



# The Telepathic People: The First Secret



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# The Telepathic People

*(In Galaxy NGC 1232 - Eridanus Cluster, hundreds of millions of years ago.)*

*There existed a mysterious people, who used telepathy to communicate with each other and with the natural world around them. They lived in caves, and their primary source of livelihood was the nearby forest where they hunted animals and gathered fruit.*

*We can say that they were leading a primitive life, but they also possessed a unique knowledge that allowed them to develop their intelligence and other mental abilities to a degree that is unimaginable to us, people from planet Earth.*

*Their telepathic connection made it possible for them to know where to find food and know what their fellow tribesmen were thinking. When somebody needed help in an emergency or if someone had reached a valuable achievement, the rest of the tribe would come to know about it.*

*They considered characteristics such as hostility, selfishness, greed, stealing or violence as fit for animals only and individuals who displayed such attributes were, in their opinion, insane.*

*They conquered and dominated their environment by helping it rather than by destruction and thus ruled their miniature world by being beneficial to it. For this reason, their culture was developing with incredible speed, needing one year for a degree of cultural advancement which on Earth and similar places would take tens of years or maybe as long as a century.*

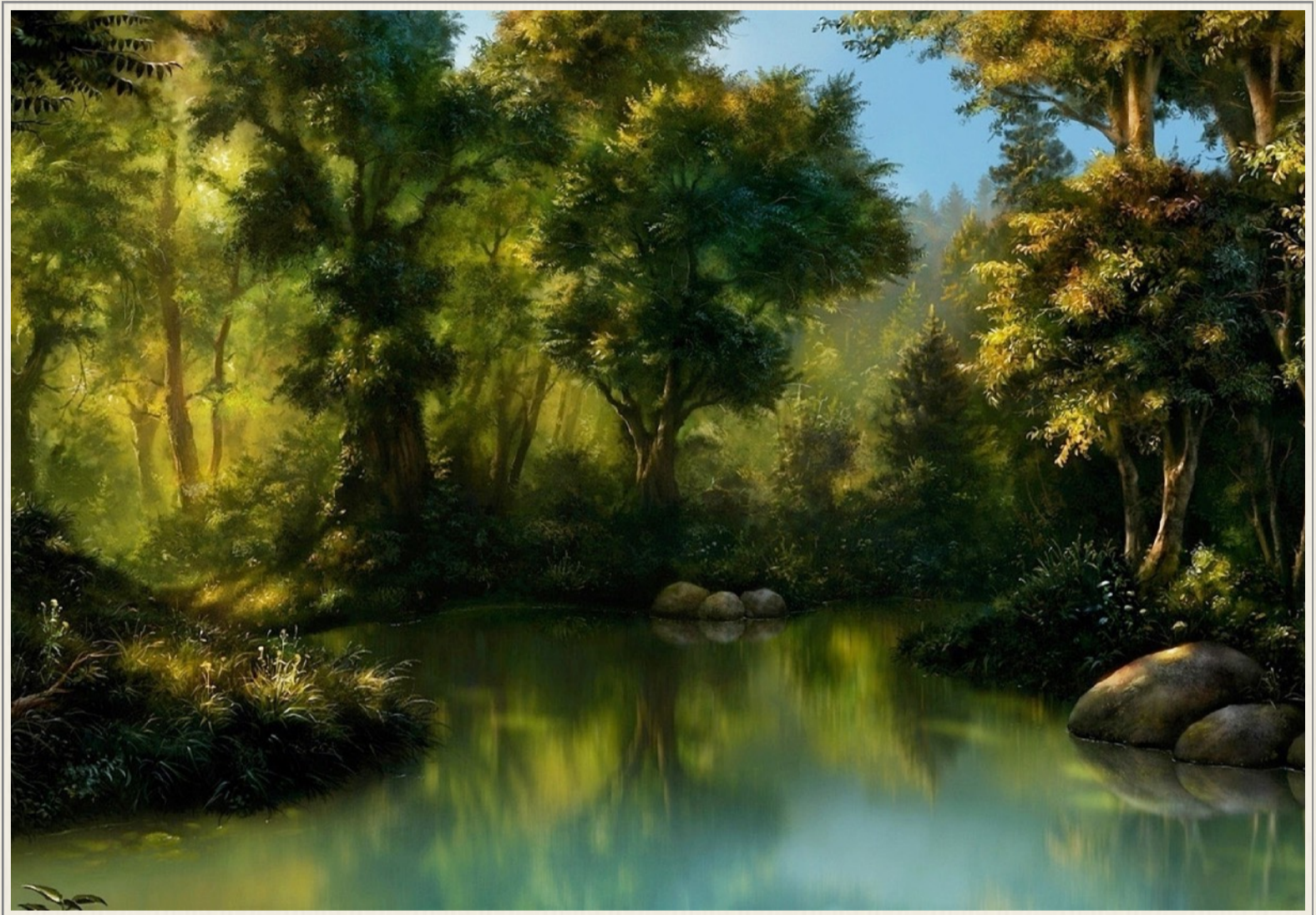
*The special mental abilities were not inherent in them. All of them were born with the same potential as all other human beings. The Telepathic People learned those skills and developed them by rigorous exercises in their childhood.*

*The knowledge of those people was recorded into very tiny electronic fields of very short wavelength and transferred through light years of distance and hundreds of millions of years of time to various places in the universe.*

*Oddly enough, in the previous century on Earth, an independent scientific research study was carried out, which accidentally proved the validity and workability of this kind of knowledge, and it was discovered that Earthman could use it for their substantial benefit.*



# An Attempt to Heal



While walking in the high grass through the woods, Dodo kept thinking about Li. Dodo was about ten years old, and Li was his friend, a girl approximately two years older than him. Li was ill. She might die if her fever worsened. Her little brother had had the fever once and died a few days after it broke out.

However Dodo himself also had such a fever, but he did not die. That was hopeful. Li's death, therefore, was not inevitable.

How come he didn't die when he had the fever? What had made him feel better again? What was it? Dodo thought hard and after a few steps, he remembered! Fruit! The tribal chief had given Dodo a nice, juicy, orange fruit and he started to feel better after he ate it. That is what he needed to bring to Li.

The trees with orange flesh fruit were growing in this forest on the other side of the slope. Dodo had to go up to the brow and then down, bearing to the left.

After some ten minutes of walking, he saw the tree with big orange, egg-shaped fruit. He jumped with joy and propelled by gravity, ran down the hill. Dodo quickly picked up one, two, no, better three pieces of the orange, fleshy fruits. He could not carry more and immediately hastened back to Li's cave.

What a joy! Li is going to eat this fruit, Dodo imagined, she will get healthy and maybe in the afternoon, they will play in the forest. They could, at least, climb a tree and swing around on lianas.

Dodo was positively enthusiastic about his plan.

However, there was a catch. Dodo was not allowed to pick any fruits in the forest, eat it or bring it to the caves for others. There was a good reason for this rule. The fruits on their planet were edible only when they were fully ripe, which was a short period, usually just a few days. The unripe fruit was poisonous even in

small amounts and could kill an adult if eaten in sufficient quantity.

Another problem was that an unripe fruit was indistinguishable from a ripe one by appearance or smell. It even tasted the same, and people could recognize its toxicity only after swallowing it.

Dodo's grown-up fellow tribesmen distinguished the ripe fruits from the unripe by the use of their telepathy. But Dodo had not learned this ability yet, so he was prohibited from picking up the fruit for food by himself. Adult tribe members fed their young with pieces of ripe fruits selected by them.

