

# RADIATION OF FATHERHOOD

By Fr. Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II) • 1964

## A MYSTERY

*For there are three that bear record  
in heaven, the Father, the Word, and  
the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.  
And there are three that bear witness  
in earth, the Spirit, and the water,  
and the blood: and these three agree in one.*

1 JOHN 5

## PART I. ADAM

### 1. "I" AND METAMORPHOSES

#### ADAM

For many years I have lived like a man exiled from my deeper personality yet condemned to probe it. During those years I have toiled unceasingly to reach it but have often thought with horror that it was disappearing, blurred among the processes of history, in which what matters is numbers, mass. All this is connected with the name Adam given to me. Through this name I must encounter every man; at the same time everything in this name that every man contributes can be made commonplace or even be devalued. I have a difficult name. How often have I thought that my footsteps should be wiped out, that I had to obliterate myself, so that I could identify with every man whose history is written by the crowd. Is it written only from without?

The thought constantly returns that I ought to find myself in every man — searching not from without but from within.

*[Many people enter. Haphazardly and chaotically, they fill the space around Adam. He does not turn to them immediately but feels their presence]*

Here are the people who emerge from the gates of the steelworks... They wear workers' overalls and leather jackets.

Here are the passersby: they overtake me at the street corner without looking in my direction.

Here are those who find their way home and quietly shut the door behind them or slam their garden gate.

Some look back intently; others do not even turn their eyes.

All of them pass by.

Everyone carries in himself an unrealized substance called humanity. This is connected with the painful experience of so many generations. Can one hide in it? Or on the contrary, should it be brought out of hiding, like an object one admires or despises? O humanity, which can be filled to its upper limit or weakened to its lowest! What distance separates those limits?

"I" and the metamorphoses of so many people. I face this always.

I decided to place one man apart and make him a common denominator for all men, letting him be present in all yet not be any of them. Then I had a good look at that man and recognized him: it was myself.

They all pass by.

I look toward those who have gone away, having fallen in the battle. It is true that we all fight — but are we all soldiers?

I look toward those who approach. Is it true that through my fault "approach" means the same as "draw near to death?"

## 2. THE ANALYSIS OF LONELINESS

### ADAM

I find it difficult to think about this.

Although I am like the man who can be placed apart and made a common denominator for all men, I am still lonely. It is easier for me to feel lonely than to think about death. Nobody calls loneliness a sin, and I find it easier to feel lonely than guilty of sin. But I know who Adam was and who he is. He stopped once on the frontier between fatherhood and loneliness. Who cut him off from men; who made him lonely in the midst of them all? What if he became lonely of his own free will? What if he became lonely in order to graft that loneliness onto others? Can he say today, It is easier for me to feel lonely than guilty? After all, he made himself lonely in the midst of them all because he made them lonely.

"Ah," he said then about himself, "I could not bear fatherhood; I could not be equal to it. I felt totally helpless — and what had been a gift became a burden to me. I threw off fatherhood like a burden. For that matter, was I to be a father, or would people merely associate me always with the idea of the Father?"

He is lonely, I thought. What will make me more like Him, that is to say, independent of everything? Ah, to stand apart from everything, so that I could be only within myself! I should then be closest to You. I later said to Him, complaining, "You could have left me in the sphere of fertility (I would somehow have reconciled myself to nature) without placing me in the depths of a fatherhood to which I am unequal! Why did You plant it in the soil of my soul? Was it not enough that You had it in Yourself?"

"Well, what if people had multiplied out of me, what if they had peopled the earth? You could have left me apart from them. There would have been an 'outward Adam' to flourish and grow and an 'inward

Adam,' a lonely one. Why ask that he allow the radiation of Your Fatherhood to enter him so that he can refract it as a prism refracts light?"

If having formed me of clay, You had said: Clay, go on forming, I would have formed many a thing. You know best the staggering temperatures of kilns where clay is baked — You for whom the entire computation of atoms is the simplest intuition, not a compilation of figures and formulas. I would surely pluck out many more things from Your intelligence and implant them in my world — calling, It is I, it is I, that is true — but that world would be Yours anyway. For what am I?... I who am transient all the time. With every step — not with every generation now but with every step — my life is breaking off...and constantly begins anew.

Did You have to touch my thought with Your knowledge that means giving birth? Did You have to touch my will with the love that is fulfillment? I cannot give birth in this way! In me love never fulfills itself. That is why You were disappointed in me. Did I not call from the start, "Leave me my loneliness"? I know I called in spite of myself. But even more in spite of You.

I will say more: I have decided to throw the word "mine" out of my vocabulary. How can I use it when I know that everything is Yours? Although You yourself do not give birth with every human birth, still he who does give birth is Yours. And I myself am more Yours than mine. I have learned that I must not call what is Yours mine, must not say, think, feel it to be mine. I must free, divest myself of it; I must not have or want anything of my own ("mine" means "own").

Is it really so?

I am afraid of the word "mine," though at the same time I cherish its meaning. I am afraid because this word always puts me face to face with You. An analysis of the word "mine" always leads me to You. And I would rather give up using it than find its ultimate sense in You. For I want to have everything through myself, not through You. To want this is nonsense, but haven't many other people harnessed themselves to serve it?

Thus the thought never leaves me that You have been disappointed in me. When I give birth, I do it to become lonely among those born, because I pass on to them the germ of loneliness. In the midst of a multitude, are they not more and more lonely? Numbers do not engender love, and loneliness rather engenders strife than makes one independent. Just think, I have not known, even for a moment, the fulfillment that is in You!

Can I ask, after all this, that You forgive me for executing my plan with such obstinacy? For continually evading Your Fatherhood and gravitating toward my loneliness, so that You must reveal Yourself as if in an external vacuum? But I am only a common denominator of all men, or a common word that can be put outside the brackets.

