

# RAMA AND THE GOLDEN CORD

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*One fine San Francisco day in 1974, a very large, very black woman stepped onto a street. Swathed in bright colors, fingers circled in rings, a single small diamond piercing the side of one nostril, Rama stood there sure, stable, grounded.*

*She stuck out her thumb.*

*A pale white man in a big old car slowed, stopped. Rama glided over and opened the door, "You want a ride downtown?" he yelled. "Yes," she said, "thank you." Royally, with great deliberation, Rama placed herself into the front seat, closed the door, and folded her hands in her lap.*

*The pale white man is nervous. Why he picked up this exotic creature, he'll never know. He's not the kind to pick up hitchhikers. But there she was, black as night, dressed like a figure from some ancient legend, feet apart, her center of gravity a plumb line to the center of the earth. Before he knew it, his foot had gone off the gas and slammed on the brake. Oops!*

*The sun, shone bright on blue waters circling the city. Seagulls circled through low swift wisps of fog. They drove into the morning through choked streets.*

*"Nice day, huh?" he said, glancing at her, nervous. Rama nodded, perfunctory.*

*Rama sat stately, silent. The man glanced over at her again. "You know," he said, cocking his head at the abandoned gas station they were passing, "I used to manage a gas station, and then they had to close it down. Not enough gas, they said. But I don't believe it. They're making it up, trying to squeeze out the little guy, to make more profit for themselves."*

*Rama ignores him. He doesn't mind. He just needs somebody to talk at. He feels so uneasy, nervous — and not just because Rama's in his car.*

*Only a month ago things were going fine. Then all hell broke loose. "They" call it a world-wide oil shortage — and now he is out of a job.*

*Oil shortages were the first visible manifestation of what quickly became known as "the energy crisis." And everybody was talking about. It.*

*The energy crisis had replaced idle chatter about the weather. Something had changed, and he didn't like it. It didn't feel good. It felt ominous.*

*Both his life and his values were being altered by this mysterious spy thriller called "international events" — involving politics, economics, and God only knows what else. All he knows is, now he's out of a job and blaming the other guy, feeling sorry for himself. Rama, he assumes, will offer him sympathy. Or at least lend a willing ear.*

*Instead, she swivels her head, catches his eye, and says, her voice deep, resounding, "The energy crisis? HA!"*

*"The energy crisis, my friend, is in us!" she thundered, pounding her fist on her chest.*

This story is true, and so are Rama's words. They are words which might have gone unsaid, so closed were the ears to hear them.

Thirteen years have passed since that fine October day, years in which our homeland, the American West is being transformed into an energy colony for national and international corporate Interests. Powers which we have given our power to. Power which they sell back to us in the form of gas and other "goods" — at ever inflated prices.

Thirteen years ago, we discovered the world's resources were limited, and we've been grabbing what we can while it lasts ever since. This is not surprising. This is a further development of trends begun long ago.

For hundreds of years now — or is it thousands? — we've looked to the outside world, to the world of material bodies (including our own bodies) to provide us with the good life, however we see it.

As more and more waves of souls incarnated during this century, most of them carrying on the individualistic and materialistic values of their forefathers, there has become less and less room in which to practice these values without conflict. The world has begun to shrink in our collective imagination. The energy crisis of 1972 made it official.

This is the real cause of inflation. As long as we imagine our world is shrinking, we grow afraid. Afraid there's not enough to go around. Afraid the other guy will take what we've got, or get what we want before we do. Inflation would be unheard of in a world where money and other resources were not hoarded and used for selfish ends.

We forget we are rich already. We forget that as the physical world shrinks in our imaginations, so can our mental and spiritual worlds expand indefinitely. External riches are symbols for this inner creative power.

We created the value system which engendered the current state of the world. And if we created the world as we see it now, then we are also responsible for its transformation.

Henry Ford, working long and hard, succeeded in projecting his imagined reality out onto the physical world. He imagined the automobile and presto, there it was! This was wonderful! Now we could go wherever we wanted by mechanical means. Roads soon crisscrossed earth, paved roads, cutting up farms and so on and on to the interstate highway system — flat, straight as an arrow, ignoring the curves of the land.

The gas crisis in 1972 was the latest development of our long reliance on mechanical transportation — and its human and global side effects.

The seed of our current unease was planted long ago by a single individual, and its consequences — both good and bad — reverberate round the globe. The idea of a single individual revolutionized the culture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Or was it Edison with his light bulb, or Tesla with his alternating current? Or was it Einstein's magic formula? Each of these individuals affected worldwide change through his persistence in following through with a dream. A vision of an alternative. An imagined future.