Dodo knew the rules, but he thought that this was an extraordinary situation, and so he could break them because he was about to save Li's life.

When he returned to the caves, Li's mother was already expecting him. She saw him carrying the fruit and read in his mind what he was about to do. She understood the boy's concern and was touched by how earnestly he wanted to help Li. She also knew that Li's fever was not severe, which Dodo could not know, again because his telepathic ability had not yet developed.

However, Dodo's attempt to help Li was dangerous, because the fruit he brought was not ripe, and she considered it necessary to educate him about it.

"What do you have those fruits for?" she asked kindly. "You

do know that you are not supposed to pick any fruit from the woods and bring them here, don't you?"

"But this is different," Dodo answered breathlessly, as he had come running up the hill. "I will give it to Li; she will eat it and get healthy. The chief gave me exactly this fruit when I was ill, and it cured me very well."

Li's mother had to smile. Dodo was cute. "And how do you know this fruit is safe to eat?"

"Well, it is from a nice tree, and I had good intentions to help Li when I was searching for it. Nothing bad can happen because I meant well." Dodo was beaming with enthusiasm, proud of himself that he had made an independent decision.

"Of course, you meant well, Dodo, but we must make sure that what you brought isn't poisonous. You do not want to harm Li, do you?"

"No, I don't."

"Then you must first try the fruit yourself to see if it is edible. Are you ready to do that?"

Dodo was prepared to do anything for Li. He was an orphan and Li was his closest friend, almost like a sister because they had grown up together. Without any hesitation he took out his knife, cut half of one of the orange fruits and before Li's mother could warn him he quickly swallowed a hefty piece of it.

It started to burn his insides even before it got into his stomach and shortly he fell on the ground, writhing in pain. For a while, he felt spasms in his stomach, which was trying to reject the poisonous fruit, and then he lost consciousness.

When he woke up, he was lying in his cave, and Li's mother was giving him an herbal potion to drink.

"You had too much of it, Dodo," she said, seriously concerned about him. "In the trial, you eat just a small piece. There is no need to devour half of it. How are you feeling now? Can you stand up?"

Dodo staggered when he tried to get up and took hold of the wall in order not to fall.

"I am all right," he said bravely. He wasn't, but he did not want to be helped too much and thus show his weakness.

The boy then rested all day inside the cave until the effects of the poisonous fruit had subsided.





# Learning



In the evening, the tribal chief asked Dodo to sit with him near the fireplace. He felt responsible for Dodo's education and wellbeing, so he used to take him for small discussions like this, now and then. First he listened to Dodo's story about how and why he got poisoned by the unripe fruit. Then he suppressed his concerns and expressed his decision:

"Your desire to help Li shows that you are about to become a man. That is good. But to show real maturity, you must pass the life-or-death test, just like each and every member of our tribe has to do. You must learn to recognize which fruit is ripe and which is not by the mere power of your mind, without eating it or touching it. You must acquire the skill to read trees and understand the language they speak. Practicing the Ultimate Love is the way to achieve that ability.

"Therefore, from tomorrow onwards you are not allowed to eat anything that you did not find yourself in the forest. No one in our tribe is permitted to give you food anymore. You must feed yourself on your own. That is the part of the test. Also, you are still forbidden to bring any fruit to the caves so that others do not get poisoned by accident. If you can feel with your mind which fruit is ripe and eat it, you will survive. If you fail to perceive that difference and eat the poisonous, unripe fruit or do not eat at all, you will die eventually. Without this skill, you cannot live in our tribe or feed your future family. It is a real life-or-death test. Do you understand?"

Dodo nodded his head. He understood well. All tribe members lived in close communication with nature and with each other. The communication was so intimate that they knew basic facts about each other instantly without speaking about them.

They only talked when it was faster to explain something in greater detail.

Similarly, they were able to perceive by their minds the intentions and conditions of animals, trees, plants and also states of non-living things like rocks or soil. For their survival, it was vital to be able to recognize which plant or fruit was still poisonous and which was ready to eat.

Without this ability, none of them would live long and they would be a huge liability to the rest of the group. These people were so proud that they would rather choose voluntary death, than the humiliation of being dependent on another tribe member.

Dodo was aware that he would sooner or later need to undergo this life-or-death test. He also knew that some children disappeared forever during their attempt to pass it.

That night, Dodo was lying in his cave for a long time but could not fall asleep. Tomorrow he must learn to understand the language of trees. What if he failed? And how was this reading of trees done? Would he ever become a real member of his tribe?

The more he thought about it, the more agitated he became. It kept coming back to his attention, although he knew it would be better to sleep and make himself fresh for the next day. Fear swallowed his peace of mind.

When he woke up in the morning, Dodo felt that he just could not do it. He was not able to read trees. But everybody else in the tribe could, so it must be somehow possible. The problem was that Dodo had no idea how to go about learning this skill. For now, he must quickly go to the woods to get there early and have more time for learning. He took a sip of water and walked downhill into the forest.

After a while, he found a small group of fruit trees. Now he needed to recognize which fruit pieces were ripe, but there was no apparent distinction between them. Were they all ripe or unripe?

Was there a difference in their smell? It was hard to tell.

Dodo then simply selected one of the trees and plucked off a bluish fruit similar to a plum. It looked just like the fruit other tribe members used to give him at home.

‘The sooner I try, the sooner I will learn,’ he thought. Dodo opened up the fruit and ate just a small piece of its flesh. It was sweet and juicy; there was no burning in his stomach and no unconsciousness. The fruit was ripe.

Although he was glad that he had chosen the right tree, the boy was dissatisfied with himself because he knew it was down to sheer luck, not a mental communication with trees or understanding their "language". He ate the whole fruit to satisfy his hunger.

In the afternoon, Li came. She was still a little weak from her fever but felt ready to take a slow walk into the forest together with Dodo.

"Li, I am doing the life-or-death test. It started today. Do you know how to distinguish a ripe fruit by mind?" Dodo asked.

"I do, and it is not that difficult," she said rather carelessly. But Dodo was seriously worried.

"And how do you do it?" he enquired.

"I simply feel the tree with my mind, and it tells me if it is good to eat or not," said Li.

"But I do not hear them telling me anything. Do they talk to you?"

"They talk to everybody. Just like the sun shines for everybody, just like rain gives water that can be touched by everybody, the trees tell if they are ripe or not in same way." Li explained it as if it was obvious, a fact that everybody knew. She sounded a bit surprised that Dodo even asked about it.

The boy was baffled. "I can see the sun and feel the water, but trees don't tell me anything. Am I deaf? How are you able to hear them?"

Li contemplated for a few seconds and then she explained: "I use Ultimate Love. When I extend Ultimate Love to the tree or its fruit it usually tells me if it is ripe or not."

"Maybe that is my problem. I like trees, but I do not love them very much" Dodo was thinking aloud. Li smiled a little, perhaps understanding more than Dodo, and interrupted him:

"But do you know what the Ultimate Love looks like, Dodo?"

"I thought that it is something only the adults can understand and that I am too young for it."

Li started to laugh loudly. "No, Dodo, you are not too young. You are old enough. But you cannot go about it like this. When you work on something, first of all, you need to know what you are aiming for and what result you want to achieve. It is not enough to know just that Ultimate Love is something for the adults. That kind of explanation of it cannot help you much."

