

The Saga of Odin

Written down by Anna Zubkova

**Editor of the Russian version —
Vladimir Antonov**

**Translated into English
by Keenan Murphy, Anton Teplyy
and Vladimir Antonov**

This saga was narrated by Odin, Who incarnated Himself on the Earth in ancient times and Who takes care of the Scandinavian lands (and other lands as well).

The particles of the Eternal Knowledge about the purpose of human life on Earth, about the multidimensionality of the worlds beyond the material world, about what is truly ethical, about earthly love, and about the Divine Love are interwoven into the plot of this saga.

May these stories and images manage to transmit the Tenderness and Power of the Divine *Depths* to the readers who will try to experience the Light and the Love of the Creator of the entire universe behind the words and images of events!

This book is intended for a wide array of readers.

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Chapter One:

The Girl and the Lord of the Lake

We are sitting together, Divine Odin and I, hugging each other and uniting ourselves as souls, even though He doesn't have a material body right now, while I have one, this does not hinder our communication in any way!

Many legends are related to the name of this Divine Teacher Who has looked after the Scandinavian lands throughout the centuries! Many generations of people have honored His Wisdom and Power!

So we are both together, Odin and I. I am listening to His Words, I answer Him, I ask Him questions, and I listen to His responses and explanations.

His Divine Body, the Body of the Spirit, consists of Light! He can condense this Light and His appearance becomes more defined in this way, so that one can see His locks of hair, His eyelashes, His bright eyes that radiate Love and Calm, His soft and tender Smile, and His strong arms.

In a blink of an eye, He can make Himself younger or show His Appearance saturated with the great Divine Power, with beard and hair as white as snow, and wavy hair that covers His shoulders.

His Great Power is connected with the Ocean of Power of the One Primordial Consciousness.

His agile Body of Light is much bigger than the material body of a person. This Body of Light can become giant and extend itself for kilometers or it can dissolve itself in the Transparency of the Calm of the One Ocean. He can recreate this Body anywhere in the world, and even in many places simultaneously.

Odin shows me, within a tender Light that is similar to a golden mist, the vivid images of the stories that He wants to tell us with my help, my dear readers.

I understand that today Odin did not come to just visit me for a moment, which means that it is now time for Him to tell His stories, those which He has meaning to tell me for a long time. The three-dimensional images of the northern beauty of cliffs and rocks covered in moss and lichen, of crystalline lakes amidst thick forests, of fields and a small farmhouse close to a lake, open before me. I see people dressed in ancient Finnish clothing.

It seems as if this image is getting closer and the words of Odin begin to sound.

* * *

A small Finnish farmhouse was located near a forest lake. Here there lived a family, a husband, a wife, and their small daughter.

And *above* this lake and *beneath* this lake, and around this lake and afar, there lived the Divine Lord of the lake. He was big, like a mountain, and consisted of the Light of Love, Care, and Tenderness. This Light easily permeated both the land and the air and was very subtle, so that not everyone was able to see it.

The Divine Lord of the lake was the Lord of not just this small lake and the forest around it, but also, like all other Divine Souls, He was Lord of all the Earth and could appear and disappear in His Body of Light anywhere. However, He still had His favorite places where He always stayed. In this way, He lived close to this small lake together with people, trees, grass, small fish, birds, and other wild and domestic animals, filling all the space with His Light of Love.

The adults could not perceive the Lord of the lake at all, but a girl, while she was very small and still could not speak, was able to see Him.

Some young children very often can see that which exists on the non-material plane. This happens because they themselves have recently lived in these worlds, in the same way as do the souls who do not have material bodies right now.

However, after these children grow up, they forget their ability to see with the soul. They lose it because they stop using it.

This happens since none of the adults explain to the children that it is possible to do this. On the contrary, parents teach their children to live among material objects, and if children tell them something extraordinary, adults say that all of this is just a fantasy.

Without a doubt, it is very important to teach a small person to use his or her body in the material world, that is, to walk, to talk, to look using the eyes of the body, and many other things.

Losing the ability to see with the soul is a good thing if this soul is weak, because, otherwise, the non-material worlds will only frighten this person!

Nor will this vision be favorable for the souls who came to incarnate having coarse qualities that were formed in the past, because such souls will only be able to perceive infernal beings, which can in no way benefit these incarnate souls.

However, the ability to see can help a subtle and strong soul to learn more quickly.

Adults don't know this, because they themselves forgot about this possibility long ago. Well, maybe not all adults, but the large majority of them unlearned the ability to perceive the surrounding world with the soul without using their bodily organs!

And our AINU, which was the name of the girl, growing up, also began to lose her ability to see in the world of the Divine Light, since no one could explain to her that this world is a reality. She began to gradually forget that the soul has eyes that can see much more than the eyes of the body. She did not have time to understand that a soul which is developing correctly can also listen and speak without pronouncing words. The soul can speak the language of the spiritual heart.

The parents of Ainu did not tell her anything about such possibilities, since they themselves did not know how to see or listen in this way.

In spite of this, Ainu did not lose the ability to feel everything around her with the spiritual heart and the ability to love everything. That's why she always felt joy and tenderness when she went to the lake, even though it was the Lord of the lake Who was helping her to experience these states.

The Lord of the lake loved the little Ainu very much!

The girl frequently played on the sandy shore. There, magical tales and marvelous stories always came to her mind. Ainu did not know that it was the Lord of the lake Who was telling her them using the language of the souls.

When she retold these stories to her parents, they called her a daydreamer and an inventor.

Also, one time, it happened that the Lord of the lake saved the girl by teaching her how to swim! This happened as follows:

Ainu went to get water from the lake. The bucket was very big, and Ainu could only lift and carry half of it. She bent down on the pier to collect the water, but accidentally picked up more than she could lift. The weight of the bucket pulled her, and she fell into the water.

She was very scared, because the adults always told her that, when swimming, she should not go very deep so that she doesn't drown! And in this place close to the pier, it was very deep for her size.

Ainu began to sink out of fear, even though the shore was very close.

In this same moment, the Lord of the lake was able to calm her. He made a small female duck with her ducklings swim near her. The girl, after seeing such nice ducklings, forgot about her fear. The mother duck decided to leave, and the ducklings followed her moving their legs so fast that they almost ran on the water. Ainu saw how the little ones were kicking quickly and that they did not sink for this reason. So, she also began to move her arms and legs quickly

and soon reached a shallower place, where she could stand on the sandy bottom.

* * *

One time Ainu fell asleep on the shore and saw the Lord of the lake. It even seemed to her that she recognized Him. After all, He lulled her to sleep when she was very young, and she always felt very good in His arms that consisted of Light!

And so it happened that, upon awakening, she did not stop seeing Him. Her eyes of the soul had opened!

Even though it seemed impossible, the Lord of the lake began to talk tenderly with Her:

“Hello, Ainu! Do not be afraid of Me! I am the Divine Lord of this lake. I have known you for a long time and I love you very much!

“Do you remember the stories that came to your mind when you played on the shore? It was I Who played with you in those times!

“And later, when you were about to drown, it was I Who taught you how to swim!”

From then on, Ainu was able to see the Lord of the lake and converse with Him.

She asked Him questions and He always answered her.

In addition, He taught Ainu to live in a happy, sunny, and golden world where everything responds to love with love.

She would wake up in the morning and greet everyone and everything with her joy! Then she would walk along a trail towards the lake and on the path she would say: “I greet you, forest! Good morning, giant pines! I thank you for your songs, dear little birds! Flowers and grass with dew, you are so beautiful! I greet You, my friend, Lord of the lake!”

The entire world around her responded to her with joy and love, and the Lord of the lake hugged her with His tender and transparent arms, and smiled to her with a radiant smile.

Some time passed, and AINU grew and became a very beautiful girl.

* * *

One day, the parents of AINU decided, as they always did each month, to go to the city to sell milk, cheese, and butter and to buy what they lacked on their farm.

The Lord of the lake told AINU:

“Try to convince them to not go to the city this month! If not, this can end badly!”

AINU pleaded with all her strength for her parents to cancel their trip, but they ignored her, saying:

“How can you not understand, AINU?! The milk will become sour and we will not get any money!”

AINU had long ago stopped trying to tell them about the Lord of the lake, because they only laughed at her words, saying that she had already grown up but was still fantasizing!

When the parents returned, both became seriously ill.

AINU tried to cure them, but each time they only got worse, so she became very frightened and went to see a medicine woman.

The medicine woman came, but did not even enter the house or look at the sick. She said that in the city an epidemic of a very dangerous disease had begun and that many people were dying with great suffering.

Then the medicine woman burned some herbs, ordered AINU to repeat certain incantations, and said that the disease was very contagious and mortally dangerous, so AINU should not even go near her sick parents.

However, AINU continued taking care of them.

Despite all her efforts, her parents died several days later spending all this time in pain and agony.

AINU grieved and was so frightened by the disease of her parents that she stopped seeing the Lord of the Lake and listening to His words. She forgot about Him, and it did not even occur to her to ask for His advice and His help.

She stopped seeing Him because the worlds of the Divine Light are not visible from the worlds where despair, sadness, fear, anger, or other similar states reign. AINU only felt the Lord of the lake again when she buried the bodies of her parents and came to rest on the shore of the lake.

The Lord of the Lake tenderly embraced her with His Calm and Care and said to her:

“One should never cry for those who have abandoned their bodies! For they did not die at all! Look, here are your parents! They see Me and they see you!”

The parents of AINU were close to them in their non-material bodies and appeared to be younger and more beautiful than they were in their final years of life.

They addressed the Lord of lake:

“Oh Great One! Will you take care of our AINU? She is completely alone!”

“I will try!” the Lord of the lake answered them and smiled in response.

The parents told their beloved daughter some comforting words about how good they feel there in this new world, then they hugged her, and started walking away on a path covered in resplendent grass.

“Look where they will live!” said the Lord of the lake.

And so, AINU saw in the distance a house on a hill and a meadow in which cows and horses grazed. Over there, the birds were singing everywhere! All of this was not material; but nevertheless, it was filled with homely comfort and tranquility.

The Lord of the lake continued:

“You should not try to hold onto them, AINU! They will rest much better in the clear and pure worlds than being close to you all the time!

“However, if you remember them with joy, they will feel this and will visit you.

“They were good people in general. They lived in calm and care for each other and for you and they learned cordial love, even though this love was not perfect in all aspects.

Their life will be peaceful and cheerful until each of them will be born again in a new body.”

Ainu stayed seated for a long time on the shore of the lake. Her Great Friend did not say anything to her, but each wave of His Light washed away traces of her sadness.

Ainu asked:

“Why have I not seen You all these days? Where were You?”

“I was here, nearby, but you were so scared and afflicted that you did not notice Me. It took Me a lot of effort to protect you from the disease.

“It was not possible to help your parents. Their time for parting had arrived.”

“Are you saying that a person cannot change his or her destiny?”

“Sometimes one can. The destiny depends on the past lives of the soul and on those decisions that one takes in the present.

“Do you remember when you, being very, very small, told you parents that one should not kill and eat chicken, geese, and lambs and that it is not necessary to eat meat to be healthy? Although they loved their domestic animals and took care of them, they continued killing and eating them. They did not heed your words at that time.

“You yourself always followed this advice of Mine, while they refused to do so. For this reason, they underwent so much suffering before they died.

“The pain caused to others always returns to the one who caused it. The pain returns to one’s destiny, to the destiny in this earthly life or in the life of one’s next incarnation in the material world.”

“Tell me, is it only possible to see with the soul into the worlds of Light?”

“No, but I do not want to teach you, without necessity, to see the worlds of gray sadness and tears, nor to speak about the worlds of the cruel darkness! I do not wish for anyone to live in these worlds!

“It is for this reason that the absence of the ability to see the non-material beings that inhabit these wretched worlds is a good thing for those souls who are not subtle yet.

“One must become a strong and wise soul to be able to see in these dark worlds without becoming afraid and without dirtying oneself from the contact with the beings who live there; which can happen, for example, when one is helping those who are sick.”

“So then, can you teach me to heal diseases? In this case, I could help many people understand what I understand right now! I will not be afraid, because I know the Love and the Power of Your Light!”

“Alright, Ainu!”

*** * ***

From that moment on, the Lord of the lake began to teach Ainu the art of healing, and she began to help people by healing their diseases and explaining their causes. She also explained how to eliminate these causes in oneself. In addition, she discovered the healing properties of plants and different methods of healing that can be done with the help of infusions made from these plants, as well as with the help of the Subtlest Light, Which the Lord of the lake taught her to feel and to direct in order to heal someone.

In this way, the young healer became very famous in that area.

Soon the times grew restless and war came to these lands. One day, a large detachment of soldiers passed near the house of Ainu.

They stayed to rest in the farmhouse and took all the reserves of cheese, flour, and nuts.

The head of these soldiers was young, strong, and very handsome. He liked Ainu and he ordered his soldiers:

“This woman will be mine! Don’t you dare touch her, or even kiss her or hug her.

“When we return victorious, I will marry her! And when we visit this place next time, I will give her many beautiful jewels of gold and silver!

“She will share with me, as my wife, all my new lands!”

Ainu asked in astonishment:

“Maybe, first you would like to know if I want to be your wife!”

“It is enough that I want this!” replied the chief with arrogance.

The soldiers marched out the next day leaving the farmhouse completely sacked.

They returned three months later or, better said, only some wounded and mutilated ones returned carrying the almost dead body of their chief on a stretcher. They said:

“We will leave him with you. He wanted to be your husband. If he survives, you will be able to marry him or have him work for you. We cannot carry him any longer.”

Ainu asked the Lord of the lake to help her heal this warrior. His name was Richard. She liked him, even from their first meeting. His strength at that time attracted her, but she did not like his arrogance.

But now, when he was nearby, weakened by his wounds, the heart of Ainu shuddered from compassion and ignited with true love.

She recalled how unattractive Richard was during their first encounter.

However, love changes people! Richard fell in love with Ainu during his first visit and he still loved her now, recovering from serious wounds thanks to her care, and learning to love.

He began to understand that love does not mean “to possess a woman”, but that it is the ability to live together in harmony, giving joy and happiness to one another.

Ainu cured Richard by healing his body and soul. The Lord of the lake helped her to do this.

* * *

Richard and AINU became husband and wife.

One day the Lord of the lake asked AINU:

“Would you like to give me a new body? You and Richard could become the parents of a child in whom I would incarnate a Part of Me.

“There are so many afflictions and calamities on the Earth! I would like to help people, but for this I need to obtain a material body. Through you two, I could become the Person Who would bring the Divine Knowledge to the Earth and reestablish the Divine Laws for a righteous existence!”

