

Meaning of Life



Roditch

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A short and bright story

This tiny but true book is dedicated to
Filmmaker Cecelia Hedditch

‘The bright and shining light in my life’

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The journey from Warrnambool to Melbourne, then to the outer suburbs with Francis to meet Nikki was peaceful. I had survived my first 12 hours with Francis in the city. As usual, I had little foreplay by explanation from Francis as I stepped through what appeared to be a dance hall door, but was really a passage into another dimension, another world; one that was completely foreign to me.

The room was being pumped full of bush music. The band was happily sending out jigs to a meagre audience. I also played in a bush band with Francis. Fiddle tunes and polkas felt very familiar and made me feel at ease. By the time we had crossed the dance floor to meet Francis's true love lost, Nikki, I was full of happy countenance. Her smile in the introduction went straight to my heart. Never had I encountered such an instant loving response: I loved this woman. Her inner beauty shined through her body, straight through her clothes, rays of light piercing my inner darkness; illuminating me like a street light. Joy was overcoming me, my whole being seemed to vibrate with hers. I was lost in time and space, which was to become a common experience; a sort of norm compared to found in space, where my mind still had its bearings.

This feeling of incredible joy, peace and love in the presence of an angel felt better than anything in my life before. Even though I was falling in love with the woman this was a divine encounter. I had met God, appearing as a fairy-like creature, long black hair, pointy chin and thin, sitting at a mixing desk, keeping the bush band in harmony.

Memories become a little blurry as my mind then, was lost in this world of hearts. I have no clear recollection of how long it took for her love to fill my tank with high octane, low lead love drops. This was the beginning of what I was searching for all my life. It was Francis and many joints that had led me here to a place where drugs were like matchsticks in a bushfire. This was no momentary escape, I had arrived. It was only natural that I mistook this universal love for personal love and attraction, I was falling in love with the holder of the light, and the light itself. It was so easy to be attracted to a person who is so joyful and blissed out.

The spell was partly broken when Francis wanted to move on to another destination. He arranged with Nikki and her boyfriend to meet them at his house at Kangaroo Ground after they finished their gig. We both left the hall feeling good. Francis was in love with Nikki too. They had a fling two years ago and have stayed in touch since. When they split, Francis characteristically didn't agree. He followed her to Mexico and caught her and a friend in skin contact on a beach. Ownership in relationships is a big problem for partners who are sold out.

The scene outside the car was unfamiliar, an endlessness, like a desert, everything looked the same, corridors crossing more corridors with boxes filling in the spaces. While we were driving down them my mind was in Mexico trying to capture the expression on his face; the surprise at finding he was out to lunch, while Nikki was eating raw flesh.

Both scenes inside and outside the car had a lot in common: they didn't seem the slightest bit real or possible. Once touched by God, humanity seems a little off-key, missing a few sharps, imperfection, all playing but no-one winning. Life was too absurd to contemplate without a higher force or intelligence to place ourselves on a pedestal above and out of the muck. At this moment my mind has a pleasant rambling relaxing feel like it's me thinking not my mind; somehow I had become the programmer, not the disc. Could this be heaven, a place where love conquers two million idle thoughts and erases memory with no un-delete? All this free space inside my head was the prelude to bliss. For once in my life, I had faith and didn't have to rely on my mind planning everything to keep me from all those unforeseen unknowables in life. I'm not sure as usual how we got to Nikki's and Marshall's that night, but remember well, the reception when we arrived.

The mud-brick house set on the side of a hill outside Eltham in the bush was a beautiful sight. No more endlessness; here the journey through corridors ended, this was nature and I love her dearly.

Before moving to Warrnambool I had lived near Castlemaine in a two-storey house I had built out of second-hand bricks and timber. The house in Castlemaine was set on the edge of a 40' deep dry creek one side and surrounded by forest. It was hard leaving this place and moving to Killarney, a potato growing area 10 k's out of Warrnambool

to join a bush band. There were few trees, it was a green, potato leafy desert with a view of the ocean from the house.