Dodo saw that Li was right. "Then what is it?" he asked.

"Ultimate Love towards a tree means that you agree to be in the same place as the tree. You actually become that tree for a while and listen, using your mind, to what the tree is telling you.

If you practise this, you will soon start knowing whether the fruit is ripe and also many other things about trees. It's very easy. Do you understand?"

"Just a little bit... To tell the truth, not very much," Dodo admitted.

"All right, I will show you. Do you see that tree on the right?"

Li pointed to a fruit tree standing around ten metres from them.

"Yes."

"So now I will become that tree for a moment..." Li stopped walking and concentrated for a short while. "Well, that tree has a bit of a discomfort from an anthill that is on the other side of it, but its fruits are ripe. Now let's go and see if I am right." Li started to walk towards that tree.

When they arrived at the tree, the anthill was exactly in the place described by Li. Dodo was amazed. Li picked one piece of fruit and tasted its flesh. It was ripe. Dodo admired her ability but also became a bit worried, because he still could not figure out how it worked. Li's explanation did not make sense to him, but he was unwilling to ask her any further questions. He felt ashamed to show Li that he was not able to grasp her explanation, especially because she considered it to be so simple.

They both slowly walked back to the caves because Li started to feel tired and wanted to lie down again. Afterwards, Dodo returned to the forest to give it another try.

First he attempted to sit under one tree to "be in the same place" and, after a while, he tried its fruit. It was poisonous and made his stomach burn. As soon as he recovered, he went to another tree, climbed on it and sat on its branches for a while.

When he tasted the fruit of this one, he almost fell. It burned his stomach again, and he started to faint. After that, he was in too much pain and his senses too dull to concentrate on his task, so he returned home and fell asleep. His body needed rest to recover from the fruit poisoning.

Early next morning, he went into the woods and forced himself to love trees. He stroked their leaves and branches to initiate more love inside him but then he experienced another failure while trying a fruit from the tree he somehow liked.

Dodo almost cried while he was recovering from the stomach pain. With each failure, it looked less probable that he would pass the life-or-death test. However he did not want to disappoint the tribal chief, Li, and his fellow tribesmen. He wanted to become a valuable member of his community and contribute to the prosperity of the tribe.

He mustered up his willpower and tried the next piece of fruit from a nearby tree. This one was ripe. He ate some of it because he was hungry, but soon he had to stop. His stomach was still in pain from the previous poisonous piece, and that did not allow him to eat much. Dodo started to have an intense feeling of dread. He shrugged instinctively, realizing that he had just taken a step closer to death.

For the next few hours Dodo did not eat anything. He did not want to risk another poisoning, so he just drank a lot of water.



He realized that he must be courageous and not avoid the task he had been set. He decided just to keep trying the fruits until either he would die or some miracle would enable him to gain the ability to read trees. Life did not matter to him anymore, and it was important for him not to give up. He wouldn't have respected himself if he had discontinued his task.

Dodo found another tree that could be ripe and he tried its fruit. But it burned his stomach again. He leaned against the tree to gather some power to continue and looked around for another tree. Twenty metres to his left was another one. As he was approaching it, he started to think that it is not ripe. But he still tried its fruit, because maybe he had to go against his instincts and believe it to be ripe when he felt it was not. That piece of fruit poisoned him too.

At the same moment in which Dodo decided that his life did not matter to him anymore, Li was piling up pieces of wood for cooking dinner near the caves. She started to feel upset and agitated about him. First she did not pay much attention to it, but when Dodo came to the third tree and took an enormous bite of the fruit, which was again poisonous, she started to feel very anxious about him. 'He might die,' she thought.

Dodo now had already eaten too much of it. He weakened, began to faint and slid down to the ground. At that very moment Li felt tears well up in her eyes. She dropped the firewood and ran into the forest following her gut feeling that Dodo was in

peril and needed help. She knew in which direction she had to run.

The forest around Dodo lost its colours, then its noises faded away, and after that it all disappeared in a whirlpool of darkness.

Suddenly he felt relieved and found himself sitting on branches about four to five metres above the ground. The forest reappeared back in full colour with all the sounds and smells typical of this place. He looked down and saw himself lying under the tree, pale and motionless. It was confusing. How could he be sitting up in the tree and lying under it at the same time? Had he replicated himself? Was it a hallucination from the toxic fruit?

A sound of quick steps came from the nearby bushes. In the next moment, Li rushed out of them and ran to that part of him which was lying under the tree.

"Dodo!" Li was shaking his body. "What are you doing?! You will never pass your test like that! You will die!"

She put her ear on Dodo's chest to listen to his heart but she could not hear anything. It was mainly because she was too upset to be able to detect his heartbeat. Tears were pouring out of her eyes.

"No! No! No! Not like that!" It seemed that Dodo was not breathing. Li was desperate. She gasped and, for a moment, her inhalation stopped. Then the choking feeling released a loud cry.

Dodo was watching her from above, rather puzzled as to whether this was really happening or not. 'Am I really about to die? Is this what death is like? Poor Li! I don't want her to cry.'

Suddenly he heard inside himself a new thought, which not come from him. It went: 'How did the tribal chief go about it when the hunter Soot was dying? He just ordered him to take his body back.'

It was distinctly not Dodo's thought. It was even accompanied by a picture of the tribal chief, kneeling next to the injured Soot, but that happened many weeks ago. The image was seen from the viewpoint of Li. Yes, Dodo saw and heard what Li was thinking while she was sitting under the tree. And he perceived it from a distance, without Li telling him anything. That was real mind reading.

Li now became very determined and energetic and started to command him: "Dodo, take back your body. Come back and bring it to life! You can do it. Just help it to breathe!"

Dodo, still sitting on the tree, was slightly amused at what she was doing. He did not care much about what she said.

Li paused for a moment and stroked Dodo's face. "Dodo, come back! Don't leave me alone here..." she added more softly but in her voice, body position and attitude there was such a strong and sincere wish for him to live that Dodo decided to go down and take over his body again.

Once he made that decision, it was as if the nature around him switched off, and his unconscious body started to feel heavy and painful. Li's voice was now coming from above him, not from below as before.

"Dodo, come back to me. You will be all right," she said with helpless frustration. Now she started to doubt if Dodo would survive.

More and more it occurred to her that she would not be able to save him.

Dodo sensed her concern. This really was not what he wanted. He did not wish to scare her. He decided he must give her a sign, telling her that he was back, to end the girl's despair.

The boy tried to move his leg, but it did not respond. He also could not move his hand. Li stood up hesitantly to go back home and confirm to the other tribe members that Dodo was dead.

Dodo knew that she must not leave. He needed her help right now. If she left him, he would surely die. He mustered up his concentration and tried to reach her head with an idea saying: 'Stay here.'

He felt it was a weak attempt; Li continued turning away and, just for the sake of trying it, he reached her with the idea again: 'Stay here.'

This time, he sensed that Li stopped leaving and looked back at his body again.

"Now or never," he decided. Dodo forced his eyes open for a little moment and tried to call her name. Only a long sigh came out of his mouth, but it was enough.

"You are back!" Li exclaimed. She again kneeled by him and gently put her hand on his chest. "And you are breathing!"

Dodo once more forced opened his eyes, and then he had to close them quickly. The sunshine was dazzling him, but Li understood.

"It's all right, Dodo. Rest. Wait for a while until you feel strong enough."

