

Move to the Valley 1976

It was a pleasure to have Paula's parents back from their peregrinations from sea to shining sea and border to border. She and I were both happy my in-laws had returned, that was until they laid in our laps a real bomb, namely, that they were planning on selling the house in El Segundo. Translated: start packing and look for a new home.

As I was working full time in the telecommunications industry, the task of finding a new domicile for the Dyal family fell to Paula and her mother. The location that was eventually selected was in the Reseda area of the San Fernando Valley, which, if Californians used the parlance of the east coast and Midwest, would be called the "north side" of Los Angeles.

The house was situated in one of those cookie cutter neighborhoods that sprang up as suburbs of the larger cities in the post-war 1950's. The place itself was rather poorly constructed and consisted of three small bedrooms, a kitchen with a blushingly modest dining area, and a carport in place of a proper garage. Just the kind of place that would have been snapped up by a GI Bill, VA loan soldier, his wife, and statistical 1.8 children in the years following The Big One. One bright spot was that, as we only had the one child, Susan, I was able to convert the third bedroom into my study and this physically cramped space became the alchemical alembic for the alchemical transmutation of my self.

The house was obviously very affordable even for that time. Another redeeming feature was the fact it was set on a quarter acre-sized lot, giving us an unusually large amount of yard space. Its situation made it somewhat isolated and there was a sense of peace and quiet about it.

My initial early explorations of the Valley led me to Chatsworth, in the extreme northwest of the city and county of Los Angeles, once the home of family farms and extensive motion picture and television filming. One area of Chatsworth, a bucolic, rustic part called Stony Point, immediately exerted a strong fascination for me.

Stony Point, with its native shrubs and trees, hiking trails and bridle paths, was a sacred site for the local Indians who had made it their home for centuries and virtually upon arrival I could feel their energy.

Chatsworth is located at the foot of the Santa Susan Mountains and its terrain made it a natural for the filming of westerns for both television and motion pictures. The windswept sandstone rock formations create a special landscape that engages the eye. As many before me, I could not resist falling in love with the place.

One of my most vivid and cherished memories is of my first climb up the long dirt trail that leads to "the faces of the gods," three large sandstone formations with the appearance of faces. I could feel an instantaneous connection with the energy stored within and emanating from those silent rocky countenances. This is the area I refer to as "the mountain" or "my mountain," a natural,

outdoor spiritual workshop, part alchemical laboratory, part initiatic lodge, part Native American ceremonial ground, the scene of extraordinary visions and spiritual experiences all taking place within a stone's throw of the ever-busy Topanga Canyon Boulevard. This street, which winds from the Pacific Ocean all the way to the far border of Chatsworth, is one of the longest streets on Earth. In fact, the Stony Point area is in the 11,400 block of Topanga Canyon!

As for the spiritual sanctuary in my home, I carefully prepared that for my new occupancy by performing cleansing ceremonies designed to remove any lingering energies from former residents. This might sound very esoteric, but if you have ever moved into a place where others had lived before you, you will be very much aware of what I am talking about. Also, decades before most Westerners (myself included) ever heard the words *feng shui*, I carefully arranged the furniture to make the best possible use of the space.

The room had definite drawbacks, however. The flooring was of green and white tile, which was not only not only hideous looking but was very cold. I covered the floor with a red and white checkered rug that was a perfect fit for the room and provided at least some shielding against the cold that radiated upwards from the stone foundation.

While still living in El Segundo, I had established the habit of recording my visions and other experiences in a small journal. I had found that merely reducing them to words was not enough to capture their profound impact, thusly I began drawing what I had seen.

In order to do better justice to my visionary drawings, I began compiling them in a large black journal purchased specially for this purpose. My first drawings were in pencil, later I graduated to watercolors and ink. This original journal was the nascent beginning of my entire process of self-transformation, the historical record of my evolution, and, ultimately, all of my artwork in various media.

My days were occupied with the business of earning a living installing telephone systems while my nights were spent writing and drawing in my journals until the early hours of the following morning.

From my earliest days in the Reseda home, I could feel a decidedly feminine energy making itself manifest in my study. So marked was its presence I could feel the germination of a subtle shift in how I perceived my own sexuality.

My anima energy was awakening and nothing was going to stem its tide. (Anima, a word coined by Carl Gustav Jung, refers to the feminine aspects of the male personality). Paula and I had now been married four years and in a way difficult to define, we were exchanging the typical gender roles, both in our own personas and in our relationship.

For one thing, Paula was physically bulking up at an appreciable rate even as I was losing weight. My hair had grown long and rather wild and as I am naturally thin and find it easy to lose pounds, I was displaying the more feminine type masculine look of the 1960's.

This transformative period lasted about a year, at the end of which I had taken on the physical characteristics of the feminine personality. I was unable to analyze the cause but the effect was clear enough: I was overwhelmed by my own feminine energy, the side that most men either suppress or find some way of sublimating into more traditional avenues. This, of course, was all related to energies rather than behavior; I never had the slightest interest in, much less engaged in, transvestism, for example. Being tall and slim, though, my body did conform well to tight pants, I was comfortable in clog shoes, and I wasn't averse to carrying my art supplies and other things in a bag slung over my shoulder, which most males in those pre-backpack days probably would have shied away from.

I could strongly feel a feminine persona within me, trying to break free, to be born, to come to fruition as a separate entity. She wound up becoming my inner guide and the catalyst for my creative process.

In time, this feminine side of my nature became so dominant and distinct that the Myron Dyal I had known seemed to be decreasing, so she could increase. All of my sexual energy was channeled into this emerging personality and my masculine energy, which had seemed to be fading even back in El Segundo, had all but vanished. I was terrified at what all of this might presage yet I also felt very comfortable with this new psyche.

I had an enormous battle with guilt over allowing this intruder from within to push me into the background and I was at a loss as to how to foster the integration of all this with my male side, which was obviously not gone or annihilated, and I was certainly bewildered as to how to fit these feelings into my relationship with Paula.

Honestly, I don't even know if anyone even detected any changes in me, other than to remark how thin I looked. Long hair on men and an overall unisex look were in at the time, and the fact that I was a musician meant I could get away with just about anything and not risk being seen as odd. So, while I was covered as far as the world was concerned, I was fearing for my whole gender identity.

My then therapist, Russ, assured me that I was not in need of a homosexual relationship or any such thing, but a Homo-Eros experience, i.e., that of love directed towards self realization. I was still very much confused but as time passed I became accepting of and settled into harmony with, the new me.

One productive aspect of this was that my artistic life was powerfully stimulated. During this feminine period I performed with many symphony orchestras in Southern California, wrote string arrangements for Christian recordings, and began my output of drawings and paintings. Furthermore, I found my inner visions were reaching into heretofore unexplored worlds.

I should state that although this feminine energy possessed a very dark quality, it was in no wise evil or destructive. Its function was to lead me into as-yet unknown and unexpected depths of my own psychological underworld.

As this unfolded it became increasingly harder to function in the supposedly real world, especially in the telecommunications business. I had found most of the technicians in that field had decidedly red necks and displayed no sympathy for my newly emerged feminine side. I had to take a lot of flack over my appearance.

By the end of 1979 I had cut my hair, left behind the hands-on technical staff for the more rarified halls of management where, of course, it was needful to dress far more conservatively. I now looked more Madison Avenue than Haight-Ashbury. It would still take another ten years, however, to complete the integration of the masculine and feminine energies of my being.

Meanwhile, though my exterior appearance had changed dramatically, my interior life continued to enlarge and expand and that I would never have altered for anyone or any reason.