So, after some time, AINU and Richard had a son.

They named him Olav.

However, not everything in this Incarnation turned out to be as easy as one might imagine. He had to pass through many trials on the Earth before he came to know about his Divine Predestination and was able to fulfill it.

Chapter Two: **Life among the Vikings**

Odin continued:

“Today I would like to talk about what happens when a Divine Soul is born on the Earth with the Mission of Service.

“There are Those Who remember about Their Divinity after incarnating.

“But there also Those Who fulfill what was determined in the Divine Plan without realizing Their Unity with the Primordial Ocean of the Divine Consciousness.

“In addition, there exist Those Who can recall and strengthen this Unity during Their life on the Earth and later, while remaining in Complete Mergence with the United We of all the Perfect Ones, fulfill everything that was determined for this incarnation of Theirs!

“As a child, Olav did not know who he really was.”

“How could this happen? For his mother Ainu should have told him this! Everything could have been so much simpler.”

“It is very difficult for Me right now to explain to you all the nuances of the law that governs the formation of people’s destinies. I am only going to tell you the most important principle, namely, everything is done for the best, taking into account the interests of many souls.

“Ainu was taken from the material plane before she had time to teach Olav everything she knew and could do. She only managed to tell him very little, and he had to learn all the most important things by himself.

“The problem was that Ainu and Richard were very different according to the level of their subtlety and according to their ability to understand the Divine. So, in order to preserve the Divine subtlety of Ainu, she was taken from the material world much sooner.

“The task of Olav then was to repeat once again the entire Path all the way from a human to God in order to memorize well all the stages of this Path and the methods of ascension. Thanks to this, He would later be able to show this Trail to many other people.

“I want to repeat this again to avoid misunderstandings.

“According to the higher plans, sometimes Those of Us¹ Who come to the Earth have to carry out the life of an ordinary person for some time and to look at the world with the eyes of a mortal just like everyone else. This is done so that later He or She can return to the Immortality of God and can explain this Path to other people thanks to the received experience.

“It happens that it is first necessary to know weakness to later obtain the Power of the Omnipotent One; it happens that at times it is necessary to suffer from the lack of understanding to later be able to obtain the Highest Understanding; it happens that at times it is first necessary

¹ Of the Divine Teachers (translator’s note).

to know, through one's own experience, the importance of the love that unites one person with another in order to be able to unite oneself in Love with the Divine Primordial Power.

“Keep listening! What I am going to tell can help you and many others to strengthen the Unity with the Divine World! It will also help you to live with the understanding of that Divine World and of the Knowledge about which we will speak later on!”

* * *

After the unexpected death of Aino, Richard was not able to recover from the grief for a long time. He did not want to live in a place where everything reminded him about his lost beloved; he could not live anymore without her in the harmony that she had created. So, he took his beloved son, Olav, who was five years old at the time, and began to travel.

They wandered for a long time, which was fairly difficult for both of them due to the age of the boy, and later they arrived at the sea.

Its vastness captivated them with its beauty and power, and so Richard decided to live near the sea!

Soon he met a jarl, a leader of the Vikings, who accepted him into his community together with his son.

In this way, Richard returned to the life of a warrior, who went on sea voyages during almost all of the spring, summer, and fall.

It was a difficult time for Olav, for during the maritime campaigns, Richard was gone for long durations with other men, and Olav stayed on the shore with the women and children of other warriors.

For the community, Richard and Olav continued being strangers for a long time.

As a result, Olav had to endure the teasing and aggression of the older children. In addition, the woman in whose house he lived during the absence of his father was angry with him all the time, because Olav followed the rule of not

eating meat and fish, which was instilled in him during his childhood. Due to this, Olav very often left the table hungry without having eaten anything.

If it were not for the reserves of wild nuts and other edible plants that he had learned to recognize during his childhood, he would not have survived.

He was especially bullied by the teasing of the adolescent named Bolly, the oldest son of that woman.

Bolly had grown up without his father, under constant reproaches of his despotic mother. He was sickly, clumsy, and weaker than his peers. Even adults quite often made fun of him, and he kept accumulating resentment and malicious desires to humiliate others in the same way as he had been humiliated. Bolly found pleasure in venting his sensation of inferiority on others who were weaker than he.

Olav, who was three years younger, became for Bolly the principal object of such attacks.

Bolly enjoyed making sarcastic remarks to Olav, ordering him to do meaningless things, and lecturing him in a burlesque manner.

Olav was very surprised by this attitude and could not understand it. He was accustomed to the fact that mutual love and care are natural in the relations between those who are older and those who are younger.

However, thanks to this behavior of Bolly, Olav learned to maintain inner calm and not get angry in response to offenses. He maintained an imperturbable calm even when other children joined Bolly.

And if fights occurred, with each one Olav became better and better at being able to defend himself and other weaker children, for Richard taught him many techniques necessary for battle. In these harsh lands people respected strength, and Olav, fighting at his level of a child, defended his right to not be like everyone else. In this way, gradually, he gained the respect of his contemporaries thanks to his ability to be just, generous, and strong and thanks to the fact that he never employed his strength unjustifiably.

Even many adults began to say that he would become a true jarl when he grew up! For the strength of the soul is perceived by people even when they do not understand why the acts and words of such a strong person have a notable effect on others.

The jarl, the head of that community, also possessed strength, but it was coarse and it kept all the members under cruel submission.

The name of the jarl was Bjorn. He was of great stature and looked like a giant bear because of his constitution and strength. His decisions were the law for everyone, his judgment was not questioned; no objections were accepted. Those who were in disagreement with the jarl had to either be quiet or leave the community. Anyone who tried to doubt the judgment of his decisions caused an explosion of anger in him and could be killed by the jarl right there or be subjected to another severe punishment.

* * *

One day Bjorn spoke to his people about his campaign plans to distant lands that were located in the far south. He said that there were rich settlements and even cities there, as well as ships that did not have warriors on them. He also said that an abundant booty was expected from this campaign in the lands where no Viking had ever been before.

After the exclamations of joy for this future campaign had calmed down, Olav suddenly dared to object the jarl himself! He stepped forward and asked him:

“Bjorn, do you think that you are governing wisely and do you believe that it will be fair to attack peaceful settlements and take their wheat by force, the wheat that we have not cultivated and the wealth that we do not have the right to claim? Would you like it if our houses and women were also subjected to an attack and looting, while our men were on the campaign?”

Richard did not have time to stop his son and now stood with a pale face and with his hand on the hilt of his sword.

He was waiting for the inevitable retaliation for the audacity of Olav.

However, to the surprise of everyone, Bjorn did not get angry, instead he laughed and said:

“You are still a stranger among us and a brat, Olav! You have not yet understood how the true Vikings live! We fight with the strong and we do not harm children or women! That which we win in a good battle is rightfully ours!

“The cowards among the people who are afraid of battles will be kept alive and will simply pay a ransom for their lives.

“Brave warriors fight for glory and riches!

“And death in a battle is a great lot, because it opens the doors to the world beyond the grave where heroes live!

“I will take you with me, Olav, so that you learn to be proud to belong to our traditions!”

So, Bjorn decided to turn Olav into a warrior of the sea.

And that was how Olav climbed aboard a *drekkar*² for the first time so that he could learn to be a “true Viking”, which meant that he should accustom himself to the “law of strength” and forget his ideas about justice, the ideas that he was not afraid to explain even to the jarl himself.

Olav was happy that he was going to the sea with his father. Only his thoughts about the criminal intentions of the jarl watered down his happiness. But he hoped that there would not be any battles or lootings.

Olav did not foresee how this campaign would end.

Meanwhile, the severe warriors taught him to control the sail and to row for long periods of time.

He became close friends with the helmsman Vagni, who told him and showed him, among other things, how to operate the rudder and how to determine the course from the stars.

They sailed farther south than they had ever done before.

² A typical ship used by Vikings (translator’s note).

The jarl had decided to amaze everyone with a great booty.

* * *

Olav remembered this battle for the rest of his life.

Since he was still an adolescent and wasn't prepared for true combat, he was assigned, together with the helmsman Vagni (whose death would be too great of a loss for any campaign), to protect the drekkar, which would not be attacked according to the calculations of Bjorn. And the other warriors left to fight on land.

However, Olav was not able to avoid the battle, for three of the local warriors climbed onto the ship. Vagni fought with two of them, and the third attacked Olav.

He was much bigger and stronger, but Olav was able to block his attacks with success. Later he even wounded the third warrior on his right forearm, but in that same moment a sharp pain shot through his arm as well, even though Olav was not wounded. The pain that *he* caused instantly reflected *onto his own body*. He became dizzy and blind for some time and almost dropped his sword. Vagni, who had already wounded and disarmed his two attackers, arrived just in time to save him from an inevitable death.

Soon Olav saw how Richard was killed. It all happened as if in a dream. Olav watched everything from far away and, therefore, could not do anything.

The body of the one whom Olav loved very much, now lied on the ground. The body resembled a hollow shell covered in blood, and around it there were more bodies.

There were not many who perished in this battle. The defenders of that town surrendered soon and then started loading the drekkar with the ransom that the jarl determined that they had to pay for their lives, the lives of their families, and the integrity of their houses.

Olav watched all of this and his thoughts were full of pain. It further strengthened his understanding that the predatory raids of the Vikings were not heroic acts of strong

people, as everyone around him thought, but crimes instead!

He had discussed this with his father many times before, but Richard saw no other way to survive. The lands where they lived were infertile and, besides, Richard had neither the desire nor the skills to live the life of a farmer.

So the atonement had arrived.

“What would have happened if I had refused to participate in this campaign? Perhaps, the loss of the only person dear to me is the severe punishment of the Gods³ so that I understand once and for all that one should not act against one’s own principles hoping that nothing happens? Isn’t it possible to live the life of a sailor without causing destruction and death to others?”

He felt as if he was now alone in this world.

“Where is that person who was my father? What will be his future?”

Vagni tried to comfort Olav telling him how glorious it is to die in battle, for the brave warriors who die in this way go immediately to Valhalla⁴, where they meet Odin.

However, Olav was not sure that this was true, since the purpose of this battle was the looting of other people and their death, and this, then, was a deliberate injustice!

The father of Olav had told him before that his mother AINU knew how to see the Gods and converse with Them. She also said that souls do not die and that people invented many lies about the Gods and about the rules of life for mortals. These rules, used by people to justify their depraved life, are so different from the real Divine Laws.

She taught him to live in a completely different way than the way of other people. But Richard was not able to live this way without her, and he did not tell much to Olav about what AINU was like and about what she taught. For he believed that this would only bring problems and additional difficulties to the life of the boy, because these ethical principles

³ The Holy Spirits.

⁴ The paradise for valiant warriors who have fallen in a battle.

were too pure and completely dissimilar to the reality that was around them!

Olav could barely remember his mother, for he was only five years old when she left. The biggest thing that he could remember when he thought about her was the state of his own infinite happiness coming from the tenderness of her love!

Later, on occasions, Olav saw her face consisting of Light. Her lips moved as if she wanted to say something, but he did not hear these words. He only felt her tenderness and care that embraced him from all sides!

And now he was left completely alone. “How will I continue to live on? And why do I need to keep living?” he thought.

Olav directed his mental questions to the world of the Gods and asked for Their help and understanding.

Meanwhile, all the Vikings rejoiced over the conquest of great riches! The death of some of their warriors was something typical. Fortune smiled upon them and they were returning with the drekkar full of wealth. They were triumphant!

Only the helmsman Vagni came to the jarl Bjorn and spoke to him gloomily and confidently:

“Stop the lading, Bjorn! The drekkar is overloaded! Greed will destroy all of us!”

“Shut up, Vagni! I want to take everything that now belongs to us! We have laded even more than this!”

“Yes, jarl, we indeed have laded more, but we navigated along shores in good weather and we stopped in bays for the night. But now the open ocean is waiting for us!”

“Stop the panic, helmsman! You are whining like a woman!”

Vagni became gloomy, turned aside, stopped arguing, and went to check if the load was properly secured.

* * *

Very soon the ship, which was overloaded by the booty, came across a storm. This storm was so strong that the drekkar could not resist it and began to sink. Vagni once again saved the life of Olav by tying him to a piece of the mast. Olav then fainted and did not know what happened to everyone else.

Having regained his senses, he saw how a person with a brown face leaned over his body. The man said something to him in his own language, which Olav did not understand, and gave him something to drink.

In this way the destiny of Olav, controlled by the Divine Will, changed drastically and unexpectedly.

For what reason? To give him the possibility to search for the answers to the questions about the meaning of human life and to study them in new conditions, more appropriate for this.

Chapter Three: **In the Southern Lands**

A few months passed before Odin continued His narration about Olav, and when this happened, I found myself at an unexpected turn. Before me, images of a Mauritanian styled palace, which reminded me, by its beauty, of the Alhambra, began to unfold.

There, among other things, there was a patio with an arched marble colonnade around its entire perimeter that provided shade during the stifling middle of the day. Refreshing streams flowed from one pool to another gleaming in the sun and murmuring. Each pool had a beautiful mosaic on its bottom. There was also a garden with orange trees and peach trees, and a large room decorated in oak wood served as a library.

“Where is all of this, Odin?”

“This is the south of Spain during the greatest flourishing of the Arab caliphate. In those times, almost all the countries of the Mediterranean constituted an integral part of this great world of the Arab Empire and of its religious and cultural influence.”

*** * ***

A brown-skinned Arab, who was not very young and who was the owner of that luxurious palace, walked through the market being accompanied by his armed bodyguards. The market was located near the port. Everything was sold here, from gold-plated jewels and fabrics to aromatic spices and mature fruits, from fish and clams to slaves. An adolescent was the subject of a negotiation between a buyer and seller. It was possible to hear their conversation:

“No, you are wanting too much! He may not even live until tomorrow, and then I will lose my money!” said a buyer who was indignant and who wanted to pay less for the slave.

But the seller did not yield, saying:

“He only looks weak! He is very robust and will be a good worker! It was not more than yesterday that we fished him up from the sea! If he managed to survive there, he will not die here!”

“But this almost dead little fish is not worth this money!” said the buyer and continued on his way.

The eminent Arab attentively looked at the young boy, who was Olav, and paid the seller what he was asking for. Then he motioned for Olav to follow him. The latter did not even try to escape, since he barely had enough strength to walk.

*** * ***

The name of this eminent Arab was Amin Abduljadi. He not only rescued Olav from slavery, but also treated him as his own son given to him by Allah in place of his only other son who recently passed away.

Amin began to educate and teach Olav as his heir. He was very rich and possessed many merchant ships that carried both travelers and cargo across the Mediterranean Sea.

