

SAHARA SKIES

The peace yet constant activity in the desert impresses again and again into the bones, the skin, the breath. A unique environment, unknown to most yet home also to many.

The heat at times unbearable, depending on the time of year, but often generous, sweet, soothing and healing. Walking through the desert terrain is difficult at times, other times easy and buoyant even. As though one is being carried by the strings of a sweet lute and the wings of an angel. A place suited to deep contemplation. Walking allows remembering and then letting go. The space allows preciousness to enter and the fragility of life to flutter through on the winds. Impermanence is all around in this vastness. The sands of time scattering everywhere, always.

I spent a few days walking in the Sahara desert near M;Hamid which is a ten hour drive more or less from Marrakech. A drive not to be done in one go really..... I know better next time.

The landscape varies from open prairie type vistas to snow covered mountains. On the road back after our trek into the desert we were gifted with blizzards of snow and whiteness of everything. Then to torrential downpours which woke me from a slumber.

The desert offers a sense of space and timelessness. The landscape penetrates, it is possible to feel it etching the consciousness like a master sculptor. It carves silently the jagged edges of the mind, the monkey mind. That incessant mind of tricks and avoidance. The desert invites you, if you are available to an encounter with the deep self. It invites the jagged edges to a showing, an invitation to dissolution.

The desert enters you, allowing an encounter with silence within. This gift of silence within which our modern-day culture is running from rapidly at cost.

The phrase The Sands of Time was used in the seventh stanza of the poem.

A Psalm of Life

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

*Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the **sands of time***

I met the lady of The Sands of Time one night in the desert in a dream.

She was ordinary like you or me.... no different. She was wearing clothes, had hair and spoke in a language I could understand.

She showed me something, a transference of energies. When the sands move there is a flow, a domino effect. Nothing is ever the same again. She showed me transformation and that when we knock on a door and something or someone answers there is no return.

Sand sometimes sucks you in and then releases but the movement is like the rapid fluttering's of the hummingbirds wings, is being felt forever.

Recognising this I understand resonance and continuity. I understand that a sound, a movement made centuries ago and consciously carried on through space and time has force, has energy. Consciousness is the key.

Awareness to self and other, dances around me in the desert. There is so much space. Sometimes the vastness expands awareness so much so that there is a little death. Perhaps an ego death, I am not sure, but a death yes. Not a sad death because it has no sadness attached, nor joy nor grief or anything. But it has something!

It has an arising from inside that demands a deep breath. That breath, that movement from within is like a food, a food that has no composition, no density, yet demands an emptiness inside so it can fill you. That filling up has a joy with it, a wonder and awe. Eyes open wider with this wonder and the light sparkles diamond like.

Ah, the desert and she and I have only begun our introduction.

Sometimes there is discomfort when intense heat seeps into the flesh and bones. Only because I am not used to it. But it seems this heat is a good remedy for arthritic conditions. I learn that 10 or 15 minutes buried in the late afternoon sands for three days can cure chronic conditions. So perhaps that discomfort is a necessary medicine that heals the density of pain.

Night falls and the stars appear, first slowly and then in their millions. Crowding the skies and I lie head supported by my hands and bask in the magnitude of this display. I am so small, I am at this moment a child of this marvellous universe. The Mother earth, she holds me as I fly into the arms of this night sky.

And then there is "Sand Bread"!

Sand bread baked naturally in sand heated by the night fire. I watch in amazement as the yeasted bread kneaded with presence and vigour begins to rise under the hot sand. The mother earth is pregnant with bread and her belly rises as she cooks. It is an awesome sight, the bread like nothing I have tasted before. There is sand everywhere but not in the bread.

We eat with reverence and gratitude.