Arriving at their house at night was expectant, the beautiful warm red-yellow glow from the windows contrasted with the deep dark bluey-green of the surrounding forest. Like a moth, I was attracted to the light this place was emitting. Pulled closer and closer by the desire for more of what these people had: I wanted some. Here were two people who had received the bounty of the universe; they were living in God's love they were free of their obvious limitation: their humanity.

The warm yellow glow leaking outside on our arrival was to symbolize the radiance of Marshall and Nikki. Marshall built the house out of mud brick and natural timber with large living areas divided by furniture and objects he has collected. This was a real house, not a box but a home, made from friendly familiar unpasteurized materials. With this type of house, you think the bank manager had a hard day at the office trying to sell lifetime nooses for your everyday geoses. The Flexi teller machine has no menu for: do it yourself. I had come to the city and found the bush, all this reminded me of life before Warrnambool, the Castlemaine days. I felt suddenly that Warrnambool had been more barren than I thought. That I had an affinity with the forest, it represented life to me, a voice calling from the mist: spirits of the land.

A book by Michael Roades had changed my perceptions forever. He was an English pig farmer turned aboriginal who could talk about the dreaming in white fella talk. The recognition of nature being alive and intelligent like we are, sometimes. Somehow, the trees connect to a higher intelligence more capably than us two-legged folk, especially us white ones. The intelligence, that is in all that is created and uncreated—must wonder why white skin means thick ears—so often.

Once your eyes and heart are opened these silent sentinels with Whitely haircuts are speaking to us if you listen. The forest felt warm and friendly and so did Marshall and Nikki; the bush attracts its own kind and here we all were. Francis stayed for a short while and looked as if he was arranging my future putting me in the hands of his friends. I needed a cure and they held it. With beaming faces, like kids who had a very special secret hiding place and were offering to take me there.

Francis left me for the night and arranged to meet me at his brother's (Ollie) hairdressers in South Yarra the next day. Had he already visited the hiding place before or was he afraid that this place may hold untold mysteries that once understood there would be no turning back? Either way, he left me with Marshall and Nikki to concentrate on solo. The three of us huddled up in the lounge room and bade goodbye to Francis as he was leaving this perfect place and setting forth out of the womb and out, again, into the faceless corridors, womb hunting. I didn't mind

being left, it made me the centre of attention. Nikki and Marshall were happy and stayed happy because I was getting happy.

The night progressed as if charted by a glow chart going off the scale. Seven PM, 4 glows, Midnight 85 glows, Morning off the glow meter; facing Father Glow rising above the trees. Marshall was more pushy and conservative than Nikki. She was more of a presence, saying you can be me too. Marshall was only recently converted to glowdom and was still pulsing off and on depending on his minds travels.

Nikki emitted a steady stream of peace, love, patience, bliss and most of all she was beautiful. By 3 AM Marshall went to bed. Either he was sleepy or was tired of selling his newfound stuff to me and retired. Nikki and I stayed up all night. She was embroidering a button while continuing to talk about how good it was? I would not know how much I had changed under her spell until I got on the train later in the morning. She told me the button was for a friend of hers and that the pictures she painted in cotton thread were intuitive portraits that she gave everyone that had blown the glow meter.

A badge of success and arrival, a joyful colourful symbol of knowing her and her goddess. The badge she was doing had transformed into a night-blue sky dotted with stars, and a yellow moon shining a silvery path onto a dark blue ocean. Because of my readiness to accept what her heart was teaching me—my glow meter went off the end of the

scale—she presented me "a Moon ruled Cancerian" with the badge and said that during the night it had become mine. There was no mistaking this as the most important possession I have ever had. Twelve years after it was made it still sits beside my bed in a carved wooden box with 2 or 3 other precious pieces, all reminders of the time I saw the light.

After 10 hours inside the warm red/yellow womb, it was refreshing when Nikki and I went outside to watch the Sunrise. The Sun's rays pierced the blue-green haze of the landscape in gentle spear-like threads; sent from heaven, full of love and hope. The early morning sun beamed down and touched me like Nikki had all night. Were these two beacons of light love and warmth related? They seemed to be made out of the same stuff, the essence of life, the ultimate driving force behind everything. Turning from this haze piercing light I looked at how it fell softly on Nikki's pixie face: a mask of warmth, highlighting her eyes like a photographic spotlight. There was a homage expression, oblivious of my presence. I was witnessing a sacred ritual between my goddess and her source. This experience of worship was far distant from the constant drone of male robe and pulpit.