*[Again in ADAM'S space the same people appear who were there before, but they come nearer, as if they wanted to surround him]*

Leave me! Do not always find your way to me! I am only the common denominator of you all — do not try to find anything else in me!

An association with the idea of the Father — between the upper borderline of man filled with humanity and the lower one of humanity destroyed in man, this always remains: association with the idea of the Father . . . association with the idea of the Father.

*[The people surrounding ADAM step back a little but do not leave]*

### 3. THE THRESHOLD CROSSED BY WOMAN

#### ADAM

Because You execute Your plan. You are determined and Your plans are irreversible. The strangest thing always transpires in the end: that You are never against me. You enter into what I call loneliness, and You overcome my resistance. Can one say that You force Your way in or only that You enter through a door that is open anyway? You did not make me closed; You did not quite close me. Loneliness is not at the bottom of my being at all; it grows at a certain point. The fissure through which You enter is far deeper. You enter — and slowly begin to shape me. You shape and develop me in spite of what I imagine about my ego and about other people, yet You do it in harmony with what I am. This I cannot deny. Yet can I wonder that You are stronger in me than myself ?

You want me to love. You aim at me through a child, through a tiny daughter or son — and my resistance weakens. Nothing remains of the loneliness with which I resist You. You, however, express Yourself deeply. Gradually I cease to feel that You express Yourself in me, and I begin to think that I express myself in myself. And it is always so until love gives pain, the pain caused by lack of fulfillment, a lack of my ego in the beloved or of the beloved's in me . . . But precisely at that moment one sees most clearly that man cannot reject from his consciousness the word "mine." This word follows him all the time, and he goes where it leads him. And this word cancels loneliness.

The Woman has entered loneliness. She has entered and enters all the time. I see her following in the path of all people, who keep asking for me. I, however, direct their attention to her and ask if they know her. They grow silent then and begin to look toward her. In her, new life has been conceived. So she walks with extreme caution. Even from outside she tries to enfold the Being she carries in her womb. She is a Mother.

*[Everything ADAM describes happens as he speaks. The people scattered in groups in ADAM'S space turn their eyes toward the WOMAN, and when she has passed by and disappeared from view, they begin to move in the same direction. After a while, all are turned away from ADAM. They look toward her]*

#### 4. BETWEEN MEETING AND FULFILLMENT

##### ADAM

After a long time I came to understand that you do not want me to be a father unless I become a child. That is why Your Son came into the world. He is entirely Yours. In Him the word “mine” finds complete justification; it can be spoken credibly by Him. Without such a justification and credibility this word is a risk — love is a risk, too. Why did you inflict on me the love that in me must be a risk? And now Your Son takes on Himself all the risk of love.

How much the word “mine” must hurt when it turns out later to mean “not mine.” I think with awe about the strain and toil of Your Son, about the magnitude of His love. How much did He take on Himself? What voids did He fill? How great is the void He must fill! After all, in all of us the common denominator of our loneliness remains, and in it, against all the logic of existence, “mine” still tries to force out “Yours.” Could I too become a son? I did not want to be one. I did not want to accept the suffering caused by risking love. I thought I would not be equal to it. My eyes were too fixed on myself, and in such a situation love is most difficult.

When Your Son came, I remained the common denominator of man’s inner loneliness. Your Son wants to enter it. He wants to because He loves. Loneliness opposes love. On the borderline of loneliness, love must become suffering: Your Son has suffered.

And now there are two of us in the history of every man: I who conceive and bear loneliness and He in whom loneliness disappears and children are born anew.

Many people look on Your Son’s life, on His suffering and death; many have gone the way He takes. I do not stand apart from Him; I do not oppose Him. I admire and worship Him, but at the same time I resist Him. I do it to some extent because I cannot afford to do anything else. Sometimes this is connected with a mirage of greatness. But I find it even harder to retain a sense of my own greatness than a sense of my loneliness. In loneliness one can hide and forget. But what am I to do when I keep falling off pedestals? What am I to do when people tormented by other people, crucified like Your Son, return and ask the same questions: Where has the exiled father gone to? Where has the punishing father come from?

*[ADAM’s space suddenly fills again with people. They are the same people who had earlier moved away in the direction taken by the WOMAN, looking toward her. The horizon has darkened, and these people, near ADAM again, circle around him and repeat in a chorus the questions he has just asked]*

##### CHORUS

Where has the exiled father gone to?  
Where has the punishing father come from?

## ADAM

Two thoughts just came to me. The first thought: Fathers will not return to themselves, so you are not wanted; go, mix with the crowd now, and lose yourself in it. The second thought: Fathers return through their children; the father always revives in the soil of a child's soul.

## 5. MOTHER

### ADAM

That second thought brought liberation with it. The hands stretched out ready to snatch and maybe tear me to pieces — or what is worse, to merge me with the crowd — turned back. Soon I heard a voice. I heard it before I was able to see who spoke. It was the Woman, the Mother.

### MOTHER

Do not be afraid. This must hurt. It is a pain like the pain of birth. A woman knows infinitely more about giving birth than a man. She knows it particularly through the suffering that accompanies childbearing. Still, motherhood is an expression of fatherhood. It must always go back to the father to take from him all that it expresses. In this consists the radiation of fatherhood.

One returns to the father through the child. And the child, in turn, restores to us the bridegroom in the father. This is very simple and ordinary. The whole world is full of it. One must enter the radiation of fatherhood, since only there does everything become fully real. For at no point can the world be fiction, the inner world even less than the external world. Just think! Think, all of you: one must choose to give birth! You have not thought about this. One must choose to give birth even more than to create.