Subsequently, he and Olav travelled very often together on these ships. Thus, Olav learned to sail and to carry out trade negotiations, for Amin dreamed of handing over all of his affairs soon.

Olav learned Arabic very quickly, since Amin Abduljadi hired many professors for him. He studied Islam in all the beauty of its Sufi wisdom, the philosophy of the Greeks and Romans of ancient times, the scriptures of the Jews and Christians, mathematics, and astronomy.

Amin was not a religious fanatic. He called himself a philosopher and did not force Olav to adopt Islam.

At times they discussed the differences that exist in the beliefs of people. This topic always interested Olav, because he wanted to find the truth hidden in the many religious doctrines of different nations, which he could now observe and study.

* * *

One time they rested on the sea in a small sailboat that Olav had already learned to steer perfectly. It was a clear morning and a gentle breeze filled the sail.

They talked about the differences that exist among religious beliefs.

Amin explained to Olav his own worldview with the following words:

“I love the wisdom and beauty in everything!

“I enjoy the beauty of this day and of the blue waters of this calm sea!

“I love these seagulls that fill the expanse above the sea with their voices!

“I receive Truth from everywhere, no matter where it comes from. For me there is no difference if wise words come from the mouth of a Muslim or from a Christian who adores the Sacred Scriptures and worships Jesus or any

other manifestation of the Power of God, no matter what name they call Him.

“I believe that there is only one God beneath all the disagreements of human beliefs!

“Here, in this country, we can see how many people live in complete harmony, even though their beliefs are different. If the Arabs began to annihilate those who follow different beliefs, we would be surrounded by ruins instead of the flourishing of culture, of art, and of commerce. But now, many people adopt Islam voluntarily.”

“Yes, but this occurs because the slaves get their freedom in this way. And other people do this so that they do not have to pay taxes for the right to follow their own faith. There are also those who do this to obtain a preferred position in society.”

“You are right Olav. Many people want to gain earthly profit from everything, including from their religious life. They believe that this will bring them happiness and success.

“However, happiness has a different nature and is discovered through love for God, the Almighty and Merciful Lord of all!”

“But if God is One, as you say, why then do such different beliefs exist? Do the gods adored by people really exist or is this simply an inherited tradition?

“My father told me that my mother could talk with God. Can you also do this? Can you listen to God, ask Him questions, and receive His answers? Can you teach me to do this?”

“I myself cannot, but I find the answers to my questions in the sacred books.

“If you would like, I can invite a sage, a Sufi, who says that he can listen to and understand the words of Allah. It would be interesting for you to speak with him!”

* * *

The name of this Sufi was Ali Djamal.

**“Tell me, oh venerable one, can you listen to Allah?”
asked Olav.**

“Yes, I can!”

**“And why can’t I do this? Why can’t other people do this
either?”**

**Ali Djamal was silent for a while looking at Olav atten-
tively and later answered him thus:**

“God speaks with a person *in the language of the heart.*

**“Those who learn this language will be able to under-
stand God.**

**“The ability to perceive God with the spiritual heart that
can see and hear is a simple and accessible ability for each
person! And this ability is easily developed by the one who
knows how to love! You already know how to do this! And
you only have to learn a little bit more in order to understand
the Highest!”**

**“But I do not hear His words even though I want to! I
have so many questions for God!”**

**“Do not be in a hurry. You will be able to listen when it is
time!**

**“Meanwhile, you can feel His Will in the same way as
you feel the favorable wind that fills the sail and gives the
ship the power to move. Or, on the contrary, you can feel it
like the warning in the sea when the black clouds cover the
sky and the blasts of wind burst.**

**“With time, everything around you will become an open
book wherein you will see His Divine indications and learn to
understand them.**

**“You will realize that the Divine Power always abides in-
side you, in the depths of the spiritual heart!**

**“Yet, some other events in your life must first occur be-
fore you can feel the Power of Allah in all His magnitude.”**

**So, Olav gradually began to learn all this, in the same
way as every person can learn it. For this, he transferred the
center of his perception of the world to his chest, in which
not only breathing is performed and the heart beats, but also
love is born.**

And with this love, the soul can embrace everything that it sees around itself! And then the spiritual heart can grow and become gigantic!

Olav could do this especially well on the open sea during good weather. It seemed to him that he could embrace with his love all the sea and all the lands and that his love could even reach those places where he had previously lived! It also seemed to him that he could embrace his mother and his father, even though they had left this world, and many other people whom he loved and respected, as well as others whom he had never seen!

In this love of his, there was the tenderness of the morning sun. There, the power similar to the power of the ocean also grew! God, Who created all of this and Who loves everything and everyone, was present in this love!

It seemed that just a little more was left before it would be possible to listen to the answers to all his questions and understand all the setbacks of human destinies. But this did not happen, and the sensation of the happiness of the Merger with the All-Powerful Sovereign of the world disappeared for a time. In this case, the habitual perception of the ordinary material world and of people returned to Olav.

*** * ***

One time, Amin Abduljadi asked Ali Djamal:

“Tell me, what destiny do you see for Olav? Will he abandon me? He longs to return to the land where he was born and raised, and I feel that if I let him do this, I will never see him again. Do I have the right to keep him here?”

“This young man, given to you by Allah for his education, is special. Even I, who have been walking toward the light my entire life, cannot understand his entire destiny. It is this way because he came from the Source of this Light!

“Soon he himself will come to know what is necessary about himself, but not now. One more important event must happen to him before this, and then he will remember his Divine Nature and bring the Light of Truth to this world!

“I do not have the right to intervene in his destiny. I can only help him a little and teach him certain things.

“Still, I can console you and tell you that you will abandon this life and pass to other worlds in his arms.”

*** * ***

Many years passed. Olav sailed with commercial missions all over the Mediterranean Sea. He had business with some European countries and carried out increasingly distant sea voyages.

He gathered in his ship a group of brave and faithful sailors, and each one of them became a loyal friend.

Olav knew that we would have to travel north! He knew this in the same way that he knew the Will of God, and he only waited for the right time to come.

Thanks to the lessons of Ali Djamal, Olav not only learned to *feel* the Will of God, but he could *listen* to His advice and indications as he addressed Him with his questions. He felt His Love, His Power, and His constant presence more and more vividly.

When Amin Abduljadi, who had replaced his father, left this world, Olav understood that God filled the new course of his destiny with a favorable wind.

Chapter Four: **Journey to the North**

It is silent. Mist floats on a small lake that is lodged among pine-covered hills. Here at a certain time Odin began to tell me this saga.

Now He once again fills the silence, which embraces me from all sides, with His words:

“Can you hear me well in this silence? Are you ready to write down the next chapter of the saga?”

*The presence of Odin begins to increase like a rising wave of the sea and envelops me completely.
He continues His narration.*

* * *

Olav stopped his ship at a small seaport. It was a necessary to replenish the supply of provisions before the final voyage.

Before this, the members of his crew had refilled all the containers with fresh water from a very clean little river.

Now in the city, they bought everything else that they needed.

However, for some reason, Olav kept having the sensation that he should do something more important in this city.

Olav's companions were astonished and wondered why they had been at this "stinky place" for three days already. Still, they were accustomed to trusting Olav, and for this reason only, they waited.

Olav also waited for at least some sign from God to continue the journey or a clear explanation on what he should do. For the moment, he heard only the following direction: "You must stay here to pay off your last debts. Then your path will be clean and clear!"

But Olav never borrowed anything. He was raised by his adoptive father with the understanding that being a debtor in big or small things is a heavy burden that prevents one from living correctly, because it does not allow one to feel oneself as being free. In addition, unpaid debts aggravate the destiny of a person.

Olav did not understand what he should do now.

"When will we finally leave?!" this question was on the tip of the tongue of every one of his companions, but they stayed silent.

"We will leave soon. Get ready to sail. I only have to go through the city one more time," Olav told them.

He decided to be in solitude for some time in order to try to understand what he should see, hear, or give back here.

* * *

Narrow dirty streets, stinky smells, noise, chaos, and rude shouts were all around him, and there was not a single sign from God!

Olav started walking resolutely towards the sea. The cool breeze cleaned the dirtiness of this suffocating and crowded city. Olav thought: “Enough with this waiting! If something must be done, God will show me this clearly!”

Near one of the ships at the berth, he heard the following conversation:

“Are you in need of a marine pilot⁵? I can steer your ship wherever you need me to.”

“Get lost, you poor old man! You cannot even see what is under your feet! Perhaps you were once a marine pilot, but now it is time for you to open the path to the other world! This place is only for the young, leave it!” the man responded and burst out laughing.

The old man turned his back in silence and headed for the next ship.

Olav decided to give this old man some gold coins and accelerated his pace.

Suddenly, he recognized that this person was Vagni, the helmsman!

The joy of this understanding overflowed Olav! He called out to him in a loud voice:

“I need you, helmsman Vagni! We are sailing north and our path is long and dangerous! Would you like to come with us?” Olav spoke in the native language of Vagni, whose sounds he had not heard in a long time.

Vagni turned around. In his burnt-out gaze and hunched body, a formerly powerful and calm sailor awoke! Hope arose! It seemed that this hope was rising slowly from the depths of the sea, the hope of liberation from this miserable and humiliating life in a foreign country. It was also the hope

⁵ A marine pilot is a sailor that steers the ships in dangerous waters or in intense traffic, like ports, narrow canals, or rivers (translator’s note).

of returning home. Vagni did not recognize Olav, for more than twenty years had passed.

“Do you remember Olav, the boy whose life you saved twice, helmsman?”

“You survived in those times? Are you going back and can you take me with you?”

“Yes!”

Olav hugged Vagni, who still did not fully believe his luck.

A boy who looked to be about ten or twelve years old and who carried small merchandise on a tray fastened with a strap that passed over his shoulder, heard the conversation between Olav and Vagni.

He understood the words of his native tongue that was foreign here and addressed Olav, saying:

“Take me with you, sir! My name is Roon, and I will be a skald⁶ in your battles and feasts! I ‘drank the honey of Odin’ and I know how to compose heroic songs! Do not worry that I am so skinny! It is only an appearance! I will not be a burden for you! I will glorify your deeds and your kindness! I am also from the north! Take me with you! If you leave right now, my owner will not be able to catch me and he will never find me!”

A boy who was both weak and, in appearance, sickly was something unexpected for Olav.

But then he remembered how he himself looked in the slave market and thought that he must have looked the same or worse.

Well, at least now he understood which debts God had told him about!

Olav ransomed this boy from his master.

The crew of Olav gained two new members, and they finally continued on their journey.

⁶ A Viking war poet (translator’s note).

* * *

They were on the open sea. The aft wind filled their sail, and the ship glided smoothly over the small waves. Olav held the steering oar firmly, and Vagni was at his side. After spending a few days with Olav, it seemed that he had rejuvenated.

He told how he had survived after the sinking of the drekkar, how he was able to return, how he participated in new Viking campaigns to the lands of the Franks, how he almost died there after a grave injury, and how he led a hard and lonely life abroad.

Olav also told a little about his life.

Vagni was surprised by what he saw on the ship. He could not believe that people of different nationalities and beliefs could work side by side with such harmony.

He asked Olav:

“In your crew there are Christians. Are you not afraid that they will betray you?”

“It took me a long time to choose my companions among the brave sailors for this expedition. I rescued many of them from slavery and many of them have traveled with me more than once when I performed the merchant duties of my adoptive father. I trust each one of them, and each one of them is faithful to me.

“And what about you, Vagni, did you begin to hate the people among whom you had to live? Hatred destroys one’s health and ruins the life path of the one who hates, condemns, and despises others!”

“You are talking as if you approve of the Christian ideals?”

“I consider some of these ideals to be wise and just! I follow many of the commandments of Jesus in my life, and this makes me happy!”

“Did you change your faith? Did you become a Muslim or a Christian?”

“No, Vagni! I changed my faith for the Knowledge!” Olav smiled. “And the commandments about love announced by

Jesus also come from the One Divine and Eternal Source of the Truth!”

“So, you still haven’t abandoned your childish ideals of ‘justice’ then?”

“Not at all, Vagni! Not only did I not abandon them, but I also understood their Deep Foundation that lies in the Laws of the All-Powerful Creator of this entire world!

“The majority of people are accustomed to dividing everything into what is ‘theirs’ and what is ‘foreign’.

“In doing so, they love, protect, and respect what is ‘theirs’, *their* children, *their* beloved women, *their* country, or *their* faith. Each person can have different degrees of understanding and feeling of this small world of ‘theirs’.

“On the other hand, that which is outside of what is ‘theirs’ is considered ‘foreign’. And so, it is okay to hate and despise ‘foreigners’ because they are different and live in a different way. It is okay to take their lands and riches by force.

“It is called ‘heroism’ and ‘feats’, to take from ‘foreigners’ and give it to ‘our people’. This engenders hatred between people, between countries, between towns and brings wars and other calamities to the destinies of people.

“It is important to understand That Which exists above all of this. It is the One and All-Powerful God Who created this Earth — one for all beings — and these seas and oceans — one for all as well — and the trees, and the grass, and the fish, and the birds, and the other animals who live in the forests, and the same people, and the sun that rises above us all and give us its light without any discrimination.

“The understanding of this allows us to stop dividing the world into parts and understand that everything comes for the Creator and exists for the Creator!”

“But is it possible to love ‘foreigners’, as you say?”

“At one point you, Vagni, began to love a “foreign” boy and taught him to steer the drekkar, did you not? Now look how strong my arms are and how easy it is for me to set the course by using the stars! All of this is the fruit of your love!

“Well, they are not just fruits of your love, but of many other people as well.

“And my second father adopted me, a “foreign” boy, and educated me as his own beloved son! I hope I never gave him a reason to regret this!”

“It is difficult for me to understand you, Olav, for you think in a completely different way than all those whom I have known up until now! Apparently, I am too old to change, but I will try!” said Vagni.

“It’s never too late to understand the Truth, Vagni!”

“And are you sure that this is the Truth?”

“I am verifying this with my life! And God speaks with me through every event that He sends to my life, and to your life as well, Vagni! After all, I was able to find you in that little city thanks to His directions! And now before us the entire expanse is open for new discoveries and feats!”

Chapter Five: **Olav and Annika**

We are sitting near a fire in the woods. Its calm flame gives us warmth and comfort.

It is a chilly spring morning. The sun recently began to rise above the horizon. The new day is awake, and the birds greet the dawn with their songs that decorate the silence of the forest!

Odin began to speak:

“Love between a soul and God usually has a story that lasts more than one earthly life. I took care of you, as well as of many other people, for many lives.

