctrines. Religion lies in being and becoming, in realisation. All men are born idolators. The lowest man is an animal. The highest man is perfect. And between these two, all have to think in sound and colour, in doctrine and ritual.

The test of having ceased to be an idolator is, 'When you say 'I', does the body come into your

thought, or not? If it does, then you are still a worshipper of idols. Religion is not intellectual jargon at all, but realisation. If you *think* about God, you are only a fool. The ignorant man, by prayer and devotion, can reach beyond the philosopher. To know God, no philosophy is necessary. Our duty is not to disturb the faith of others. Religion is experience. Above all and in all, be sincere. Identification brings misery, because it brings desire. Thus the poor man sees gold, and identifies himself with the need of gold. Be the witness. Learn never to react.

In answer to a question : The artist is the witness who testifies of the beautiful. Art is the most unselfish form of happiness in the world.

APPENDIX C, TO CHAPTER XVI.

NOTES OF LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE VEDANTA SOCIETY,
NEW YORK ; SUNDAY AFTERNOONS JUNE, 1900.

THE UNITY.

The different sectarian systems of India all radiate from one central idea of Unity or Dualism.

They are all under Vedanta, all interpreted by it. Their final essence is the teaching of Unity. This, which we see as many, is God. We perceive matter, the world, manifold sensation. Yet is there but one existence.

These various names mark only differences of degree in the expression of that One. The worm of to-day is the God of to-morrow. These distinctions which we so love are all parts of one infinite fact, and only differ in the degree of expression. That one infinite fact is the attainment of Freedom.

However mistaken we may be, as to the method, all our struggle is really for Freedom. We seek neither misery nor happiness, but Freedom. This

one aim is the secret of the insatiable thirst of man. Man's thirst, says the Hindu, man's thirst, says the Buddhist, is a burning, unquenchable thirst, for more and more. You Americans are always looking for more pleasure, more enjoyment. You cannot be satisfied. True, but at bottom what you seek is Freedom.

This vastness of his desire is really the sign of man's own infinitude. It is because he is infinite, that he can only be satisfied, when his desire is infinite, and its fulfilment infinite.

What then can satisfy man? Not gold. Not joy. Not beauty. One Infinite alone can satisfy him, and that infinite is Himself. When he realises this, then alone comes Freedom.

"This flute, with the sense-organs as its key-holes,
With all its sensations, perceptions, and song,
Is singing only one thing. It longs to go
back to the wood whence it was cut!"

"Deliver thou thyself by thyself!

Ah, do not let thyself sink!

For thou art thyself thy greatest friend.

And thou thyself thy greatest enemy.

Who can help the Infinite? Even the hand that comes to you through the darkness will have to be your own.

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Fear and desire are the two causes of all this, and who creates them? We ourselves. Our lives are but a passing from dream to dream. Man the infinite dreamer, dreaming finite dreams!

Oh the blessedness of it, that nothing external can be eternal! They little know what they mean, whose hearts quake when they hear that nothing in this relative world can be eternal.

I am the infinite blue sky. Over me pass these clouds of various colours, remain a moment, and vanish. I am the same eternal blue. I am the witness, the same eternal witness, of all. I see, therefore nature exists. I do not see, therefore she does not. Not one of us could see or speak, if this infinite unity were broken for a moment.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

A locomotive, with all its powers, is only a machine; and a little worm is a living being. What is it that makes us differentiate, between the living and the dead?

All over the world is worship,—of ghosts, of serpents, trees, gods. The whole world expects a miracle. We are all running after the curious, the extraordinary.

We dismiss this as ignorance, but the fact remains. I believe nothing to be vain or meaningless. The Jews were not singular: the whole world asks for a sign. Then there is this universal dissatisfaction. We work for an object, or an ideal, and before we reach it, our desire has changed. Man is a born rebel against nature, and nature's laws.

The first act of our life is one of rebellion against life. The earth, moon, and stars, tremendous as they are, are but machines. Life, from its first twinkling to its highest growth, is above all these. 'Freedom, oh Freedom!' is the cry of life. 'Freedom, oh Freedom!' is the song of the soul. All worship, all desire for miracles, is, at bottom, this thirst for Freedom. Science on her countless watch-towers signals back to the asking soul, 'No, not yet! Nature has no freedom. She is all law.'

This is why the idea of God is essential to the Mind. There *must* be the concept of some being or beings with Freedom.

Religion thus becomes only a question of the materialisation or personification of the idea. Even a plant could not be, without this notion of Freedom. Embodied Freedom, the Master of Nature, is what we call God.

Which of you would come or go or eat, if you did not believe yourself FREE to do or not to do? This may be a false notion, yet it shows the conception, and this is as much a fact as the bondage itself. Freedom must bring the mastery of nature. Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Freedom must go hand in hand, and must be beyond nature. All its dust and mire leaves Him unstained. In us, every little thing produces change. Not so in Him! So SATCHITANANDA alone describes Him.

"He is the Ruler of this universe. Him the sun cannot illumine, nor the moon, nor the stars. The flash of the lightning cannot irradiate Him. How then speak of this mortal fire?"

He depends upon Himself alone. All movement is His Worship. No action, no movement, no throb in the universe, but goes towards Him. Not only all that we call good, but evil also, is

from the Lord. "I am the Real: I am the Unreal." He who gave us life, He is pouring out of His vial, the direst death. 'He whose shadow is death, whose shadow is immortality!' We may bury our heads in the sand, like the ostrich. But there is no escape that way! Once, in Benares, I was pursued by troops of monkeys, and I turned to flee, when suddenly I heard the voice of an old sannyasin behind me call out "Stop! Always face the brute!" So, face nature. Face ignorance. Face illusion. Never fly. You remember the story of the king who saw the vision of an enchanted palace, but he spat upon the ground, and all vanished?

