

# **MYTHIC YOGA**

## **Narayana's Dream**

**Ancient Hindu Myths and Personal Story**

**By Sydney Solis**

**The Mythic Yoga Studio**

**Boulder, Colorado**

**Copyright 2008 All Rights Reserved**

They say that enlightenment is like a jewel that sits right in the middle of your forehead. It's always been there, even though you search for it. You walk around and search and search out ahead of you, but one day, you realize, Oh! Of course! It's been right here in the middle of my forehead all along! Why, it's so obvious! Because it's part of you. It is you.

I grew up in Boulder, Colorado in the 70s and my favorite place to go, as a child was the Boulder Public Library. I loved all the books and ideas and concepts, but most of all because I was with my beloved big sister, Nancy. She'd take me to the card catalog – these big long, long narrow drawers filled with thousands and thousands of index cards typewritten with book titles and call numbers. Her fingers would flip through many of them, and then she'd take me by the hand and we'd go up, up, up the big staircase to the heavy steel racks filled with books and she'd pick out books on homemaking.

We'd check out 10 at a time and pour through them at home in the security of our bedroom we shared together. Nancy would then teach me everything about having a beautiful home. She taught me how to square the sheets on the corner of a bed when making it, how to deep fry home made donuts and how to diaper a baby. Why, growing up with Nancy, the one I worshiped, it was paradise.

But after a while, paradise began to change. At least I thought it did. When I was in fourth grade I noticed that all the kids I went to school with in Boulder, they all had those big puffy down jackets with a jangle of ski lift tickets hanging on them and they'd come back from the weekends owl-eyed from the sunburn where their ski goggles had been. Skiing, now that was expensive, my mother always said. We would never do that.

All the kids also had those new Izod shirts with the little crocodile embroidered over their hearts. But all I had over my heart was a grease stain because my clothes all came from garage sales that my mother paid a quarter for. She'd take thick yellow yarn and embroider a flower over that grease stain and said nobody would even know it was there.

But I knew it was there. I didn't like it. And I didn't like myself. I didn't like being different. All those feelings I didn't like about myself, I discovered that I could do something about it. I could open up a door inside my heart, like a little, dark closet, and I could cut that part off that I didn't like about myself, then stuff it through that door and then shut the door tight. And then I hoped people would like me.

By now Nancy was already in high school, and despite all our shabby clothes and house, she was really well liked. She showed me all the tricks of how to get friends and smile and smile and smile. I loved and worshipped Nancy even more. Especially because she promised that she would teach me how to get a boyfriend.

But when I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Platt Jr. High School, Nancy moved away from home after she graduated. She didn't get along too well with my mother, so she moved to Alaska to work for the forest service. Now, my mother was a loud and eccentric and embarrassing person most of the time and when she heard Nancy was going to Alaska, she got all excited.

“Oh, Nancy, I think it's so wonderful that you are going to Alaska to work! You know, you are so close to Hawaii up there, why don't you just hop on over?”

Alaska close to Hawaii? What was my mother thinking? Well that was my mother and like I said, my mother was very WEIRD, REALLY WEIRD in a bad way our house was REALLY embarrassing, but that's another story. But I knew that to deal with her I could cut my mom off, stuff her through the door in my heart and shut that off too.

One day, my sister called home.

“Quick everybody! It's Nancy!” my mother yelled. “She's in Hawaii!” We each picked up one of the phones that were spaced all over the house. I picked it up and I heard my mother say, “I bet it's beautiful in Hawaii. You lucky dog! You are probably lying in paradise on the beach! Tell us all about it, Nancy!”

“Mom, Dad,” Nancy said. “I’m with the Hare Krishnas.’ There was a pause on the phone.

“Harry who?” my mother said.

“Hare Krishna. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness. I’ve found my bliss and I’m so happy,” Nancy said.

Oh no! I thought. The Hare Krishnas! I know who they are. They are so weird. People don’t like them! Because they are so weird and they’re really different. I thought, I would never fit in now. Even Carolyn Hemstreet at her birthday party said, “Those Krishnas are weird,” and everybody agreed! Oh no, I thought, am I going to have to cut my dear sister Nancy off from myself too and shut her away in the closet like all those other things I don’t like about myself?

Now my mother was upset for a long time. And about a year later, when it seemed like Nancy wasn’t coming home, she went to Hawaii, because we had “.... to get Nancy out of that nut house,” she said about the Krishnas. But she was unsuccessful.

Apparently my mother “made offenses,” as Nancy put it, and she was strong-armed by two Krishnas out of the temple. How do you get physically removed from a Hare Krishna temple? Well, that was my mother.

So another year passed, and when my sister still didn't come home, my mother sent my younger sister, Jeanie, and I on a mission. When I was in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade I went to Honolulu and I thought, great! I'm going to Hawaii, I'm going to get a tan and a boyfriend and I may get my sister back, too.

