

My Own Story

by Marjorie Moran

WHERE TO START?

Brief impressions written in my journal after Jung Society meetings. Notes to self during taped lectures. Nocturnal jottings about everything. Excerpts from my papers tossed into my writer's black bag. My thoughts written on scraps of napkins and paper towels before the critic edits, and my job intrudes. Words and memory written quickly, or they flee like convicts set free.

I heard James Hollis say: *The first half of life is biographical, the second half is autobiographical. You write your own story.*

My mother's parents were early twentieth-century eastern European immigrants, and my father's ancestry surfaced from the vast Irish poverty pool. I am a product of the literal translation of tension of the opposites. My father, an attorney, and my mother, a psychiatric social worker had a loving, creative, and successful union blessed with sixty-seven years. I am the fifth of five children—four girls, and one boy. My roots were in the West but now are planted worldwide. I was married and divorced and have no children. My job has informed and uniformed me, and stayed the same for the past thirty-five years.

A post-Jung lecture note: *Jungian psychology is not for the young, for life must first be lived.*

I was surrounded by books about Jung, myth, and dream work as my mother participated in Jungian dream groups. In my young adulthood I was intrigued by what seemed mystical information, but I comprehended virtually nothing. The mandala paintings were beautiful but the printed text escaped me. My first attempt at Jungian literature failed.

LIFE

In my twenties I was a cog in a wheel of economics, a debutante in youthful dreams, a butterfly in society's whirl. My thirties brought my own imagined dream couple, a union that—when faced with life's realities, cracked apart, and like the shell of a fragile egg was never to be put back together again. Unfertilized. Humpty Dumpty.

"It is our inward journey that leads us through time, forward, or back, seldom in a straight line most often spiraling."

—Eudora Welty

Did Eudora Welty read Jung?

My divorce in my forties set me adrift, still clinging, and finally mourning, the lost remnants and dreams of childhood. My therapist compared my marriage and subsequent divorce to a giant rope attached to a massive ship, each part of the rope twisted and connected to a series of smaller ropes slowly unraveling, rope after rope after rope loosening, tearing apart finally, twine fragmenting. A brilliant therapist. License revoked.

Who am I now?

Copied New Years Eve, the first year of my divorce. I carried it in my wallet for years: *Conversely, I myself am a question which is addressed to the world, and I must communicate my answer, for otherwise I am dependent upon the world's answer.*

—Carl Jung

SECOND HALF OF LIFE

Proceed as way opens. Old Quaker saying.

Writing my new autobiography.

I discover there is an artist within me—a painter, a sculptor. Paintings want to tell their story, and I learn to stand aside, and let them be told. I learn about matter, energy, and the life of sculpture. How did my hands become instruments of spirits? Or are they? What connection to the universal collective, the unconscious collective?

Scraps of paper written in bold block letters:
Nothing human is alien to me. —Heraclitus

Note to self: Find time for reflection.

Question authority and let the young have heroes. Grow out of worship, govern your own power, and control your own personal authority. Guard against fundamentalism as the world grows more complicated and vast differences erupt. For brief moments I think of the days of sea monsters that turn into gods and goddess, of a time when the sun revolved around the earth, and ask myself what really was wrong with the horse and buggy. My own personal bars and brakes are well oiled and are always in danger of dropping down. I must remember that we have been shaped over centuries as culture and technology evolved.

Science sobers

Be kind for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.
—Philo of Alexandria

At the Rose Center in New York, the planetarium. Seeing our vast universe and walking the time line,
the length,
three floors ramped,
starting with the big bang,
walking, more than halfway down

finding human beings space less than one third the length of my little finger,
Ninety-seven percent of all species that have lived, gone,
extinct,
no longer in existence.

How do we put together the puzzle of science and spirituality? Weather discovery? The body of the world's knowledge has exponentially expanded since the last century. Experts need to master vast sums of information. Will they work in groups, one global identity, and in the spirit of collaboration. Information, all aspects of life, gathered by computers turned into simple graphics. The world's complexities now simple? What about the String Theory? M Theory? The Theory of Everything? I am engaged with my own lifelong Herculean struggle to understand the new science, its explosions of counter-intuitive information and logic.

Note to self: Study Buddhism

Note to all: I have not yet studied Buddhism

Long paragraph written in the middle of the night, which I am unable to decipher. Was it something of great importance? It woke me up. I see the misspelled word "existentialism" and wonder what was so urgent to write. My handwriting, illegible. Brief moments of transcendence are difficult, no, almost impossible to capture with words. I must always remember my own thin places. My connection to the Numinous. My experience with the cosmos and all it implies.

There is a sword of consciousness that hangs over my head.
—Marjorie Moran

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