I had never felt good about the white man's church all my life and now I knew why. Here the connection with the divine was one to one, no pompous intermediary, acting out a part at a sin-stained pulpit (we are born in the image of God) holding back walls of doubt and uncertainty. In a sideways glance I had crossed the border between darkness and

light; a simple movement, one we can achieve easily, just turn sideways and there is another view of life: hidden.

Our fears prevent us from experiencing this view. Ye old devil Saturn does urge us to construct barriers preventing us experiencing the uncertainty of the unknown universe and Saturn also fears that once you merge with the whole universe you will lose touch with your important material world of identity and possessions. In the Western world, Saturn rules comfortably over all the technological city structured environments which contrast greatly with our natural environment where energies beyond Saturn reign supreme and beckon us to listen to their voice and experience their worlds.

The time had come to catch the train and head back into the city. Marshall had risen all chirpy and was happy to drive me to the station. It was early in the morning. The transition from Marshall and Nikki's was quick and painless. Somehow during the long night, I learnt how to speak their language and hear their tune. A conversion had taken place in the bush just near Eltham. I had welcomed their teachings and now some 12 hours later I was to leave the womb and go whence I came, with a skip in my step, clarity in my eye and faith in my heart.

After lots of hugging and beaming smiles, the train became the symbol of my new journey. The carriage had beautiful pressed metal everywhere and was occupied by myself and a young couple. This was

my first encounter with the other world and it appeared totally different. The actual volume of space in the carriage had increased fourfold just by looking at it with different perceptions. The young couple were probably only feet away yet appeared metres away in their own space and their own world and they looked incredibly happy.

The sun shining thru the windows of the train had an extra luminous glow, permeating every corner of the carriage, Nikki's love was following me in the form of light, a mystical ethereal light. From the moment Marshall had gone to bed and now, on my way into the city from Eltham I had been in a woman's company. The peace and relaxation of sensitive understanding and mutual feelings was joyous compared to Francis's mental confusion. I was musing at this loss, as the train of light softly and smoothly flew into the city to make a connection with him.

The mere thought of catching up with Francis was changing how I felt: the spell would weaken and lose its hold, each time I pictured the reunion with brother weed and the trip back to Warrnambool. Arriving at Flinders St. Station my perception of Melbourne had totally changed, no longer was I concentrating on the negative. The light which followed me from Eltham shined a golden yellow wash over everyone and everything; nothing was left untransformed.

I could see the light from heaven shining down on everyone; that they did not notice made no difference to the beauty of the scene. A remarkable change had taken place in a major way. I felt more confident and comfortable in my skin than ever before. There is no way I could ever be the same again. With so much talk of personal change, transformation and growth in the world these days, I was now living and breathing these words; feelings had replaced concepts and possible future events, I was in the now, which, was in me and it is a miraculous thing that God can totally transform you and open your mind through another, in one life-changing evening in the bush. It is the way of God to greet you through another just like electricity saturates water so does God transmit to the ready.

Uncomplicated feelings and perceptions. By opening myself to the love from Marshall and Nikki a crack appeared in my Saturnian armour and fear quietly slipped out ridding myself of 30 years of community and family influence, I was suddenly cured, and able to see the world through fresh eyes; eyes, that led straight to my heart which led to..... This is the greatest turning point for anyone; to feel yourself without any encumbrances. To know the freedom of an unpolluted mind, a septic tank, sucked dry to reveal the shining inner chamber. At no stage in my life have I felt more native and connected to all the beautiful natural energies around us, blue sky, shining sun, wafts of air laden oxygen and perfumed molecules floating past the very end of my

nostrils. This is it, the meaning of life is none, no ideas, no thoughts, no shit, no fear, no schedule, no money, no walls, no city, nothing. As all internal matter flows out so does the voice of nature and the universe flow in. All living energy is perched, waiting to be received, all we need to do, is to welcome these spirits of natural sources into our internal abode to take residence.

