

# **D Y I N G L O B Y V I N G**

**Stories inspired  
by Meher Baba  
and His path**

**• • •**

**Max Reif**

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"Being is dying by loving."

Meher Baba

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For Mehera







### THE BALLAD OF A WARM CAFE

A cloud walked into a small cafe and said, "I would like a little Sun, if you please."

The waiter said, "If you get too much Sun you will evaporate. You will not be a cloud any more. You will not be your self any longer."

The cloud said, "Then just give me a little bit of Sun. I have had enough of dark, stormy skies and in fact helping to make them dark, helping the Thunder's bluster."

"But I didn't know that to come out of all that I would have to evaporate. Dear me, what would I be then? I could not deal with that, not at all."

"So I will have, then, please, a small dose of Sun."



WALKS UP A WALK WAY

ON A SMALL WALK AND WALK

WALKS UP A WALK WAY

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The waiter brought the cup of Sun, on his tray, and set it on the table in front of the cloud. The cloud saw the Sun swimming in the cup, and brightened. He placed the cup to his lips and drank, emptying the cup in a long, deep draught.

"How wonderful!" he said, and the Sun was very definitely now within the cloud. He no longer looked threatening; in fact if you saw him now you would not immediately think of a cloud any longer, you would think rather of the Sun, and then you would have to look again to see that it was indeed only a sun-drenched cloud.

The cloud was silent. For a long while it said and did nothing at all. But the rays of the Sun shone, shone, from out of the cloud, and the cloud truly seemed a center of brightness all its own.

The cloud began to cry.

"What's wrong?" asked the waiter.

"I remember a long time before I was a cloud," said the cloud, "When it was always like this. And now the draught of the Sun is going to go away, evaporate, and I will only be my old self again and have to go out there and follow Thunder up in the sky again."

The understanding waiter said, "You do help things grow, even now, don't forget. And the Sun doesn't evaporate, it remains inside you."

"But if you want more Sun and want to leave the raining to others, you may always come back here, to this place, any

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it on the table. The client saw the  
cup, and his eyes were fixed on it.  
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time at all. This place will always be here for you."

The cloud said, "That is good. But I don't want to evaporate, and if I get too much Sun I will."

Perplexed, the cloud left.

But a week or so later, the cloud was back for another draught of Sun.

"I couldn't stay away," the cloud said. The waiter smiled.

Soon the cloud was coming in frequently and looking brighter and brighter. With all the sunshine he was getting, his appearance seemed to be changing in a permanent way, so that at all times now you were not sure if he were a cloud or something else.

"I am so afraid of losing myself," the cloud said again one day. "But I cannot stay away from this Sunshine."

"Losing yourself?" said the waiter. "It appears to me that what is actually happening is that you are finding yourself. You are finding that a cloud was not you, only something you had been molded into for a period of time. It appears to me that you are now on the verge of finding who you have truly always been."

"One more cup of Sunshine," said the waiter, "And I believe your number will be up."

"I cannot do anything about it any longer," said the cloud. "I must have the Sun no matter what."

The waiter brought the cup of Sun on his tray. The cloud drank. He was infused with Sun, more than ever before,



"I will always be here for you."

"I know, but I don't want to."

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and the light in the room for a moment was blinding.

When the light cleared the "cloud" had a form just like the waiter. The two looked at each other.

"Now you will take over here," said the waiter. "I have a further journey awaiting me."

"I, too, was a cloud before I came here," he announced. "Now it will be your turn, to serve all who come here, for whatever reason, to serve all who come to this special place, hidden in plain sight of all, to give them Sunshine and fill their clouded hearts.

The eyes of the two met fondly and they embraced.

"I will serve," said the former cloud.

"And when we meet again, it will be for all time," said the waiter.

With that the former waiter turned and went out the door, and the new one was alone. He picked up his tray and holding it in one hand began wiping tables in the small cafe, waiting for those who might come.