Your own child comes to you masked. A moment of terror, and then—It is the Lord! The world has been ever preaching the God of virtue. I preach to you a God of virtue and of sin. No more looking up and down at each other! The less differentiation, the sooner God. This is the one sin, differentiation. This is the door to hell, differentiation. Only when this is broken, when it is pulverised to atoms, can we attain the goal. Can we, or can we not, see God in all equally?

"Thou art the man, Thou art the woman!

Thou art the youth, in the pride of his youth,

And thou the old man tottering on his crutches.
Thou the sinner, thou the saint !"

Two birds of golden plumage sat on the same tree. One above, and one below. The lower bird was pecking at the berries, some sweet, some bitter, at last he ate one most bitter, and looking up, saw his fellow, calm, majestic, immersed in his own glory. Then he drew nearer and nearer, till the rays of light from the plumage of the upper bird fell on himself ; drew nearer, till he found that the upper bird was all. He, the lower, had been only a reflection seen amongst the branches.

The man who is groping his way through sin and misery, the man who has chosen for himself the path that runs through hell, will also reach. But we may choose for ourselves the path that runs through heaven, the path of unselfishness, of purity, of love, and virtue. Let us come consciously, by seeing all beings as identified with ourselves. We want to move consciously. Let us be rid, then, of all these limited ideas, and see Him, the Ever-Present Self, evident, nearer to us than our own selves ! This has to be felt. This has to be realised.

May it please the Lord to grant us soon this knowledge of ourselves as one with the universe !

This is the highest development of humility.

“Sharp as the blade of a razor, long, and distant,
and the way so hard to find !

So the sages have declared.

Yet do not despond ! Awake ! Arise !

Struggle on ! and stop not, till the goal is
reached !”

“Giving up all these paths and struggles do
thou take refuge in Me ! I will take thee unto
the other shore. Be not afraid ! Be not afraid !”
Say all the scriptures of the world.

Either say : ‘I am thou, O Lord !’ thus killing
the lower *I* ; or, ‘I am nothing. Thou art all.
Thy will be done on earth !’ This last is a little
easier. But we slip, and we stretch out the hand to
the Mother ! It has all been done. Well said an
Indian philosopher, “who says, ‘Thy will be
done !’ twice, commits a sin.” Manu says salva-
tion is for all, save only for a traitor. We all stand
condemned as traitors, traitors against our own
selves, against the majesty of Mother.

“For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and
the glory ! For ever and ever !”

APPENDIX D.

THE WORSHIP OF THE DIVINE MOTHER.

FRAGMENTARY NOTES, TAKEN BY MISS WALDO, ON A SUNDAY
AFTERNOON IN JUNE, 1900.

From the tribal or clan-God, man arrives, in every religion, at the sum, the God of gods.

Confucius alone has expressed the one eternal idea of Ethics. 'Manu Deva' was transformed into Ahriman. In India, the mythological expression was suppressed, but the idea remained. In an old Veda is found the *Mantram* "I am the Empress of all that lives, the Power in everything."

Mother-Worship is a distinct philosophy in itself. Power is the first of our ideas. It impinges upon man, at every step. Power felt within, is the soul; without, nature. And the battle between the two makes human life. All that we know or feel is but the resultant of these two forces. Man saw that the sun shines on the good and the evil alike. Here was a new idea of God, as the Universal Power behind all. The Mother-idea was born.

Activity, according to Sankhya, belongs to *Prakriti*, to nature, not to *Purusha*, or soul. Of all feminine types, in India, the mother is pre-eminent. The mother stands by her child through everything. Wife and children may desert a man, but his mother, never! Mother, again, is the *impartial* energy of the Universe, because of the colourless love, that asks not, desires not, cares not for the evil in her child, but loves him the more. And to-day Mother-Worship is the worship of all the highest classes amongst the Hindus.

The goal can only be described as something not yet attained. Here, there is no goal. This world is all alike the play of Mother. But we forget this. Even misery can be enjoyed, when there is no selfishness, when we have become the witness of our own lives. The thinker of this philosophy has been struck by the idea that *one* power is behind all phenomena. In our thought of God, there is human limitation, personality: with *Sakti* comes the idea of One Universal Power. "I stretch the bow of Rudra, when He desires to kill," says Sakti. The Upanishads did not develop this thought; for Vedanta does not care for the God-idea. But in the Gita comes the significant saying, to Arjuna, "I am the Real,

and I am the Unreal. I bring good, and I bring evil."

Again the idea slept. Later came the new philosophy. This universe is a composite fact, of good and evil; and one Power *must* be manifesting through both. "A lame one-legged universe makes only a lame one-legged God." And this, in the end, lands us in want of sympathy, and makes us brutal. The ethic built on such a concept is an ethic of brutality. The saint hates the sinner, and the sinner struggles against the saint. Yet even this leads onward. For finally, the wicked self-sufficient mind will die, crushed under repeated bows, and then we shall awake and know the Mother.

Eternal, unquestioning self-surrender to Mother alone can give us peace. Love Her for *Herself*, without fear or favour. Love Her because you are Her child. See Her in all, good and bad alike. Then alone will come "Sameness", the Bliss Eternal that is Mother Herself, when we realise Her thus. Until then, misery will pursue us. Only resting in Mother are we safe.

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