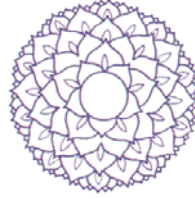


*Above the*



*Underground*

*a novel*

*by Nya Gregor Fleron*

Blissful Longing

Tell nobody except the wise,  
Because the mob is immediately scornful;  
I wish to praise that element of life  
Which longs for a fiery death.

In that coolness of nights of love  
Which begat you, where you begat,  
An unfamiliar sensation comes over you  
When the silent taper shines.

No longer do you remain embraced  
By the shadow of the darkness,  
But a new desire draws you  
Upward to a higher form of mating.

No degree of distance makes you doubtful;  
You fly over and fall under a spell,  
And, at last, lusting for the light,  
Like a moth you are burned to death.

And so long as you don't have it,  
This "Die and be transformed!"  
You will only be a gloomy guest  
On the dark earth.

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*  
*Translated by Stanley Appelbaum*

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*This book is dedicated to every explorer in the world, who has the great courage to stay open and curious to life in whatever shape it presents itself, to stay faithful to that openness even in times of hardship, to believe in the light of joy and peace within, and to have it shine through every day. Explorer you bring vision and courage into the world, and inspire us to overcome our fears of the unknown, from which healing arises.*

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# Prologue

*Wisdom permeates all things.  
She is like a fine mist  
    rising from the power of God,  
The divine radiance  
    streaming from the glory of the Almighty;*

*She is more radiant than the light of day:  
    for day is overcome by night,  
    but against Wisdom no darkness can prevail.  
Her power spans this world from end to end,  
    and keeps all things in perfect harmony.*

Book of Wisdom

## Seed of Prophecy

### Costinesti, 1997

*We had been watching the stars all night from the small balcony of our guesthouse. They were bright and clear, here in Costinesti - unlike the stars that I used to look at as a child from my home in Copenhagen. For years, I watched these mysterious lights, longing and hoping that these distant messengers of the universe would give me answers to all of my questions. But they never did. I had kept searching in the world below the sky, rummaging every road and path. That night I looked at the same stars with renewed wonder. Their light comforted me, and kept me company in these still and expectant hours before dawn. I watched them as if for the first time. What answers would they bring me, when tomorrow came around?*

*My friends talked about their practice and laughed at each other's jokes, while they tried to stay awake, but the promise of slumber was too great. Jon, who had decided to meditate until He showed up, was now snuggled up to Rikke, who likewise had been very determined on staying awake, not to disappoint Him either. Mihai wasn't in sight, as always he was everywhere and nowhere, together with the group and yet on his own. He had invited me to go all this way to see his Master, and yet he seemed so illusive here among the people he came from. Klaus, always so devoted to his practice, had been doing asanas for a long time, but now he was curled up in an armchair. His face was full of joy and peace. Was that what they found in his presence? I watched them from the balcony where a cool breeze was blowing. One by one they retired to the beds or the floor of the small room we had gathered in, amidst blankets, pillows and other sleeping bodies. I was tired, but could not sleep. I slept all my life, but not tonight.*

*The first glow of the sun appeared in the horizon, a sliver of light. I felt the warmth of a new day coming, like a present being unwrapped. Those of us still standing or sitting on the balcony watched it with dreary eyes. It held a promise of an affinity, we couldn't yet grasp.*

*"He is here!" somebody called out.*

*In a matter of seconds, all the people I knew from the Danish school were all gathered in the bedroom. We all rose together, when he entered the bedroom, which crowded in a group of twenty some people. I sensed a sudden excitement in everyone, and it all began to take root in me. The many hours of waiting for him, the promise of the stars and the glow of the sun, and now he was finally here. Who was he?*

*I looked, but couldn't quite believe what I saw. There was nothing about him that showed the devoted and*

*beloved guru he was. He was an ordinary man with gentle eyes that looked directly at you, while he smiled. It looked like he hadn't shaved for days, let alone slept. He wore blue jeans, a black cotton shirt, and brown sneakers just like my next-door neighbor in the apartment building I lived in. His limbs, especially his hands, his nose and neck, were long and slim, yet he was not a tall man. His hair, thin with flecks of gray, was the only part of him that revealed he was nearing fifty. Yet I sensed something more. Brilliance and gracefulness.*

*I wanted him to notice me; still I sat down in the back of the room, and leaned up against the wall. My stomach was full of warmth and excitement, and I could hardly sit still. Mihai and other people from the yoga school had told me that he started practicing yoga as a small kid, growing up in a farmer's family outside of Bucharest. No one had taught him, he just knew. By doing yoga, he survived two years of brutal imprisonment under the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceasescus, who had prohibited all practice of yoga. Since the great changes in the country almost 20,000 Rumanians followed him and his teachings. When people spoke about him, I felt the devotion they carried in their hearts. It puzzled and fascinated me, but it also scared me.*