After I arrived at Central Station I got on the train to South Yarra which was more modern than Eltham's pressed metal rattler: more people and more silence. The elevator effect was in full force (the other passengers were unfriendly) until I got off at the wrong station with a lady in her 60,s. She was travelling to Prahran and got off one too early and I was off one too late, my reverie of past hours mixed with the silent elevator atmosphere had taken me to a different destination. This lady and I met on the platform at Toorak Station and instantly decided to combine both our mistakes into a shared solution. Let's share a taxi and get to South Yarra? no! we decided that was not the answer we could wait for the next train together because now we were kindred souls brought together by our untogether.

We walked back down into the station from the taxi rank and found a large wooden seat near the edge of the railway line. She looked at me with faraway close to you eyes, and I replied with something similar.

The first words spoken were about the embroidered brooch I was proudly wearing of the Moon over the sea that Nikki gave me. It was like a boy scout badge saying I had passed hobs in spiritual experiences; look everyone I am a graduate. This friendly lady's soul disappeared inside my brooch into the image of the sea and Moon taking her into the past; when she had a house by the sea with the same scene from her bedroom window every moonlit month.

I could see her going back in time in her mind, in her eyes. Somehow, the past was more than a distant memory of a past life it was though she was remembering a dimension of life sliced from her memory by some cataclysmal experience: an experience that I was part of right now. I stared, wondering if the same fate was coming my way. Will, I because of my past, change the future, will my ship change course and lose my bearings like her? The far distant shore behind me merging into the sea spray. Family and childhood disappearing over the horizon. Funny to think that we are both strangers sitting on a bench at Toorak station, but our minds were taking us somewhere else. The sea and Moon beckoned us and we were being pulled into the picture, leaving me to ponder what was the most powerful reality; the physical world or the realm of mental imagination?

The next train to South Yarra arrived. We sat together in a crowded carriage that had an overall blue theme, blue suits, blue seats, blue faces. I was back in a bubble, like before on the way to the city but this

time my lady friend was in it with me. We were more yellow. Our conversation became animated as we rocked along. We talked about many forgotten things, and I could not stop thinking about how everyone else in the carriage seemed dead. Blue for dead yellow for alive. The more animated we became the harder it was to detect any life or movement from the other people in the carriage: they were working so hard at being strangers. There was great comfort in being yellow, not blue, why couldn't we all be participating in our reverie and sharing the wonders of life together instead of committing life to the dustbin.

Maybe the day was already programmed blue; even before getting out of bed and yellow would only come about by accidental interaction with a spontaneous stranger; not before noon thank you.

I was more interested by now in my confident and joyous conversation in the blue train than what we were actually talking about. I think our lips moved? The journey from Toorak to South Yarra was quick because we were enjoying each other and slow because we were in a time warp. We managed to recognize the stop and departed from the train together.

Walking towards Toorak road my lady friend asked me if I was coming with her? All hell broke loose in my mind, I felt confronted. My first Libran experience in the past 24 hours. Will i go with her? Wherever

that was? Did she mean to continue this mental/ spiritual journey to its ultimate end quickly, or was it an invite home for tea and scones. I freaked out! This question left me rooted to the ground, as if I was being asked to let go of everything, Francis, Warrnambool, Pamela, and take a giant leap of faith. My mind was happy, it was back in total control. Indecision was its fuel, panic its slave and fear the engine. Finally, an answer came, "No, I am sorry" I said I would meet Francis at 3.30 at Zimmers Salon. Sorry but I can't meet my destiny right now I have an appointment with Francis instead. My new-found friend I met in the moon shining over the sea, bade me farewell and took off on her way as if she was happily meeting her maker, like me at 3.30, did she have a Francis in her life too? Waving goodbye, no exchanged phone numbers or addresses, just a look to say we will meet again, even if she isn't her self next time.

Walking happily hurriedly towards my familiar past, I knew I had lost in this parting and would, someday, have to meet the same intersection in life again, but that was okay it wasn't now, and right now, Familiar Francis, was looking good.