“I watched over your development in this life from the very beginning! I bathed you in My lakes! I taught you to admire the beauty and to love everything around you! I sat with you near many fires without you noticing Me or recognizing Me.

“And then many of your years of studying Me have united us even more firmly.

“Now I am telling you stories about earthly love and about Heavenly Love. With the Waves of My Tenderness, I again and again embrace you and every one who reads these lines!

“By using the emotions of the heroes of this saga, I want to embrace everyone with My Light and submerge everyone in My Depths! Now let the words sound in which one can hear the voices of seagulls and feel the splashes of the waves against the sides of the boat!

“May the fragrance of the flowers and the salty taste of the drops of the sea reach every soul!

“May the expanse of My northern lands be so palpable that, by only reading, one can expand oneself over this vastness, loving every pebble and every pine, which found the strength to take root in a crag and not fall from the strong bursts of the winter wind!”

Odin easily opens the image of His northern lands before my inner vision. There, granite rocks rise on both sides of the fjord⁷; the streams of the waterfalls fall in some places of the cliffs; the pines manage to keep their trunks with their strong roots in the steep slopes; the crystalline surface of the water reflects the sky with the delicate tracery of the white clouds.

It seems like we are flying, as consciousnesses, above the surface of this mirror of water! I begin to hear the sounds of oars touching the water!

**** * ****

The ship glided smoothly over the waters entering into the fjord. The movements of the rowers were harmonious and rhythmic. It seemed that the cliffs, covered with trees in some places, floated to the right and to the left.

⁷ A large narrow inlet of the sea on the coast located between steeply sloped mountains, typical of some Nordic countries (translator’s note).

Ahead, an entrance to a small bay opened up. The small and long houses of the Vikings were lodged here, protected from the winds by the large cliffs.

Not many merchants dared to enter these fjords, because those who lived here were accustomed to taking what the merchant ships carried with the aid of arms. The one who dared to offer his or her merchandise in this place, especially that expensive merchandise which Olav brought, had to have great courage and strength.

Olav's lightweight and agile ship flew in like a seagull in the bay. The boardwalks touched the small pebbles. Olav disembarked and walked towards the armed people who left their houses.

He said:

“We have come in peace! From my travels to faraway lands, I have brought you my merchandise: golden wheat, white rice, fabrics, and jewels. If the owner of these lands allows me, I offer to your warriors and to your mothers and wives all that they desire!”

The jarl Ingvar, who was the head of the clan, the governor of that community, and the owner of those lands and of some drekkars, personally went out to meet Olav:

“Well, merchant! Bring your goods and we will look at them!”

The companions of Olav began to empty the trunks and sacks and put the merchandise inside the main house of that community.

Meanwhile, the jarl asked Olav:

“Why are you not afraid that I will take away everything that you brought and your life for good measure?”

“Those who live in fear hide themselves in their houses instead of sailing the oceans! You are a warrior and you know that fear leads to defeat in a battle!

“Fear is destructive not only in the battlefield, but it also brings undertakings into ruin.

“Brave people, however, ‘go after the horizon’ and God is behind their back, as a Protector, and shows them the way!

“If we reach an agreement, I will come back to your hospitable bay after one year and after two years and I will bring the new exotic goods that destiny will send to me.”

“You are brave and speak in a beautiful way! We respect the brave! You are right! We will gladly listen to you in the future!”

Meanwhile, they began to hear the excited voices of the women who were inspecting the fabrics and jewels displayed on the tables.

*** * ***

Annika was the only daughter of the jarl Ingvar.

She was as beautiful as a tender and delicate spring flower, slender with long blonde hair up to her waist, tied back by a thin ribbon around her head. Her blue eyes were the same color as the clear sky. She wore a white dress with the fine embroidery of blue flowers around her neck, and a belt made with threads surrounded her precious waist.

Fragile and tender compared to the people around her, she was different and special.

She saw Olav, and from this moment on, she did not look at the brocade or the precious stones, or the fine drawings on the buckles, or the different necklaces, or the earrings, or the little filigree chains. Now she only looked at him until their eyes met.

And when this happened, what people call “love at first sight” occurred. A radiance ignited in the souls, that radiance which attracts one soul to the other!

“Who is she?” Olav asked the jarl Ingvar after a time that seemed to be an eternity.

“She is my daughter Annika. But do not look at her like that! She is not for you, merchant! I am going to marry her to the owner of some nearby lands. This kinship will bring me

great luck! I will be the supreme sovereign of all the local jarls!”

Olav did not answer, because first he had to make sure that she wanted to unite her life with his. And if this were the case, there would be no obstacles!

* * *

The jarl Ingvar invited Olav and his crew to stay several days to rest from their long sea voyage. In addition, he decided to hold a feast with a competition between the friends of Olav and his warriors. He wanted to show his superiority over these foreigners.

Olav did not have anything against this, because his friends also agreed to rest there, to participate in the competition, and to show their mastery in the handling of swords and bows.

On the day of the competition, while everyone was preparing for the tournament, Olav and Annika moved away from the others and headed for the shore where they could talk alone having hidden themselves from curious eyes.

The most important thing had already been said between them with their words, with their looks, with their touches, and with the tenderness of the love that was burning stronger and stronger!

Annika looked at Olav in such a way that he no longer had any doubts that fate had given him a mutually experienced love!

It was as if they had begun living in another world that illuminated everything around them with a state of growing happiness rising from mutual understanding and unity of souls in the shining Light!

“Tell me about yourself, Olav! I want to know everything about you! Where were you born? Where did you live? And what is important to you?”

“But you yourself have not told me anything about you.”

“Why should I if you can see me like the palm of your hand? Besides, my life is so simple that I do not have any-

thing to tell! My years passed by each one like the next! I rejoiced with the arrival of spring, with the flocks of swans that fly above my house, with the flowers that open themselves up. Then summer arrived, and the tender sun warmed both me and all of nature, which also rejoiced in the short northern heat. Then autumn and winter arrived, and I spent many sunsets near the flame of the fire doing sewing chores. So, I have nothing to tell. You, on the other hand, have seen and known much!”

“I was born in the lands of the north, much further east than here. I became an orphan very early, and destiny brought me to the southern lands. There a person, who later became my adoptive father, educated and taught me.”

“What God do you worship? How should I pray for your wellbeing and protection?”

“In my travels, I was able to study the many beliefs that exist in different countries and among different people.

“Through these studies, I recognized the sovereignty of one God Who governs the entire universe. It does not matter if one calls Him Odin, Allah, or Elohim! I believe that to each people He sends His Messengers, which is why there are many Who are called Gods. Those who know the Primordial as the Truth, the Wisdom, the Love, the Perfection, and the Omnipotence also know that just as all rivers, seas, and oceans consist of water, all beliefs are similar to the sounds of the different languages used to designate the One Divine Power.

“No doubt, there exists what the people themselves added to the legends about God and His Messengers, and this is why many misinterpretations of the Truth arose in the beliefs of people.

”It is similar to a reflection in the water. Without wind, this reflection is perfect, but when there is wind, the movement on the surface of the water creates alterations, and if the waves are very strong, you cannot see anything anymore. In spite of this, that which is reflected does not cease

to exist, it does not matter if we can see the reflection or not.”

“You speak so well, Olav! Tell me, how did you decide to come here with such expensive merchandise?”

“I dreamed about returning here for many years. So, I assembled a team of brave sailors and faithful friends. I will introduce you to each one of them! We have stayed in many places, and no one has created an obstacle for the peace and friendship that I have proposed.”

“And in all these places the beautiful women could not keep their eyes off of you?” Annika jokingly asked.

“Possibly. But I found you!

“Love is the most beautiful state of the human soul! And you gave me the happiness of being able to love you!”

“Why do you not seek to participate in this competition that my father organized? Your friends also want this entertainment. Are you not afraid that they will think you are weak? Do you really want to be here with me and not there?”

“Yes, I want to be with you and not be separated from you even for a moment!

“I control the sword and the bow fairly well, but I believe that one should not use arms without extreme necessity. I am not afraid to appear weak because I know my strength. But I saw several times how my loved ones perished.

“It is difficult for me to explain it now with words, but I learned the law of the Creator that calls on us to not cause unjustified harm to anyone.

“Therefore, one should not even tear out a small flower without extreme necessity!

“Right now, looking at these forget-me-nots near the water, I see in each one of them a small manifestation of the marvelous beauty of the entire Earth, this beautiful Creation of God!

“And the plants not only manifest the beauty of the Creation that delights us, but they also feed our flesh with their fruits, and, through this, their strength adds to the strength of each one of us.

“The suffering and the pain of assassinated animals or the suffering of people due to enmity among themselves is, in my opinion, what violates the Laws that please the Lord Who created all of this.”

“Do you really believe that there can be Perfection on Earth?” asked Annika.

“How can you doubt this, experiencing the delight of the love that has brought us together?”

They embraced each other and united their lips.

Later, when they continued their conversation, Olav said:

“It is important to understand that what people consider to be an ideal for themselves does not always really bring them closer to the authentic Perfection.

“Many consider kindness and mercy as weakness, while force, cruelty, and certainty in the right to avenge oneself are considered to be bravery. It is not easy to change these convictions.

“The victories in this tournament will entertain the pride of many. For some, these victories will serve as lessons in the art of combat, while for others they will be a motive for envy.”

“But I believe that this tournament will not cause harm to anyone! If you triumph, it will be more likely that my father will agree to marry me with you!”

“I am not sure of this, Annika, but we can try it. Alright, let this competition be for me too! Let’s go!”

They held hands and walked happily towards the crowd of spectators and participants. When they arrived, the jarl looked at his daughter disapprovingly, but she gave him a brave and firm look back. The happiness and love made her fearless. Then the jarl understood that now it would be difficult for him to get the obedience of his daughter and he regretted having started this feast. However, it was too late.

* * *

The entire community, from children to adults, gathered to see the duels. Even the women with children who were breastfeeding came to see how the foreigners fought.

Among the friends of Olav, there were some Africans and their dark skin was the subject of wonder. Everyone was also interested in the armament of the friends of Olav, who had lightweight swords and sabers, as well as thin armor that shined like scales.

Every person wondered if this armor would resist the strong blows and also how these foreigners would fight.

In the beginning, each fighter competed in shooting bows.

Later, the duels with swords began. Whoever lost left the competition, and whoever won continued to compete.

Olav beat everyone. No one could compare with him in the speeds of his attacks and his defenses. It seemed that he predicted every movement of his adversary before that person could even move. The attacks of Olav were so precise that he did not even injure his opponent. Instead he simply put his sword in such a position that the next movement would be fatal for his rival.

Initially, Ingvar wanted to fight with this merchant to give him a lesson, but, seeing how his best warriors were defeated one after another, he decided not to participate in the tournament.

Together with all the others, he greeted the victor saying:

“Ask for any prize, merchant! You are, truly, a powerful warrior!”

“I ask you for the most beautiful treasure in the whole world! Let me marry your daughter, jarl Ingvar!”

“You are bold, stranger! But these matters are not resolved so quickly!”

“You will give me a great ransom for my daughter! You will bring your boat filled with gold and jewels to this bay once again! And only then will we celebrate the marriage. Of

course, you will leave me what my people did not buy now as an advance payment. You promised to come here again. So, I will wait for you for one year. Are you rich enough to gather such a ransom?"

"I have enough gold and jewels to fulfill this. But let your daughter marry me now. My word is as firm as the blows of my sword. And later you will receive what you want!"

"No, merchant! First bring me the gold! There is no other way! And hurry! For if you do not return after one year, I have another candidate, the union with which will give me the same influence as your gold!

"Now let's feast! Prepare the tables with the food!"

Everyone ate, and the young skald Roon sang his beautiful songs about brave warriors and about the heroes of the legends of different people. He sang about the love of the bride waiting for her fiancé.

He not only sang the ancient songs, but he composed new lines listening to them in the world known only by poets. Everyone applauded him, for in these lands the art of the skalds was appreciated in almost the same way as the valor of the warriors.

Chapter Six: **Leaving to Return**

Odin stopped his narration for some time.

I waited for the continuation of the story for several months.

On that day we meditated amidst beautiful expanses of meadows that extended for many kilometers to the left and to the right. In our wooded lands, such places are rare.

On the gently sloped hills, angelica plants flowered whose tender fragrance saturated the air heated by the sunlight. Soon fireweed will also bloom and then there will be even more beauty around us!

Odin came!

He had never come in this way before.

The Light began to rise from the Depths, and suddenly all the fireweed flowers opened simultaneously on the non-material plane! This happened not only near my body, but also at a great distance. Everywhere, the blossoming sea of meadows became covered in resplendent pink foam! It is impossible to transmit this beauty with words!

At the same time, Odin filled all this expanse above the surface of the Earth with the Tenderness that arises and pours out from the Divine Depths, similar to a universal ocean!

I even got a little confused by this Beauty manifested so Divinely and grandiosely! Tears of happiness welled up in my eyes!

Odin maintained this beautiful painting, so intensely filled with His Love, for a long time!

Then He continued His narration.

* * *

Olav and Annika walked, holding hands, amidst the pink sea of fireweed in bloom.

“Travel with me right now, Annika! I love you and you love me! It is too long to wait for the consent of your father, and during this year, in which he waits to receive the ransom, much can change!”

Olav knew in this moment that a great obstacle lied ahead. He felt the danger, but he did know whom this danger was threatening, him or Annika. He did not have any idea how it could be prevented, but he hoped that the difficulties would only come to his path. He did not want to frighten his loved one.

Meanwhile, Annika said:

“My love for you will remain unchanged, Olav! I don’t want to risk your life! Your ship is fast, but the drekkars of my father have more rowers. And if you take me against his will, they will begin to pursue us. And if they reach us, a cruel death awaits you, and I await an even more terrible fate,

which is the life without you! I ask that you fulfill what my father wants and bring the heavy ransom that he asked you for, and then I will be with you always! I will wait for you, no matter what happens! Only death can stop this!”

“Alright, let it be as you wish! I will return for you and bring as much gold and jewels as your father asked me for. Only death can stop me!”

“My love, I cannot travel with you right now, but I can become your wife without waiting an entire year for this! I love you! May all the Gods be witnesses of our love!

“For if something happens with you or with me in this year, we would not forgive ourselves for not using this time when we were together!”

* * *

That which happens in the bridal chamber between a man and a woman, called husband and wife, is sacred, and this sacred union should be hidden from the eyes of others.

And that which opens up to those who truly love each other during the union of souls and bodies is impossible to transmit with the help of words.

Olav and Annika understood the great happiness of this union. All the earth was their conjugal bed and the sky covered them with itself as if with a blanket!

