

A LOVE LETTER TO JANAKI

Once upon a time ago, 18 years to be exact, I was visiting, for the first time, an ashram, a spiritual residential center, which was headed by an Indian Guru, teacher, named Muktananda. From the first irreverent moment to this very present one, Swami Muktananda's teachings and presence, although he has long ago left his body, are very much with me. After meditation, during satsang – greeting the Guru – one evening, Muktananda offered me the gift of a spiritual name – Janaki _ which means, “wife of Lord Ram”. I hated it!

Twice divorced with two daughters, I was just beginning to reclaim my emotional strength, stabilize my financial balance and develop my spiritual focus. I totally rejected being anyone's wife... ever again, even Lord Ram's, whomever he may be! The ashramites were all excited by my name. Since Lord Ram was the Hindu reference for God, and based on the belief that the masculine and feminine deities were different sides of the same Holy One, the wife of Lord Ram was indeed... God too. Janaki is a highly prestigious name. I remained resistant, yet secretly felt pleased and hopeful.

Today, it is to that higher One, that spiritual Self, the Goddess Janaki, to whom I address this love letter.

To You, who has been with me All Ways

I love you most now. I didn't always. You've seen me be strong, sometimes falter and, even at times, fall flat on my face. Yet, you remain a silent, smiling witness. You loved me young and thin, as well as older and rounder. You have watched me as a daughter, wife, mother, and even now as a grandmother. You partnered me during my militant life phase as well as my feminist politics. You've glided gracefully over the tidal waves of my unique life experiences, consistently communicating with clues sent via my unconscious. Sometimes quick on the uptake, sometimes slow to understand, I always trusted your existence, even when you remained nameless and I... unfaithful. Thank you for being with me, even when I was loath to be with myself.

Mostly these days, I love hanging out with you best. You are with me most fully when I am alone and quiet: on my yoga mat,

meditating, journaling, gardening, needlepointing, cooking, reading, writing, or silently puttering. I adore you most when I am in intimate communion with another... personally or professionally. The sacred space in being with others in real, open and honest ways offers me the opportunity to really feel your Divine presence. I am blessed to experience love in many forms in my life; since You, I believe, lead me on the path of the Beloved... our most direct access route to God/Goddess.

I love the ways you play with me these days: walking, yoga, traveling, private practice, and even scrabble. I have fun costumes for each event. The people you've chosen to cross our path: each tickle my fancy in some very special delicious way... although a few in the past remain questionable. Your thoughts, feelings and knowing touch my soul, while my struggle with "life on life's terms" touches yours. You get vicarious thrills witnessing my imperfect humanness, and I receive ongoing inspiration from your eternal reverence. We team well together, You and I.

I'm proud of you Janaki. You gave me Crone courage to tempt love again, sort of free falling with neither a parachute nor any illusions... as if I had a choice! You broke through the veils of my own resistance to march me back on the Beloved Path. For this, I am currently most grateful. I only hope she will be as bountifully appreciative when I inevitably face the shadow side of love lost again. I hope you will remind me.

Especially, Janaki, I love your ability to always find my life interesting, to make the hardest times the deepest leanings, and to be forever loving and accepting, although I have caught you being somewhat skeptical for a moment or two there. I treasure you constantly moving toward the light of consciousness even as I am often seduced by the forbidden darkness, and I cherish your "bigger picture" viewfinder. I'm glad you're with me. I love you, dear Janaki.

Always...All ways,

Lovingly,
Seena

P.S. I hope you are having a blast with Lord Ram!