

THE RETURN OF JULIUS CAESAR

C. JINARAJADASA

ADYAR

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“Julius Caesar appeared but he died young by a fall. He is the boy mentioned in the story of ‘The Two Brothers’ in Invisible Helpers, where Cyril comes in. The dead boy’s name was Reginald. The living brother is Arthur. They are Irish. Reginald (Julius Caesar) is to come back presently to play some part in an Anglo-American Anglo-Saxon Federation of the future.”

These are the words of C. W. Leadbeater which I wrote down as a memorandum during a voyage we made in December 1906 from Liverpool to Malta. My

memorandum of the conversation bears the date December 21, 1906.

The story of the brothers was first published by Annie Besant in *The Theosophical Review* of November 1897. It narrates the astral experiences as an "invisible helper" of an English boy aged ten, for whom the name "Cyril" is given in the story, so that attention might not be drawn to him. His real name was Basil, and he was the only son of Alfred Hodgson Smith, a most devoted and distinguished Theosophist, of Harrogate, England.

Basil Hodgson-Smith was at Oxford, where he joined the Officers' Training Corps. He worked for a while at the Theosophical Headquarters in London. On war breaking out in 1914, he volunteered and received at once a commission.

He rose to the grade of Brevet-Major. He was seriously wounded in 1916. Later, after rejoining, he was captured by the Germans while holding an outpost, and became a prisoner of war in November 1917. He was wounded in the hand and lungs, and though after the war he recovered, he never fully regained his health, and died in 1929 at the age of forty-two.

The incident of "The Two Brothers" is thus narrated by C. W. Leadbeater in his *Invisible Helpers*.¹

¹ Revised and Enlarged Edition, 1928, p. 62 ff.

I

THE TWO BROTHERS

Our *dramatis personæ* are two brothers, the sons of a country gentleman—Lancelot, aged fourteen, and Walter, aged eleven—very good boys of the ordinary healthy, manly type, like hundreds of others in this fair realm, with no obvious psychic qualifications of any sort, except the possession of a good deal of Celtic blood. Perhaps the most remarkable feature about them was the intensity of the affection that existed between them, for

they were simply inseparable—neither would go anywhere without the other, and the younger idolized the elder as only a younger boy can.

One unlucky day Lancelot was thrown from his pony and killed ¹ and for Walter the world became empty. The child's grief was so real and terrible that he could neither eat nor sleep, and his mother and nurse were at their wits' end as to what to do for him. He seemed deaf alike to persuasion and blame; when they told him that grief was wicked, and that his brother was in heaven, he simply answered that he could not be certain of that, and that even if it were true, he knew that

¹ In taking a high jump.

Lancelot could no more be happy in heaven without him than he could on earth without Lancelot.

Incredible as it may sound, the poor child was actually dying of grief, and what made the case even more pathetic was the fact that, all unknown to him, his brother stood at his side all the time, fully conscious of his misery, and himself half-distracted at the failure of his repeated attempts to touch him or speak to him.

Affairs were still in this most pitiable condition on the third evening after the accident, when Cyril's attention was drawn to the two brothers—he cannot tell how. “He just happened to be passing,” he says; yet surely the

will of the Lords of Compassion guided him to the scene. Poor Walter lay exhausted yet sleepless—alone in his desolation, so far as he knew, though all the time his sorrowing brother stood beside him. Lancelot, free from the chains of the flesh, could see and hear Cyril, so obviously the first thing to do was to soothe his pain with a promise of friendship and help in communicating with his brother.

As soon as the dead boy's mind was thus cheered with hope, Cyril turned to the living child, and tried with all his strength to impress upon his brain the knowledge that his brother stood beside him, not dead, but living and loving as of yore. But all his efforts

were in vain ; the dull apathy of grief so filled poor Walter's mind that no suggestion from without could enter, and Cyril knew not what to do. Yet so deeply was he moved by the sad sight, so intense was his sympathy and so firm his determination to help in some way or other at any cost of strength to himself, that somehow (even to this day he cannot tell how) he found himself able to touch and to speak to the heart-broken child.

Putting aside Walter's questions as to who he was and how he came there, he went straight to the point, telling him that his brother stood beside him, trying hard to make him hear his constantly repeated assurances that he was

not dead, but living and yearning to help and comfort him. Little Walter longed to believe, yet hardly dared to hope; but Cyril's eager insistence vanquished his doubts at last, and he said :

“ O ! I do believe you, because you're so kind ; but if I could only see him, then I should *know*, then I should be quite sure ; and if I could only hear his voice telling me he was happy, I shouldn't mind a bit his going away again afterwards.”

Young though he was at the work, Cyril knew enough to be aware that Walter's wish was one not ordinarily granted and was beginning regretfully to tell him so, when suddenly he felt a

Presence that all the helpers know,¹ and though no word was spoken it was borne in upon his mind that instead of what he had meant to say, he was to promise Walter the boon his heart desired. "Wait till I come back," he said, "and you shall see him then." And then—he vanished.

That one touch from the Master had shown him what to do and how to do it, and he rushed to fetch the older friend who had so often helped him before.² This older man had not yet retired for the night, but on hearing Cyril's hurried summons, he lost no time in accompanying him, and in

¹ The Master K. H.