In this consists the radiation of fatherhood. It is no metaphor, but reality. The world cannot depend on metaphor alone, the inner world even less than the external world.

We return to the father through the child. And the child in turn restores to us the bridegroom in the father. Do not separate love. Love is a unity.

*[The people assembled in ADAM'S space listen with growing attention. The WOMAN is talking more and more to them and for them. They are encompassed by a common light — not full light, perhaps, but low light. ADAM, however, remains outside its circle. He talks very slowly]*

### ADAM

It still seems to me that somehow I evade the substance in which I am embedded. Man is not only born but also dies, not only gives life but

also inflicts death. To be able to choose, one must first know all. Can I say that I know all? No, I cannot say that . . .

*[He is silent for a while]*

I have found, though, that I am not “lonely.” I am, much more, “closed.”

*[The CHORUS is silent]*

## **PART II. THE EXPERIENCE OF A CHILD**

*[The external situation drawn here is, step by step, an outcome, or offshoot, of the inner situation. This is most important. The scenery is at times intimate: a solitary room, whose most significant piece of furniture is a big armchair. There is also a writing desk and a bookshelf; a flower vase on each of them. Later the scenery changes (for this purpose it may be necessary only to remove the furniture), and we have the edge of a forest. For all the action in this part has something of wandering or striving about it: the inner striving finds its counterpart in the external action. Only two persons take part: ADAM, who becomes a father, and a child, whom we will call MONICA.]*

### **I. THE ALBUM**

#### **ADAM**

Let us sit here in the armchair, under this lamp with its shade, and take the album into our hands. Here are snapshots from the earliest years. A young woman is holding a baby in her arms. Its oval face is different now, but the eyes have the same glee. The history of those eyes: through all these pictures they remain, more than anything; they unite everything in one stream, which absorbs more and more traits; in them rests the identity of the soul.

Oh, look! If only I could put this picture into a projector —  
here is a girl of two with a huge dog.  
The dog was called Arpad; he had a sweet mouth  
when he approached the little girl, wagging his wispy tail  
and kindly holding out his paw... You innocent little creature,  
how obedient all nature is to you; even this giant does not bark —  
the first picture.

Now the goat: the projector shows huge horns and a slanting head.  
You're struggling, little one? Not afraid of the horns? The tiny hands  
beat with a stick  
as if the horns were the keys of an instrument hidden in the goat,  
on which, little one, you want to play something, something that is  
also in you now —  
the second picture.

The third picture: hens — big hens and little chicks,  
among whom you dream away each day in the yard, picking flowers  
as they peck at their seed. Then you come in through the French  
windows,  
and they, returning to the roost, pass the night in the henhouse,  
while you sleep in a little bed beyond the French windows,  
past the verandah, beyond the hall, beyond the kitchen and beyond  
grandpa's room.  
You sleep with mommy. Daddy is far away . . .

There is no daddy in this album, nor will he ever appear there.  
But is he not like the hidden sun that warms your little body,  
oh, here in the fourth picture?

The fourth picture:  
you are sitting under a parasol, hiding from the hot sun.  
Though the sun cannot be seen in the snapshot, we feel it all around  
and in you too.

There are many snapshots in this album — a whole roll of film —  
all clipped together in one book and in the book one story:  
but the eyes are the same — the soul's identity.

(The album ends at this point — but I remember what follows.)

When she was still at primary school — I remember her laughter,  
the free, girlish laughter — she was called squeaker,  
little squeaker. This name was meant to describe her laughter,  
which sometimes changed to a squeak — the squeak of a shy  
nestling.

When she was still a little girl, she was more outside me,  
though it appeared to be the other way around..  
She did her homework in the afternoon, quick at algebra  
though she blotched her Polish exercise book, often crossing out  
words.

Then geography and later still a drawing lesson —  
and at last freedom, freedom: one can run along the long corridor  
without upsetting things; one can spin around  
without even touching anything; one can squeak..  
"Daddy has come." She creeps up furtively in her soft slippers,  
then suddenly tugs at his sleeve and nestles close to him: "Here I  
am."

Poor child, I thought, poor child, *she will never see her father...*  
"Do you know, I have a daddy now," she once confided to her  
mother.  
"Do you know, I have a daddy now . . ."



## 2. THE CHILD'S SANCTUARY

MONICA

1

My father's history in me. The beginning is lost in the darkness  
of my soul, a child's, long before the wandering begins  
to trace his presence, because first there was absence.  
When I was a little girl, I ran briskly on the grass,  
I drove hens from the yard, I slept in my little bed with my teddy  
bear,  
then when I had had enough of the teddy bear, I slept with a doll.  
In the spring I picked flowers for someone, for someone, for  
someone...  
Daddy was not by me; Daddy was not on earth.  
I want my daddy on earth, close, very close to my heart.  
I must find him, pluck him out of the still picture,  
and from all my hope give birth, give birth, give birth . . .  
Many a time I took flowers, and when he was not in the room,  
I put them on his desk and left immediately.  
He would recognize my presence  
from the flowers in the vase near his books.  
He would think I am in her heart and look for me in his own heart,  
if only for a while.  
When I was far away, I would pluck a flower while writing a letter  
and put the flower in the envelope together with a sheet of my  
clumsy writing,  
for I do not find writing easy and cannot express  
what is in me.  
But he would know everything from the flower  
that the postman brought him with my letter and my thoughts  
and, above all, my heart.  
Would you believe it?...  
If you were not on earth, I would look with pity  
on the album of my infant days — that other one would not know  
this one;  
this one would not know her. Everything would be split,  
disunified — and yet it does.

