

1956

In a bright morning on Eighth Street in Greenwich Village in the summer of 1956 I pushed through a heavy oak door and climbed up a creaking flight of polished oak stairs to an open second floor office. The office had natural light rare in the dawning of fluorescent office glare. A few impeccably groomed men in deep midnight blue suits suavely **ing business on ebony dark telephones sat at long feces brown tables** that seemed **ed to float a few tacky Mexican pottery, mirror, tile, and do ll baubles** amidst **nly spaced white paper rectangles of very precisely stacke d invoices.** Suddenly **a very upright gray-haired tweedy English looking man got up and** walked **er to me and with a sudden sunny smile said, "Mr. Daniel s?" It was** over **rt. He asked me if I would like to go down to have a drink a t the Cedar** Fred Impo **Bar. "Yes," I said. We walked silently down to the bar. "How old ar e you?" he** Bar. "Yes," **I said. We walked silently down to the bar. "How old ar e you?" he** asked, as w **e sat in a high wood booth at the morning quiet bar. "Twe ewnty two."** "Do you h **ave a job?" "I work for American Export Lines." "Why do you want** to do the G **rogrief work?" "I have got to be what I really am. No t what I'm** supposed t **o be. I want to know why Euripides says *That which ha pens every*** *day is The Good. It looks like pure crap to me. Why is everything so phony?* Why do p **eople always end up pretending they're what other people want them** to be? Is t **here really help to get away with being your Self? To b e what you** really are? **To do what you really believe in? Can you teach me how?" Fr red Import** smiled an **d under his smile seemed to be beaming in a deep place. H e seemed to** be doing s **omething very light intensive and breathless deep in hi s mine. He** seemed to **be of two different ways. In one way he seemed to be totally unmoving,** stopped, n **on-breathing, his entire mind looking through me as if I were a glass** cage maze **lost in its Self, in the other way he seemed to be just a fr iendly busi** ness man **who had been through the mill, like the ones I used to h ear tell sex** jokes all ni **ght in the club cars of the Pennsylvania Railroad to and fr om Chicago.** I was certa **in I did not know my Self. I intuitively hid my absolute dis belief in** God and m **y profound prejudice toward any and all belief, religiou s or political,** as mind sh **ackling. In my clumsy blind brightness I had asked exact ly what was** necessary t **o ask, and at 22, I was younger than most who asked thes e things of** the I Have **Something Special You Don't Have Esoteric Religiou s High Hat** Ladder To **God Authentic Consciousness Idiots in the secret GroriefWork.** In a few d **ays I would see and hear and begin to realize exactly what he was** doing. As **his was the most intense presence I had encountered on o r off a stage** or screen u **ntil then, to my surprise and wonder Fred Import said with h a very kind** smile, "I a **m not a teacher. I know a teacher but she has been in the hospital.** She will be **able to see you in a week or two." He gave me a teleph one number.**

A few years later at the very brightly lit se cret Christ mas party in the Hall of Mirrors at P.D. Ouspensky's mansion at Mendham, New Jersey, the driving wind snow was howling into the sixty-foot wall of French doors. My mind was as quiet as the universe. I was constantly sensing my entire being. I was beginning to breathe. I had worked harder than I believed a person could work to be my Self. I was in a state of constant presence to my Self. I was very proud of my Self. I was standing with my teacher Tempo Perdue, and my friends Sinfan Tasmaguri and Fred Export. Fred Export was saying he never hated or loved anyone as much as he hated and loved his teacher, Gaspair Grogrief, whom he referred to as The Old Man, and that The Old Man had sponged off him for six months in the thirties in New York during the Great Depression. The Old Man had lived in his apartment and had hardly spoken a word to him, but had eaten his food, had given him his cleaning and laundry to take out, had run up his phone bill, had taken him to Romany Marie's, where the minute a beautiful woman was singing hypnotically he would say, "She give everything away. She keep nothing for her Self. She svolitch¹ cubed. Get up. We go." And he had sent Fred Import out at many a 4 AM to Little Italy to procure roast split lamb heads and had Fred Import eat the opaque, scabuscous jelly eyes, and brain, and cheekbones, and tongue, and etc. When The Old Man moved out he said, "Too bad Fred. I here six months You learn nothing. With a pleasant smile Fred Export said that ever since then he had been as kind as was possible to completely idiotic helpless and hopeless young people asking him for help. "I'm glad you learned that," I said. "Daniels, you're a windbag. You're supposed to be a door, then a mirror, then a lamp, then a way. Not a vacuum cleaner. Stop trying to be good. You're as hopeless and helpless as Dr. Tasmaguri," Tempo Perdue said, after a short fast intense air snort like a sniffle, but without the tears, but very near tears glancing down at my friend, Sinfan Tasmaguri, a midget Japanese Psychiatrist standing with us in his little tuxedo and crying and shaking like a leaf. "When you are near tears you are near the truth." Fred Import sighed after a fast air snort as if breathing in without knowledge breathing out, that would enable and smiled as if we had hidden treasure received in a ruin.

