

THE WORLD WITHIN

Quietly I sit on the outskirts of your vision. It is very easy to overlook me, to pass me by, for I am someone who seems small and insignificant and while some may find that rude, I do not. I do not desire the limelight that so many seem to crave. Like a fire, it has burned me and I am comfortable with my little world; we cannot all be the centre of attention. If we all shared the limelight who would notice the great ones among us, there would be no centre from which to draw our hope and life.

I am content to let the life of the party continue to bring us all the laughter and joy that seems so much a part of their life, and whilst some condemn them for their shallowness, I do not. While they are around I can relax and withdraw from the limelight that you may seek to throw upon me. Like a watchful guardian of hope I will sit on the sidelines of your parties and functions and enjoy the peaceful rest of the redeemed.

There are those who from time to time, notice me sitting out there on the sidelines of life and call me to join in; some are even offended when I refuse their invitation. Others however, who tire of the endless noise and frivolity, sit by my side a while and plumb my depths. I sit and listen so patiently for I enjoy your company; it is nice to sit for a while with a friend at my side.

If you invite me into your life I may seem hesitant, but do not be offended. Your personality or the colour of your skin does not put me off, nor am I contemptuous of your gender or sexual orientation. Your beliefs and lifestyle may be foreign to me but that is no reflection on you; I like to take stock of my surroundings.

I will move through the rooms of your life examining your jewels as you watch me. Do not be afraid, for I am a great believer in privacy and will only come as far as you are prepared to let me come. I too have been hurt before by people who thought they knew what was best for me. Sudden movements also frighten me and like a hunted animal, I will run if you should seek to capture me. I need my freedom—it is upon the boundless plains and soaring mountain forests of my imagination that I find my wellspring of hope. But by noticing and pondering the assorted clutter of your life, I am learning more of me.

I am defined by my relationships with people and our journey together along the path, for however long that will be, will reveal a little bit more of myself to me. Should you care to look within yourself, you may find a little of the beauty you have left behind with the toys of your childhood. Who knows? Perhaps our journey together will last for many years, till at last I draw my final breath and go to wherever the winding path leads me next.

Do not pry unnecessarily into my life, even if I seem to be in pain. Sorrow is the wellspring where I find renewed hope. My emotions, whether happy or sad, peaceful or angry, are all vital parts of my personality and all of them serve to make me who I am. My life has often been marred by tragedy and there are those who break down when they hear my tales of woe. These acts however, have made me what I am today and I have an infectious sense of humour that has served to soften the hardness of my own heart. Should I need you though, don't worry. I am not an island and I detest ivory towers; I'll let you know soon enough if I need help.

My life depends on the support of others. I have survived the very worst that life

can throw at me, because I was never afraid to take the hand of another who was also hurting and take their pain into my very being. It was within the death of my own selfish desires and my love for my fellow traveller that I found the answer to my own pain. You have heard it said that 'joy shared is joy doubled and sorrow shared is sorrow halved;; to take the yoke of another and share the load makes our journey together that much easier. There are also times you will see me withdraw into myself, do not strive to reach me, for it is within the solitude of silence that my strength lies. It is where my batteries are recharged and my soul breaks forth into song.

And should I reach for you and invite you into my quietness—you will begin to reach the very heart of me.

Such is the depth of the world within me...

Written by Alastair Rosie 1997 ©