2

My father's history in me begins with his absence,  
yet he must have been there all the time, though I did not feel him at  
all.  
Perfectly unified with mother, I did not know that he would one day  
break loose,  
for he is embedded in me with his roots, *like another, parallel, tree*  
*trunk.*

I have just realized: the double trunk among so many trees  
in the forest. What a wealth of boughs and branches and, high up,  
leaves;  
everything grows out of one system, out of common roots.  
So did father grow in me through mother,  
and I was their unity,  
that segment of the mass of the tree through which both trunks grow.  
It seemed strange to me that I was the thickest segment  
(for further on the tree divides into two parallel trunks,  
and each of them is thinner).  
And so I looked astonished  
at the thoughts that passed into me from the divided tree.  
So father grew in me through mother — but for a long time I did not  
perceive him,  
did not feel his absence because his roots were embedded in me.

3  
How I do love you, my father,  
my strange father, born in my soul,  
Father, you who were born in me to give birth to me.  
I did not know for many years that you had grown so much in me;  
for so long I did not know your face, your warm eyes, the bend of  
your profile —  
until the day I linked the immense longing in my soul  
precisely with you,  
until the day the absence had to become the presence  
it had once been.  
My father, I am fighting for you. Be in me, as I want to be in you.

4  
Now we are in the forest. The trees climb high.  
The last little triangle of light disappears from a sheltered creek  
between the isle of branches and the trembling waves of air.  
The forest evening, small forest evening, rises to a large evening  
that will soon fill the horizon.  
When will be spoken what is contained in you and me,  
what lies in the depth of consciousness and must wait for words?  
Being together, shall we find one day the moments for such words  
that bring to the surface what really is deep down;  
shall we confirm for every day the existence of what is?  
I discover this world in you slowly and all at once:  
it is the world of my father — how much I want to be in it!

*[She hums]*

(A small dark street among trees — and there are many such streets,  
running in many directions. Which ones will meet?  
I don't know anymore if you're sitting in a deep armchair by the  
shaded lamp

or stooping to throw more logs on the fire.)  
These moments converge continuously. Every one is all-important  
because of one common substance, because it reflects  
the growth from unseen roots of everything in me  
that I am today.

5

Well, dusk has ripened and total darkness has fallen.  
It is hard to distinguish the edges of trees from the  
background air.  
How glad I am that you are here with me. You will sit now in  
an armchair  
made of moss.  
Soon everyone will come, the fire will burn more brightly,  
we will drink tea and eat buttered biscuits  
with jam, then we will sing...  
How good it is that you are in the world,  
because I thought you no longer were, and then I thought, I cannot  
reach,  
yet I have reached you and feel that I have you now.

### 3. FATHER, BE MY WAY, BE MY SOURCE!

#### ADAM

The next day we had to walk through a thicket. At the edge of the  
forest,  
where the magnificent high pine trees end,  
and with them the shadows; where the pine trees end,  
and with them the litter of needles and moss; where the soft  
brushwood ends and a clearing begins lies  
the tangle of bushes and shoots through which one forces one's way  
while gathering raspberries or blackberries.

Our way takes us there.  
But it is not enough to look from the outside. You must enter.

You know the thicket that is *in me*: how many people  
can believe that none of us  
is closed and unchangeable? We only carry in us  
the content that outgrows us in its absolute form,  
but we are attached to and dependent on it.

Is it true  
that fatherhood is only a burden one bears alone —  
not a privilege one enjoys by oneself?  
And now you: you walk with me. *The child's sanctuary* —  
who has the right to enter it? Surely the father has  
such a right. But I only indicate the Great Meaning.

You are very shy. That is not yet simplicity,  
though you are also simple: when you cannot express something,  
when you are ashamed of your feelings, you know how to cry in  
secret.  
You know also how to bring a bunch of flowers and put it on my  
desk when no one can see.  
Your views are hermetic and grow from first impressions.  
You find it hard to stand outside — and so you often feel a stranger,  
even among friendly people. You adapt yourself with effort.  
You are very ambitious, too; you are dependable to the point of  
willfulness;  
I look at your features, at the way they are formed. I look at the  
impenetrable sanctuary of a child. You have been lulled to sleep by  
the overabundance of nature,  
which harmonizes with insufficiency in man.  
*I still remain lonely.*  
Suddenly a rustle wakes me. *I am not lonely, for I tremble.*  
A glistening, patterned body throbs in the grass,  
pulsating with measured breathing. On the beaten trail  
*a viper*  
rapidly curls up and puts out its tongue.  
Obviously something has vexed it.  
I am not lonely, for I tremble.  
My whole awareness throbs with this one meaning — viper —  
that clings to it from outside.  
At the same time another meaning appears, which clings from  
within:  
child. One must protect this child!  
I am immensely moved. I know now that something has happened.  
But I do not yet know exactly what.

#### MONICA

I know that fear has left me. You have taken it all upon yourself.  
We are walking toward the forest; I am holding you by the hand, as I  
have held no one before . . .  
The viper disappeared in the grass somewhere; you must have saved  
my life.  
What are you thinking about?

#### ADAM

I was thinking about your father. He gave you life.

#### MONICA

Didn't you give me a new life?

ADAM

No. I only took from you  
what is His due. Only in your imagination can I be linked  
with the idea of the Father. I can be only for you  
that Great Meaning . . . Am I able now to give you birth again?  
This is the framework.

MONICA

Fill it; fill it with yourself! You must fill it with yourself!  
Do you know how I need you, how much I took from you and am  
still taking?  
But my need for you is not the reason. I want to love without any  
need,  
aiming directly with my heart at a meaning that is both simple and  
great  
and in which man is contained, being unable to contain it in himself.

ADAM

I know you do not love out of need — but we follow the traces of the  
Meaning  
that is both great and simple. Can I give birth to you now?  
Can you be born of me?

Only an association remain  
(though life returns continually to the same old places,  
it does not find us there anymore...).