The Gods rejoiced for these people in love, for this love was preparation for the Great Love that unites a soul with the Creator of the entire universe!

* * *

The week before Olav’s departure passed by like a happy dream.

And when the ship departed, having hoisted the white sail, Olav stood at the stern holding the steering wheel. He did not look back. The meeting with his beloved was waiting for him! After a year, we would return here and Annika would be his forever!

She, on the other hand, stood on the edge of the cliff and whispered: “Great Gods of all the lands and seas, protect my loved one no matter where he goes on his journey! May he return! I will wait for you, my dear!”

Chapter Seven: Year of Separation

Blossoming apple-trees in the garden, planted by good hands. The beauty of their white and pink foliage this spring seems especially beautiful!

And Odin also admires beauty! His gentle Light-Love embraces space, permeates trunks and crowns, caresses every flower.

He says:

“God is like the Great Gardener, nurturing souls!

“The way of every soul is long — even before birth in the human body.

“Incarnate people can learn to love their younger brothers and sisters in plant and animal bodies.

“And then — every human soul should grow, blossom! And it is obligatory — to return to its Gardener good results!

“... It may seem that life is insignificant — in comparison with the immensity of the universe. In the immensity and eternity of the universe, it is just a small spark...

“But — human life can become very significant!

“If the soul has become Love, similar in quality to the Ocean of Divine Consciousness, then this Great Ocean replenishes Itself with such souls!

“Water drop acquires involvement in the power of the ocean, merging with the integrity of the entire ocean. And the ocean becomes more by... a whole drop...

“But the Ocean of the Universal Divine Consciousness expects and accepts the infusion into It of Those Souls Who

have advanced to the Perfection — because His Infinite Vastness consists precisely of such ‘Drops’ replenishing It.

“People can help each other and other embodied beings in this Evolutionary Process!

“One who lovingly assists others in spiritual growth — that one finds special assistance of the Creator in his or her personal development.”

* * *

Before going on the way, Olav was thinking about who would be best to stay here, next to Annika, — for her safety. “But who can be left? Of course, any of the team would carry out this assignment, but, perhaps, only Vagni could agree to this with joy...”

When Olav told him about this, Vagni sighed happily:

“You, as always, are more than wise, Olav! I myself did not dare to ask you about this! After many years of life in foreign lands, I so did not want to leave these places again, just after I returned!

“I am ready to give my life for your beloved and I am ready to protect her from dangers if they suddenly happen.

“I have no home and family, and I will treat her like my daughter!

“But how will you manage without a pilot?”

“I remember all the pitfalls and currents that you told me. You do not doubt that I’m a good student!” — Olav said with a smile to him.

... So Vagni remained.

Jarl Ingvar allowed him to live in a small house on the shore, somewhat away from the settlement. Here sometimes the workers stayed to sleep, when their drakkars were repaired. Vagni was tempted also in this ability — and could help them both with advice and work.

A small river carried its streams and clean sand into the waters of the fjord in this place.

The house was old, but Vagni brought it in order.

Annika became a frequent guest at Vagni. She so wanted to talk about her beloved and asked Vagni about everything that he could tell.

”Tell me, is it true that Olav will be able to collect such a rich ransom?”

“I think, yes. He said that his foster father owned many lands, houses, and merchant vessels. He told me about the eastern luxury of his Arabic possessions in those distant countries where he happened to be. I think it will not be difficult for him to collect gold and jewelry.”

“Olav said that you knew him as a boy and that you saved his life twice.

“Tell me about him — at least something else! I’m so interested!”

“Yes, he was not the same as everyone else — even from childhood. He rushed to defend those who, in his opinion, were unjustly offended... And he was not afraid of anything!”

... Vagni told Annika a lot about what he remembered.

Once he told how Olav saved him:

“You asked, how I saved Olav’s life... But Olav, too, saved me! Saved — not from death, but from what is worse than death: from the slow, senseless fading of everything in my life...”

“I already thought that my destiny is nearing completion and that everything of me is now in my past. There was only one dream: to die in native lands or at sea, but not in a foreign land, where I looked with disgust at everything that surrounded me.

“And then, Olav found me — and he changed all this! Next to him — my life again made sense! I became needed — and as though youth and vigor had returned! Even eyesight had improved!

“He is not a healer, but for some reason even people’s illnesses leave, if one were to be next to him! Here, for example, Roon, the skald-boy, — he was so weak! But after a

few months' journey together with Olav — he became as you saw him!

“And this happens to people, because Olav teaches them a different attitude to life, gives them hope, a goal! For everyone — he finds special words that are necessary specifically for that person. These words awaken strength and joy, encourage one to change oneself in order to become better!

“For example, he told me that my vision was diminished not due to old age, but because I saw only darkness and dirt around me, also because I looked only at the shortcomings of those people who were in my field of vision! And I was not ready to love those people, I did not seek to help them, but only yearned for my own past and condemned, hated everything and everyone around me...

“I do not know for sure whether the truth is what he says, but usually everything goes exactly as he speaks! My back does not hurt me anymore, and my eyes see almost as well as in my youth!

“And even now, without him, I understand that I need him and you — and this brings joy from life!

“A person's life must necessarily make sense!

“Olav spoke on this words that I do not fully understand... He said that he lives in accordance with the Will and Power, Which are called by him *God* — One All-the-Father of all the worlds in the Creation.

“Olav is not a sorcerer, not a shaman, but he... speaks with God! And God reveals to him what he asks.

“I saw different priests — both from self-referring Christians, and from those who worship Odin, Mithra, or other Forces or spirits... They all only do rituals and cry out for the mercy of their God(s)...

“But Olav — he can talk with God... as with a Friend! It's as we talk now between ourselves!”

“Yes... I heard him talking with God.

“Olav — he's special! He is so beautiful, strong, pure, and clear! And in him, there is no lie, falsity. I had never

seen such people before! Everyone shows off at least a little before others — either by power, or by mind, or by appearance, or by wealth... And — they hide what they do not want shown to others.”

“Yes, you are right! But Olav is sometimes difficult to understand... And even more difficult — to accompany, fully following his advice...”

“But even the unknown, about which he speaks, is so inviting, beautiful! And so I happily try to live the way he explained to me!”

“Sometimes, it seems to me that, what he believes as right for people’s lives, — it is not realizable in reality... But he... lives just that way — and has success!

“I do not know if it’s possible to learn to observe the principles about which he speaks in life. But I believe that people’s lives, in fact, would be better if all these rules were followed.

“Olav told me that he had a teacher, who was called a Sufi. This Arabic word means *pure*. And that teacher spoke about the laws of pure and righteous life for people. I’ll try to tell you what I have remembered:

‘A person must observe the purity of the body, food, clothing, and home.

‘Because external purity contributes to the purity of the internal.

‘A person must observe the purity of vision.

‘This means — to protect the eyes of the soul. And for this, you need not look at what causes anger, envy, and the desire to steal someone’s else.

‘But the contemplation of the beautiful — it gives the purification of the soul!

‘A person must observe the purity of hearing.

‘It means — to protect your hearing from foul-mouthed and mud-filled hate speech.

‘It’s a blessing to listen to beautiful music or gentle sounds of nature, listen to melodious singing and wise speeches.

‘A person must keep the hands clean.

‘This applies not only to washing them, but any deed, to which we apply our hands, must be kind, useful, and honest.

‘A person must keep clean thoughts.

‘That is, it is necessary to remove bad and gloomy thoughts, not wish evil to others and not self-pity. Heavy thoughts, devoid of purity, — destroy happiness.

‘But bright and kind thoughts bring success to the future of man.

‘One must keep one’s speech clean.

‘Because spoken words carry within themselves the strength and purpose of the soul. And do not waste it!

‘Words must be pronounced only when they can reach the goal in the soul of the hearer.

‘And also the purity of speech is acquired by the ability to remain silent. This ability helps make every word weighty, necessary, and timely.

‘It’s good to hear and understand the thoughts of the interlocutor. But even better — to understand the thoughts of God! And you can master this only by training your own mind to be silent.’

‘And most importantly, to which all the rules of purity serve, — *one must observe the purity of the soul!*

‘Because only a pure soul is able to walk the Path of the spiritual heart and approach the Purity of the Most High!

‘Only the purity of the spiritual heart allows us to display true love!

‘To give love and not demand love from others — this is the way of happiness!’

“Olav spoke a lot about *the path of the spiritual heart*, which brings man closer to the Divine and which can make a person as the Divine Souls, sometimes called *Gods*. Indeed, according to Olav, His Great One God consists of the Unity of Many Divine Souls.”

“Yes... Olav knows so much! And he opens to people their great opportunity and happiness — to love!”

... In such conversations Annika and Vagni often spent time, and Annika rejoiced in everything that she learned about her beloved.

*** * ***

Jarl Ingvar steadily advanced his desire — to become a konung. And he had achieved his goal.

To consolidate his new position, he decided to relocate the entire community to another location.

The property, the families — everything was immersed in the drakkars. Only Annika refused to go with all:

“Olav should return here! And I’ll wait for him here, as I promised!”

“He’ll be able to find you if he can and wants to return! But he might change his mind. How many pretty women has he met this year? We do not know this... And leaving with me, you will be the most desired bride for any yar! You yourself can choose among them!”

“Do you still not understand, father? I love Olav!”

“Well, love!... Then let only his man Vagni remain here. He will tell Olav where to find us!”

“No! I, too, stay here!”

... Ingvar did not expect such obstinacy from his daughter. Enraged, he threatened to leave her alone, without the former guard. He hoped until the last moment that she would come to her senses. But Annika was firm in her decision.

Only Vagni stayed with Annika in a deserted settlement.

* * *

Annika liked to climb the high cliff and look from there to the distance — in the direction from which the sun shines in the daytime and from where her beloved returns.

She thought that when she looks at the sea and hears the sounds of waves, then she gets closer to him. As if her love can reach out and embrace him!

... Winter passed, spring came.

Apple trees blossomed. Before, fruit trees were not planted in these lands. Three seedlings, which were brought here by Olav on the vessel, were planted by him and Annika together. Young trees had survived the cold winter! And Annika, admiring the first of their several gentle flowers, felt that closer and closer is her beloved!

Once her emotion of love was so strong that she thought that the cliff, on which her body was standing, seemed to grow in the space of Light. As if it was a sort of ledge from the denser layers of Light, located above the great expanse of the most delicate white-gold Radiance. And even deeper was a whole sea of tender and affectionate Fire!

She felt that she could — by the soul that had become, as it were, winged from love, — slip into that Light and soar like a seagull. And maybe — fly to where the vessel transports Olav! And there — to be hugging the beloved!

In that Light, she suddenly had seen the Face and Eyes and felt the Embrace of gentle and affectionate Great Hands... “It’s evident that great God of my beloved Olav is helping me!” — Annika decided.

She could not hear the words of God, but had the feeling that in the Light the most gentle and beautiful words about love sounded! She dissolved into blissful happiness!...

... Annika ran down the cliff:

“Vagni! I have seen God of Olav!

“Olav is already close! Soon he will be here!”

Chapter Eight: Death and Immortality

More than three years have passed since Ódin started telling this saga to me. Sometimes I wrote a lot from Him at once about the life of heroes, sometimes — only small episodes which supplemented what I had already heard.

And now — early spring. The first sunny days already caressed with their warmth.

But the weather suddenly changed dramatically: the cold wind blew again, bringing rain and snow.

In such bad weather, meditations usually get worse and there is no point in leaving home without special need.

But I had such need: I was called to leave the house by Odin. And, covered in a raincoat, I overcame the bad weather.

Suddenly, Odin Himself approached my body — and everything changed! The cold and icy streams of rain almost disappeared from my perception, I immersed myself in the Caress given by Him.

He appeared in all His Power — as the Chief Divine Curator of the development of souls in all the North-European lands:

“Yes, I also once lived in flesh — in the harsh and volatile conditions of these places...”

“And I love this part of the Earth!”

“I’m used to bad weather, including, — to gusts of wind, which hit the face with streams of rain or thorny ice! I’m also accustomed to the leaden heaviness of clouds over the unruly masses of waves!”

“But now — I freely manifest Myself through all this and even through the thickness of granite rocks — by the Divine Fire!”

“And I’m not afraid of earthly storms!”

“I saw many hurricanes and tempests when I lived here, incarnating more than once! I saw terrible storms and

terrible for mortals streaks of lightning striking the sea, and I heard rolls of thunder that shook the space...

“What causes fear in many people — teaches strengths for fearless persons of strong nature!

“And yet — it teaches also to appreciate the beautiful: gentle and subtle!

“Including, the tender sun, and the quiet smooth surface of the calm sea, reflecting the blue of the sky, will be then invaluable treasures!

“Clean streams of brooks with beautiful water are more expensive than diamonds — for those returning from distant sea trips! Such water is the most delicious of terrestrial drinks — for those who have cognized the thirst!

“And green meadows with blossoming flowers are more expensive than emeralds and rubies for those who have visited the edge of death in sea storms and no longer hoped to see land!

“Strong hands of friends, love of gentle wives — all this becomes meaningful a hundredfold, when life is not a standing swamp, but a heroic path to the goal!

“Courage, honesty, purity, tenderness, and strength of the soul lead along the Path of cognizing Power, Love, and Wisdom of God!

“And sometimes even evil people who inevitably are met on the Path to the Goal also help to pass through the necessary tests and gain understanding and stability in Unity with the Divine Power!”

... Odin showed me a camp of people resembling robbers. Their leader talked with a man obsequiously bowed before him...

* * *

The leader said:

“The vessel laden with gold and other jewels? A rich ransom for the right to marry the daughter of the konung? It would be a noble loot! But are you sure that this is not gossip?”

“Kund, who told about this, himself participated in the tournament at Ingvar and heard how merchant-foreigner Olav asked Ingvar to give him Ingvar’s daughter in marriage and promised to bring a whole vessel of gold!”

“Are you sure that our people saw the approach of this same vessel?”

“I think I was not mistaken! Kund is confident that he has recognized both the silhouette and the sail. He was close and heard foreign speech.

“They stopped in a cove nearby. A storm is coming, which, most likely, will be strong and long-lasting. They will wait. There are only twenty of them. And a better time to attack cannot be found!”

... The leader was Bolly. He changed over time not for the better. His envy toward the successes of others and the anger that arose in his childhood, as well as his desire to sweep away his failures on the weak, his pleasure in humiliating people — all these worst qualities have increased in him and acquired devilish power.