It was sensible advice. Dodo was happy that he could lie for some time. His strength was gradually coming back as the poison was losing its power. Shortly, his eyes got accustomed to the sunshine, and he could look around. Then he tried to get up but was only able to sit. His legs were too weak, and he was about to faint again. At least he could talk to Li.

"Do you know what happened, Li?"

"Well, I first started to feel that you were in big trouble, so I ran to you. Then I saw your body looking like it was dead. Apparently you poisoned yourself unnecessarily, but actually ... Dodo! You! You should explain to me what you were up to!" Although Li was relieved that he was out of danger, the girl was also annoyed with him for causing her so much distress.

Dodo wanted to avoid talking about what he has done, so he said. "You say a peculiar thing: that my body looked like it was dead. Because I was outside myself and I also saw myself dead. I was sitting up in this tree, and I saw you coming. For a while, I was in two different places. And now I am one again. Is that some illness, when I exist in two places?"

Li just held her head in both hands. Dodo was ignorant of a fundamental fact which everybody in their tribe was supposed to know.

"Dodo, what are you telling me? You do not know the basics! You confused, ignorant moron! You don't know who you are?"

"Well, yes ... no ... what are you trying to tell me? Here is my hand, here are my legs and trunk and head up here. All that is me. Of course, I know who I am," he defended himself.

"No, you don't, Dodo!" Li started to mentor him as if he was a small child. "You have it all upside down. You are not your body. You do have a body with its hands, legs and other parts, but you are not it. Just like you are not a pebble or an animal or the sand on the other side of this hill. I am also not my body. I am myself. You are yourself. You must understand this very well. Otherwise, you are going to remain stupid."

Dodo did not display the bitterness and upset he felt from being shown that he did not know about these matters, which Li considered so basic. What she said was fascinating.

"You must explain it to me. How come I am not the body? What am I?" Dodo asked.

"You just said that you were sitting up on the tree, seeing me and seeing your body. Not yourself, you saw your body. You were actually very close to death. And when you were close to death you could see all of the surroundings, couldn't you?"

"Yes, I had a good view from that height," Dodo agreed.

"But at the same time your body was just lying there, and it did not see you, did it?" Dodo nodded.

Li continued. "You, is that part of you, which is your true self and is capable of knowing. You are aware. Stones are not aware. Water is not aware. Those things just are. Have you ever seen a dead animal?"

"Yes, many times." Dodo was listening very attentively.

"And did those dead animals see you or hear you?" asked Li.

"No, they were just lying there, stinking and I could kick them, burn them, and they would not do anything at all."

"That was because their spirits were gone. Only their bodies were there, so they were not aware. You are the spirit, that part of you which is making your body alive. That part of you which thinks, dreams, sees, hears and feels. That is you. The spirit. I am also spirit. Each animal and plant has a tiny little spirit in them.

You were sitting on the tree because your body was useless and poisoned, so it was more comfortable for you to get out of it."

"And did you see me sitting on that tree?" asked Dodo.

"Of course not. You are a spirit, and nobody can see you. Spirits are invisible. But I felt you and knew you were around. That's why I called you back to your body."

"And how come you can feel me, but I cannot feel you, Li?"

"I can feel the thoughts of others. I learned it shortly after I learned the reading of trees. It was quite easy. All members of our tribe can feel each other's thoughts. Didn't you know that?"

"I have heard about it," Dodo answered. "I have never felt it myself, so I thought it is something only adults can do. But wait a moment. When I was sitting up in the tree, without myself or my body, I actually heard your memory of how the tribal chief salvaged another man, Soot, who was about to die. Was that what were you thinking about?"

"It was. You felt it correctly, Dodo," Li answered with a hint of relief.

"So at that time, I heard your thoughts." Dodo was still thinking aloud. "Amazing! Now we really have a lot to talk about."

"No, Dodo, come back to the cave and have some more rest first. We will talk more about it tomorrow," Li said kindly.



Dodo felt that Li was sincere when she was telling him all this and that she meant well for him. It was also sensible to take a rest, so they slowly went back home. He did not realize that, at this very moment, he was not only hearing Li's words, but he also perceived her intentions. His telepathic ability had started to develop, but it had escaped his notice.



# Revelation



The next day, Li decided to stay with Dodo and watch him so that he didn't do anything foolish. His body was exhausted from days of hunger and eating the unripe fruit, and any blunders now could be very dangerous.

Dodo was very excited to know more about his experiences of “being outside himself”, when he felt Li's thoughts and all other aspects of his near death. They quickly went to the forest, sat in the shade under the branches of a tree and started to discuss it.

"What actually happened yesterday? Was I really dead?" Dodo asked impatiently.

"It was similar to death, but you did not die fully. Your body stopped breathing only for a short time; you knew what was happening, and you did not forget what had happened before. You see, real death is the forgetting of everything. It makes an end which is also a new beginning and that we call death. Therefore, you did not die, that's for sure, but you were close to death."

"Well, if this is how death looks, it is not so bad. I can deal with dying," Dodo concluded.

"What are you talking about? Why do you want to die?" Li refused to understand his way of reasoning. "When you die, you forget your tribe, you forget your name, you forget who you are, and you would forget me! No Dodo, you must not do that!" she said in a firm, determined manner.

"Li, it is not about what I want or what I don't want. I do not know how to read trees so it stands to reason that I will die sooner or later. And forget, as you say." Dodo was calm and factual; apparently he had thought it through.

"But what if you can learn to read trees?" Li objected.

"That would be different, of course, but I kept trying for days and read nothing. I am not able to say which fruit is good and which is not. I found ripe fruits only by accident. I tried every-

thing. It does not work for me. I was not born with that skill, so I have to be ready to deal with dying," Dodo explained.

Dodo, in fact, started to be a bit impatient because he had already made up his mind that he should rather enjoy the last days of his life. Getting poisoned again by an unripe fruit was not part of his plans.

"But Dodo, there are also many others who did learn it. And yesterday when you were, as you said, outside yourself, you were feeling my memories and thoughts, which is the same as reading trees. This is it. You can do it."

"Really?" Dodo was surprised and doubted it, but he also silently admitted that there was some point to what Li was saying.

"Yes, Dodo. Every spirit can read the ideas of other spirits and can perceive conditions of the things around him, without touching them, including fruit trees. You are an immortal soul just like me or anybody else," Li was tired of explaining this again.

Dodo was quiet for a while. Li's words hit him because they were the truth. This truthfulness changed his way of thinking and only now he began to understand that he is not just a body but a spirit. It brought a strange calmness to his mind. It was very subtle, but he felt as if things were about to go in the right direction. His life had corrected itself. Now there was more order in his mind than before and less confusion.

Dodo woke out of his contemplation and asked Li, "But do I need to be half dead to read other people's ideas or to read trees?"

"Not at all. In order to learn it, you need to practise, which will give you this ability, and I can help you with that."

That was excellent news for Dodo. "Are you sure that you can help me to acquire that skill?" he asked.

"Yes, I can. You were failing because you were missing the knowledge of how to do it," started Li, but then she realized something and quickly added, "but there are certain conditions to my teaching you."

"What conditions, Li?"

"Well, first you must earnestly want to learn it and to live, not want to die," Li said strictly.

"I see." Dodo was not very sure yet, but his acceptance of death by hunger was conflicting with Li's statement that he is an immortal spirit, so he decided quietly to give it a try and live.

"All right, so I have decided to learn it and live. I will do my very best to stay alive. What is the next condition?" he asked.

