

...

One day I went to Haridwar and bumped into Ramda, a friend of mine from Brazil, just the day before he was due to go to Delhi and fly back to his home country. He said, 'Oh! Peter, how nice to meet you here. I'm just on my way to see my Guruji, would you like to come?'

I said, 'Yes, yes! I have some time and would like to come.' So we went through some back alleys of Haridwar to the house where the guru stayed.

*Up to that point had you been with other gurus?*

I had attended *Satsang* (meeting in Truth), and *Darshan* (being in the presence of a saint) with saints in Rishikesh, but nothing caught me. I never felt, 'This is my guru.' I wasn't looking for a guru. I did believe that it would happen sooner or later, if it was meant to happen. People were talking about freedom, enlightenment and self-realisation, but I didn't fully understand what they were saying. I definitely wanted something, but I didn't know exactly what. I saw so many saints and teachers in Rishikesh. Nothing really worked.

So as I said, I met Ramda and he took me to the man in Haridwar. We came to the room, and a beautiful man was sitting on a bed, half naked. He wasn't wearing a shirt. He had all these tattoos on his arms and was amazingly strong. I almost felt some fear; his presence was so powerful, incredibly powerful. He invited me in. He said, 'Come in and sit.'

I was invited to sit in front of him, and he asked me where I was from. I said, 'I'm from Australia.' Immediately he gave me a smile and said, 'Do you know the kangaroos, have you touched a kangaroo?' And he started talking about nature and animals. At one point I told him that I had been a diver. He was so interested in this that he lit up. He was very happy to talk about nature. We talked for a long time, and I became completely lost. I felt beautiful with this man. Everything that I would have thought of before went away. I was just being with this beautiful man and feeling so good. I didn't know what was happening. He gave me *chai* (tea) and lots of *prasad* (offering from the guru).

After some time he said, 'Okay Peter, now you go back to Rishikesh, and I am going to walk with my disciples by the Ganga.' I thought, 'I would really like to go walking with this beautiful man, along with his disciples by the Ganga.' But I knew I was not to ask, as he had given me a clear order to go back to Rishikesh. I said to myself, 'Okay, I will go,' but I felt really sorry that I had to go.

I went back to Rishikesh, and this man never left my mind. After a few days I thought, 'I want to go back to this man; maybe he would let me in again.' I went to Haridwar but couldn't find him. I couldn't find the side streets where he was because I hadn't paid attention while going there, and certainly not while leaving. I had been in an altered state. I had even failed to ask his name. I didn't know who he was. I started asking people if they knew this beautiful man. I described him, but nobody seemed to know.

I went back overseas and travelled around the world to South America and to the United States. I went to live in San Francisco for some time. I often thought about this man. I wanted to go and serve him, completely surrender to him. I just wanted to be with him, he was so beautiful. But I couldn't find him. Nothing brought me back to him. Two or three times I went back to Rishikesh, still asking for him. People said, 'Come and see our guru.' I said, 'No, no, this is my man. I think I have found my guru.' I searched. I saw all kinds of gurus, in South India also, and people were talking about a man in Lucknow. I said, 'No, no, I want to find this beautiful man.'

One day in January 1994, I went to visit a girlfriend in West Bengal. I was in love with this girl whom I'd met in Rishikesh. She had left, as she had a prior arrangement to work in West Bengal. She sent me a letter to come and join her, which I thought would be a good thing to do. When I arrived she had decided that it was off. I was distraught and very unhappy. So after twenty-four hours I left. I just wanted to go back to Rishikesh. I couldn't really think, I was so hurt and disappointed. I went to the train station on the main line from Howrah to Delhi.

I went to the station master who asked, 'Where would you like to be going, sir?'

I said, 'I just want the next train going west.'

‘Surely you must know where you want to be going.’

‘No, no, just put me on the next train. I want to go. I just want to get out of here.’

‘Shortly there will be a train. I can’t give you a reservation.’

‘Give me a ticket please.’

‘Don’t you want to know where the train is going?’

‘Okay, you tell me.’

‘It’s going to Lucknow.’

‘Okay, I will go to Lucknow.’

I thought, ‘Lucknow sounds right. I will go and see this man who people are talking about, who is now so popular.’

I arrived in Lucknow. Long before, somebody had given me an address. I went to Indira Nagar and to Satsang House, which I found without any difficulty. I arrived and went inside. Some people were playing Japanese flute and a Japanese string instrument. Everything was peaceful. I immediately liked it very much. I sat and didn’t expect anything. I was just happy to be there. I felt relieved to be with these beautiful people. Suddenly everybody got up. The music stopped and everyone turned around and started bringing their hands together in *namaste* (traditional palms-together greeting).

I looked, and I couldn’t believe it. In came the man I was missing so much. It was the man who’d sat on the bed in Haridwar. I couldn’t believe it. I couldn’t think. Everything changed. Suddenly there was an incredible sensation within my body. Every cell, every atom in my body, went out to him. It’s very hard to describe that feeling, and it was so powerful.

This man walked towards me, and I was quite beside myself. I looked at him. I looked in his eyes, and he looked at some people, then he brought his eyes to me and looked deeply in my eyes. I was completely gone. It was complete surrender without me doing a thing. There was no thought, no decision to surrender. It was completely automatic.

...