Where are our Fords, our Teslas, our Einsteins now? Where are those creative individuals who realize the link between their dreams and the realities those dreams make possible?

The creative person knows how much more real is his or her dream than any of its flawed material reflections. He/she knows that any transformation in the external world depends first on inner transformation within at least one human being.

This person knows that to function creatively is to tap into something far greater than the small personal self. That indeed, his or her personality is merely an instrument for that greater Self in which we all, if we only knew it, move and live and have our being.

It is time to remember ourselves, time to put ourselves back together again, body, mind and spirit. Our bodies and our minds, rightly used, are servants to the spirit, and it is in the spirit that our future today, takes hold.

The pale white man who picked up Rama is not, obviously, functioning creatively. Transfixed by reflections, he looks to the outside world for both cause and solution to his problems. Rather than acting from his inner spiritual direction, he is reacting to manifold outside circumstances. He has no center, no plumb line to the ground, and so fails to realize the link between his own nature and Mother Nature, fails to realize that the same spiritual laws govern both the individual and the planet.

Earth is our Mother, how could we have neglected her for so long?

And what will it take to right the balance?

Any alternative future is possible. All of them lead to unity of some kind, *what we will all either enjoy or suffer*. The question is, do we want to take a conscious part in the process of our own evolution or not? If we want to — if we have the passion, the intensity of purpose — then, literally, anything we imagine we will get.

Yes, friends, the energy crisis *is* in us, and the energy to overcome it is within us, too. This is first, this is primary. The inner world is where things start. Transformation within the outer world will follow upon human transformation, as effect follows cause, one byproduct of a certain inner process. We have put the lid on our own energies, burying our quest for meaning, purpose, value. We have ignored our insight, and forgotten our origins.

What human purpose is served when a young man works twice as hard as other Americans in the oil fields exposing himself to a dangerous, stressful environment — and on his days off he is used up, he can't even relax within going on a binge. What purpose is served when some men serve other men's tools so totally that their very lives are bound to them?

What human purpose is served by women who are encouraged to identify with their own bodies as tools to get what they want in the world?

What human value is served by the pride and honor of nations who defend and enlarge their boundaries at the cost of human life?

What insight is served by mindlessness?

What origins are served when we ignore our roots, our common human ancestry, our divine discontent?

One of the signatures of our humanity is our ability to fashion tools. This use of our energy is, at root, both. Productive and protective. Tools refine and amplify the outer energy at our disposal. Tools protect and nourish the human race.

This tool-making ability stems from our creative energy. In order to make a tool, we must first be able to imagine it. Whatever man imagines, nature will provide.

Once a tool is fashioned and put to use, there is set in motion a reverberatory effect in its atmosphere. We shape our tools initially. They, in turn, help shape us. Had Galileo not been looking through a telescope, he may not have posed the fateful question.

Throughout human history, there has been this energy exchange between man and nature.

Man's imaginative energy — and his passion to see, in the world of material form what was originally only a vision, his willingness to work long hard hours to make that vision come true — is the umbilical cord linking inner to outer, our human nature with the mother nature. As long as that link is there, then all's right with our world.

Somewhere along the line, our energy exchange with nature became unbalanced. Rather than energy flowing back and forth between our inner and outer worlds, we've projected our inner energies out onto our tools. As a result, we feel empty inside, and look to our tools to provide us with life.

20<sup>th</sup> century man is now surrounded by the material forms he has created. These forms — ever proliferating — threaten to crowd us out of an already crowded world. (Indeed, this could happen. The neutron bomb kills people and other living things. It leaves their mechanical creations intact.) Moreover, they require great energy from us in their care, their consumption, their disposal.

Somewhere along the line we snapped the golden cord of our umbilicus. We forgot that it is we who first imagined these things, we who are responsible for their continued existence. Man, originally the master over the forms he created, is now their servant, mesmerized.

The right order of things has been disrupted. Our creations have taken on a life of their own. Once simple tools have evolved into machines, so huge, so complex, that we cower in front of them, we treat them like gods.

We have broken the golden cord, we have forgotten the source — that inexhaustible creative energy at our disposal. Indeed, we have, many of us, blocked our knowledge of our deeper selves, that wellspring, so utterly that we feel dead to ourselves, we no longer use that energy at all. Instead, we are manic.

As manic energy replaces creative energy, so does our need grow for more and more things — more gas, more “goods,” more money — to fill that inner void.

No longer in touch with our center, we have retreated to the periphery — gathering more and more things around us — in the vain hope that as the circumference enlarges, so will our lives be enriched. But it doesn't work.