"After I have taught you everything I know about it, you need to keep practising until you become perfect. You will need to work on it every day and not stop until you have thoroughly mastered it."

"Yes, Li, I will definitely do that." This was easy for him to promise and made sense.

"But I will teach you the exercise only if you fulfil one more condition," Li continued.

"And what is that?"

Li slid down from the branch where they were sitting and stood on the ground in front of Dodo. She tried to look authoritative and quickly took two breaths before she dared to say what was on her mind.

"Dodo, you must swear now and promise that you will marry me," she said rather abruptly and then waited nervously for his answer.

That was the last thing Dodo expected. He was still too young to think about marriage and did not understand why, of all things, this was so important for Li? He was happy that she did not ask for his new knife, which he had made out of bronze all by himself because he liked it very much. However, as he saw her excitement, he became a bit nervous himself, so he asked, "What would it mean if I were to marry you?"

"Well, we would stay together for our whole lives, be friends with each other, help each other and love each other..."

"We have been doing this all the time anyway," commented Dodo.

"Yes, almost," Li agreed.

"If it is just that we stay together, I am all right with that," Dodo agreed, thinking more about his life-or-death test.

"So are you promising to marry me?" Li asked.

"Yes."

"And do you swear to stay loyal to me till the end of our lives?" She needed reassurance.

"Yes, you have my word on that!"

"So, now you are mine and nobody else's!" Li was filled with joy and hugged Dodo, who was a bit perplexed. But Li was a girl and girls do strange things at times, so he took it as it was.

In fact, Li was concerned that in a few months when she had grown up a bit more, they would give her to some foreign man from another tribe whom she did not know. Li was terrified of that, so she had started to plan the marriage with Dodo. She had known him for a very long time and could imagine how her life would be if she stayed with him.

"Come, Dodo, I want to dance!" Li's eyes and face glowed with joy. She pulled him out of the shade where he was sitting and started to dance with him in between the trees. Li was in a state of exhilaration. Dodo got infected by her enthusiasm, and they began to swing on nearby lianas and laughed. Eventually, they landed on the grass.

"I did not know that to get married is so much fun!" Dodo laughed.

"It is, and it is a lot more than that but that I will show you when you have grown up a little more. Now you need to learn to read the trees. Are you ready, Dodo?"

"Yes, I am."

"So let's begin." Li assumed her teacher's attitude. "You need to know a bit more about who you really are and what you can do. Your body is made of flesh, but the spirit is not. Spirit is neither flesh, nor wood, nor earth. It does not flow like water, and it does not blow like wind. It is not from any matter, so you cannot see it. You, as a spirit are not made of things of which nature is made. Spirit is invisible, and it is the creator of all things and also of all life. You are it."

"But if it exists, we should be able to see it," objected Dodo.

"Not necessarily. Spirit is a thought, and you cannot see it, just like you can't see a spirit of a plant or a bird. Can you put some thought into that tree in front of us?" Li asked Dodo.

"What do you mean exactly? How do I put thought into a tree?" He got mildly annoyed because Li wanted from him more than he was prepared to understand.

"You create the thought by your imagination. Just imagine that somewhere in that tree is some idea, whatever you want," Li explained quickly.



"But don't laugh at me," Dodo asked her.

"I won't."

"Alright, I have put thought into that tree."

"Excellent, Dodo. And did you see with your eyes that thought sitting there?"

"No, I did not see anything."

"That's right. But you knew that you had put that thought into that tree, didn't you?"

"Yes, I..."

Both of them were startled by a sudden sharp noise of cracking wood. A big branch of the same tree into which Dodo was putting his thought into broke off and fell to the ground.

Dodo twitched and looked at it as if he couldn't believe his own eyes. He was in shock.

"No, that cannot be because of me. It was an accident, just a joke," he uttered, looking at Li with a big question in his mind.

"What were you up to, Dodo?" Li asked him strictly.

"The branch of that tree was half broken off from a storm. It was hanging quite loosely, so I put there the idea that it would be funny if the branch would just entirely break off entirely and fall. I did not mean it to happen. I just thought it would be funny. But

then it fell off all by itself. I didn't do anything, really." Dodo defended himself.

But Li understood what was going on. In fact, Dodo's natural intention had started to work, which was a good sign, and Li had to choke back the laughter that was about to break out of her mouth.

"Was it funny, Dodo?"

"No, it was scary. It looked like I broke it."

Now Li could not suppress her amusement any longer and burst into laughter. "And who do you think did it? Who put the idea into that tree?" she laughed and laughed. "At the very least you helped it to happen. You did not know that you could do such things? Then your life must have been very confusing."

Dodo was, at first, a bit insulted, but then he started to laugh as well.

"Do you think that I did that with just a thought?" Dodo asked her.

"Naturally, it was not an accident. You did it!" Li was still laughing.

"How come?"

"Well, every spirit, though invisible, has two essential capabilities. First is the ability to cause things. You can change things, create new things or destroy something with your

thoughts, just like you did with the tree. The second ability of a spirit is to perceive. That is why we are here. You need to learn to perceive the trees and their fruits with your spirit only."

"You are right." Dodo remembered how Li had ceased to go away from him previous day when he was lying unconscious below the tree. Then a concern came into his mind about failing to read the trees and he stopped feeling like laughing. Again he began to fear that he would not learn that ability and that he might fail in his life-or-death test.

Li observed the change in his mood and from his mind, she perceived that he still had too many worries. Based on that, she decided to take the next step right away.

"Dodo, now we need to work on the first condition. You must earnestly want to learn how to read trees. Your mind is full of doubts."

"Of course it is," Dodo agreed. "I keep seeing myself failing. I keep seeing that it is impossible for me to do it. Even when I now tell you "Yes, I want to learn how to read trees," I know that I am actually lying to myself. Because saying it is not really wanting it. How can I want something that is impossible?"

"Well, your first spiritual ability is to cause things. Do you want to cause yourself to learn it, or do you want to doubt it? Or do you want to cause yourself to fail?" Li asked.

"You mean that I can cause myself to fail or to win?"

"Yes, Dodo, that is how things are. At least by thinking you will succeed you are increasing your chances. Don't you see that?"

"I see... maybe," Dodo said with hesitation, but he slowly started to realize the scope of this principle. He felt that it was some profound truth that he could cause things. A truth, which he had never before considered.

Li interrupted the flow of his thoughts. "So, can you put aside your doubts and imagine that you are going to succeed? Can you just for a while blindly believe in your success, Dodo?"

"I can. That is just a change of decision. Of course, I can do that," answered Dodo while changing around his thoughts. At a certain moment it clicked in his mind, and he started to feel that he could succeed, so he quickly asked the girl, "And now can you please tell me how I can learn to read trees?"

Li felt a change in her mind from worrying about Dodo to a relief and certainty that he was actually expecting to succeed. So she proceeded to the next step.

"Well, we use the principle of Ultimate Love, and this works only with you as a spirit, not with your body. The Ultimate Love is the occupation of the same place as a thing or an animal or a person. You, as a spirit, are usually in your head or body. But you can decide that you are in a different place and be, for example, in that rock. Let's try it. Can you imagine that you are occupying the same space as that rock over there?"

Dodo felt ashamed now that he had tried to climb the trees and hug the trees to create a sort of Ultimate Love. That was, of course, ridiculous, from the viewpoint of the understanding he had now. He closed his eyes and imagined himself being in the same place as the rock Li was pointing out for him. He started to feel its solid mass and then sensed that it was wet on the bottom, and then also the idea came into his mind that there were snakes or worms moving under the stone.

