

Some Sketches
from the Life of
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky



Joanne Kyger

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from the Life of
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
Paul H.P.B. loves you!

by



Joanne Kyger

*Joanne
at Seattle
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Some Sketches from the Life
of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

— the 'visionary trailblazer'
who was the first to introduce
Eastern religious and spiritual thinking
into Western religion, psychology, art
and literature

and the first to treat Buddhism
"with anything approaching respect",
starting the Buddhist path in America.



H P B
MADAME BLAVATSKY

Well, yes her eyes of course, large
powerful, focused.
Born August 12, 1831
Helena Petrovna
in a Ukranian town and baptised quickly
in the Russian Orthodox manner
lest she die with the burden
of original sin on her soul being born prematurely
and with delicate health.
A very young aunt of the baby
at baptism inadvertently sets fire to the long
flowing robes of the priest
with her consecrated candle.

Helena Grows Up

Mister Blavatsky is married, and dispensed with.
She is 18 and wants to travel,
Turkey, Greece, Egypt and France.

Now this mysterious

MASTER she meets in London
"A tall Hindu (6'8") in the street with Indian princes".
She greets him the next day in Hyde Park.
I have an important task for you, he tells her,
'Go to Tibet for three years'.
She goes to Canada. New Orleans, Mexico,
South America, West Indies,
the Cape, Ceylon,
and India.
They won't let her in Tibet.
She returns to England, back to America,
crosses the Rockies with immigrants in a caravan.
This is 1854. She goes on to India,
Kashmir, Ladak, parts of Tibet,
Burma, Java, France, Germany,
and back to her family in Russia on Christmas Eve.
She is now 27 years old, and goes on to travel
in the Caucasus among the native tribes for four years.

Acquires control
over her occult powers.

Off to the Balkans, Egypt, Syria, Italy, where she is wounded
in the battle of independence.

On to India and Tibet
with her teacher, the tall Master.
Is she a spy?

Back to Greece. Her ship is wrecked
on the way to Egypt. Travels to Syria, Palestine,
Lebanon, Odessa, Paris, and New York.

And here we leave her for nine years.
She has met Colonel Henry Steel Olcott
and they found the Theosophical Society.

The question was (in 1874) whether the spirits
of the dead return to us or not.

The Eddy Brothers, near Rutland, Vermont, uneducated farmers,
are able to bring specters forth — deceased relatives
who "found means to reconstruct their bodies and clothing
so as to be temporarily solid, visible, and tangible".

HPB, appears there. "Good gracious, look at that specimen
will you," shouts Colonel Henry S. Olcott. She is clad
in bright red Garibaldi shirt with silken blonde hair
"like the fleece of a Cotswold ewe".

"She is not controlled by spirits to do their will
It is *she* who seems to control them, to do her bidding."

And what is Theosophy?

Well, they found the word
in a dictionary:

"Direct knowledge of God and the world
by direct mystical insight
or philosophical speculation".

So in New York City, 1875 —

a small band seeking to harmonize the divine.
Friends of all movements in the world.
Against drunkenness, cruelty to animals,
injustice to women, corruption.
Open hearts to charity, justice and generosity.

A Universal Brotherhood. The study of Ancient
and Modern Wisdoms and religions.

And most important at the time, the investigation
of the unexplained laws of nature,
and the psychical powers latent in man.

Spiritualism was the rage at the time
— spirit writing, table turning.
And in the United States White House, Abraham Lincoln
at the behest of his wife consulted Nettie Colburn
during seances when crises arose.

All this time, Madame Blavatsky has been acquiring
and practicing her 'powers'.

"SHE CAN AT WILL MOVE PHYSICAL OBJECTS
AROUND A ROOM"

"I have seen her cause objects in the room
to move without aid from anyone. Once a silver spoon
came through two walls
and three rooms into her hands before our eyes
at her simple silent will," says friend William Judge.

Powers of the 'Elementals made subservient to Human Will'.
Mesmeric hallucinations.
Thought reading. Clairvoyance. The astral realm ...