*Rikke was the first to pose a question to Him. She asked about her job, if it was right for her. She helped disabled and mentally ill people. Mihai seated by his side translated what was being said from Rikke to Him. First, He listened to Mihai's translations, while paying attention to her. For a long time, He was silent, before he answered in Rumanian. Klaus asked for a certain technique to lift his energy, when making love to a woman. Mikael asked about an herb for an ailment he had. I didn't pay much attention to all the details. These were questions that mattered to the individual, but how did it connect to higher aspirations? Could he really see into your soul and understand the connection it held with the Divine?*

*I knew, what I wanted to ask him, but this time I couldn't move, just stare in wonder. Could this ordinary looking man be a great master like the ones I had read about in books? Mihai caught my eye and winked. He looked radiant beside his master. I knew what he was thinking. I had come all this way....*

*I raised my hand and shortly after I spoke with much difficulty.*

*"I...came here, because I hoped you would be so kind to give me your blessings," I stumbled over the words, but everyone knew what I meant.*

*The room was quiet, for a long time. Had I asked for too much? I had come this far, and I couldn't leave without making some kind of connection with this man.*

*"Of course, it would be my pleasure," he said.*

*It was the first time I had heard him speak English. I was surprised to hear that his English was clear and comprehensive.*

*"Come up here!" he added.*

*I stood in front of him. I was too shy to look at him for long. I could feel his compassion.*

*"Now close your eyes," he said.*

*Time stopped. He placed his hand on my forehead. A wondrous energy filled me, and every cell of my body*

*seemed to come alive, charged by a divine intervention. I was awake. And in the darkness behind my eyelids, I saw everything and nothing. I felt the rustle of the leaves outside in the trees, the dawning light stirring everything around me. I felt everyone's presence in the room, and yet I felt nothing. A hollow space filled with the stuff that makes this, a world of light and dark. I wanted to stay there inside that space, forever.*

*He removed his hand, and for a moment, I stood there in front of him looking into those brown eyes of him, fearlessly.*

*"Will the new century bring more peace and joy to humanity?" I asked.*

*He smiled and closed his eyes, as if he was looking for something behind his eyelids. He spoke in Rumanian this time and Mihai translated one sentence at a time.*

*"In some places of the world. In others no. Many countries will be conquered by very destructive powers, and there will be much darkness after that. People will be asleep for a long time. Ea, you will spread your seeds, which will help heal a people, who have been homesick for many years."*

*I felt the burden of his prophecy. Can I really do what I am meant to do? Does he really know who I am? Is this the answer I have been seeking all along?*

*"How can I do this? Are you sure?" I asked a little disconsolate and looked at Mihai, as if I could transfer some of the responsibility onto him.*

*He smiled and looked deeply into me, and I felt comforted already before he spoke.*

*"Awaken in heart and spirit. Seek your true essence. Transmute and refine your energy. Do what you are already doing," he answered.*

*My moment in his presence was over, but my life in his world had just begun.*

*I slept for three hours and had no trouble getting out of bed. I woke full of life and energy. Mihai had never come to bed and could be anywhere. I decided to go to the beach. I walked through the dirt roads of the village. Piles of watermelons, apples, and root vegetables filled up the sides of the streets, which were more like ditches than actual sidewalks. Cars and horse wagons with hay and crops rode slowly side by side. A steady stream of people walked through the roads, most of them in the direction of the big market near the other beach. I was heading toward the less crowded one where all the yogis came, away from the tourists and vacationers. All the dust from the dirt roads rose like a mist and formed a protective veil over the village, shading it from the strong rays of the sun. The village houses, some once white, others put together with a mix of materials, others again constructed in bricks, were all shrouded in a dusty brown color, and if it wasn't for the colors of the trees and flowers, it would have been like walking in an old brown tinted black and white movie.*

*From the grassy top of the cliffs, where the wind tugged at my summer dress, and stung in my eyes, the Black Sea stretched itself out, as far as any sea I had seen. And I imagined what seas I would have to cross one day, and where the people he had spoken about were living. In what corners of the world?*

*I sat down on the edge and kept looking at the sea, as it moved like a weaver's shuttlecock, flowing back and forth as if there were no end or beginning.*

*"Awaken heart and spirit. My true essence," I thought, as I was lulled into a dream state by the words, the wind and the waves.*

*I realized that the first seed had been planted that moment I was with him, and it would grow like a mustard seed. I was twenty-three then.*