"I did it!" Dodo opened his eyes.

"And what did you find out?" Li asked. She was still seriously performing her mentoring role.

"Well, I felt its rockiness and that it is heavy. Let's take a look. It seemed to me that it may be wet on its bottom, and it also looked like there are some worms or young snakes underneath it."

He quickly made a few steps towards the stone, lifted it and pointed to the ground with a big smile. "I was right! There are worms here. A whole nest of them!"

Li came to him and saw that there were some worms under the stone he had picked up.

"Excellent, Dodo! Yes, that is the way. That is how you can read the trees!" Li rejoiced. "Now you need to practise it. Do it many, many, many times. You will see not only successes but also mistakes, and very often it can be quite boring or even upsetting.

However, you must not give up and must continue until you are perfect. Just select an object, be the object, wait for what it tells you about itself and then stop and do it with another one and so on."

"And can we start with fruit trees? That way I might have a chance to eat something," Dodo said practically.

"Sorry, Dodo, I forgot that you must be starving." Li smiled. "Let's feed you while exercising your new skill."

"What about that tree on the left?" Li chose the first one she could see. "Can you be that tree?"

Dodo stopped walking, concentrated so intensely that he frowned and then said, "Well, I can feel its branches, but that is about it."

"It might not have any fruits yet, Dodo. Let's go down to the valley and try another one." Li loved being in charge.

They went a bit further into the lower part of the forest, and there were fruit trees in the corner of a glade, with visible fruits.

Dodo and Li saw them both at once.

"Do you see that group of trees, Dodo? When you are using Ultimate Love, and you are things, you can contract yourself and be just one single piece of fruit, or even smaller. Or you can expand yourself and be the whole forest or much, much bigger.

You can do anything you want. Check various sizes of your being and we shall see what will happen." Li already knew that two of those trees did have ripe fruit, but she wanted to allow Dodo to find that out by himself. Dodo first concentrated and became the whole cluster of trees for a while. He found them friendly to him, but that was all. It could be a trick. Yesterday, one gorgeous and attractive piece of fruit turned out to be poisonous.

Then he tried a single piece of fruit, but it was just a fruit with leaves. He could not tell if it was ripe or not. After that, he tried to be another one, which had a hole in it because a bird had been eating it. That gave him hope, but then he saw a dead bird lying nearby, which was a clear sign that he should not eat that particular fruit.

He tried to be the roots of the trees. That was interesting, but it did not tell him what he needed to know.

From the viewpoint of Li, he was dwelling in his mind too long, so she decided to enter into it again. "You know what Dodo? Be all those five trees again and take a look. Tell me if some of them are ripe."

Dodo did not want to put his attention on those trees again and to be them. Right now his attention was on Li because he did not like her telling him continually what to do. So he did not do what she asked of him. Instead, he pondered about Li herself

and why she was so interested in teaching him. At that moment, he started to have an idea: "It's the second tree from the left."

It seemed a bit weird, but it was in his mind, so he told her quickly, "It is the second tree from the left."

"Yes, Dodo!" Li exclaimed joyfully. "I think so too. Let's have it!"

Dodo ate it absent-mindedly, still a bit confused about what had just happened. The idea that he in fact "heard" a thought of Li's rather than knowing himself which fruit was ripe made more sense to him.

"Li, I think I did not guess it correctly because I did not put my attention on the trees when you told me to do so," Dodo started to explain.

"And where did you have your attention then?" Li asked.

"It was on you. I did not even look at the trees, and suddenly I heard in my mind that it was the second tree from the left."

"Hm, that fits Dodo, I thought it, at that very moment. You were reading me, not the tree. That's great!" Li was smiling happily.

"That is not too big a mistake. You are getting there."

Dodo was glad too. Yes, this was the first time he had found out whether the fruit is ripe by his mental perception, though indirectly.



Now it made more sense to him. Only spirits can perceive directly, read the minds of others or see conditions of things without other senses. The body itself cannot do that.

That's why all his physical attempts had failed.

Then there is this principle of Ultimate Love, the spirit occupying the same space as the object or living being. That is how telepathic perception can happen, by the spirit extending self to it. If the spirit is not there, the communication connection is severed, and perception does not occur. He understood it and was able to work with it further.

Li woke him out of his contemplation. "Now that you know about this tree, you can mark it or make a stock of its fruits so that you can keep it for later. There is still a lot of practice you will need to do, and it is best not to do it while you are hungry."

It was a good idea. Dodo started to collect a stock of fruits, but then he stopped himself. "I think I shouldn't do this, Li."

"Why not?" she enquired.

"Because I was reading you when I was meant to be reading trees. Yes, I can refresh myself and satisfy my strongest hunger, but that should be it."

"But you correctly found that it was the second tree from the left. Whether it came from me or the tree, it does not matter." Li was refusing to understand his way of reasoning. In her eyes, he did not need to be so strict with himself.

"Maybe for you it doesn't matter," Dodo explained, "But I feel as if I have cheated and I cannot fool myself that I was reading trees when I was reading you. No, I must do it in the proper way, whatever it takes."

"Dodo, you are too hard on yourself!" Li became afraid that Dodo would get upset and do something foolish again, but Dodo was determined.

"Li, I must be happy with myself and part of it is that I cannot pretend something to be true when it is not true. My ability is not good enough yet, and I want to learn the reading of trees properly."

"All right, Dodo, let's continue. Where are some other fruit trees?" Li asked in a resigned tone because she saw that Dodo was correct and felt respect for his honesty. However, Dodo came up with yet another idea.

"Li, I must now do it on my own. When you are with me, I cannot be sure if I have read your idea or the tree itself. Please, go home and I will practise it alone." Dodo seemed very resolute about this matter.

Li shrugged and went away. She knew Dodo's moods. He was able to stay with her for many hours, but when he wanted to be alone, it was best to let him have his way; otherwise he got quite grumpy.

When Li left, Dodo thought up a simple plan of how he would alternately be various parts of trees and then be other things and then trees again and so on. He liked to be systematic.

Without hesitation, he got down to work. Dodo kept practising first being the object, finding some information about it such as a tree trunk being covered with moss on the side he could not see or a fruit having a worm in it and so on. Whenever it was possible, he looked at the subject itself to verify if his mental finding was correct. Many times the data gained by being things were quite accurate, but sometimes Dodo got carried away by his fantasies and made a series of mistakes, which was quite frustrating.

Later on in the afternoon, he tried eating the fruit of one tree, and it was ripe. However when he was reading this tree and its fruits, he was not able to tell if it was ripe or not. He found out by tasting it. Naturally he was not satisfied with that, but he kept the fruit to eat so that hunger did not impair his concentration.

In the evening, he returned to the caves. Li was happy to see him. Dodo noticed from the seriousness in her face and from the emotion that emanated from her that she was concerned about him.

That was another moment when his telepathic ability was awakening and which he overlooked. He helped her to bring water for cooking dinner and then he, for some time, entertained

himself by being caves, various pots, fireplaces and other things he could find in his home.

In the next days, Dodo kept going into the forest, practising the skill of being things, gaining knowledge in this way and trying to read the trees. Sometimes it was arduous, but Dodo was motivated enough to continue and not to give up. Those demanding periods alternated with times of extraordinary happiness, especially when he found out something interesting or verified that his mental estimate was confirmed by what he found when actually looking at the object.

