

DREAM ANSWER 2

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(5 minutes)

Narrator: Pat felt the burden of her years. There was struggle to control living expense, deal with deaths in the family, recover from illness and discipline herself to do the same work every day in a job with little security. She *did not* feel very good about the *quality* of work she did there. It all took its toll. Pat remembered a time when life was an adventure, the laughs, the excitement. Where were they now? She had heard about prayer all her life. In the past she didn't seem to need it. But now, with a seriously low spirit that numbed her very being, Pat prayed for inspiration, a feeling of being truly alive. It felt like begging – like a ludicrous waste of effort.

Nonetheless, Pat persisted. One night she retired, but *did not* have the usual fitful tossing and turning.

(Pat looks around, smiling slightly with open mouth as though amazed and thrilled. She reaches upward, palms outward, and waves slowly across as though sensing with hands what she sees in the distance and all about her. Then she moves arms outward, palms upward, and raises shoulders in a slight shrug.)

Pat: Where is this? How did I get here? ... It's all so beautiful!

Voice: You are dreaming.

Pat: What? Who said that? I'm dreaming? ... That's a disappointment.

Voice: Why? Do you not know this is your mind also?

Pat: It's – It's like a heaven.

Voice: Heaven ... Would you like to see God?

Pat: G... God? Yes! You mean ... Oh, but I don't feel ready.

Voice: That's the very reason you feel disconnected in your wakefulness. Remember the ennui, your sense of futility when you...

Pat: When I tried to pray ... It just felt like empty words. I didn't feel a loving presence - no inspiring sense of purpose - no vision.

Voice: But you did not give up trying did you? So here you are. Are you without feeling now?

Pat: No! I feel lifted, awed, enthralled. ... But it's just a dream.

Voice: All this is in you, all the time. Your waking hours and your visions here are both very real. They are *in* your true, eternal mind, always. But there is even more than this. Far more.

Pat: More than this? ... I'm beginning to feel a bit apprehensive now. What if I get lost in this dream and can't go back?

Voice: You wish to cling to your old life? Don't you know that's why you were drifting? Why your soul seemed to slide into a desolate void?

Pat: But I tried. I did everything I could to dispel that feeling of drabness that was smothering me.

Voice: You were trying to do this as a person from your past. You're not the same now. ... Step into the strange. Allow yourself to be aware of all things: Fear, beauty, sadness. These are mere players in the unfolding life, not conquerors of your spirit. ... Cling not to comfort and bow not before despair.

Pat: Is this dream a message? Did my prayers cause it?

Voice: Remember walking through the park after fretting over debts? You chanced to peer up through the canopy of trees at shimmering glints of sunlight as a breeze stirred the branches. For a short moment, you really saw something in and of itself that was beauty. Your willingness to be in that moment, however brief, was your petition.

Pat: That was my prayer? Not my nightly words and pleading?

Voice: You have said it.

Pat: Sooo. As I see it now, I don't pray with words but look at something beautiful?

Voice: You search for beauty. The search is the path, the becoming. It's the engagement of spirit with the truly real. Do this and you will *find* words with rich meaning for your prayers.

Narration: From that night forward, Pat was on a path to becoming a happy and grateful person. She began to glimpse beauty in the clouds, the sunsets, the rain. Arising earlier in the morning, before work she briefly watched wrens in the flower bed outside her window. Pat would take time to pause and remember the evening when a change in the weather caused a gentle wind-song in the trees: Crisp Fall leaves rattled in the branches and seemed to chatter to one another.

When paying a compliment, Pat noticed beauty in the girl's response at the super-mart checkout. She saw it in fellow customers who held the door as she passed through. Pat found that inspiration, even glory, was a matter of attention. But first, she had to shake off the cloak that dimmed vision and confined the mind to inner struggles about survival and what "should be".

Pat took a step into strangeness. She applied for a different job - one with fewer after-hours, yet one that she feared she could not do. With an *unaccustomed appeal* to fellow employees to help and guide her, she became *very good* at what she did.

(5 minutes, three voices)

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