He gathered around himself many men outcast from Viking communities. The main principles of their life were “power makes right” and the absence of any morality. Bolly did not hesitate to attack the houses and families of other Vikings during the long marches of their husband and fathers. He could do business via meanness, betrayal, deception — and then admire his own evil cunning. He boasted that Loki — “‘god’ of all cunning” — bestows him luck.

Bolly continued to question:

“Tell me, who is this Olav? Where is he from?”

“One person among those who arrived with him, named Vagni, said that this Olav was from these places. But I think that this is not true. They sailed from far-away southern countries, where our vessels have not yet reached.”

... Bolly has heard another name he knew. “Coincidence? Or is it, in fact, — Vagni-helmsman? Could this be? Is this merchant really the same Olav whom I hated, with whom I once sat at the same table in my mother’s house?

The same one — of whom I was so envious, when he, over me, was taken on a voyage, although he was the younger? That same Olav — news of the death of which made me so elated?... Well, let's see now!"

Bolly was used to not disclosing his thoughts to others. He said aloud:

"It's necessary that no one thinks that namely we have captured foreigners! konung Ingvar can consider these riches — already his own! We do not need his vengeance!

"We will attack this night: we will go down by boats on the river, which flows in the depths of this bay. It does not take a lot of time. And the dangers from there — they do not wait for a better time for us.

"We will then take their vessel to the open sea so that the people, who will find the wreckage, presume and tell everyone that when trying to hide from the storm in this bay the merchant Olav's vessel crashed against the rocks and sank.

"We need to act quickly before the bad weather is out! The storm will be strong!"

"They are very skilled fighters... Though we are three times as many, each of them is dangerous!"

"It does not matter: we must not let them have time to use weapons! I know how to defeat this stranger!

"Send Orm and Skeggy to reconnoiter! And — to remain quiet: so even a branch does not crackle nor a pebble roll!

"The rest — quickly prepare boats and weapons for battle!"

... Bolly acted according to the plan. His scouts reported that Olav himself, the scald-boy and two other foreigners remained on the vessel in the bay. The rest are sheltered from the weather and sleep in a cave on the shore. The entrance is guarded by only two.

* * *

The attack went according to Bolly's plan. Robbers have managed to capture without much effort the two sailors

guarding the entrance and all comrades of Olav sleeping in the cave.

The noise of wind and waves, increasing every hour, drowned out sounds from the movements of the infiltrators.

On several boats, Bolly's men made for the vessel and boarded. Olav and his two companions snatched up their swords, Roon in his clear high voice tried to alert about the attack those who were in the cave. He did not know that all, who were there, are already tied up.

The battle that took place on the vessel was more difficult than Bolly had anticipated. Olav and two of his friends fought back the attackers. All three have already received wounds, but Bolly's people could not cope with them.

Behind their backs, Roon stood on the bow of the vessel and sang about the scoundrels, attacking under cover of night, about cowards who strive to strike in the back, about shame and the Heavenly retribution, which awaits those who overlook the laws of honor and valor, about brave heroes who always win!...

The rain increased. The wind grew stronger.

It was time to implement the second part of the plan: to bring the vessel into the open sea, otherwise the storm would make this impossible.

Bolly already recognized Olav. Now he decided to act himself, being sure of the success of his insidious intention.

He quietly rose from the outside to the bow of the vessel along the anchor cable and seized Roon, bringing a knife to his neck.

“Stop, Olav, and order your people to surrender! Otherwise, I'll cut the throat of this ‘songbird’!

“Come on! If you stop resisting, I'll save your people's lives — both those who are here and those on the shore! They there are already tied up. If not, you will be guilty of their doom!”

“No, Olav! No! I'm not afraid of death!” — shouted Roon. But Bolly plugged his mouth with the folds of his cloak.

... Olav appreciated the situation:

“All right, we’ll surrender! Remember: you promised not to hurt my people, Bolly!

Lower your weapon!” — he said already in Arabic to his friends, and they reluctantly obeyed.

... Olav and his friends were tied up.

All the cargo from the vessel and captives were hastily overloaded on the boats. Only Olav remained on the vessel.

“Faster!” — Bolly commanded his people.

... Then he went to Olav:

“I also have recognized you, Olav! Let’s see which one of us will now be happier and more lucky!

“I will save your people’s lives, but not because I have promised you this. To keep promises is the rule of naive fools! But I will save their lives because it is profitable for me! I will sell them as slaves in Hedebyu in Jutland. We will sell them there with great benefits! And no one here will know about their fate! They are strong! And they will bring me great income! And those with black faces, like coal, will be in triple price!

“But as for you — I did not even promise life! You will now experience the ‘laws of justice’ of your God!”

... He ordered:

“Tie him to the mast! Stronger!”

... And Bolly continued to enjoy the triumph of his superiority and power in this situation:

“You will die slowly of wounds and thirst! Or — by the grace of Thor — you will get lightning struck! Or, by Njord’s grace, you will be broken against cliffs with this ‘floating shell!’” — Bolly scornfully kicked the side of the vessel.

“Orm, Lyot, Skeggy! Take the vessel out of the bay, remove the sail — and take it with you to the boat! Cut off the stern oar! Throw overboard all the other oars so that people can find them on the shore! By these special carved arms on the oars — they easily will determine that the vessel of Olav was lost, even if the remains of the vessel itself are not cast ashore by the storm.

“Then come back on the boats! Faster: after a couple of hours the storm will crush this trough into small chips, throwing it on sharp rocks! Or — the storm will take it so far away that a quick death for Olav might be considered a blessing!

“Now — goodbye, Olav! Give my greetings to your God and enjoy your ‘laws of goodness and justice’!”

*** * ***

The storm played out in full force. Arching lightning flashes cut through the blackness of the clouds...

Lead-black shafts crashed onto an unguided vessel.

The body of Olav, tied to the mast, seemed almost lifeless. But he was still alive.

Olav turned to God. He did not ask for salvation. He was not afraid of the death of his body. But he tried to understand the reasons for everything that was happening to him now:

“What is this all for? By what I have attracted all these troubles to my friends and my beloved, who will never wait up for me? What did I do wrong? Is it really that so stupid and ignominious a fate will be the end of my earthly life?”

“Sometimes it is correct to ask not ‘what for?’, but ‘what is the reason?’!” — the answer came from the Shining Living Light, Which was seen suddenly by Olav everywhere around.

He decided that this is death. Because he ceased to perceive the raging sea and black clouds, ceased to hear thunder.

He — really completely left the body and found himself among the Divine Souls, Who constituted by Themselves this Sea of Divine Light!

He realized that he had become... one of Them! He became — a Part of the One All-Powerful Lord, consisting of many of the Perfects!

... Always before in meditations, feeling God, Olav perceived Him as a certain Force, Light or Divine Fire, separate

from Olav himself. He could merge with Him for a while, but there always remained *one who* understood that here is a soul which for a time is united with God...

But now — Olav felt himself completely identical with Him! Olav became an inseparable Part of the All-Creating Divine Consciousness — the Omnipresent, Mighty, and Gentle in His Divine Omnipotence!

From this Oceanic Part of Himself — Olav recalled and saw all of His last earthly life...

... He was greeted by Others — the same as He, the Divine Souls in male and female Forms. In Them, there was so much Beauty, Caress, Wisdom, Care!...

They began to speak:

“Yes, You are now — One of Us!

“Life in the body on the Earth makes it difficult to remember what was before the incarnation.

“But You, in fact, wished to come in a body on the Earth to return to people Knowledge of the Highest!

“And now — the time has come for you, having been enriched with many qualities necessary for the attainment of Divinity, including the ability for strong emotions of love, — to realize fully Your Divinity.

“Moreover, You have to learn to live possessing the Immortal Body!”

... Again Olav felt Himself in the body tied to the mast of the dying vessel... But He returned to the body — being in Divine awareness of Himself.

He began to try to substitute the totality of the Divine Being — for the raging sea, the thirst, the pain of the helpless bound body at the mast... And again, He became the Radiant Divine Light!

... The storm raged for a long time...

Olav seemed to die in the body — and then resurrected in it again, learning to feel Oneself in the body — as the Possessor of Divine Mind, Omniscience, and Power. This was repeated again and again, until nothing remained in the body tied to the mast — of the former Olav-man.

Then — the Divine Flame flared up and filled all His earthly body.

He has now acquired a new Body that could no longer be separated from God. This new body retained the shape of the former body. But it could not be killed any more. It was — the Divine Immortal Body, by which God could easily do His Will on the Earth! To see, hear and speak — Olav could now with the help of this new Body.

And this Body was only a small part of Him. As the Soul — He was huge! He could freely penetrate the abyss of the sea and the earth's firmament, rising from the Deepest Depths.

... The storm began to subside quickly. In gaps between the clouds, sunshine began to shine.

Olav moved his shoulders — and the ropes fell apart, like ash...

He stretched out his hand — and a bowl of water was in it. And He drank.

He thought that the thirst and hunger, from which He had recently died, were like a dream.

He stretched out his hand — and took from the *unmanifested world* the warm bread. The bread was as delicious as the purest water from the bowl.

Olav realized that His Intention alone was enough to control the vessel.

In the distance, on the cliff, He saw a female figure. It was Annika. She was waiting for Him.

It turned out that the storm had driven the vessel close to the familiar shore. A little more — and He will be in place.

* * *

It was a complete calm after a terrible storm.

Olav sent — by His Intent — the vessel to the shore. And... habitually took by the hand a stump of the steering oar which did not even reach the water...

The vessel obeyed without any material effort. Olav now accustomed to a new *way of living*, realizing the Divine op-

portunities which He had attained. He learned to control Oneself-Power — just as He once mastered control of the drakkar with the help of the steering oar.

... He saw Annika running to meet him along the path from the cliff, when Vagni came out of the small house and stared in amazement at what was happening.

Olav is back! But — no longer as a man, but as God-Man!

Now — in the fullness of the Divine Awareness — He must continue that Work for which He was born on the Earth as man, and then as God!

Chapter Nine: **Return of Olav**

Gentle hills overgrown with blossoming heath... Its little pink-lilac flowers shine in the rays of the morning sun.

Pines, covered with morning dew, rise over the heather carpet.

Sometimes granite stones protrude from the heather. They were here even in those times when Ódin walked in body through these lands.

Since childhood, I loved these beautiful places, still not knowing that it was the Divine Presence of Odin, which made them so incredibly beautiful, giving a hard-to-describe joy!

And now I, having known Him already for many years, am overflowed with gratitude to Him for His Love, for His Care!

His words fill me with unearthly Happiness, and the Mergence of consciousnesses gives great Bliss!

Odin — in response to my emotions — expresses by His emotions and words Love between God and the embodied human soul:

“I’m Omnipresent!

“From any corner of the universe — in an instant — I can be close to you!

“You can — in the body or without a body, that is, as a free soul — call Me. And I — at the same moment will be next to you and in you!

“The Ocean of My Transparent Peace embraces you always. But if you want to turn your love to Me, then the Flame of My reciprocal Love flares up!

“I am ready to direct Flows of My Tenderness towards you, in you — whenever you think of Me!

“If you invite — then I enter into your loving heart, granting a state of Happiness.

“I am ready to pour My Power in your body, filling it with the Fiery Stream of My Love!

“I say these words not only to you: I want everyone, reading these lines, to try to be in your place — for feeling Me, for hearing Me!

“I address these words to everyone who loves Me! I am ready to embrace everyone who is faithful to Me, who is directed to Me!

“I am One of Many, Who have attained the Divine Oneness in the past! And Each of Us is ready to lead to the Divine Universal House — the Ocean of Primordial Consciousness — everyone who sends to Us the emotions of love!

“The soul, who has learned to love, overcomes the obstacles that seemed insurmountable before, and quickly approaches the Creator!”

... Having immersed me in His Light, Odin continued to tell the saga.

**** * ****

When that terrible storm was approaching, a sensation of irreparable misfortune piled on Annika. Her heart trembled and compressed, as if in pain. A loving soul always feels if trouble happens to the beloved.

Storm clouds approached, thunder rumbled...

Vagni already several times called her into the house. But Annika did not leave the top of the cliff.

“Oh, Great Gods! If Olav has died, then it’s time for me to follow him! Because I would like to be with him in life and in death! I want to share his fate, to accept, too, the fate that You have prepared for him!”

“Do not rush, Annika, you can spoil everything with your haste! That which for a small soul can seem a disaster or even a death — the same for the Great Soul has a completely different meaning! Wait! He will come to you in three days!”

“... Do I hear You?! Am I not crazy due to waiting and anxiousness? Are You talking to me?! Can I converse with Gods?!”

“Of course! And everyone can do it! But why else did you turn to Us? Did you not expect Us to answer and advise you?”

“I never heard answers before...”

“Everything happens once for the first time! You’re growing up, Annika! You have cultivated love which *unites souls!* A soul which *has become love*, can very much! It can learn both to see, to hear, to talk at a distance with other people! Also such a soul can communicate with Gods — as with Friends and Teachers! You have to know all this, since you firmly decided to share the fate of your beloved!

“You must wait three days more!”

... A terrible storm was raging.

Vagni spoke to Annika, trying to calm her down:

“Do not be afraid! Olav is wise and will never risk the lives of his friends and the vessel! In such weather, they certainly took refuge in some quiet bay!”

... Annika could hardly hear Vagni. Sometimes she saw — as if in a fog — the face of Olav, consisting of Light, and other radiant Divine Faces. This gave her hope. But then she again did not see or hear anything, and from the alarm, she felt that she would die in that very moment...

* * *

**It was morning after the storm. Not the slightest breeze!
Annika stood on the cliff and looked at the sea.**

**... The vessel of Olav was approaching. There was no
wind, no rowers, no sail on the mast...**

Invisible Force propelled the vessel to the shore.

Olav stood at the stern and held the steering oar.

**She hardly recognized her beloved. His hair was now
white, like snow, lit by the sun. And the shining of Light was
around!**

She ran from the cliff to meet.

He went ashore and hugged her!

**“Now we’ll go for my friends, Annika! They were cap-
tured because of their loyalty to Me. And we must free them.**

**“After that, if you do not change your mind, it will be our
wedding.”**

“How could I change my mind?!”

**“I have returned. But I am not exactly what I was before. I
am now one of Gods. And the Great Power is now in Me! I
will have to do many deeds, obeying the Will of the One!**

**“And I will never be able to deviate from His Will — even
out of love for you.”**

**“I belong to You forever, my Beloved, and I do not want a
different fate, except to live with You!”**

* * *

**Olav now knew that navigating a vessel could be much
faster than it used to be.**

**Now He controlled the movement, embracing Annika
who was pressing to Him, and at the same time continuing
to listen to His Divine Brothers and Sisters:**

**“You had gone through the ‘gates of death’ — to the
Eternal Life! And yet your body did not die. This is a great
opportunity to convey the Divine Knowledge to people di-
rectly, without intermediaries. To be God, having a body like
the bodies of people, — this is a great fortune!**

“Now you need to learn how to control the Divine Force.

