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Written submission.

It was in the early to mid-1990s. Aseshananda was still in good health. Sita and I had made our annual pilgrimage to Portland, stayed a few days and were about to leave. We asked for a private interview with him. We sat alone with him in the foyer. Swami said, “All right, now ask some question.”

We said, “We don’t have any questions, Swami. We’ve been practicing for more than 30 years now. We just wanted to be alone with you for a while.”

Swami was pleased with this, took out the little picture of Holy Mother he always carried with him and touched it to each of our heads, murmuring something we couldn’t understand. Then he sat back in his chair, we all closed our eyes, and suddenly the three of us soared upward. Sita and I had the identical experience. We suppose Swami A. had it, too. For some minutes (hours? days?—there was no sense of “time” as we usually conceive of it) we sailed up and up into a cloud of light. It felt like he was holding us to him somehow, or maybe we were being drawn along in his wake—very difficult to describe. Ecstatic. Eventually we heard him saying, “All right, all right, very good,” and some other mumblings. We returned to our bodies, took the dust of his feet and said our goodbyes, probably staggering a little as we walked. The radiant sense of the experience stayed with us for days, and a wisp of it is with us still.

This was one of our most treasured experiences with Swami Aseshananda.

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