Francis's brother Michael (Ollie) worked at Zimmers, a rather trendy Toorak hair salon. It was a first time for me and even though I knew Ollie I felt very uncomfortable in body beautiful, especially after a night in the hills of Eltham communing heart to heart. Here I was hairdo to hairdo, with a Goddess inside the door to greet me. I knew I had been

enlightened this past night because I managed to squeak out the name Francis before I was completely beauty dumbstruck by the receptionist.

I was early, so Ollie with a wave of silver pointed scissors pointed to the back room where reality waited silently in the wings. While beauty born of hope gave birth to temporary youth, the fountain of life was resurrected. Before windswept pillows and restless dreams undid the magic web of spray and gossamer illusions. After sometime Ollie came out to see me with a friendly greeting to say Francis was not here. It has been a while since we have met; we looked into each other's eyes with a friendly familiarity born out of childhood surfing adventures together.

Francis finally arrived to rescue me from this intense and scary encounter. I was becoming too aware of the craziness of having to match my headspace with the rest of the world. There was so much love and peace in Eltham where had it all gone? These feelings have never left me in all this time.

Will there be another someone in the future who will take my soul for another joy ride? I need a cave, somewhere where I can call my feelings my own and hang onto the joy once found. There is so much talk about pollution, what about my mind? It has been a receptacle for environmental trash since sliding down that dark and slimy corridor into life. My mother was not an artist, she created me from her naive palette, a tidy neat attempt at colonial realism; here I am trapped and

glazed over and trying to free myself from a forgery and trying furtively to whip this tired canvas into my own infinite creation.

Nikki had scraped through this tired replica and exposed the clean canvas underneath: trying to escape to the surface. For a start I needed much more colour; quickly.... paint over this tired Hollywood realism..... broaden the canvas..... stretch it to breaking point and tip buckets of colour; flowing and merging right off the edge. Movement, release, I can see the picture transforming. No more hard-edged restrictions; letting my nose find its own borderline. I am now my own artist and my life will be my painting. I yell (silently) as the last parts of my mother's image disappear and die under a waterfall of colour.

The car is heading Westward over the Westgate Bridge back to the Western District we go. I am quietly wondering if Francis actually recognizes me anymore; after all, in his absence, I had switched paintings. With this thought in mind, I was able to smile again and feel less threatened. I still felt more peaceful than at any other time in my life because even though it felt like I was leaving God behind in the forest I knew he/she had given me a glimmer to cherish and foster for the next part of my journey into the light.

After getting home my life was quickly entangled again in personal relationships. Pamela was happy to see me but I felt the same confusion about how to love and be loved by another: as I always have.

Oh my God! this will follow me to my grave. How could I tell Pamela what had happened when words couldn't stand upright in my own thoughts. I settled back into life but would never stop thinking about Nikki... a dream across the oceans; the same as any woman would feel with their husband, lying in mud-filled trenches gazing at the Moon.

A beautiful woman and a God (Nikki) merged into one glowing sphere of longing would carry my thoughts to the sandman every night. One year later we would meet again and have an even closer relationship: she took me to Satsang. This Indian spiritual gathering would gather at night and new souls would sit and face everyone and talk about their experiences and they all were like Nikki: they blew my bliss meter off the scale, again and again. Their words were not words but some kind of alphabetic drug that misted from their mouth to my mind. I met a leader of the group this night and she asked me if I was ready and I said yes (ready for what? I thought) and then we left.

The next night we went to a party in the city and I was challenged to understand what was happening. I had no idea why I felt like I was the centre of attention and would be amazed at the feelings and impressions I would get from someone's gaze and would often hear their thoughts. Gentle communications of welcoming friendship but their mouths were closed while their minds spoke. They could hear my unprotected thoughts; I could hear theirs, not a sound. In a roomful of

strangers, I was experiencing telepathy, empathy and spiritual truths I had dreamt of knowing for eternities.

During the night I felt alright but my mind gave way to fears and worries and confusion which meant I took flight: I ran. I was scared because everyone was the same as Nikki and the energy was too powerful for even my ready heart – like being in a room with a 100 Monks. I ended up escaping and was alone and safe: from what? I slept in my car and the next day went back to get my shoes but I couldn't find the house. I spent days in Carlton lost between worlds, caught in a fracture of reality and timelessness kicking solar oranges in the grass.

