

LET ME TELL YOU

Let me tell you a tale, not so old, about a homeless woman and her extraordinary, unbelievable purpose in living—I think. Maybe.



I was in San Francisco to study hands-on healing—airy fairey stuff that's quite real to me—when I first saw the ancient woman.

Between the trolley and the wharf, crippled and hunchbacked, bloody rags wrapped around her feet, she huddled on the sidewalk. Gray scraggly hair fringed her leather face and bleary eyes.

“Strange,” I thought. “No cup. No open hat. Poor thing.” And I hurried away from her stench, pretending I hadn't seen her, for the homeless are legion in the City of St. Francis.

She came to my attention again, sleeping on the grass beneath a tree, yellow newspaper rolled up for a pillow. Filthy towel for a blanket. Again, no begging cup in sight. Looking at her, I felt like I needed a shower.

Then, a week later, I saw her sitting cross-legged on the cement beside the diner where I had breakfast. When I left, I put a grilled cheese sandwich on her lap.

She looked up. Her clear, steel gray eyes seared through me like I was hot butter. Then they went bleary just as quickly, became watery, and she gave me a reluctant, snaggle-tooth grin. Strange, I thought.

My advanced healing class was going well, and I was getting amazing results. People returned to me for more treatment, over and over again. My greatest challenge was to avoid pridefulness, for I was told that I was not the one doing the healing. I was only a channel for higher energies, an invisible process that's difficult to believe, but I kept on trying to think: “It's not me. It's not me.”

Late one evening, after working on a particularly difficult series of infirmities, I found the old woman sitting on the curb outside my hotel door. By now, I was accustomed to her sudden appearances and gave her the money I had prepared. Yet, she seemed disgusted by my charity. I shrugged and vowed to ignore her in the future.

After receiving my hard-earned certification as an Ordained Doctor of Spiritual Healing, I took a last stroll through Golden Gate Park. The beauty by the bay is quite different from the Arizona landscape, and I thought to enjoy my last moments.

Then I noticed her, not far from the road, on the grass, cramped in a fetal position. Still as death, between deep shudders. She uttered no complaint or cry, though she was obviously suffering great pain. I hurried to her with my extraordinary new skills, honed and ready to heal whatever ailed her.

First, send Light through her crown to fill her whole body. Okay.
Then, focus on my 3rd eye and intensify the light passing into her. Okay.
Now, stream the intention to heal on a great wave of Heart-Love. Okay.
Now, intensify the flow of Light and Love to fill all her cells and extend beyond.

Kneeling over her, hands on her head and back, I concentrated the channeled Light and held its steady stream through her. The early crickets serenaded in the silence of dusk, and tree frogs chirped in tune to their symphony. Somewhere distant, a horn honked. I took a deep breath of sweet ocean air and doubled my effort.

“Stop that!” the old woman bellowed. “You don’t know what you’re doing!”

I jerked my scalded hands away and landed on my butt. Her anger seared away my effort to *serve* and *bless*. “What do you mean? I’m healing you!” *Ungrateful wretch*, I thought.

“No,” she mumbled. “Interfering,” and fell into a coma.

I called EMS. They said it wasn’t her first time. Her street name was Witch Woman, and the homeless swore she was a healer. Except sometimes, she’d look right through a body that had fever, chills, and was vomiting. Then she’d mutter, “No healing for that one,” and she’d walk away and leave them. Cold. Just like that.

The EMS lifted her onto the gurney.
Weird woman, they said. *No compassion*, they said.

“If somebody is sick, you heal them, no question about it,” I said.
They all agreed, and shoved her into the ambulance.

The waning siren played background for her words pounding in my mind.
You don’t know what you’re doing. You don’t know what you’re doing.

Maybe I didn’t.

That’s the day I stopped being a healer.

Never saw her again in the flesh, but years later something gave me an inner nudge to look into the mystery of “not healing.”

I found out Masters of Compassion often volunteer to return.

They take a human form in order to bear the brunt of illnesses, disease, trauma, and poverty. Seems *They* can ease some human pain and suffering, to give mankind some relief, to dissolve a little karma.

Must have been the case with Witch Woman, because I still haven't recovered from her "Stop that" smashing into my heart. Her voice had sliced me to the core and withered any trace of pride hiding inside. Split me clean away from who, or maybe what, I thought I was.

Not a healer, for sure. Can't even get my mind around all the possibilities of "not healing" actually being a greater "healing."

Way too complicated for my brain. She had shriveled my arrogance into ashes. How could I have ever thought I knew what each person required? How could I?

I may be gnawing on this humble bone for several lifetimes.

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