Ah, Child, how deeply painful it is that I cannot give you birth anew —  
even though you would not then be who you are now.

And for you

I can trace only from outside that Great Meaning  
that we long for with all our human nature,  
especially from a certain moment...

“Father, father” — with what Meaning does this  
word resound?

MONICA

Has not the moment come yet when it could resound  
for me with you and for you with me?

ADAM

We keep walking. A stream is running by; we go uphill, upstream.  
Among the pine trees nearby, one can immerse one's feet in the  
water. Do it.  
The stream is cool; the water falls quietly down the stones,  
its murmur slowly grows all along its run.

## MONICA

I am putting my feet in the water. What a soothing coolness, what  
freshness, what rebirth!  
Life enters anew into all my cells.  
Ah, as I am being born anew from this forest stream,  
I ask: Be water for me!  
I ask: Be water for me!

## CHORUS

1

We have come down to the cool stream that runs in the shadow of  
the pine trees  
nearby.  
No one will recognize our footprints. Water is not stone,  
nor is it clay, in which your feet leave an imprint.  
Has water left its imprint on you —  
or only coolness and a stillness of the body?

2

We have come down to the cool stream, which  
on the gentle mountain slope and in the stately shadow of the pines  
has carved out its own bed.  
The bank of the stream is both the edge of the earth and the edge of  
human thought —  
the sight flows here into objects, small trees, and stones at the  
bottom.

## ADAM

3

We have come down to the forest stream to praise you, the water  
that has given birth to man anew, yet we have passed by unaware  
of your own goodness.  
I praise you, cool forest water, for having saved for me the breath  
that I feel so close to my heart: the breath of a child by my side.

## MONICA

I will not move from this place; from this child's place I will never  
move.  
I want to embrace you with all my childhood, which you once  
traced on the pages of an album . . . Then came the girlish years . . .  
I love you for all the yesterdays that did not happen —  
and for today, in which yesterday is contained.

**ADAM**

Well, can we contain it? . . . How shall I find your childhood years  
in what is now? I will miss them greatly.  
All the past converges at this point — suddenly, suddenly the years  
come back...  
You cannot return to them, but they can swell and come again,  
flooding your heart. Child, child. How can we enter that flood?  
I would enter — with great trepidation — the whole past that moves  
toward us  
and floods the present moment... I would lead you like a little girl,  
by the hand. I would then go back and separate by year  
everything that is here all at once. How can all this be embraced?

**MONICA**

4  
We have come down to the forest stream. Tell me,  
are we not here at the lowest point of some strange gravitation?  
How can I embrace you with all my child's being?

**ADAM**

Look once more: the stream — you are entering the water, which  
keeps falling down from here.  
Through the stream do you not reach the SOURCE where everything  
begins?  
Through the stream do you not embrace the SOURCE?

**MONICA**

Through the stream the SOURCE EMBRACES ME TOO.

**4. THE FATHER AND THE CHILD EMBRACE ONE ANOTHER  
BY MEANS OF THE WORD "MINE"**

**ADAM**

...my child. When I first decided to think of you as my child,  
by that very fact I accepted the meaning of the word "mine."  
What happened?...  
Something  
quite simple yet eternal.  
Some words carry weight,  
even small words... Such is the word "mine."  
With this word I accept as my own, but at the same time I give  
myself  
...MY CHILD! My child! "Mine" means "own."

## MONICA

I do not know how it happened, but I think this word emerged  
on the waves of my heart.  
The waves of the heart flow over us often in ebbs and tides —  
I have felt a wave rise and fall again.  
I have even feared sometimes that it would push me over, but now  
I am not afraid anymore; I am used to it.  
But I like stillness best —  
when a huge wave, dormant in its depths,  
stands still between the banks of my being.  
It is better when the wave is quiet, and only I know it's there,  
for when it moves, I feel again like a reed or bulrush  
and feel less strongly the banks of my being.  
The banks grow distant then.  
Some frontiers break too and in me  
strange beings roll, also uncertain of their frontiers.  
I dream of a stillness so great that even those strange beings  
could emerge on the wave of my heart as if they were my own.  
I dream of a great stillness where nothing would disturb  
the sense of all that is contained in the word "mine."

## ADAM

The word "mine" — a tiny, simple word. How long I had to stand  
on its threshold. How long I looked into it through all the logic  
of existence... This word has an eternal sense . . .  
Do you know that we must not accept what emerges only  
on the wave of heart until we assume responsibility  
for the truth of this word, the common simple word "mine"?  
We may return to the heart once we have dealt  
with the logic of words. How many of us fear we shall not then find  
again  
the warm current the wave of heart carries?  
  
*Never* act like a blind man who only touches objects  
but devises no picture of them. Such a life would be a poor one.  
  
And yet I do not want to belittle anything you treasure.  
I shiver at the very thought that I could upset  
or undermine something in you . . .  
But what emerges on the wave of the heart  
should not develop haphazardly, leading into blind alleys.  
Every feeling, my child, must be permeated by light,  
so that one does not feel in darkness, but in the light, anew.  
One must transfix feelings with thought.  
(I transform the delicate heart of hearts in which I stay more and  
more freely;  
I live there as if it were my own. How many doors has she opened  
for me?



And if she knew of another, hidden, gate, still closed to me,  
she would try at once to open it...yet she is not one of those  
who open themselves easily...)

### MONICA

When I think of you as mine, I do not follow myself, only you,  
and at the same time I go into myself to find you there.  
When I find you, I feel joy. But if I do not find you,  
I feel pain, and that is why sometimes I cry in secret . . .  
What does it mean? Do I want to take you, to have you for my own?  
Well, certainly I do. But I could not . . . and such  
possession would even be impossible . . . I want only to pass into  
you always  
so that you can find me in your heart and then  
think "mine" about me . . . as one thinks about one's own child.