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...the "climb" had a fairly good like  
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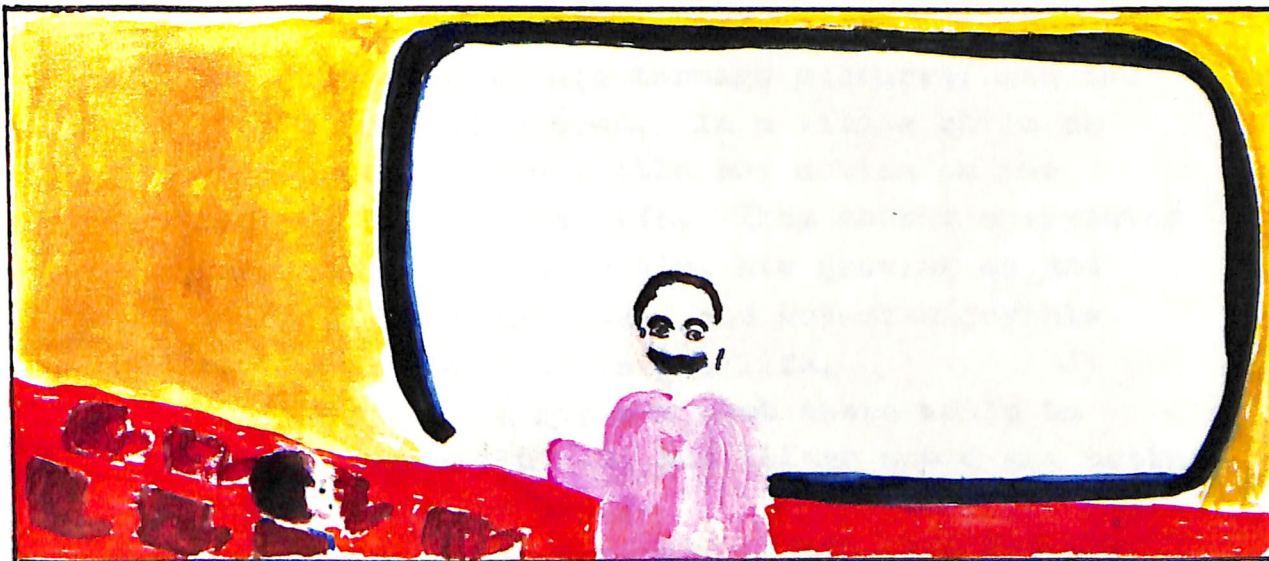
"I never knew," said the waiter.  
"Well, my dear."

"I don't know I care here," he answered.  
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...to give this service and till

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...and the night and the night  
...he looked at his watch and said  
...the night and the night





### The Movie Man

The little boy went with his father to work, sometimes in the day and sometimes at night. His father had a furniture store with his grandpa, on a big street with lots of other stores, a park nearby, and a movie theater next door.

At night Mr. Straeder, the tall, thin manager of the movie theater, would sometimes let him go into the theater and see the movies for nothing.

One night in the theater, after a little bit of the cowboy movie the little boy expected to see, the lights went on. He was the only one in the theater. He wondered what was happening.

In a minute, a beaming, mustachioed man with a huge nose came out in front of the screen and began smiling merrily at the little boy.

The man's smile was so broad that it seemed to fill the entire theater. The little boy knew somehow that this man understood all the things about life that usually only children understand.



The man with the mustache did not speak, but expressed things through gestures, and the little boy understood. In a little while he began showing the little boy movies on the screen, of his own life. They showed everything that would happen to him, his growing up and doing all the enjoyable and not-so-enjoyable things he would do in his life.

The little boy saw that there would be very difficult times, but things would get better and he would be happy.

When he had finished showing the movies the lights came back on. The man with the mustache beamed some more, and the little boy beamed back, and then he left the theater and returned to his father's furniture store.

He never told his father, or anyone else, what had happened, and as time went on the pace of his life overwhelmed his memory, and he too forgot, and only many years later, when he was grown and many things shown in the movie had already happened, did he remember.



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### Lucky Harry In Poughkeepsie

(a fantasy based very loosely  
on the story of Hazrat Babajan)

When Lucky Harry came to Poughkeepsie, he immediately went to Main Street and sat down under a tree.

And there he stayed.

Pedestrians, shopkeepers, and even the police came and went on their regular rounds, and there sat Harry, a cheerful smile on his face for everyone.

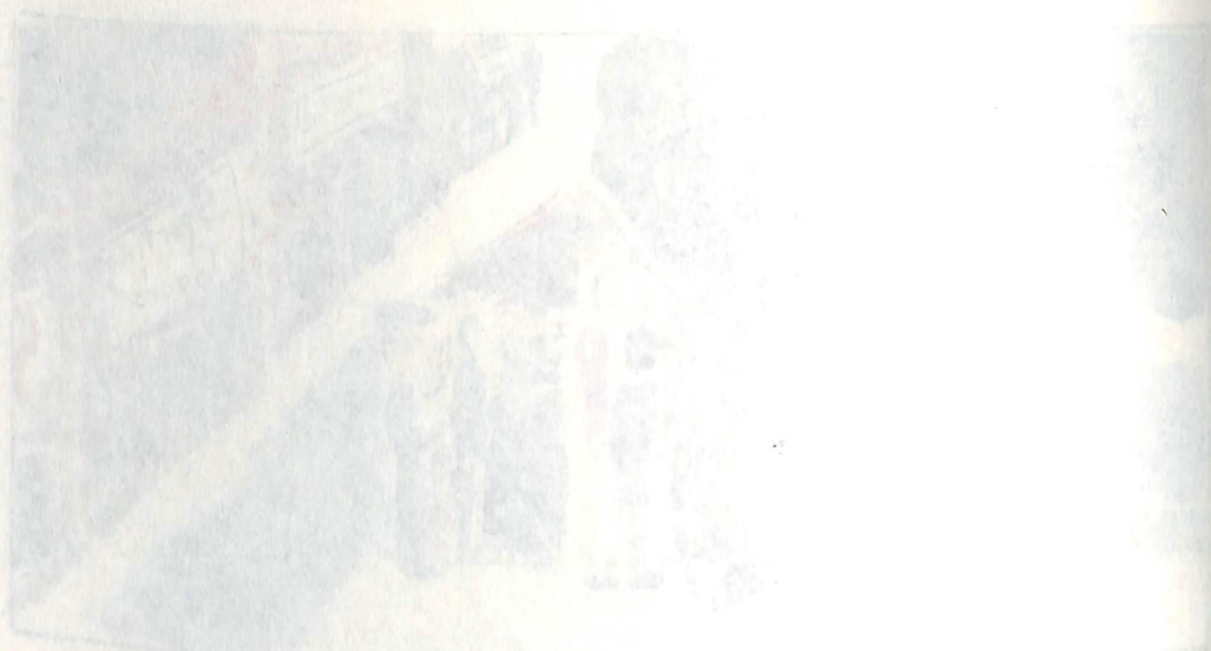
The police, of course, were asked to tell him to move on.

