

4. Mum

The plane lands in Girona, Spain. It's already dark outside. I have my backpack with me, a tent, a sleeping bag and water. Somehow life is difficult and at the same time very easy when you don't have any wishes or hope just because nothing matters. It all does not make a difference. So I am in Spain, standing at Girona Airport in the middle of the night. I can't speak any Spanish. My English is so bad that I am hardly able to introduce myself and I feel totally calm. I have nothing to lose. I do not care about my life. The night is cold and clear. I have no place to sleep for the night, no orientation, nothing. For some time, I just stand there – the last people leave the airport. Cars go in different directions. I am near the last lights waiting for whatever. Suddenly something is happening inside of me. Something I have not felt for weeks. A wish coming up from deep inside: I would like to see the sea! My inner system comes to life. There is something to do. Something to reach. There is a direction. I want to reach San Feliu and look at the sea! I look around. There is no bus (well, no wonder, it is in the middle of the night) and I have no money for a taxi so I search for a street sign. Great! San Feliu: 30 km – if I start walking now, I will reach the sea in the morning! So I just start walking.

10km later I already feel quite exhausted. My backpack is getting heavier with every step I take. I could stop, sleep here and continue my walk in the morning. But I can't. After such a long time I feel a wish inside myself! So I keep walking. Everything is dark around me except some stars glimmering softly above me. Inside myself I start to speak:

“Spirits, whoever or whatever is around me now, I need your help. Please help me to reach the sea! I need to get there!”

I keep on walking through the night when suddenly a car appears and stops right beside me. My first impulse is to jump into the next bush but there are none. As soon as I have calmed down and am able to feel, I realise that it does not feel dangerous. It feels totally safe. The driver rolls down the win-

dow. He speaks Spanish and I have no idea what he says but he understands that I am trying to reach San Feliu. I think it is not really his direction but he asks me to get in. I must be totally crazy to do this: I am a woman, I am alone, nobody knows that I am here, it is the middle of the night, and I do not know this man. I get into his car. There is nothing we could say to each other, no words to share but we both smile at each other and he starts the engine.

20km later I stand at the beach of San Feliu in the early morning, looking at the sea. I smell the sea, listen to the soft waves gently touching the sand. For a long time I just stand there and for the first time in months there is something like peace coming up.

I spend the rest of the night between two walls near the port in my sleeping bag.

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The contrast probably could not be bigger. I, the woman with the green hair, who had just slept between two walls the nights before, now find myself in the big workshop room of a four-star hotel. Everything is clean, clear and peaceful. Even the chairs are wearing sweet dresses. I feel a little bit like an alien, like the English man in New York. More and more people enter the room and I am glad when I realise that there are many people from different countries whose mother tongue is neither English nor Spanish. When all participants have arrived we are around 80 people. I feel quite comfortable among them and as long as nobody pays attention to me, I can imagine being invisible. Invisible I can be a part of this community. I feel safe. I can be here and nobody expects anything from me.

At the first Holotropic Breathwork session my world shifts. Half of the workshop participants are lying on mattresses while the others care for them. When the music starts half of the people in the room go mad. I lie on my mattress, leave everything behind: my thoughts, beliefs and perceptions. There is nothing left inside me that is worthy enough to be protected.