### ADAM

We are born also through choice — then we are born from within,  
and not at once but bit by bit...  
So we are not born but rather become.  
But at a particular moment we may not become, may not be born.  
This depends on us. And that is why — bit by bit — I try to find  
credibility  
in the word "mine." Do you also try to find it, child?  
Giving birth begins with unity and aims at unity. In this love  
consists.  
When you were conceived and your mother was to give birth to you,  
first you had to penetrate the depths of her body, then to tear  
yourself  
out of it with the first impulse of independent life...  
If you are to be born of your father, you must first penetrate  
the depths of his will... This is giving birth through choice.  
And to choose means to accept what makes my world,  
what is in me and what is of me . . . Are you able to accept it?  
For already I carry you under my heart and know that I must give  
you birth,  
because I cannot think of you as other than mine.

### MONICA

Oh, do not worry about giving birth... I know it is the woman who  
gives birth.  
Do not fear what I say: how differently YOU ARE GIVING ME  
BIRTH!  
You want to give me birth like this all the time —  
to introduce me to what is

and what has not yet come to be (and if it is somehow already,  
it is thanks to you). Though born once,  
I am also many times unborn and want to be born many times.

### ADAM

Do you know what I used to think? — Poor child, she has lost her  
father.

I can be for her the Great Meaning...

I only wanted to signify the father.

Then I did not want to find myself in you. But now I want to.

Now if I am to find you in myself, I must find myself in you.

Do you know that if I do this, you are not altogether free?

For love denies freedom of will to him who loves —

love liberates him from the freedom

that would be terrible to have for its own sake.

So when I become a father, I am conquered by love.

And when you become a child, you too are conquered by love.

At the same time I am liberated from freedom through love,

and so are you;

at last I am liberated from loneliness,

*which I do not want to exchange for love.*

Child, child. When I become father, I must want

that strange being —

subtle and timid,

bold and carefree,

cheerful and sad,

defiant and immensely vulnerable — to become mine;

I must want that strange being,

you, to be mine.

I must want her to be born of me and ever to grow out of me,

not to be born apart and grow away from me —

I must want this and tremble for it.

I must tremble too because she, being born of me,

will not for an instant cease to be herself.

Thus I have to split and divide myself from herself always,

having both myself in her and her in myself.

And if I have to tremble, that means love for a long time

has met with fear.

Love is always a choice and is always born by choice.

(This is the mystery of the word “mine.”)

If I love, I must always choose you in me,

so I must always give you birth and always be born in you.

Giving birth this way through perpetual choice, we give birth to

love.

(This is the mystery of the simple word “mine.”)

So you see that you cannot be free any more than I.  
And you too, like me, must be liberated from freedom through love.  
For there is no giving birth without everything that is contained in  
the word "mine."

And though I would very much wish to stop at the edge, love will  
draw me in...

Do you understand this?

## **5. FATHER AND CHILD ALWAYS FIND ONE ANOTHER BY MEANS OF THE WORD "MINE"**

### **MONICA**

I cried this morning. I know that my father is sad too.  
I feel this sadness very much. Why does it have to be so?  
I cried; I was helpless. Can I always want  
what he does when I simply want what I want?

### **ADAM**

My child, beloved child. I cannot spare you tears.  
Sometimes I even wait for them. Then I wipe them  
and say, "Do not cry." What remains is to await a new maturity,  
a new unity of will, a common rhythm...  
I never doubt you, remember, but test you in myself always.

One must desire together. One cannot escape by desiring,  
for then the feeling deceives...and the word "mine" remains in a void  
and hurts because of that...for the void of love is the most painful:  
when we love, a common current runs through our wills.  
From it a certainty grows, and freedom is born again from certainty.  
And this is what love means. And then without fear I think "mine"...

### **MONICA**

Many times father repeated (the autumn abounded in strange  
tensions),  
"Too many of the bonds between us are external;  
there are too few inner bonds. Ah, child, I know this well —  
you live too little in me, though you are so close."  
I said then, "Is it not true that I took from you  
so much? Can one take more?"

But those were difficult days. Did I misunderstand you, or could you  
not find me?  
I decided the fault was mine.  
After all, my father, you may look for me

first in yourself, and only later in me.  
So I said, "It is my fault; it is my fault only"  
(those were December days, which always end so quickly,  
turning into evenings almost without dusk),  
as if you wanted to say, It is our fault; it is ours. — It is only  
mine!

From now on shall I live in you?  
It seems to me that you are determined, that you demand radical  
changes.  
Sometimes it is as if you said, I must have been late in you... But I  
know  
that it is I who am late. Yes, it is certainly I who am late.  
You are patient, however...

### ADAM

When we descend from word to will, what will the word mean?...  
The meaning in that brief word "mine" is irrevocable.  
I feel that one cannot turn back; one can only find  
or suffer.  
There was a moment, like a flash,  
when I wanted to tear out of myself the meaning of the word  
"father."  
It was only a moment. I knew you would come back. I will clear the  
way for you myself.  
You will come back and find in me all you have desired,  
and all that you are sometimes afraid of... Is it not true that in the  
word "father"  
there is also fear?  
I will *never* be only stillness but also storm.  
Nor will I be sweetness only; I will add bitterness.  
And though I try to be transparent, I will also be a puzzle.  
And you will not always rest; sometimes you will be tired because of  
me,  
my child...  
Am I truly in you?  
Is my world also your world?  
Or do you enjoy feeling only on the surface —  
the gentle, warm wave flowing through your heart —  
and do you not even think  
that from that wave you must fish out the whole inner world,  
the world I call mine?  
The levels of emotion can, after all, slide past each other,  
touching whole people, leaving them behind...  
There are hours, sleepless nights,  
during which I grapple with the feeling  
that you are created outside me, that I do not give you birth...