I would eventually return to Warrnambool completely transformed but never again able to function like me, as I was before. This spiritual experience with Nikki and her Indian meditation group had unlocked me and I was unable to control what was happening. They left me to find my feet or drown, as there was absolutely nothing they could do. Many Buddhist Monks walk a lonely road in search of, or to hang onto enlightenment. From the day I left Melbourne after the second round of spiritual metamorphosis, I have felt like a monk walking on and off the road.

One night I sat and watched the full moon for hours and felt incredibly 'normal' and fell asleep. Then I woke up to a chanting ranting world and have felt incredibly alone ever since. Will it be like this to the end?

Yes! Unless I go back to where it all started and ask what really happened to my mind? How could I feel so much and yet know so little?

Many months later I walked for miles along the back roads of Warrnambool, through the town to an isolated beach surrounded by farms. It was a necessary escape from the maddening world of people. It is only now in my sixties I have met myself on a page that I call my best friend. A conundrum every day. Someone wants something from you and you feel unable to give it. This whole story is about one and one makes one. Whether I am one with everyone and feel like the world is my home and everyone in it my family -- but still alone within the script that keeps writing anew every day until I don't know what to say anymore: confusing.

Like, excuse me can you tell me the way to nirvana? Did Plato really have a full handle on everything? Is everything we know just another question? Ummm, do you know how to be happy? Tell me... how did you manage to manage yourself into this current state of being? Oh shut up keep drinking, have another smoke, go root some sheila get a life mate. Not a good idea, sorry I don't know the way: never did and never will. As a boy, I was blinded by the Sun as I watched my brother Bill kick another speedy goal between the tall wooden posts. Now, as I type this mind-blowing experience on paper (30 years later), I have returned to the world; more humble, more honest and more peaceful

knowing I have loved, been loved and being loved by God thanks to Nikki.

It was a warm night and the stars were as beautiful as always. I felt wonderful the moment I left the town's borders and entered nature's gateway. I met a farmer as I was walking and said a friendly hello. But, he motioned to grab me so I ran and ran until I couldn't see him anymore and that brought me close to the sand dunes and the beach. I walked over the dunes and onto the sandy shore and saw a cathedral of stars and waves. The stars were touchable and my hand played with them like fireflies. As I gazed at this universe overhead the ocean sounds changed from a crashing roaring sound to a haunting chorus of mother nature singing her cosmic song – like the sound of a school of whales.

The beauty, the sounds in Nature's cathedral, were alive and living and breathing and it became more beautiful just for me (particles change their behaviour depending on whether they are being observed or not, this is God's way) like any artistic symphony was meant to impress with its virtuosity. It was dazzling, uplifting, and often changing between a Miles Davis Jazz tune and a Bach concerto. In this whole scene of stars, waves and endless sky God revealed herself into reality and came out to play: something Aboriginals see every day.

There was another moment like this in Melbourne when my thoughts and my eyes were one, but this was so more beautiful and I will never forget this one magical hour when nature and I, whoever I am, were happy knowing that we atoms have a soul and matter only prevents their play if the mind is weak, so play we did.

This is not an exclusive experience as the many religions of the world will speak of the Dreaming, the Dharma, the Christ but it is hard to know how to teach someone to let their atoms go free.

This symphony of atomic bliss cleaved my reality. So, it was with some trepidation I started the 10 km walk back into Warrnambool and reality (not my reality though). Following the moonlight in the spent and spending waves, gliding up the sand.

The Moon pipered me all the way back to Penguin Island which was only metres away from the main surf beach. I crossed over the road and walked to the Surf Club and saw a couple of people walking on the beach like me: it was around 11 PM. It was the same as leaving Nikki's months earlier; I felt the 'cold transition' from spirit to human slowly take over and capture my thoughts (like the Berlin Wall could). I walked into the main street, passed pubs with drunken ghosts falling and stumbling out of their doors speaking in tongues and looking like evil spirits. I kept walking and walking and continue to walk like Forest

Gump because my heart and soul are fragile and cannot bear to be human again.

So if you are wondering where God is? She is in the light. In the spark of a baby's eye, in the glitter falling from the sun and in everyone's heart.

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