

The Master Director

EXCERPT No. 8

Diamond Mind

(from Chapter 12)

The following excerpt takes place when I went to meet Gurudev for the first time in his home village. Before leaving Darjeeling I bought him a present. It wasn't a diamond, but it looked like one. It was a cut zircon. The highest teachings of the Tibetan Buddhists is called the Vajrayana, or Diamond Vehicle. A diamond reflects the many facets of the world, yet itself is clear and retains no image, just like the enlightened mind.

I take out the zircon crystal and present it to him. He opens the white tissue it is wrapped in, picks it up between his thumb and forefinger, and holds it to the open window. The snow peaks splinter in its many facets. 'Clear, just like mind,' he says. 'Empty *and* full.'

He tells Dawa to find a mirror. Dawa runs out with his usual enthusiasm and returns a moment later with a round pocket mirror. Gurudev places the crystal on the mirror, which he holds in his palm. He slowly starts tipping the mirror but the crystal doesn't slide. Dawa and I are holding our breath as the mirror becomes vertical. Then Gurudev keeps going and turns the mirror right upside down—and the crystal sticks to it. Dawa's eyes widen. Gurudev looks at Dawa and then turns to look at me, wanting to see the effect his feat has had on us. Then he turns the mirror back over, takes the crystal off, wraps it in the tissue it came in, and motions for Dawa to put it in his shirt pocket.

Gurudev jumps up; Dawa helps him with his slippers, and Gurudev goes to the outhouse.

I am alone with Dawa.

'So what did you think of Gurudev's trick with the crystal?' I ask him, emphasizing the word *trick*. He obviously thought it a miracle. Sensing my scepticism, he smiles without answering. 'Let me see the crystal,' I say. He hands it to me. 'Now where's the mirror? I bet I can repeat his trick.' From the beginning in Timi, Dawa and I have had a friendly banter going about Gurudev's miracles. Needless to say, he is always seeing them, and I am always debunking them. He gets the mirror and I unwrap the crystal. He has a big smile on his face. While gullible, he has a keen intelligence and is open-minded enough to relish an experiment.

Wetting my forefinger without him seeing, I moisten the largest facet and then press it onto the mirror. To fully contrast Gurudev's show, I turn the mirror upside down without ceremony and the crystal sticks. For a moment Dawa looks at me as if now I've acquired supernatural powers, then catches himself. Just then, Gurudev returns. I put the crystal back into the tissue and Dawa slips it back in his pocket.

A little later an old man comes in, and Gurudev invites him to sit. It is an intimate moment. Gurudev is in a good mood. He puts some pillows behind his head and lies on the bed. We are sitting on cushions on the floor, leaning against the wall. Gurudev and the old man speak, and I enjoy watching them.

Then Gurudev asks Dawa for the crystal. Dawa takes it from his pocket and gives it to Gurudev, who presents the crystal to the old man, indicating that he should make it into a ring. The man is elated to receive such a gift from Gurudev.

Dawa leans over, and with a twinkle in his eye whispers in my ear, 'Did you see the miracle Gurudev just performed? He took a piece of zircon and he made it into something infinitely more precious than diamond. Now that man will treasure it for the rest of his life.'