The pain of birth is a joy, but the pain of not giving  
birth to a child must be terrible! . . .  
There are such hours. Forgive me for them!  
Maybe they too serve love.  
And do not think for a moment that I would want only myself in  
you.  
I want you so much, so much,  
but always find that secret formula  
through which I shall be in you,  
and you in me!

### MONICA

Are those not the same hours, the same sleepless nights  
during which I also cry, my eyes full of tears.  
Why do you sometimes appear so distant, though you are closest to  
me?  
I realize that you cannot want me to remain outside the truth of your  
existence;  
I realize this more and more.

### ADAM

Gradually I learn through you what it means to be a father:  
it means having the strongest bonds with the world . . . So let us  
shape that world together!  
How precise we must be here, how sensitive and subtle!  
But on the other hand: a slight scratch, tiny wounds that hurt a long  
time,  
then the long healing, then the gentle cure —  
understanding, and again determination that seems like vehemence...  
but a father finds it very hard to lose, cross out, reject, and cut off  
(ah, what a hope in this; what trust begins from here!).  
A father finds it very hard to lose, to push out of the field of love!  
Fatherhood binds me not only to the child;  
it binds me also to myself: I am bound within myself.  
And I find it very hard to lose myself in myself. It is not possible.  
If one loses faith in one's own fatherhood (think, child), then only  
pain is possible.  
But I cannot now cease to be myself together with what binds me  
from within —  
my burden and happiness — because it has somehow become myself  
too.

### MONICA

Father, father, I am here! We have come back from the mountains.  
It is lovely. The tents drying in the sun.

Resin drips down the bark, tall grass, a path runs across,  
hardly, hardly trodden in the grass. A man can hide  
and muse. Discover the depths of other beings and his own —  
discover, reach. Reach with what is in me that which is in You.  
I am, I am! Please forgive me. I want to be always.  
You must not doubt this. Only sometimes I do not know how.  
Do I not want to?... When I do not know how, do I not want to?  
No, do not think so! Never think so!

A path through high grass, hardly, hardly trodden...  
Your child is here. You see, she will evade the vicious viper.  
Your child has presence of mind, senses your world.  
But she does not drink fully of that world.  
Is this not well, my father? In you there must always be more;  
in you there must always be something more...

And then pine trees — the pyramids of shade, the low bushes full of  
berries,  
and the stream.  
I walk into the water up to my ankles, up to my knees, up to my  
hips.  
I feel its coolness (I touch the stones underwater);  
I feel its coolness, and at the same time —  
ah, Father! —  
I feel, I feel my body anew  
and my soul!  
You took me by the hand then  
and guided me.  
It is not possible now to change that in you and me.  
I know. And you know, too. And the rest will come.

## **PART III. MOTHER**

### **1. CONCERN FOR INNER RADIANCE**

#### **MOTHER**

Do not go away, child — you eternal child — never go away. Even if you  
depart, remember that you remain in me. All who depart remain in me.  
And all who pass by have their place in me — not just a wayside stop but  
a permanent place. I gather the people whom Adam has dispersed. There  
is in me a love stronger than loneliness. That love is not of me. Though I  
intend to speak of it, silence here expresses more than speech.

People inhabit an earth that has two poles. They have no permanent  
place here. They are all on their way, which leads them from the pole of  
loneliness to the pole of love. I love Adam and constantly restore to him  
the fatherhood he renounces. I discreetly turn his loneliness into my

motherhood. And this is how people liberate themselves from the heritage that forms the strangest community — the community of loneliness. Adam, too, liberates himself from it. I help him leave the circle that binds him to himself.

Do not think that I inspire him. I am too simple and too tired for that. I am tired of people, as he is, but in a different way. Adam does not see my beauty, perhaps does not even know who I am. I entered his history unobserved. Among the many servants of history I am the least obtrusive. And I am not the light for those I enlighten but rather a shade in which they rest. A mother ought to be the shade for her children. A father knows he is in them: he wants to be in them and confirms himself in them. But I do not know whether I am in them — I only feel them in me. And so my absence alternates with Adam's presence, while his absence alternates with my presence. We are present and absent in different ways. If Adam knew all about me, if he knew the whole truth about me, he would cease to be embedded in loneliness and see in himself the features of the Bridegroom, which he is trying to hide.

When I give birth to children, they are not only mine but also his. Thus I restore to him at least a shadow of the fatherhood that he has renounced from the beginning, unable to renounce it altogether. And I stay in this shadow — unobserved by him, unloved. Sometimes he meets me and asks about the pain of childbirth. But he denies what I reply: our truths cannot meet. I am not the bride of him whom I love. I am only a mother.

*[The upper area of the space in which the MOTHER is standing gradually lights up. One can see people grouped as during ADAM'S monologue]*

People who have departed, who have fallen in so many battles — for life is full of battles — are born anew in me. I am their shelter for they do not have the full beauty from without, only the need for rest. And I do not know how it happens that I fill these people with radiance from within. Or rather I do know, but my knowledge is faith. Faith is also knowledge — although in its most sensitive point it is not knowledge any more but expectation. And this is the only radiance I can afford. I instill that radiance in people who are born of me. It is the true inner radiance coupled with outward fatigue.

I give birth to people through the fatigue that fills life as well as through the light that they experience from within. I do not give birth to them physically, as a woman, though the labor of my childbirth is no less acute — only different — for it is difficult to join fatigue with light and light with fatigue. Ah, Adam! Why does he scorn that labor? Why won't he believe in the light joined to fatigue, instead of always choosing loneliness? People born of him live in inner darkness, without expectations. I am the other pole of Adam's loneliness. I must constantly clothe his children in light because they walk naked from within. They clothe themselves on the outside with an immense wealth of creatures and of their own work, but on the inside they are naked. Yet they are ashamed. So they run away, shouting, "I have hidden away because I am naked."