¹ A cross between a prostitute, a pig, and a used fish skin condom in early urban and rural 20th century lumpen Russian usage.

A
few
days or so
after meeting
with Fred Import in that
fall of 1956, I walked through
the crystal New York light on the East Side
to a Field Marshall uniformed doorman and
said: "Hubris Perdue." This was the last day I did not
realize my mind created my brain and it was meant to be silent
as breath or that I would ever again be totally ignorant of and separated
from my real Self. There was the usual boring East Side intercom recognition
clearance ceremony, the death quiet elevator ride to the eighth floor, and then, the down
the cleaner than clean hall and into the patently obvious door number search. I rang Hubris Perdue's
doorbell. As she had been in the hospital, I expected to be greeted by a dying old woman or her nurse.
Instead, the door was opened by the divine Hubris with a mighty, "Hello, Daahling," of *The Theeaahtuh*.
Looking straight in my eyes she exclaimed, "How utterly charming, Dear," and grabbed my hand with enormous
crushing strength. "Your hand is too limp, Dear," Hubris said, "Put all your strength in your handshake or people
will think you're a queer, Dear." She smiled, turned, and walked into her living room. She was wearing a real leopard
skin bathrobe with the head and tail still on the skin; the leopard head, eyes, teeth, and all hung down like a hood behind her
head and the long tail dragged along the floor behind her. "Sit down, Dear!" Hubris said. She was beyond 50 and wore heavy
Spring In Park Lane, 1930's stage [*Late Morning, The Drawing Room*.] makeup ^{as if to conceit} a sort of ingénue light about her.
Hubris Perdue broad gestured to a large sofa. I sat. Hubris Perdue thin gestured toward a jade cigarette box on a real sawed
off elephant foot table. "Have a cigarette?" she asked. "Thanks. I have my own," I said. "Very good, Dear," Hubris smiled. "I
haven't smoked in a year, Dear. Will-power, pneumonia, bronchitis, emphysema, all that sort of thing. But you go right ahead
and smoke anyway." I did. I leaned back on the sofa with University of Chicago lounge lizard acumen and took a deep drag on
a Lucky. "Stop slouching like a Lower East Side Dead End Kid, Dear." Hubris roared, giving me a 1930's Noel Coward sharp
dog trainer hand signal: Up! "What are you? Anyway?" she asked. "A Jew," I said, as I sat my Self up straight. "How pleasant,
Dear" Hubris Perdue said. "My mother was a Viennese Catholic." When I didn't say anything, Hubris Perdue's leopard
skin swooshed past me and she sat down. It was one of the most memorable sights of my life. It was as if she were doing
the Louis XIVth chair she sat on, and me, an enormous favor on the surface, but you could see somehow that the unbelievably
subtle adjustments of the leopard robe, the "Dears" and all that, were an act; for as she sat, she changed completely into the
presence and being of a Naqshband Sheik or a Sudden School Master or what some would call a saint on a golden throne
or what you're hoping to find in the back of your mind or the real thing. Her entire being seemed to radiate the room. A
look of profound seriousness flew over her face like a rose opening in a night garden to the ending couplet cry of a deep
dark mysterious nightingale manifesting as if truth in the night before the morning the Arabs and Jews were kicked out of
Spain. "Yes?" Hubris asked, her enormous eyes seeming to look through me. "Is what happens every day The Good?
Can you show me how to be what I really am? Why is everything so phony? Why do people always end up pretending
they're what other people want them to be? Is there a way to get away with being your Self, what you really are?
To do what you believe in? Can you teach me how?" I asked. Hubris said, "You are the salt of the earth, Dear,
but what good is salt that has lost its savor? What is your savor? You are the light of the world, Dear, but you
are hiding your candle under a basket. What is your light? Where is it? You see you've lost contact with your
Self. What you're looking for is inside you, Dear." Hubris Perdue: [sighs: *The Dying Swan*.] "The first
thing you have to learn is how to remember to be in contact with your Self, but in order to
do that you need a great deal of attention. Here is an exercise you may do every morning
when you first wake up. Between sleeping and waking something precious inside
a person is open. Do it while I am describing it to you now and you will
understand better." Hubris Perdue looked down at the floor,
seemingly in at her own life, and seemed to be in
sensate prayer for the entirety of Life itself.
Hubris Perdue: [sighs: *The Dead
Swan Ascends Unto Heaven*.]
"Close your eyes as you
will be able to concentrate
better. Later, you will be
able to open your eyes and
see. This is the way in. The
way to the heart of the mind,
Dear. First things first, one step
at a time, and first is always
sitting. When I sit I hold my
Self up. I then sense my
body. I allow it to rise.
I quiet my body. If I
sense unneccessary
tension anywhere, I
place my attention
on the place of that
tension and allow it
to melt and all this
time I yearn to rise,
to be up. To live. It's
like placing a yeast
in the dough of body.
When your body is
quiet place your attention
on your mind. If you perceive
any words, pictures, thoughts,
visions, colors, daydreams of your
mind, try to place your attention on
them in your mind until they disappear.
After all, this is the Song of Nothing, Dear."
Hubris Perdue: [sighs: *The Swan Inhales A
Spark Of Joy*.] "When my mind and body
are quiet, I place my attention on my right
foot. I actively attempt to perceive as
deep and fine sensations as I can of
my foot. Pulse. Skin. Bone. Nerve.
Whatever sensations I can sense.
Then I move my attention
slowly up my right leg,
sensing each sensation
as I go. Skin. Toes. Calf.
Knee. wrist. Thigh. Thumb. It's
like taking a trip around your Self, Dear.
When I reach the top of my right leg, I place
my attention on sensations of my right hand, and
actively try to perceive as deep and fine sensations as
I can as I carefully and slowly sense each sensation of
my hand and then with equal care and consideration sense
each sensation up my right arm to the top." [Hubris Perdue
[sighs: *The Swan Breathes The
Marrow Of The Sun*.] "Then I
place my attention on each sensation I sense on the top of my left arm and with equal
care and attention slowly sense each sensation that is available to my perception on, within
and down each sensation of my left arm to each sensation of my left hand. "Then I sense down
each sensation of my left leg, again slowly and carefully into each sensation of my left foot. It's
like taking a trip around your Self, Dear, a long and quiet and subtle trip, Dear." Hubris Perdue
[sighs: *The Swan Is Sun*.] "Always try hard to perceive the deepest and finest sensations you
can. We must become more sensitive, Dear. This is the next step for Humanity, Dear."