I arrived in Hawaii and Jeanie and I stayed with Nancy in the women's ashram. I had to wear a sari and we had to get up at 3 a.m., brush our teeth and go to temple and chant Hare Krishna. We chanted and danced for two hours and I had to plug my ears because it was so loud with cymbals and drums and the blowing of a conch shell.

During the day we ate so much really delicious vegetarian food that prepared with so much turmeric that we peed bright orange all day long. Later we went down the beach for Sankertam, where the Krishna's asked for donations and they gave out a book. Its *The Bhagavad-Gita*, it had these really beautiful painting and it had this guy who.... was... blue! I had never seen a blue man before. He looked like he took a hot bath in some Rit dye or something and he was playing a flute and I thought, "This isn't Jesus!" I was worried because we were baptized Catholic and now went to Episcopal Church.

Afterwards Nancy and I went down to the beach and sat by the waves. I looked at her and said, "Nancy, don't you want to come home?"

"Oh! Syd, you must understand something. Back home I was living the life of a Karmie. I was stuck in the cycle of samsara. I was stuck in the wheel of birth, life,

sickness, old age and death. Now, instead I keep my mind focused on Krishna and stop all that. You should too. Keep your mind on Krishna, Syd, and all suffering will subside.”

Keep my mind on a blue guy? I thought. “Nancy, don’t you want to come home and be with me?” I choked back the tears now.

“Sure, Syd,” she said putting her arm around me. “ But that’s not going to satisfy you. Just look at the people on this beach. They’ve been dreaming of coming here, saving their money and now that they are here, they think they are happy. But soon it will pass. They will all have to go home. Soon they will be back in the office working and dreaming about the next trip. You see everything in this material world is impermanent. Your desires and fears leave you dissatisfied. The only thing that satisfies is Krishna. So you should surrender, Syd. You should surrender to Krishna.”

“Surrender? Surrender to Krishna? I just want to get a tan and a boyfriend!” I said.

“Oh, Syd. You see, if you don’t surrender, you are still stuck in the world, you are stuck in a dream.”

## **NARAYANA’S DREAM**

## From the Mahabharata and Vishnu Purana

The great One, decided to become Vishnu. He cast his veil of maya and created the cosmic ocean. He liked his creation and decided to take a nap. From out of the depths of the cosmic ocean, came the serpent Ananda Sesa, the guardian of the great treasure. With his huge body and 100 heads it created a bed canopy for Lord Vishnu so that he could sleep. Vishnu's radiant and golden wife, Lakshmi, the great goddess of wealth and beauty, massaged his feet. Ah, it felt so wonderful, and he was filled with desire. And so he began to dream. Thus he became Narayana, and from his navel grew a lotus. The lotus came up, up through the cosmic ocean until it reached the water's surface. There it opened petal by petal until it was in full bloom.

In the middle of the lotus was an egg. The egg sat there for a whole year until finally it shook, and cracked and out popped Lord Brahma, with his four faces he saw all of creation, north, south, east and west. With the top of the eggshell, he saw creation as the sky and heaven, the bottom of the eggshell he saw below and the earth. He liked his creation and felt the desire to continue creating.

Just then, out of Narayana's ear came two demons. They climbed up, up his lotus stem through the waters. Brahma saw them and cried out, "Wake up! Wake up Narayana! Demons want to destroy me!" Narayana didn't wake up. Instead, Lakshmi appeared beside Brahma and said, "Well, what have we here?"

“These demons want to destroy me!” Brahma cried. “Please, my lady, you must help me and do something! Destroy them first!”

“Well, you see, he who sleeps, all of this is his dream. Good, bad... it is all his creation. You are just beginning to create right now, and this whole cycle takes some time to come around.... you will do battle with the demons.... but down the road in time. So be gone, demons.” And she banished them to the edges of the universe.

When the demons had fled, Brahma asked, “Who are you?”

“I am the spouse of he who sleeps,” she said. “This dream of his that we are in, it is my body, it is all of creation. I am Lakshmi, but to you I shall be your spouse, Saraswati. Together we shall create art, music, math, and speech. So let us continue in our creation.”

She looked at Brahma with her deep eyes and as her gaze penetrated him Brahma again felt the desire to create. He hummed the great syllable OM and from him arose a bubble came out of his heart. Suddenly, a shot of energy came up out of Narayana’s body and pierced the bubble. It shattered into hundreds of millions of tiny pieces.

Brahma discovered that he could take one of those tiny pieces and pierce time and space. Why, he became a blade of grass quivering on the hillside. He was a bleating

sheep, or he was a mother distraught over the death of her son killed in war. Oh! He was now a mother, in joy at the birth of her son. Ah, all of creation he became.

Brahma now understood why Narayana had come into his own creation --  
Because it was fun.