I can feel this big dark cloud again. But I do not need to run away anymore. I am not even afraid of it. Fear is something someone who has something to lose feels. But I do not have anything to lose. I do not care about living or dying anymore. I feel the deep pain in my chest, I feel like I am being torn into pieces and I scream and cry, cry, cry till my voice gets weaker and weaker. I am a baby and someone touches me. I have no idea who it is but whoever it might be, it feels warm. My mother. No, it can't be mother. The attention she gives me. The love. My mother never felt like this. It is a facilitator from the workshop. It is Elara. Her warmth. It feels like something I have missed my whole life. This kind of warmth. But I can't reach her. It is too late. I am too exhausted. And I don't know her. And I will not trust her. No! I will never trust anyone again. Never. It is much too late. I have given up long before. I am going to die. I am lost. She can go... No, the truth is: I want her to stay. Even if I am not going to trust her, I maybe can take her warmth for this one moment, knowing that there is nothing that can help me anymore. Knowing that it is just this short, little moment till she will leave me again and I will die. The only time that exists is the moment. And after that she will be gone. Elara is near but I cannot allow her to reach me. I wear protection, an armour made of metal. I wish I could let her touch me... No! It is better if she does not reach me... It feels like she is listening carefully to me. It feels like she loves me... But no! I will not make this mistake again to trust her. I am not going to trust any human anymore. She will leave me alone. It is important not to trust her. What she does is not real. It is a game. And if she is tired of that game she will throw me away. Like people do with all things they have. They use them. And if things do not work anymore the way they want them to work, then they just throw them into the next dustbin. I do not want to be thrown away. Not again. I won't trust her. I hear her voice. I feel thin and like I am starving. Like my body is only these thin bones and a little skin around them. I am a baby. I will not be able to survive. I am too hungry. I am too thin. It is over. My mother came back too late. But now Elara is here. She is sitting there at a short dis-

tance. Her voice is touching the metal around me. I cannot reach her and she cannot reach me. I feel warmth in the tones she is singing. She is waiting for me as if she had all the time of the world. She does not want anything from me. She does not want to use me. I hear her singing with the music. These tones are stroking my pain inside. Carefully I open up to her. I answer her. I want to sing with her. The tones we are singing are flowing into each other. It is not over yet.

Later I sit on my mattress stroking my legs. What is so bad about me and my body? I feel as if I wanted to get away from my legs and the lower part of my body. What is wrong with me? Why have I been treated so badly?

When I try to come back from the experience into the Breathwork room somewhere in Spain, I realise that there is no coming back. It is not possible to come back. I think of my little room-cave at home. Even if I have no chance to survive, I don't want to die alone somewhere in a little room. Suddenly there is no difference between the inside and the outside anymore. All masks have disappeared.

“If you want to talk, let me know”, says Elara to me at the next day during the lectures. Now that the session is over I cannot feel her anymore. I can only see her. And she is not my mother. She is a facilitator. I don't want to talk to anyone. What for? Who is she? She somehow seems to be distant. I do not know her. Why should I talk to her? And what should I tell her? I do not feel like I have anything to say. The moment when she touched my heart is over and will never come back.

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We have lectures and I try to follow the theory. But I am unable to concentrate. I just feel so full of despair and I cannot hold back my tears. I don't like crying in front of other people, so I leave the room to search for a place where I am alone. I want to go into the mandala room. I like it. I like the colours. It feels good to concentrate on something and every time I look on my paper I look into a mirror. While I am on my way

to the mandala room, I get aware that probably all the facilitators are having a meeting in that room right now. So I change direction and go to the sea instead. I sit down on a wall at the seafront and cry. I watch the waves. Looking at the sea calms me down as if the waves were cradling me. In Germany it had still been so cold. Here the sun is shining. I can feel it on my skin. I need warmth. And I need to find a solution to how to go on in my life. I wish I had an idea. Or a direction. I let my mind wander to the sand tray I made this morning in the mandala room. I just put some toy animals in there and suddenly I felt deeply touched. There was something it wanted to tell me. Something that has to do with my sessions and with my life. There were two geckos. One is me but it seems that I am not alone. And there is the skull of an animal. It is the big dark cloud. The constellation wants to send me a message. But I do not get it. I decide to look at it again. I am completely lost in my thoughts when I go to the mandala room once more. Some steps before I reach it, I suddenly stop. I remember that maybe all the facilitators are sitting in this room. I can't just go in there and look at my sand tray. I try to look through the windows to find out if there is someone inside the mandala room or not but the curtains are closed.

“Alright – it’s up to you, fate!” I say, “I’ll go in there now and if no one is there, I can just take my time and look at my sand tray for a while, but if my worries are true and the facilitators are in this room, then I am going to talk with Elara.”

I grab all my courage together and open the door “please, let this room be empty”, I pray.