"Last night, I did as I was ordered
and wrote down these pages of words."
It is the summer of 1875
and Madame B has started the writing
of her first 'delivered' tome, ISIS UNVEILED

Everyday more pages
"appeared in her eyes on another plane
of objective existence". She sees the pages
and translates them into English, working
seventeen hours a day, subsisting on oatmeal.
The book
is twelve thousand small print pages long.

"I AM ALL THAT HAS BEEN, ALL THAT IS, ALL
THAT SHALL EVER BE,
AND NO MORTAL HAS EVER LIFTED MY VEIL."

The thousand copy edition is sold out in ten days.
An unprecedented success. In print ever since.

The Madame and the Colonel go to Bombay
The Theosophical Society has proclaimed admiration
for the ancient wisdom of the east
— Hindu and Buddhist.
They start THE THEOSOPHIST
their journal of communication. "Our pages
will be like the many viands at a feast
where each appetite may be satisfied
and none are sent away hungry."

There are excursions. Madame B writes,

"While every Hindu bewails the decadence of his country,
few realize the real cause
is the destruction of its forests.

The stripping of the hills,
and the drainage slopes of their vegetation area
is a positive crime against the nation.

In America, where my observations have been chiefly made,
the wanton destruction of forests has been appalling.

The ruin and extinction
of national power
follow the eradication of forests
surely as night follows day."

A German Professor wants proof

of her powers in Benares.

She sets her lips together and muttering something
Sweeps! her right hand thru the air with an imperious

gesture and Bang!

on the heads of the company
fall a dozen red roses.

And she does it again! Another dozen roses.
— A parting 'souvenir'.

Then to Ceylon.

Madame and the Colonel become formal Buddhists.
"I regard the philosophy of Gautama Buddha
as the most Sublime system. The most logical
of all.

But the system has been distorted
and popularized.

I hold to the mother source, rather than the streams
that flow from it."

What To Do When You Have 10 Guests and Only 9 Teacups

The Madame and Colonel in Simla on a picnic. They need
an extra teacup for an unexpected guest.
(Great day for Madame's phenomena!
writes Alfred Percy Sinnet)

"Dig there," she says.

A Major Henderson brings a knife and digs.

He finds the ground hard and full of small roots
of a young cedar tree nearby.

He cuts and pulls them up, down to the depth of six inches.

There is something white in the black soil.

Lo! a cup decorated in green and gold EXACTLY MATCHING
the others.

"Dig more!" The Major finds a SAUCER TO MATCH the cup!
Imbedded in the ground like stone
with roots growing around them.

Major Henderson becomes a Theosophist on the spot.

Returning to the house, Colonel Olcott rushes straight
to the pantry. "I found the three other cups
of the nine left of the original dozen
put away on an upper shelf with broken handles.
The seventh cup had NOT formed a part of the set —
there were now 13 cups, ten intact, and three broken."

The duplicate cup and its saucer still exist
and were on display in 1975 in New York City
at the Statler Hilton Hotel
on the 100th anniversary
of the Theosophical Society.

Phenomena like these draw the attention of the public
to the existence of the Theosophical Society.
Madame B poo-poops these phenomena as being mere marvels
that attract children.

December 1883
Adyar, Madras

"It is just wonderful here.
What air! What nights! The moon appears twice
its size and 10 times brighter
than your European little mother of pearl."

A Headquarters is established, a notable library
of Buddhist and Hindu texts
in Pali and Sanskrit "to revive the original
traditions in Ceylon and India".
(17,000 manuscripts and 160,000 books)

She is seated in a chair
surrounded by a group of her admirers —
"A pair of flowing but terrible eyes
A woman in body, a man in speech
Earthly in appearance
Celestial in reality."

She travels with the Colonel to Paris, then London.

Her health is not good, but she is greeted, acknowledged!

An acolyte is told in a letter from 'The Master'

"Appearances go a long way with Europeans.