² C. W. Leadbeater.

a few minutes they were back at Walter's bedside. The poor child was just beginning to believe it all a lovely dream, and his delight and relief when Cyril reappeared were beautiful to see. Yet how much more beautiful was the scene a moment later, when, in obedience to a word from the Master, the elder man materialized the eager Lancelot, and the living and the dead stood hand in hand once more !

Now in very truth for both the brothers had sorrow been turned into joy unspeakable, and again and again they both declared that now they should never feel sad any more, because they knew that death had no power to part them. Nor was their

gladness damped even when Cyril explained carefully to them, at his older friend's suggestion, that this strange physical reunion would not be repeated, but that all day long Lancelot would be near Walter, even though the latter could not see him, and every night Walter would slip out of his body and be consciously with his brother once more.

Hearing this, poor weary Walter sank to sleep at once and proved its truth, and was amazed to find with what hitherto unknown rapidity he and his brother could fly together from one to another of their familiar haunts. Cyril thoughtfully warned him that he would probably forget most of his

freer life when he awoke next day ; but by rare good fortune he did *not* forget, as so many of us do. Perhaps the shock of the great joy had somewhat aroused the latent psychic faculty which belongs to the Celtic blood ; at any rate he forgot no single detail of all that had happened, and next morning he burst upon the house of mourning with a wondrous tale which suited it but ill.

His parents thought that grief had turned his brain, and, since he is now the heir, they have been watching long and anxiously for further symptoms of insanity, which happily they have not found. They still think him a monomaniac on this point, though they fully

recognize that his "delusion" has saved his life; but his old nurse (who is a Catholic) is firm in her belief that all he says is true—that the Lord Jesus, who was once a Child Himself, took pity on that other child as he lay dying of grief, and sent one of His Angels to bring his brother back to him from the dead as a reward for a love which was stronger than death. Sometimes, popular superstition comes a good deal nearer to the heart of things than does educated scepticism!

The incident was described in fuller and in more poetic form by Dr. Annie Besant as follows¹.

¹ Published in *The Theosophical Review*, November 1897, p. 229, ff.

II

THE TWO BROTHERS

A TALE OF REAL LIFE

He lay nigh unto death, the little dark-eyed lad, as he sobbed his heart out in his empty silent room—empty with the emptiness of loss, silent with the silence of the grave. Eleven years only had he of life, but the little life held a great love. In a huge rambling ancient house he lived with his brother, a boy three years his elder ; they were bright handsome lads, overflowing with life and mirth, and the long gloomy passages rang with the echo of their laughter;

fearless and strong, the elder led in everything ; they rode, fished, rambled, romped together, and the younger loved the elder with the clinging idolatrous devotion seen now and again in childhood, the devotion that has in it strange presagings of future loves, of those of youth to the lady of his dreams, of soldier to leader, of disciple to Master, of saint to God. And now ? But a few days back the elder, Lancelot, had been carried home with sobs of strong men, warm-hearted peasants, over the broken form stretched limp and helpless on a hurdle, for the young rider had fallen from his favourite pony, and his life was crushed out—he was dead. What skills it to tell of Walter's

passionate unbelief, his frantic cries, his storm of tears, his wild clinging to the dead hands that answered not, his piteous appeal to the dead ears that heard not. And now they had taken Lancelot away, away to the cold earth on which September leaves were dropping, dark and sodden ; away to be lonely in the churchyard as Walter was lonely in the home.

Worn out by exhaustion, the child would take neither food nor drink ; why should he take an unshared meal, dainties of which Lancelot was deprived ? In vain mother and nurse pleaded, argued, and at last blamed. It was wicked to rebel against the will of God, selfish withal to wail and moan ; his brother

was happy with God and the angels in heaven, perfectly happy, content. At this the child broke out again in passionate revolt : " He is not happy, he is as miserable as I am ; he is crying for me as I for him. He doesn't want the angels, he wants me. He wants me, I tell you ; angels don't understand boys. And you don't know where he is," he sobbed in a new burst of anguish. " You've sent him away. He's out in the cold, perhaps, somewhere. You don't know, you don't know ! "

The shocked mother, conventionally religious, broke in with pious remonstrance : " Walter, it is wicked to talk like this. God is all-powerful, and can make your brother happy anywhere."

"He can't! he can't!", cried the child. "Lance can't be happy without me. He never was, and he isn't now. He took me with him everywhere. He's trying to find me now, and he's crying, I know."

"But you will die if you do not eat, alannah, heart of my heart," said the nurse, her heart torn for her foster-child.

"I want to die," wailed the boy, "and then wherever Lance is, I'll be too. Leave me alone! leave me alone!"

And now he lay exhausted on his bed, in the room where no brother slept beside him, sleepless as he had been sleepless since he was alone, but too worn to cry aloud; only long moans

shuddered through him, and a sharp sob shook him now and then.