A Japanese midget in a tiny Brooks Brothers suit walked into the room. "Sit down, Dear," Hubris directed him. He sat on the very small armchair. Hubris nodded to the jade cigarette box on the sawed off elephant foot table. "Cigarette?" she prompted. "Thank you," he said, climbed down off the little armchair, took one, lit it, and climbed back up on the little armchair. Hubris Perdue turned and directed me, "Now do it your Self, Dear, And after you've sensed each sensation of your left foot, open your eyes and I will explain the state you are in to you while you are in it." The first time you take a trip around your presence to Self you wonder why you've ignored your presence to your Self all your life and you seem to become different. Everything seems different. Suddenly, after sensing all those little galaxies of sensations within your presence, you're no longer pulled out onto a selection reflection affection erections. I opened my eyes. They met Hubris Perdue's enormous eyes. It was as if there was a clear nothing between us and then again it was as if the atmosphere between us was infused with light. She dénouemented in stately quiet: "You are now in a state of collected attention. The mind is like a bird. It flies wherever it wants to fly, into dreams, movies, advertisements, the mind to sit on one's hand. What is the difference between birds and intelligent human beings, Dear?" I said, "I don't know," hearing my voice louder and clearer than I had ever heard it before, sensing it spring a million resonations in my body. "Well, nobody knows that, Dear. We realize that when our reason of truth, love of life, and sensation of being king harmoniously. If you were a churchgoer, you would understand that, her voice sneered a bit. The difference between a bird and intelligent human beings is that birds wish to fly off in all directions. Intelligent human beings collect attention is very important, Dear. It was the first exercise given by Mister Growkeeff. This you can trust to be real, at first, are sensations of your body. First learn to keep your attention on your own body and later you will be able to keep your attention on everything real. Among other things, it turns your left and right sides into magnets, and generates something electrical in the middle. You need to build an inner barometer in order to determine your authentic state in order to direct your authentic center of gravity. Just sense sensations of your arms and legs through your head and torso for the time being. Hubris Perdue: [sighs: The Swan Is Swan:] It's like defining the edge of a pool when you sense sensations around your arms and legs in the middle or the top or the bottom, that's fine but for the time being notice anything in your arms and legs carefully, searchingly. Later you will see much art of the mind. Never forget between the heart of the mind and the heart of the deep heart of the reaction that a mirror is at already giant here is no stand," Hubris Perdue smiled deeply and seemed to open her and says, Try to see how long you can keep your attention on each sensation in your right hand when you are out talking to someone. You must keep your attention out in the world as well as within it were, Dear. Come see me next week and I'll tell you more." Hubris Perdue rose. I stood up. I turned to say good-bye to the Japanese midget in the Brooks Brothers suit wearing heavy, ox-blood polished leather shoes which barely reached the lion skin carpet. He stared ahead of him, eye balls bulging, rduie clipped as she four glances at me, then at the midget, then back at me. "What did you say you are?" "I am a Jew," I said. "Never forget that, Dear. Never forget where you come from," Hubris Perdue shuddered. "Thanks for having kindness," I said as she showed me to the door. "Does God have Jewish balls?" Hubris Perdue screamed into my face. "Just sense what's there! Beware of imagination! Try to get sensations of things as they really are and maybe someday you'll see things with all her y are! And for Christ sake stop trying to pretend you're good." And then suddenly slammed the door shut in my face. Beautiful species of life have own way. Should not interfere with each other. Yet life, more often than not, in my experience when it one door slams another.