One day Dodo swallowed quite a big piece of poisonous unripe fruit and had to sit down by that tree for a while because he was losing consciousness. A young deer came along, not noticing him at all and without hesitation swallowed fruit together with leaves and a piece of branch from the very same tree that had poisoned Dodo. The deer then walked a few steps and continued eating grass from the ground. Dodo expected the deer would soon be crying in agony, to struggle, or maybe to run around, have a fit and then die. It did not happen. The deer continued to eat the grass quite contentedly and showed no signs of poisoning.

Dodo thought that this was unfair. He took just a small bit of the fruit and was not able to walk for about half an hour while this deer ate a whole branch from the same tree and was apparently immune to the poison.

The picture of this deer eating the whole branch of the fruit tree came back into Dodo's mind. It struck him again that the deer had eaten the entire branch with several pieces of fruit similar to cherries and did not get poisoned. Dodo just had the fruit and was poisoned. Leaves! The antidote must be the leaves. Dodo concentrated his attention on one leaf of that tree and did the exercise of being it. It felt as if the leaf was not only pleasant but also contained some juice which would counteract the effects of the poison in the fruit of the same tree.

That seemed too simple to be true. Dodo decided to verify his feelings. He got up slowly and carefully ate one leaf of that tree expecting that it would have no effect at all. The leaf gave him a warm feeling in his stomach and shortly after that his tiredness and weakness went away, leaving Dodo fully alert. The nature around him suddenly had sharper shapes, and the noises and smells became stronger and more distinct. The leaves were the antidote!

It was a discovery about which even the tribal chief did not know. Dodo quickly tested the fruit and leaves from several fruit trees of other varieties and the result was same. The leaves worked each time against the poison in the fruit.

Naturally Dodo was very excited about this finding. He quickly selected a few pieces of unripe fruits and some leaves and hurried to Li to show her what he had discovered. First he ate the poisoned fruit, fell ill and then he healed himself with the leaves.

It was much more efficient than the herbal potion the tribe used to bring relief from such poisoning. Li then carefully tried the same thing and was amazed by the quick result.

Li's mother with her sharp mind quickly grasped this discovery and soon the whole tribe knew about it. Everybody rejoiced and praised Dodo. It was a big victory for all of them.

However the tribal chief ordered that two hunters must go and test various fruit trees, root vegetables and their leaves, which they used for food. He wanted to know if it was true, without exception, for all kinds of trees or if only some leaves would work as an antidote. The tribal chief recorded their findings into a knowledge box, a special device that they inherited from their ancestors. They had been a much more advanced civilization that had perished several generations ago.



# The New Level



The tribal chief later called for Dodo to talk with him. When Dodo arrived, he felt a bit uneasy because he had not yet finished his task of learning how to read trees and, therefore, had not passed his life-or-death test. The tribal chief felt Dodo's concern a moment before he entered the chief's cave.

"You have made a valuable discovery, Dodo, and you have shared it with others so that they can benefit from it. That is excellent.

In my eyes, you have passed the life-and-death test by doing just that. With this knowledge you have brought to us, the ability to recognize ripe fruit from a poisoned one is no longer necessary.

But I also know that you do not agree with me."

"No, Chief." Dodo was very humble. "You gave me the task, and I have achieved something else, but not this exact ability. My work is not complete, and I don't understand why. Do you have some advice for me?" Dodo ventured to ask.

The tribal chief could not help but admire Dodo's honesty and determination. He smiled at him kindly and said, "Just continue practising it in the same way as you have so far. Come back after three days and we will see how you feel then."

The tribal chief then dismissed him.

Dodo exercised for two more days, working as hard and as fast as he could, but still he was not able to recognize the ripe fruits from the poisoned ones. The trees revealed to him all manner of other things, but they did not tell him if their fruit was ripe or not. He was disappointed with himself and kept thinking that he would need to leave his tribe because he was not able to do this.



Li perceived Dodo's concerns and felt sad about it because she, of course, did not want him to leave.

This repeating of being trees, plants, things, animals or people in caves gave Dodo a lot of knowledge. Each time he concentrated and mentally occupied the space of an object he learned new information about it. Thus, each minute he learned about twenty to thirty new facts about his surroundings. As he was accumulating this information, his knowledge was not only increasing in amount but also the data he gathered made various cross-relationships.

All that helped him to find out the principles of how nature works. It gave him a new understanding of his surroundings. It was not a mere collection of data but an actual multiplication of his intelligence.

Dodo started to see connections between apparently unrelated events. He became able to predict with astonishing accuracy future development and changes in nature. His intellect increased by several leaps. He reached an entirely new level of understanding, and that changed his personality and viewpoints about people and things as he continued this exercise. From being a small boy who just loved to play in the forest, he developed into a mature man with experience and wisdom fully matching and factually exceeding the knowledge of many other members of his tribe.

He was still anxious about his inability to read the trees and to tell which one had ripe fruits. The worry occupied Dodo's mind so much that he totally failed to notice this dramatic increase of intelligence.

On the second day of his prolonged practising, Dodo saw the stream of water on the hill above their caves, which went down the hill and then disappeared into a rock hole before going underground.

That was not unusual. All the tribe members had known for many years that this stream went underground. Dodo expanded his attention down the hill. He wanted to find out if he could see which way the water was going under the surface. While being the hill and the stream he soon realized that wherever the water leaked back to the surface, small bushes and bunches of grass started to grow on an otherwise sandy slope and thus created a sort of track showing where the water went.

However, without the knowledge of this connection to the water stream, the placement of bushes and grasses seemed entirely random. Everybody else had overlooked this relationship to the underground water.

The water came back to the surface about six hundred metres below their caves and from there the tribe members carried water up the hill in buckets. However, a cluster of bushes grew just a few meters behind the last cave, which they used as a storage place.

Dodo came to that cluster and, by using the skills he had practised, he found the place where most of the water came up to the surface. He brought digging tools and started to excavate the sand. Underneath the layer of sand, he found wet earth. He dug even deeper, took out a pile of soil and a few stones and, after about an hour of work, a hollow space full of water opened up.

Dodo enlarged the hole so that buckets could be put into it and water drawn out of the hollow. At the same time, other tribe members arrived, perceiving in their minds Dodo's most recent discovery and they appreciated Dodo for his work. None of them had a notion that water could be found so close to their caves. It eliminated for them the need to carry water buckets over a long distance up the hill, thereby saving them much hard work.

The tribal chief invited Dodo to another private conversation. "This is the second valuable gift you have brought to our tribe this week," the chief said. "What do you believe will happen if we continue like this?"

"We will all have a better life, I suppose," Dodo answered readily, "Isn't it what you want?"

"Of course I want that, and I want you to work on it together with me," said the tribal chief. Dodo was taken by surprise.

"Maybe ... I don't know ... I have not fulfilled all the conditions yet." Dodo was hesitating. He could not imagine himself working

together with the tribal chief and making decisions concerning the whole tribe. He did not feel grown up enough for this. And then it occurred to him that he had not yet completed his life-or-death test.

"Ah, you are worried about your life-or-death test." The tribal chief sensed Dodo's concern. "Just continue practising, Dodo but while doing that, also please take a look at yourself and compare how you were before you started the exercise and how you are now. Compare your way of thinking before and your way of thinking now. Take a look at what you could do before the test and how much more you can do now. There is a surprise waiting for you, my young friend."