“You can display It as the Great Calm or — in the required quantity and intensity — as the Divine Light or Fire. And also — directly by affairs, surpassing usual possibilities of men.

“But You no longer have to and will not be able to display the former personal human desires. This is, first of all, the desire to help or change anything in the lives of people — in your personal discretion. But only the Divine Will will be manifested through You!

“Now You must not forget even for a moment — Who You are and why You are here!

“You, as the Cognizer of the Unity, now can reveal the Omnipotence of One God, His Wisdom, and Love — with the help of Your material body. And many people will be able to see and hear this!

“Your job now will be — with the help of your material body — to nurture, bringing up souls, direct their growth. And this is a long and, at first sight, very ungratifying work!

“But You can now show in detail the Path — to those who will rush to Us and are able to overcome the tests of the Path!

“Remember always: great responsibility is in possessing the Divine Power!”

... Olav was accustoming to His new state and learned to control the Force, Which was now at His disposal.

His Omnipotence, however, did not mean the possibility of doing whatever it pleased... Divine Omnipotence implied not only the Force, but also the One Divine Will that cannot be transgressed for the sake of personal desire.

The sense of Power, the perception of Himself as the Ocean of Divine Consciousness — was new to Olav.

And He studied the Power, Wisdom, and Patience of God.

The Power of all the Lords of the universe was connecting with the Power of Olav!

He was One of Them — the Set of Those Who, like the Waves of the Great Ocean, create Their Work without detaching Themselves from the Oceanic Depths. Or They are at Rest — and there were no Divine Waves, but only Blissful Peace inviting and waiting for the Worthy into Oneness.

Everything that Olav first knew, feeling only for a short time in meditations — all this became His Essence, His new Divine Life!

The body did not hinder this. It was a small part of His Being, but allowed to manifest — by the Words and Power — the Divine Whole.

He could see — with help of the eyes of the body or without their help: directly as the Divine Soul.

He also realized that the One Divine Ocean can now look through the eyes of His body. And, seeing the gaze of such eyes, evil and vicious souls would tremble. But those who strive for good, love, and purity — would be filled with happiness!

He could now speak the Words of Divine Wisdom with the help of the body — so that they would be heard by ordinary people who had not yet acquired the ability to personally understand God directly. But also — He could inspire thoughts in the soul without the help of words.

It was enough for him to pay attention to any soul and take it on the Palm of the Hand of Consciousness — and He knew the destiny of this soul, saw all its qualities and thoughts.

Annika, friends, the people of Bolly, who wanted to harm him,... — all were now *in* Him-Ocean! And not only they...

He has become the Lord of all beings in the Ocean of Life, but there was in Him no personal desire to command.

From the Great Unity — He saw now the reasonableness and expediency of all that is happening and understood the *right of free choice* of each soul.

Olav now learned to see also those rare moments when the Divine Power can intervene in what is happening, — with

the purpose of helping people understand the Divine Laws and gain love.

And one such moment approached.

... Here — already was before them the bay, where recently unfolded the events with the attack on their vessel. Here was the camp of Bolly's people: boats, robbers guarding the riches and captive friends of Olav...

* * *

The people of Bolly noticed the vessel quickly approaching on the surface of the water — while windless, without sail and oarsmen.

There were screams of horror:

“Ghost! It's the ghost of Olav! It is he! He wants revenge and to take our lives!”

... Even the most fearless Vikings wavered before the sorcery and other manifestations from the immaterial worlds.

Olav approached the people of Bolly who were frozen in astonishment and fear. Now, none of them had any doubts that it was Olav: alive — or only seeming so...

Olav began to speak, and Divine Love was in the sound of His voice. The Divine Peace was filling the space around His body.

“Yes it's Me! I come for My friends! Yes, I've returned from the realm of death — to fulfill the Will of Gods! Untie them!

But before the stunned with astonishment people of Bolly rushed to carry out the order — the ropes crumbled to dust.

The joyful exclamation of Roon broke the silence:

“Olav! I knew, I believed that it will be so!”

... Roon ran up and, without hiding tears of happiness, embraced Olav!

Bolly wanted to throw a knife in Olav, but he could not even move his hand. And none of his people could move or say a word...

Olav continued:

“Yes, I returned from the worlds, where souls go to after the death of their bodies.

“Do not try, Bolly, you cannot kill Me anymore, no matter how much you want it!

“Yes, I returned, endowed with Wisdom and the Power of Gods, — to tell people about the Divine Laws.

“I will not take revenge on you, Bolly, and your warriors for the evil that you caused my friends. The evil created is already a terrible punishment for those who commit it! This evil always returns to the one who committed the atrocity, it predetermines for that one a terrible fate in future!

“It is due to ignorance — people, most often, transgress Divine Laws and create troubles for themselves and others!

“But these Laws are called upon to help souls in reaching the Divine worlds! They are very simple:

‘Do not harm anyone!

‘Help all in all good!

‘Give others love — and love will fill with happiness also your life!’

“Knowing these Laws, one can understand also that there is a Divine Justice.

“I will now show each of you what will happen to him in later life — as a reward for already committed evil.”

... And before each of the people of Bolly — like a dream in reality — went pictures of his possible future, with an understanding of causes-and-effects connections, which are usually revealed before souls only after the death of their bodies.

After a long pause, during which each saw and understood very much, Olav continued to say:

“Sincere repentance will allow each of you an opportunity to build your destiny differently, changing the sad fate created by previous affairs.

“The fate of one does not depend on what one was awarded at birth by ‘Goddess of fate’. This fairytale only reflects the reality that a soul comes into incarnation on the

Earth with a plan-fate, already formed, and Gods only determine what from this and in what sequence is to be realized.

“But no less important is what and how one does in this life. This also predetermines one’s future — both close and remote in time — and can change one’s own destiny for better or for worse.

“The manifestation of hatred, the resistance against good and love, the infliction of evil upon others — are, in fact, means to oppose the Divine Will! It means killing the potential of Divinity in themselves and hindering the growth of the Divine in others!”

... The words of Olav penetrated into the depths of each soul, and if there was even a little bit of good and light there, then the understanding took root there...

Then Olav suggested to the people of Bolly:

“Now — get ready for the journey! You will drive the convoy with the jewels you have stolen — to whom these values were promised by Me. Go to the konung Ingvar and tell him that I kept my promise and that Annika is now my wife and will always be with Me.”

*** * ***

Bolly lay alone by the cooling fire. His former associates wanted to bind him, but realized that this was already unnecessary.

All his former assistants now left him. It was somewhat easier for them to survive what had happened to them, because it was he who commanded them, but they — only carried out criminal orders...

Bolly was worse than he had ever been before in his life. Anger smothered him! And yet every outburst of hatred caused a sharp pain in the body. Once he was filled with the emotions of hatred for Olav — and his body was twisted by convulsions and severe pain. But he could not reconcile himself to what had happened, and repentance did not come.

He was lying, unable to get up. He accused in his mind the magic of Olav in this state of his and still could not understand that his own anger engendered every subsequent attack of pain that shook his body.

And suddenly Bolly saw the reality of a woman's face which he also saw in that vision, when Olav showed them all their deaths. And this death in the vision was from the woman's hand. It was both painful and humiliating for him!...

And then he saw this woman really before him...

She was tall. Men's clothes were on her body. The dagger flashed in her hand...

Vagni also saw this stranger, who raised the dagger over Bolly, who was crouching on the ground at the burning fire.

And, even though Bolly deserved the most terrible punishment, Vagni stopped with his strong grip the already poised arm with dagger.

"It is not necessary to finish off the defeated foes!" — he said softly.

"What do you understand?! He deserves the most terrible and painful death! He robbed our village when our men did not return from the campaign! And in winter, women and children were dying of hunger! I vowed to find him and take revenge! And you — you cannot stop me! I've been looking for him for a year!"

"You will stop yourself: because a quick death now will only relieve his torment! Look how pathetic and insignificant he is!

"And mercy is more becoming for a woman than vengeance! Let him now be sick with remorse! Let all those innocent people, who were killed by him, be recalled!

"And now he himself is already worse than a dead man! And to no one else can he do harm!"

... And then in front of Bolly again began to swim terrible images — like dreams in reality.

Those people whom he did not remember, but who died because of him, surrounded him from all sides. Bolly shouted at them, trying to justify himself: "I never killed children! I

did not fight against women! I'm just a robber!... Yes, I cheated, betrayed... But I fought only men...". But he was silently staring in the reproachful eyes of many souls... Bolly burst into tears...

This hell, which he was experiencing, finally gave rise to his repentance...

The pain of the body began to let go. It was replaced by the pain of the soul, which needed a great cleansing...

* * *

Grieving over the sobbing Bolly, the stranger allowed Vagni to unclasp from her hand the dagger. Vagni himself put her weapon into the sheath on her waist.

He embraced her soft broad shoulders and led her to the companions of Olav, who were preparing the vessel, damaged by the storm, for sailing.

Vagni asked:

"What's your name?"

"Gerd. I've been looking for this scoundrel so long to take revenge..."

"Now you can be sure that he will inevitably be punished in full.

"And death is not the most terrible punishment..."

"Revenge — always only sows the continuation and multiplication of evil!

"Moreover, it makes more cruel the avenging soul, which — according to God's Intention — was called to blossom in love..."

... He stroked her hand tenderly, not knowing where his tenderness came from...

Vagni did not think that he was capable of falling in love... Gerd did not think that she could still meet someone who would be her favorite husband...

* * *

Soon the convoy with jewels went to konung Ingwar. None of those who escorted and guarded the cargo thought about stealing part of the gold and, fleeing somewhere, to start a new free and rich life there.

These people have gained the understanding that the beginning of their new life should be honest, also that robbery and theft, even unsolved and un-identified by other people, cannot serve as the foundation for a happy and joyful life.

They had now new understanding of the meaning of life — and this truly new life could not be entered with the help of stolen gold. It had to be started by changing each oneself. And of all the exploits this is the most difficult...

... Olav and his comrades put the vessel in order and set off on a journey.

“It seems that we are waiting not for one wedding, but two!” — friends joyfully joked over Vagni.

And Annika, with light anxiety, asked Olav:

“Tell me, can you make me die before I grow old and become not good-looking?”

... Olav laughed, embracing his beloved:

“Why are you so foolish now?”

Well-well, I promise you, too, will look age-appropriate!”

* * *

Many joys, difficulties and achievements waited ahead of Olav and His team.

Not so easy was the fate of the one who became His wife and raised their children. But nothing would Annika prefer to exchange in this fate, which included life with the Beloved!

Chapter Ten: The Great Traveler

It's an early morning in the city. A large river powerfully carries its transparent waters to the sea. Granite quays in these hours are still deserted. Light mist moves slowly over the calm surface of water.

Above the river, white-winged seagulls hover and remind with their exclamations the open sea spaces.

This is the place of our meetings with Odin in the city. He called me to meet Him here — and I have come.

The border of His immense immaterial body from the Light — on this place — is very clear! Crossing it, I as if leave the world of matter — and enter a space where there is only God.

He meets me, showing Himself as not only Love, but Vastness and Power of His Divine Majesty!

I asked:

“Will we finish writing down the saga today, Odin?”

“Do not outstep Me, wanting to know how ended the story of Olav! Let me tell you everything as I've planned!”

... He plunged me into the Silence, from which, like waves, began to rise His words:

“Look around and into the depths! Cognize Me in all, in everywhere!

“See how I live in My Creation — as Gentle Love, penetrating into everything!

“See: there is only the Life of God in the universe!

“And this Life is present in everything: in a blade of grass, in granite rocks, in hovering seagulls, in people who make their ways along the land...

“And righteous souls grow, transforming themselves into subtle love — in order to comprehend the Bliss and Power from Mergence with All-Creating Divine Love!

“Loving all them, guarding, correcting wisely the wayward, I am waiting for the worthy — in the Primordial

House, where all the Accomplished are the One Ocean of the Creator, where All are One in Him!”

... For a long time Ódin’s words were framed only by transparent Silence.

After a while, I asked:

“Tell me, Odin, what can we change in this world?”

“Little...

“But, nevertheless, you can teach people to smile — instead of frowning and blaming others, trying to find or invent their shortcomings.

“You can teach them cordial relationships to those who are around, to help others.

“You can explain how harmful and destructive it is for them — to hate, envy, be jealous...

“You can try to teach people to reduce fear towards their life and appreciate the amazing possibilities of transforming themselves and the world around! God is near and is ready to give to everyone who deserves it and wants it, the Helping Hand!

“You can let people know that all the thoughts and emotions of a person are like an open book, which God reads very easily! And nothing is nor can be hidden from His Omniscience!

“You can teach people to observe the manifestations of the Divine in their lives!

“And more — it needs to explain that everyone can try to not harm anyone and not break harmony! And this is so simple!

“You can give a key that opens the door of the spiritual heart! It is the open and correctly developing spiritual heart that allows one to learn to see and hear God — and in future directly receive His Guidance in life!

“That’s how Olav lived, helping people cognize the Truth about God.

“One, who has cognized the Truth, directs the growth and development of other souls. This is the work of God, Who works, being incarnate on the Earth.”

“How much can God do, living in a body like the body of an ordinary person?”

“Many times the Divine Souls came to the Earth to bring the Truth to people. But Divine Knowledge does not last long in undistorted purity!... Not many people are usually able to understand the depth of the Teaching and can reach the Abode of all the Perfects under the guidance of the Great Teachers...”

*** * ***

So many years have passed, and people have long forgotten the story of the merchant Olav and his wife Annika. Generations have changed. The great-grandchildren of those who were their contemporaries already became adults and raised their children...

... But the Great Traveler walked along the land.

His Greatness was revealed only for few people. His clothes were simple. The hooded cloak covered His body from winds and bad weather, it also served as a bed. The Traveler did not have a sword or bow. Only a staff and knife on the belt were useful on the way.

He had two companions: a white wolf named *Tryuggvi* which means the *Faithful*, and a raven named *Alvis* that means *Wise*.

Many years ago, the Traveler picked up this fledgling of a raven and cured his broken wing.

And he rescued a white wolf’s cub from a trapping pit...

Both the rescued became for a long time companions in the wanderings of the Traveler.

And His life was much greater than the duration of mortal age.