I know so many women who give birth in pain. Human motherhood is branded with pain. With pain man pays for the joy of existence. A child is born naked. When its mother recovers from the pangs of labor, she bathes it, washing the tiny body to restore its freshness. I take part in all mothers' cares, and I desire to bathe every child of this earth, to wash it in water so that it remains always fresh; we must clothe it on the inside in the radiance that liberates it from the shame of existence. I ask you, mothers, to take part in my motherhood.

*[Some women emerge from different groups and approach the MOTHER, who now addresses the Invisible Child resting in her arms]*

My little one, I know now that you are alive, because you cry and laugh in turn. But I do not yet know that your cry and your laughter are heard throughout the universe. My little one, I want to spare you the shame of existence, and that is why I say, "Take into yourself the light that will guide you through Adam's loneliness and lead you to the Father." This is also the moment of my birth, the moment in which I become a Mother.

## **2. RADIATION AND DYING**

### **ADAM**

Although I am always far away from you, still I am near. So listen to me as I listen to you.

I admire the Bridegroom, yet I cannot transform myself into him. How full of human substance He is! He is the living denial of all loneliness. If I knew how to implant myself in Him, if I knew how to live in Him, I would find in myself the love that fills Him. Love reveals the Father in the Son. How much he strives for every human being — as for the greatest treasure, as someone in love strives for his beloved...

### **MOTHER**

Whenever a child is born, I find you anew, Adam. It is you yourself who are born then, and I come forward to meet you with the light I want to kindle from within. I approach quietly, discreetly, so that you do not hear my steps, and each time I tell you, "Adam, accept the radiation of fatherhood; Adam, become a child." And each time you are silent. You do not hear my voice, or rather you do not want to hear. You regard me as an intruder. Sometimes you wish to drive me away, though I come each time with love. I love you in every newborn child, and through him I take you in my arms. You have become a child anew because I am near. The radiation of fatherhood passes through me, acts through my motherhood. And you, who have lost the clear vision of the Father, choosing your loneliness anew in every newborn child, must reconcile yourself with me.



I am near. I am everywhere. I do not know myself how it happens, but this is so. I join the birth of every man, and through it I constantly meet you, opposing you every time. Oh, Adam, how tired I am of you. Truly, fatigue is the measure of our love — and through patience we come into possession of our souls. You must be surprised at my mindfulness of every beck and call of your kind. Do not be surprised, Adam!

How does it happen that I see the father in you, even though you reject fatherhood? That I see the child in you, even though you do not want to be one? I am afraid I always come at the call of the Bridegroom, though you never call me with His voice. I hear that voice which brings me nearer to you, even though it is not you who speaks. You want so much to be lonely that the words “sister” and “Bride” are strangers to your lips. Yet I am she. I constantly watch over the quiet flow of life in you; I constantly bend over it: my substance is the life I give you, though I do not take it from you. And you know about it.

You know where there is life, there must be a bride, a mother. I am she. This you cannot contain, but you must be contained in it. My tiny son, who is also my father: love always outgrows you but never leaves you. You do not want to be a bridegroom, yet I speak to you the words of a bride. You do not want to be a child, yet I keep giving birth to you. You do not want to be a father, because you choose loneliness, but I come to take it away from you. Love that outgrows cannot cut itself off from its soil. The soil of our love is every man. But it is the Father who is the Way and the Source.

I gather in me the RADIATION OF FATHERHOOD — and the dying of fatherhood:

When a child is born, you are born in it anew, and I rejoice in that birth. At the same time — Adam, Adam — I desire you to die in it. I desire your death, and in that wish I find the very nucleus of life. Because of that wish, you bear a grudge against me, and that is why you cannot understand my love for you. It is a love that outgrows you, and I keep coming back to you with that love: to you and your children I return with the Bridegroom’s death.

You resist it.

My Bridegroom does not want to remain lonely in his death!

## ADAM

All this I know. But is it enough to know? I choose loneliness to remain myself and nobody else. This is what my world is created from.

Do I really remain myself?

Our world is perpetually being created around us: my world that is our world and our world that is my world. Even as that world develops, it disintegrates. It lacks what might profoundly unite it, but in it is my loneliness. Do we not have to envisage the possibility of a total disintegration of our world?

## MOTHER

I gather the radiation of Fatherhood and the dying of fatherhood: in me they are one.

*[She stretches out her arms as if taking the Invisible Child into them and carrying it before her]*

Who is this child?

*[The people standing around them light the candles they hold: are they a procession of MOTHER and Bride — or ADAM's children?]*

## ADAM

*[Looks at what is happening but speaks as if he were taking no part in it, as if he wanted, above the head of the MOTHER and her retinue, to establish contact with the Father]*

Yes, it could happen in the end that You will put aside our world. You may let it crumble around us and, above all else, in us; then it will transpire that You remain whole only in the Son, and He in You, and whole with Him in Your Love. Father and Bridegroom. And everything else will then turn out to be unimportant and inessential except this: father, child, and love.

And then, looking at the simplest things, we will all say, Could we not have learned this long ago? Has this not always been embedded in everything that is?

*[He speaks these last words as if he wanted to hand them down to the people standing around. Indeed they repeat the words after him]*

## CHORUS

Could we not have learned this long ago?  
Has this not always been embedded in everything that is?

*[A moment's silence, broken by the MOTHER'S voice]*

## MOTHER

You are wrong, Adam! You are all wrong!  
In me will survive the heritage of all men, implanted in the Bridegroom's death.