

# The Master and The Disciple - A Short Story

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When one Guru was dying, one of his disciple asked him "Guruji, who was your master?" He said, "I had thousands of masters. If I just relate their names it will take months, years and it is too late. But three masters I will certainly tell you about.

One was a thief. Once I got lost in the desert, and when I reached a village it was very late, everything was closed. But at last I found one man who was trying to make a hole in the wall of a house. I asked him where I could stay and he said 'At this time of night it will be difficult, but you can stay with me - if you can stay with a thief'. And the man was so beautiful. I stayed for one month! And each night he would say to me, 'Now I am going to my work. You rest, you pray.' When he came back I would ask 'Could you get anything?' He would say, 'Not tonight. But tomorrow I will try again, God willing.' He was never in a state of hopelessness, he was always happy.

When I was meditating and meditating for years on end and nothing was happening, many times the moment came when I was so desperate, so hopeless, that I thought to stop all this nonsense. And suddenly I would remember the thief who would say every night, 'God willing, tomorrow it is going to happen.'

And my second master was a dog. I was going to the river, thirsty and a dog came. He was also thirsty. He looked into the river, he saw another dog there - his own image - and became afraid. He would bark and run away, but his thirst was so much that he would come back. Finally, despite his fear, he just jumped into the water, and the image disappeared. And I knew that a message had come to me from God: one has to jump in spite of all fears.

And the third master was a small child. I entered a town and a child was carrying a lit candle. He was going to the mosque to put the candle there.

'Just joking,' I asked the boy, 'Have you lit the candle yourself?' He said, 'Yes sir.' And I asked, 'There was a moment when the candle was unlit, then there was a moment when the candle was lit. Can you show me the source from which the light came?' And the boy laughed, blew out the candle, and said, 'Now you have seen the light going. Where has it gone? You will tell me!'

My ego was shattered, my whole knowledge was shattered. And that moment I felt my own stupidity. Since then I dropped all my knowledgeability.

It is true that I had no master. That does not mean that I was not a disciple - I accepted the whole existence as my master. My Disciplehood was a greater involvement than yours is. I trusted the clouds, the trees. I trusted existence as such. I had no master because I had millions of masters I learned from every possible source. To be a disciple is a must on the path. What does it mean to be a disciple? It means to be able to learn. To be available to learn to be vulnerable to existence. With a master you start learning to learn.

"The master is a swimming pool where you can learn how to swim. Once you have learned, all the oceans are yours."