But it's got to work. So we work harder to make it work, in order to get and spend more, more, more. Our outer trappings — full of symbolic importance — mask the richness of our buried inner lives.

Rather than search our inner selves, we search the ground for hidden wealth. And when we find it, we dig it out and sell it.

We disembowel our Mother, we suck her dry.

This, no doubt, is what Rama would say were she ever to visit the Deep West.

We suck out our mother's energy, hoping to discover our own, only we don't know it. All we know is we feel exhausted, depleted, hungry. And nothing satisfies.

One of the clinical signs of depression is exhaustion, the need to sleep many more hours than usual. “I simply have no energy,” depressed people will say.

(Compare clinical depression with national economic Depression.)

Another sign of depression is its opposite, mania. The mania of buying and selling, of maintaining and consuming “goods.”

And now it’s becoming harder and harder to do that. We need more and more money to get what we need. “Things are more and more expensive!” — another conversation replacing the weather.

So we sleep; or we sleep, awake, watching TV; or we work, frantic, to get enough, to get ahead; or we drink, do drugs, party — all in a desperate attempt to distract ourselves from what lies ahead. To escape that nagging fear, its clock ticking away, counting the days, the hours; counting down.

Count down to one.

Boom goes the gun.

Well done, son.

Tick tock goes the clock. The missiles aimed at Russia and the United States are set to go off with one flip of the switch. We have projected our inner power out into those projectiles so precisely and with such mastery that we decide the fate of humankind with one false move.

Our weapons, originally designed to protect us from animal predators, and to nourish us with animal food, now threaten to annihilate their designers. Jekyll has produced Hyde. The idea that nuclear weapons “protect” us is a monstrous parody.

“The bomb is inside me,” I once heard one small child say. And she was right. There is a tick-tocking inside us all, and it’s not just our synchronized heart-beat. Remember, the “coeur” (heart) is naturally *cour*-ageous: *our beating hearts link us to one another — so deeply, invisibly, and thoroughly that our minds don’t even need to know it!*

How many of us stop our mental projections long enough to hear our own hearts beat?

And who besides mothers hear our unborn children’s heartbeats? Young hearts, strong hearts, they are meant to beat for a very long time.

Our children are longing to stand on the same ground we do, to have it nourish them — and their children’s children, too.

How much can we remove from our Mother before her good ground collapses out from under us?

How long will it take, once the missiles are launched, for that ground to again grow green and lush with food?

But we don't like to ask those questions. We shy away from them, concerned only with now, right now. Forget tomorrow. Forget our children. Life's too short to worry about what we can't control.

Too short, indeed.

Dazed, distracted, we have lulled ourselves into oblivion. Sheep, asleep, we have allowed ourselves to step to the brink of the abyss — and we grow fascinated, bewitched by its deep darkness.

Between our manic energy and our creative energy lies another abyss, as deep and as dark as the nuclear one. It takes courage to dip down into it, courage to pass through the dark night of the soul.

Everything has its price. There's no free lunch. Each rebirth. Is preceded by a kind of death.

Which death do we choose? The death of our illusions about ourselves and our capacity for miracles, or the death of all but a remnant of our species.

[expand above paragraphs?]

This is our choice. This is our responsibility.

Many souls are awakening to themselves now, their purpose, their insight, their origins, their values. They are coming alive, deciding to participate in the accelerating evolutionary tide.

(How many? How many will it require to reach critical mass, that quantum leap?)

Other souls are leaving earth now, or they will be soon, voluntarily — through accident, disease, or disaster.

The countdown has begun.

On the other hand, there is a sort of quickening everywhere, a new sun shining, circling each of our heads, yes; there is a new wind a'blowin' over this desert land.

For now this wind is invisible. It flutters our hearts. We quicken, awaken. Soon, if all goes well, we will begin to manifest new forms, new projection systems, created from our imagination, our passion, vowing never again to forget our connection with the source, our inner nature, one with Mother Nature, part of the same stream.

On the other hand, there is also growing a sort of inchoate, yet global longing for mass suicide now, much like the People's Temple in Guyana some years ago, only for us there is no Jim Jones to point the finger to, no one to blame.

We are all responsible for our own projection systems.

We are all responsible for those deadly projectiles, phallic symbols for lost virility, forgotten courage.

We are all responsible for the assumptions we hold about both ourselves and our relations to the world around us. As we think, so we do.

Most people think they are powerless, impotent. That nations are responsible for wars, not them. They have yet to empower themselves.

Rama, however, was powerful. This African Queen got a ride hitchhiking in America!

Rama assumed she would get a ride.

So she did.