

## DEPRESSION

### AN INNER ALLIANCE

from George William Russell, as cited in *The Jewel in The Lotus*

Now the duties which can be taken up by the soul are exactly those which it feels most inadequate to perform when acting as an embodied being. What shall be done to quiet the heart-cry of the world: how answer the dumb appeal for help we so often divine below eyes that laugh? It is the saddest of all sorrows to think that pity with no hands to heal, that love without a voice to speak, should helplessly heap their pain upon pain while earth shall endure. But there is a truth about sorrow which I think may make it seem not so hopeless. There are fewer barriers than we think: there is, in truth, an inner alliance between the soul who would fain give and the soul who is in inner alliance between the soul who would fain give and the soul who is in need. Nature has well provided that not one golden ray of all our thoughts is sped ineffective through the dark; not one drop of the magical elixirs love distils is wasted....

Surely it was to bring comfort to hearts like thine that that most noble of all meditations was ordained by the Buddha. *"He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of Love far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure."*

That love, though the very fairy breath of life, should by itself and so imparted have a sustaining power some may question, not those who have felt the sunlight fall from distant friends who think of them; but, to make clearer how it seems to me to act, I say that love, Eros, is a being. It is more than a power of the soul, though it is that also; it has universal life of its own, and just as the dark heaving waters do not know what jewel lights they reflect with blinding radiance, so the soul, partially absorbing and feeling the ray of Eros within it, does not know that often a part of its nature nearer to the sun of love shines with a brilliant light to other eyes than its own. Many people move unconscious of their own charm, unknowing of the beauty and power they seem to others to impart. It is some past attainment of the soul, a jewel won in some old battle which it may have forgotten, but none the less this gleams on its tiara and the star-flame inspires others to hope and victory.

If it is true here that many exert a spiritual influence they are unconscious of, it is still truer of the spheres within. Once the soul has attained to any possession like love, or persistent will, or faith, or a power of thought, it comes into spiritual contact with others who are struggling for these very powers. The attainment of any of these means that the soul is able to absorb and radiate some of the diviner elements of being. The soul may or may not be aware of the position it is placed in or its new duties, but yet that Living Light, having found a way into the being of any one person, does not rest there, but sends its rays and extends its influence on and on to illumine the darkness of another nature.

So it comes that there are ties which bind us to people other than those whom we meet in our everyday life. I think they are most real ties, most important to understand, for if we let our lamp go out, some far away who had reach out in the dark and felt a steady will, a persistent hope, a compassionate love, may reach out once again in an hour of need, and finding no support may give way and fold the hands in despair. Often we allow gloom to overcome us and so hinder the bright rays in their passage; but would we do it so often if we thought that perhaps a sadness which besets us, we do not know why, was caused by someone drawing nigh to us for comfort, whom our lethargy might make feel still more his helplessness, while our courage, our faith, might cause "our light to shine in some other heart which as yet has no light of its own."