However, whenever they got around Harry, they would suddenly feel so cheerful that they would forget.

The shopkeepers, too, came to accept Harry.

In fact, though it may have been a coincidence, business began to improve dramatically the day he sat down in the neighborhood.





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Within two months of his arrival, the shopkeepers had formed a "protect Harry" committee within their Merchant's Association, and they had even voted him an honorary member of the association itself.

When Morris, who owned the lingerie shop at Main and Lincoln, a door down from Harry's seat, walked by Harry's tree on the way to open up in the morning, Harry would say, "Good morning, Morris! How's the wife!"

And Morris would say, beaming, "Morning, Harry! She's fine!"

In truth every business owner in the neighborhood, and many of the employees and customers, had made Harry their most trusted confidante.

When they awoke in the morning, the first thing many of them thought of was that they would see Harry, and it brightened their entire mood.

Many of them came spontaneously to bring him gifts.

"I brought you a razor, Harry," said "Lefty" Worthington, who owned the Woolworth's five and ten and was called "Lefty" because he had been a hurler for a minor league baseball team before going into business.

"Thanks, Lefty!" said Harry. "I sure can use it. And if by chance somebody else gives me one too and I have an extra, I'll just pass one on to Whitey or Miguel over there."

Whitey and Miguel were the town's two derelicts, who slept on a bench across the street and down the block from Harry's tree.

"Great, Harry!" said Lefty.

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He had always resented Whitey and Miguel before Harry had come, and had even joined in Merchant's Association actions to try and have him run out of town. But since Harry had befriended him, his antipathy toward his destitute neighbors had mysteriously evaporated.

Harry passed two years in Poughkeepsie. When the cold New York winters came he stayed at his seat, impervious, with only a blanket. But the Merchant's Association asked if they might build him a small shelter, and he said it was all right if they put it right by his tree.

And the police and city officials, who had all felt Harry's beaming warmth themselves, looked the other way at a few zoning laws and Harry obligingly moved into the small hut that went up right there.

Harry counselled many of the citizens in grief, business difficulty and other dilemmas, told a funny story better than anyone, and played a mean harmonica he had been given as a gift, so that people would often gather under his tree with him at all times of the week and all hours of the day and night.

When spring came after the first winter, Harry was asked to perform the wedding of Linda Whiteside, daughter of John, the owner of the sporting goods store, and her fiance', Brian Navelle, an associate professor at Vassar College, a mile away.

Thereafter Harry was asked to be present at births, funerals, and more weddings, to bless new business ventures, christen homes, cars, and boats, to visit homes for the aged and the mentally retarded,





and he usually smilingly obliged.

After two years the Chamber of Commerce voted to renovate the downtown area near the tree. Two small but tasteful high-rise office buildings were going up. The neighborhood, which had been close to blight when Harry had come, had been totally transformed around him.

It was then, one morning when Morris knocked on the door of Harry's hut (it was still a little chilly around dawn, and Harry usually passed the nights indoors) to give Harry some fruit his wife had sent, that there was no answer.

Harry, it turned out, was not still asleep. He was never asleep at 9AM.

He was gone, as suddenly and mysteriously as he had come.

The word went 'round, and the Merchant's Association met in emergency session that night.

"I say we build a monument by the hut," suggested Morris, for everyone seemed to realize Harry was not coming back. Morris' motion was unanimously adopted, and a marble stone with the inscription "To Harry—He shone like the Sun" carved into it was placed there the next week.

Though there was sadness in Poughkeepsie, it was mixed with the joy that Harry had poured into everyone's heart, like a sun that would always be rising.

In Miami Beach, Harry lay on the sand after a dip in the Atlantic, wondering where he would go after his vacation.