He walked on the land with a body like the body of an ordinary man: white as snow curly hair to the shoulders, a white beard, a young man’s carriage and a light step, powerful shoulders and the hands of a mature husband full of unprecedented strength. Also — the radiant look of a Man Who

perceives what is happening in the world — from the Great Divine Depths.

The raven flied high in the sky and sometimes spoke something to Olav in soft guttural cries. And Olav understood its language.

It was possible to think that the raven sees further... But it was not so. No matter how far Alvis soared in the sky, Olav saw further...

The radiant Image from the Light with the face of Olav covered Him in space, rose into the sky, pierced space in all directions with the streams of Divine Power — as if there was no earthly firmament!

It proceeded from the *Depths*, into which small souls do not look.

And any corner of the Earth could be seen by the Traveler. He could know all that He needed about every soul. All that was required was easily revealed in the gaze of the Divine Soul!

It could be thought that the tremendous wolf Tryuggvi serves as reliable protection for the relatively unarmed Wanderer... But the Power of Olav was another. It proceeded via the Ocean of the Divine Power, Which gives the right to the Lords of Power to use It in accordance with the Great United Will of all the Perfects.

Olav used to be a Wanderer, Who bypassed the land and brought order where his intervention was appropriate.

He used to be such that any creature could be perceived by Him as clearly as He perceived Himself. He could feel the growth of a small blade of grass, the inviolability of granite cliffs, and the tranquility of powerful trees. And he saw and felt every man clearly. As soon as he directed the gaze of the Soul — He could know his or her thoughts, emotions, the past of this soul and the possible future.

But He remained One with the Almighty Ocean of Love, Wisdom, and Power, Which begot and sustains the “manifested” life in the universe.

Olav became one of the Lords of the universe. He supported individual lives on the Earth with His Love and Power — the Force emanating from the Great *Depths*, where there was only the Ocean of God that could not be divided.

Olav looked at everything from these *Depths*.

He had to only stretch out his hand — and on his palm he could feel both the vessels in the stormy or calm sea, and the towns with many people inhabiting them, and the forests and seas with their inhabitants... There were no boundaries to His Omnipresence!

The Wisdom of Gods was at His disposal, and any knowledge He could draw from this Source of Wisdom.

His every word or action achieved the goal. Therefore, He did not speak unnecessary words and did not perform actions without need.

*** * ***

Olav have already brought to the “Divine Harbor” many of His friends. They were now with Him together — in the Great House of the Primordial. And They, too, now executed Their Work to help people — both in northern and southern countries.

Roon was among Them. Many poets and skalds heard at the moments of inspiration His words coming to them from the Light!

Beautiful was the departure from the earthly life of the Great Scald, Who lived the life of courage and brilliance! When the impaled with an arrow body of Roon lay on the Fire Hands of Olav, and the Soul plunged into the Primordial Source of Divine Light, people saw a blissful smile on the lips of the abandoned body. And they were surprised...

And Roon entered His New Divine life. Olav and many Others welcomed His glorious Victory, by which human life can be completed!

... For a long time already in the country, called Gardarika, Annika regained the new body and grew up. Her name

was new, and her fate was beautiful! Many Gods took care of her growth.

Olav loved to be by Soul with her. He patiently waited for the onset of the time when she would gain all the fullness of the Divinity by her efforts on the Great Path and fulfill all that was planned for her. He was waiting for the moment when He could introduce her — Having Reached — the Divine House and say: “Hello, My Beloved! You’ve come! You are accepted!”

And many others of Olav’s friends still continued their Path, incarnating into new bodies — to acquire and develop love, wisdom, and power that would allow them to overcome the distance separating man from the world of the Divine. This distance is calculated not by miles, but by the degree of subtlety, beauty, and strength of the transforming soul.

Among those going to the Light — it was joyful for Olav to see His companions, who were comrades in His former distant voyages. Among them were Richard, the helmsman Vagni, his brave wife, and many-many others...

Olav managed to stop many people of vice on their false way, change their sad fates, give them the right understanding and a chance to straighten their destinies.

Many new male and female disciples have been found by Him over the past centuries!

The Divine Traveler could enter any house on the Earth. He was met in different ways... And the fates of those people changed according to whether they rejected or accepted the Gifts of Love and Wisdom that the Divine Guest presented them.

* * *

Early spring. The children Erik and Frida carried a bucket of water from a stream along an icy path.

The children were small: the boy was about six years old, and his sister — no more than five. The bucket was heavy. They often slipped, then the icy water splashed out and burned with its cold. Finally the children stopped to rest.

Suddenly a huge white wolf emerged from behind the trees.

“What a big dog!” — exclaimed Frida.

Eric, guessing that it’s a wolf, hugged his sister, shielding her with himself.

Following the wolf, the Traveler in a cloak with a hood came out of the forest.

“Do not be afraid! It’s a friend and will not harm you!” — the Traveler said to the children.

The white wolf ran up and began to lick with his warm tongue children’s frozen hands.

The stranger, too, came closer.

“Will you let Me help you in carrying this bucket?”

“Yes, sir!” — Eric answered.

“Then — show the way!”

... Eric walked in front. Behind him, patting the wolf, was Frida. Next — the Stranger with the bucket. And above them flew a raven.

When they came to the house, the wolf already was lying at the threshold, and the raven perched on the roof.

The boy opened the door:

“Welcome to our house, sir! We always welcome guests!” — he pronounced, apparently, often hearing before from the parents these words. Then — already inside the house — he continued with embarrassment:

“Forgive us for the cold... And there’s almost nothing to treat you... Father has not come back from the trip for a very-very long time. Mother is sick. She is asleep already for three days... We cannot wake her. And the firewood is finished, and brushwood burns very quickly and provides almost no heat.”

... Eric put in cold stove icy thin twigs, but could not ignite.

The Guest put the bucket on the floor in the indicated place, went to the stove — and a bright strong flame flared up, as if there was an armful of dry firewood.

Meanwhile Frida put on the table the cups and the rest of the dry barley flat cake on the plate in the middle.

Guest said:

“I’ll try to wake up your mother.”

... He walked over to the couch, on which the body of children’s mother lay motionless, and sat on the edge.

“Wake up, Solveig!” — He called a woman by name, which none of the children pronounced. — “Come back: you have good children, they need you!”

Solveig took a deep breath and opened her eyes. Then she got up on the bed, looking with joyful surprise at the Stranger:

“Who are You Who dwells in the worlds on the other side of death as freely as Gods? I thought I was dead...”

“Friends usually call Me Olav,” — the Guest answered. — “Let’s go to the table, Solveig: your children are hungry!”

... Olav took his canvas bag and began to take out of it different treats and lay out on the table: warm and soft bread, butter, cheese, honey, nuts, dried fruits.

All this could not fit in a small bag if one were to try folding it back...

After a meal Frida asked:

“Can I feed your friends and companions, sir?”

... Olav, smiling, allowed.

And the children treated Tryuggvi and Alvis, and they then participated in children’s games.

In the evening, when Erik and Frida were already asleep, Solveig asked:

“How can I thank You for the return to life in this body? You saved more than one life, but three. My children would not survive...”

“Your gratitude will be simple. I will teach you something from the Sacred Divine Knowledge, which is useful to everyone. And you — teach your children for they — in turn — will teach their children and other people how to live in accordance with the Divine Will.

“There is a holy source of love that every person has. This is the spiritual heart. To awaken this source is the task for you. And you can help to realize this many people.

“It is easy to teach the heart of the mother — to love all the creatures of God! Just as a mother loves her children, so God loves His own!

“But God’s children cannot be counted, because all are children to Him!

“And just as a good mother cultivates goodness in children and suppresses bad inclinations, so God brings up souls.

“Your — already developed by you — maternal love will help you to cognize the greater love that can grow up to union with the Love of God!

“What do you need to do for this?

“If by the same love, which you love your children, you will learn to love all kind beings, then love will grow in your spiritual heart. And it will multiply with each passing day!”

... Not one day Olav was staying at Solveig’s house. Because it would be wrong to return the soul into the body without changing much in it, without teaching this soul the main thing...

And only when Solveig’s heart had found the firm support in God — Olav continued His Path.

*** * ***

In the middle of the rich settlement there was a tavern. Its visitors sipped a foamy beer and discussed the latest news.

A Stranger in a cloak with a hood entered quietly, and no one would pay attention to Him, except for His companions: a huge white dog, resembling a wolf, and a raven sitting quietly on His shoulder...

Visitors to the tavern began to laugh and joke:

“Yeah, is that not Odin Himself looking here to drink a beer?”

“No: Odin’s cloak should be blue, and the hat — pointed! And more — Odin is one-eyed! Also the wolves must be two, and the ravens — also two!...”

“If you will drink more — you have a split of both raven and wolf!”

... After these words they forgot about the Strenger, Who found a place in the distance and did not order beer.

The fun of several drunken visitors turned into a quarrel. They used fists.

The fighters overturned the table, and all the food scattered on the floor.

From the far corner of the inn, an old beggar man stood up. He survived, gathering scraps, sometimes remaining after the visitors. He walked over and bent down to pick up the fallen bread — before the ruffians trampled it with their feet.

But the quarrelers sharply turned their attention to the poor:

“Off you, ragamuffin!”

“Let me eat this bread! You will not eat it any more! And the servants will throw it away, sweeping the floor...”

“We paid for this food, not you!

“But however — eat, pig!”

... And they with a laugh kicked and knocked the old man off his feet — so that he fell facedown to the scattered food on the floor...

This sight caused a roar of laughter in all visitors of the inn, except for the Traveler with a wolf and a raven. Olav watched sadly.

Olav stroked His companions, giving them permission to act.

A huge wolf rushed at those who mocked the poor old man, bared its white teeth. And the raven attacked from above, threatening to peck their eyes.

“Take those creatures away!” — in horror screamed those who started a quarrel.

But Olav was not in a hurry to recall His assistants.

... The old man quickly picked up the bread, got up and walked away. And Tryuggvi and Alvis started to eat, scattered across the floor. And, until their dinner was over, those who beat the old man could not move. Because when they made the slightest movement — the wolf bared his teeth, turning his head in their direction, as if warning: “Just try to move — and you will be the continuation of our dinner!” And the raven confirmed it with menacing cries.

Only when Tryuggvi and Alvis have finished all the food, they returned to Olav.

The innkeeper resented everything that was happening with the great delay:

“Remove those monsters, sir! Here needs order be reestablished!”

“They did not violate the order. They just restored it. The floor is clean, the fighters are punished, the old man took bread. If you tell to pour him a plate of soup, then, I think, the order will be quite complete.”

... Olav laid in front of the innkeeper money for the soup for the old man and continued to speak, addressing already all present:

“I came from afar and saw here very strange rules, which you call ‘the order’.

“So many spectators oversaw what was happening... You laughed at the poor old man, at the food scattered across the floor...”

“It is evident that life in abundance does not benefit the inhabitants of your village!

“Those, who forget about hunger, often do not appreciate the work invested in the nourished and cooked food. They easily throw out food, believing that having money, they will buy again — when they want to eat.

“They now do not think that it’s a crime — before those who suffer from hunger! Some food, thrown to the garbage, could serve as someone’s salvation!

“Think about — what true order is! Otherwise, the fate of this old man can become your destiny too!

“Who among you wants to end life in lonely old age, hungry poverty?”

“No one?”

“Then why with indifference and laughter do you look at what is happening before your eyes?!”

“But you can make life around you — more reasonable and more just!”

“Each of you can do it!”

“And the choice is yours!”

... And Olav with his companions — the wolf and the raven — left the tavern.

... They say that those people have changed a lot since that time. And they did not laugh anymore at those who were in need. They began to take good care of food. And they were ready to help those who needed help.

Even in that tavern they fed from now on free of charge those poor people who did not have the opportunity to pay for food.

*** * ***

At the campfires lay the bodies of warriors wounded in battle.

But they lay not only on the ground, but also on the Hands of the Physician, invisible to the ordinary sight, Who took up from an unclear place and offered His help.

It was said that a huge crow, croaking, has brought this Physician to a place where there were uncounted dead in battle, and where were suffering many injured which were between life and death.

Olav approached everyone in turn. To someone, He assisted, showing all the possibilities of Divine Healing, to others — in the most ordinary way washed, treated, and bandaged wounds.

And every time, healing the body, He found words that transformed and healed souls.

And after, He talked alternately with the leaders of both troops and asked them questions to which they did not know the answers:

“What lessons do people learn from wars?

“Why do winners learn only pride, not compassion?

“Why only desire for revenge matures in the defeated and humiliated?

“Why do not see their own guilt those, who allow conflicts in interests of rulers to grow into bloody massacres for people?

“Why is the history of mankind measured, mainly, only by bloody wars, the change of rulers and redistribution of borders?

“When will, at last, those, on whom this depends, want to think about it?”

* * *

Many things have been done by Olav! He helped many people! He generously shared the Divine Wisdom!

And people got understanding to the extent that it was feasible for everyone.

Olav was able to help a person grieve, and to heal the soul, resurrecting love and hope. He could reconcile enemies, stop the bloody vengeance.

He always looked into the soul of the person — and appealed to that bright and kind which was in everyone... He seemed to awaken the seeds of goodness that are latent in every person, but not all have risen...

Freedom of choice always remained with the one who listened to Olav. The listener could accept or not accept the Truth.

... Long lived so on the Earth Olav.

And then — He left the body, which disappeared in the Fiery Flash in an instant. Now His Work on the Earth was to be continued by Others...

* * *

We sit side by side: I and Divine Odin.

Pages of an almost completed saga are in front of me.

Odin sums up:

“Did Olav manage to do much on the Earth?

“The work of Olav and many other the Having Reached has served to the fact that — after the lapse of centuries — prior to the warlike tribes inhabiting the Scandinavian Peninsula, many of them fell in love with grazing herds and cultivated the land. And the land — began to bring people rich harvests!

“And the one who grows a crop, does not go on a military campaign in order to take away the fruits of labor from others.

“More and more places appear where the gardens blossomed in the spring. And more often people went on the road in order to cognize new lands or peacefully trade.

“Christianity, adopted by the conungs of these lands, was adapted by their subjects more voluntarily than in neighboring countries. And those who believed in Ódin and the Torah — and those who delved into the Teachings of Jesus peacefully lived here for a long time.

“Olav was one of Those Who are always engaged in the Great Work of helping souls in their evolution.

“This is the Work of the Gods, which is not seen in the beginning and which has no end. Because eternally — wise Divine Souls help in growth and direct the development of all succeeding generations of people.

“And from each of these generations — Few enter the Divine Unity. They are the Harvest, collected by the Great Gardener.

“Such continues the Work of Those Who help people — wisely and without violence — to know: why they live on the Earth and how to live...”