Dodo nodded his head and politely left the tribal chief's cave. The next day he continued the practice of being things and gaining knowledge about them. He strenuously kept exercising the distinguishing between ripe and unripe fruits, but the more he wanted to know it, the more that information kept escaping him. He felt as if he had hit a sort of mental wall which prevented him from "looking" in that direction. He was again gaining all manner of other data about nature but not what he wanted.

Suddenly he realized that he should not fight against nature and the dangers contained within it but rather support it.

He began to see how insects, plants, animals, trees, birds and people are all interdependent and that they must cooperate to live in harmony.

Each creature has a purpose and it does well only if it helps the survival of other species. Eating the ripe fruits helps the trees; that's why it is not poisonous. Prematurely tearing away the unripe fruit harms the trees, so the trees defend themselves by making their fruit toxic; and that was just one example of many things he had learned.

Then he remembered the "before and after" comparison that the tribal chief had asked him to do, so he started to work on that.

What he found was quite a revelation. Before practising his tree reading exercise, he used to do whatever the adult tribal people ordered him, without thinking much about it. He blindly followed these instructions only because somebody once told him that he must obey in order not to fall into any danger. As he had always followed their directions, he simply lived the life of a child, mostly playing with Li and sometimes doing easy work, so that he did not obstruct other tribe members from performing their duties. Now he was thinking and acting in terms of what is good for the tribe, assuming responsibility for his life, as well as responsibility for the wellbeing of his group.

Another thing that he compared was his perceptions. Before there were seemingly fewer things around him, but, in reality, he was now able to perceive more and in more detail than before.

This change of his perception created an illusion that there were more items in his surroundings than there were few days ago.

Together with his increased perception came an amazing speed with which he started to gain knowledge. In the beginning, he did his exercise of being things slowly and was often uncertain about what he "saw" in his mind, but now he was acquiring the data with incredible speed. Very often he just quickly looked at the object and knew that very instant several new facts about it, which were not visible to the naked eye.

He had also begun to see that his environment was not just static with standing plants and lying stones, but that it changed continually. Wind shifts sand, earth and other small things, while drying up the water, which later returns as rain. Animals move, vegetation grows, the sun creates, by its light and temperature, new living creatures, while other things decay and disintegrate.

Dodo also understood that plants and animals by their death feed new plants and young animals, and so the cycle goes on.

Dodo also observed that there are powers in those motions that need to be considered, be it protection against rains or earthquakes or a threat from fierce predators. These motions

could also be employed for the benefit of his tribe, like movements of herds of goats or changes in temperatures and moisture from rain, which made crops grow slower or faster in various places and many other phenomena.

Before these realizations, Dodo lived his life for himself only, but now he had achieved close communication with the people of his tribe. He spread his attention in such a way as to encompass each tribe member and was able to "hear" their thoughts and thus knew what they needed. Thus, he became able to give each of them maximum help.

He did the same thing with nature. Dodo extended his attention over the entire forest so that whenever he wanted some food, one or two seconds of concentration showed him the place where he could find something to eat. It protected him against wild animals or places where flora in the forest was too difficult or dangerous to pass through. His new ability also warned him about swamps or where poisonous snakes, giant insects and animal-plant hybrids lived so that he did not need to fight with such creatures.

He could see as well that the more he helped nature and his people, the more reward, in the form of happiness and support from others, came back to him, and the more secure he became against any possible danger.

Dodo now simply knew with complete calmness what he should or should not do. His decisions and conclusions were

precise and swift to a degree he could not have ever imagine before.

He saw that he had become a more advanced personality, and now it would be a good time to go to the tribal chief and speak with him about what to do next. So he went to see him. On his way there, he started to worry again about the life-or-death test.

"Chief, I still don't know if I have passed my exam. Let me explain it to you," Dodo said calmly.

In front of the tribal chief stood this new Dodo, still seemingly a child, only a ten-year-old boy, but with the mentality and maturity of an adult.

"All right, tell me." The tribal chief prepared himself to listen to Dodo carefully.

"I still cannot tell which fruit is ripe and which is not, and I do not know why I cannot do this. It feels like a rock wall sitting in my mind and preventing me from reaching that ability. But I do not need it. By practising the Ultimate Love, I have gained tremendous knowledge of nature, and it feels like I now have the wisdom of five men. I can perceive things in nature so well that it is practically impossible for me to be poisoned by the fruit. I have learned to help nature and, as a result, nature helps me back, and it does not want to hurt me again. I have learned so many things, but I still cannot perceive the difference between ripe and unripe fruit. Do you have some advice for me, Chief?"



The tribal chief looked at him, and he had to prevent himself from laughing out loud. Dodo really needed his help.

"You know what, Dodo? Have this orange fruit here and eat it so that you can better concentrate on what I am about to tell you." The tribal chief handed him a bowl of fruit.

"But I don't want these fruits," said Dodo.

"Why not?" the tribal chief asked.

"Because they are not ripe yet."

"And how do you know they are not ripe, Dodo?" the tribal chief smiled.

"Well, I just know," Dodo answered, confident but a little embarrassed.

"That is correct. And it is excellent that you know it. Having just told me that you know the fruit is not ripe yet, do you really think that you need to practise anymore?" The tribal chief smiled at the boy.

"I am not sure, Chief. Do you think that I have achieved that ability, that it was not an accident?" Dodo asked hesitantly.

"I cannot answer that question for you, Dodo. You must find this answer, but does it even matter anymore?"

"What do you mean?" Dodo asked with surprise. "I thought that the custom is that if somebody fails to learn the reading of trees, he must either die or leave the tribe?"

"Yes, you are right that we had such custom, but it is no longer necessary because of you. When you found the remedy for fruit poisoning by eating the leaves, I made you continue to exercise the reading of trees just to resolve your worries. There was no other reason than that. Do you understand me?"

"Yes."

"But that is not the point," the tribal chief continued. "We measure your value to the tribe by your usefulness, and you have managed to improve the lives of all of us markedly twice in the last week alone. Apparently you will be able to do more such things for us in the future. Now, even if you did not have the capability to read the trees, if I banished you, do you consider it would be good for the future of our tribe?"

Dodo thought for a moment and then said, "I don't know. If it must be..."

"Well, that wouldn't be good at all!" the tribal chief said with emphasis. "It would be very unwise if I were to send away somebody with a bright mind like yours. Your benefit to the group is much greater than the possible disadvantage of not being able to read trees. All others can do it so they can bring ripe fruit for all of us, but you are the only one who brought water nearer to us."

“You are the one who found the remedy for fruit poisoning, and I don't know what else your extraordinary mind is going to create.

“And above all, you have just demonstrated to me that you can distinguish between ripe and unripe fruit. You have had that ability for quite some time, but it did not display itself because you didn't think that you could do it. Isn't it time for you to start believing in yourself?” \_\_\_\_\_

The tribal chief was right and the boy was relieved. A few days later Dodo acquired another mysterious ability and then another one and another one. What were those abilities? What did he do with them? Did they make him happier? The answers to those questions and the continuation of Dodo's incredible story are in the next book, called The Telepathic People.

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**THE TELEPATHIC PEOPLE**

*It's always a pleasure to hear from my readers. If you have any questions, comments or just wishes, feel free to write me at: [gaelsdaan@gmail.com](mailto:gaelsdaan@gmail.com) .*

*Did you ever think that also you too might be a telepath?*

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# *THE FIRST SECRET*

*(The Telepathic People Series)*

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