When Madame B arrives, receive her as though you were
in India, and she your own mother. You must STUN them.

You must salute her on seeing her,

and salute her on leaving her.

THIS IS A TEST!"

Poor Madame is accused of occult trickery by ungrateful
employees, but is redeemed. The scandal makes
the Theosophists even more well known and read all over
the world. Two hundred centers.

With failing health, she resigns from office —

"My loving farewell. And have regard
for the welfare of mankind and your own Karma.
Be true to the Society, and do not permit it to be
overthrown by the enemy.
The blood of martyrs is the seed of Theosophy!"

She returns to the continent and almost dies.

But! she recovers and returns to London to cement the Society
together. A new magazine. "Lucifer the Light Bringer"

And she writes writes writes everyday —

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

The 'Great Masters', Krishna, Zoroaster, Buddha, Sankaracharya,
and the Nazarene, Jesus. The lodges of 'Adepts' all over
the place linking God and Man. But remember
we are all One in our common humanity. Good night.

"The most perfect aristocrat I have ever known."

It is 1887. Madame is 56 years old.

She gives advice to a young man:

"Lead the most regular life you can—
Going to bed early rather than late.
HARMONY will have a strong influence
on the physiological portion of your system.
HARMONY, bathe your very soul in it."

And in an interview:

"Madame, what is the most important thing
necessary in the study of Theosophy?
Common sense my dear.

And what is second?
A sense of humor.

And third, Madame?
Oh, just MORE common sense!"

The famous Seer Sphinx photo of Madame is taken
No posing for her. She enters the studio, sits down
immediately at a small table,
puts her hand in her pocket, rolls a cigarette,
and faces the camera.
Many thousand copies are printed.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE
is published in two volumes
"The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy"

And who is going to review this extraordinary tome,
THE SECRET DOCTRINE, now no longer secret?

A new heavy enters the scene —

Annie Besant
free thinker, feminist, teacher, author, editor
orator of compelling power, strike leader,
union organizer.

But she needs more spiritual truth!
She joins the Society.
The news is received with up-in-arms astonishment
throughout England. Many times
she makes the speech "Why I Became a Theosophist".
Mahatma Gandhi hears her, is impressed.

"What a whole hearted noble and wonderful woman she is"
writes Madame B.

The voice is passed on

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

"The voice unbroken
that resounds throughout eternities
exempt from Change
is the voice of the Silence!"

— Soul wisdom not head learning.

"Take my home, you need a bigger place" offers Annie Besant
to Madame B and the Society.

Breakfast at 8. Work until lunch.

Work until dinner.

And then talk in Madame's room

until midnight

receiving instructions

explaining 'knotty' points.

Madame never leaves the house.

She is ill.

"Oh Madame are you leaving us?"

Yes, she has left us.

May 8, 1891

Her last message, "Isabel, Isabel,
keep the link unbroken.

Do not let my last incarnation
be a failure."

In Russia, her Aunt Nadya looks at her hand —

"You know the ring she sent me from India?
A light colored agate? It became dark like coal.
I washed and cleaned and rubbed it to no avail.
After Helen's death it gradually lightened
and returned to its clear transparency."

There is a terrible crashing sound.

The organ near her portrait
begins to play suddenly
by itself.

Aunt Catherine gazes fixedly —

"I see her! There she is!"

— the wraith

clad in white with great white flowers on her head
Exactly as she was laid out
in her coffin.

This was her farewell to earth.

She is cremated on a grey day.

One third of her ashes to Adyar in India.

One third to New York

One third to London

"She hath that overflow of soul which falls to the few."

But of course

this is not the end.

Oh no.

The source for much of the material used in this piece
is from "HPB. The Extraordinary Life and Influence
of Helen Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern
Theosophical Movement."
by Sylvia Cranston.
Jeremy P. Tarcher / Putnam N.Y. 1993

11:11:98

Paul -

Nice to speak last night.

Here's Lady Helena.

Enjoy visit with lady
Joanne. Tell her

I adore her.

A