*“ He gives His angels charge of those
who sleep,
But He Himself watcheth with
those who wake.”*

A boy was passing in the world that dim eyes call invisible, a boy whose service in past lives to Those we term Masters of Compassion had called him to take up again service in the very dawn of youth. In earth-life they called him Cyril, and his body had counted but ten years. Drawn by the piteous anguish of the lonely child, he paused beside his bed, and found beside it also the lost brother Lancelot—as

heart-broken well-nigh as Walter—trying, vainly trying, to make himself heard or felt. Cyril's first effort was to comfort Lancelot, and quickly he told him that help should come; and then he turned to the poor, despairing child imprisoned in the flesh, and tried to pour into his heart some comfort. But vain were his best efforts, for Walter's grief-wrecked mind was too storm-tossed for any thought-suggestion to enter in. Keener and keener grew his ineffectual sympathy, stronger and stronger his longing to aid and console, until love succeeded where knowledge as yet was lacking, and he materialised himself, becoming visible to the heart-broken child.

Astonished, Walter roused himself and stammered: "Who are you? Where did you come from? How did you get in? I locked my door to keep everybody out."

"Never mind how I got in," smiled Cyril. "I'm here. And I've come to tell you that Lancelot is here too. He isn't a bit dead; he's as alive as ever, and is trying to make you hear him."

"Lance! Lance!" cried Walter, his whole face lightening, as he sprang up in bed. "Lance! Lance! come to me! where are you? Oh, you're not here or you'd come," he moaned, sinking back again, the wan look of despair again dulling his eyes.

"Yes, he *is* here," said Cyril. "You just listen, and I'll say after him what he says. He says he isn't dead one bit and you musn't be such a little fool. I beg you pardon," interjected Cyril apologetically, feeling the brotherly frankness might sound unsympathetic, "but that's what he says."

"Not dead! not dead! Oh! Lance, I thought you couldn't be. But where are are you? Are you playing? Oh! don't play. I'm so wretched, I—I—can't play. I *must* see you." The eager voice broke in a sob.

Lancelot answered as eagerly, full of excitement, and Cyril had much ado to act as spokesman for both. At last

Walter turned to him, his eyes ablaze, his cheeks flushed :

“ Oh ! I do believe you, because you’re so kind,” he said. “ But if I could only see him then I should *know*, then I should be quite sure ; and if I could only hear his voice telling me he was happy, I should not mind a bit his going away again afterwards.”

Cyril was beginning to say that he was afraid that was impossible, when he felt enwrapping him a loftier Presence,¹ familiar and revered, and words came softly through his smiling lips : “ Wait a little until I return, and you shall both see and hear him.” And then little Walter was gazing

¹ The Master K. H.

wonderingly at the empty spot where his comforter had been.

Swifter than wind can race, sped Cyril to an elder friend,¹ to one who had his own fair life in charge, his guide and helper in worlds visible and invisible. Brief words were enough to tell the story, and the two set forth together, and in a few minutes—as time counts on earth—they stood beside Walter, who was again drooping, half despairful, thinking that he had but fallen asleep and had dreamed a beautiful dream.

Ah! how bright was the radiance that broke, like the dawn of the morning, over his wistful eyes and

¹ C. W. Leadbeater,

down-curved mouth, as again young Cyril stood beside him, half-boy, half-angel to the child's eager gaze.

“ You’ve come back ! thank God you’ve come back ! Then it’s all true, and I shall really see him ?”, he panted quivering with eagerness.

Was it possible that a boy’s voice could breathe with such glad softness : “ Yes, you shall see him now,” and as Cyril gently lifted Walter’s hand and placed it in that of Lancelot, the helper materialising Lancelot’s astral form, the hands of the brothers were linked again warm and soft and living, and with a sob—ah ! how different from the sobs of an hour ago—Walter sprang into his brother’s arms, and found not death but love.

A strange group the three boys made, as they stood in the pale gleam of the nightlight, joined in a common joy, so diverse in condition. Two materialised from the astral form, but one from the "living," one from the "dead"; the third in the ordinary physical body. And near them, invisible to them, the elder man, who had made their gladness possible. Perhaps the astral world showed few fairer scenes that night. The first raptures over, as the brothers stood, arms round necks in old familiar fashion, Cyril asked with his radiant smile: "Well, Walter, will you be quite sure now that Lancelot is alive, and that death doesn't *really* matter, after all?"

“ Oh, yes ! yes ! yes !,” cried Walter, “ I shall always be happy now,” and he hugged his brother in renewed ecstasy. “ I don’t care for anything now, now that I know that Lance isn’t dead.”

Then Cyril, at his elder friend’s suggestion, told Walter that this materialisation was quite an unusual thing and could not be repeated, but that every night, when he himself slipped out of his body, he was in the world where Lancelot now was living, and could be with him, and that, even during the day, though he would not then be able to see him, Lancelot would for the present be near. At first, Walter fancied that being with

Lancelot out of the body would "only be a dream"—so ill do parents teach their little ones—but Cyril's boy-like sincerity at last had its way, and Walter, accepting the idea with bright conviction, would go to sleep at once and taste his new joy. As he lay down, no longer weeping, the helper released Lancelot again from his dense covering, but Cyril waited awhile to hold Walter's hand in his, in soft security, till the worn child sank gently into slumber, the first peaceful sleep since his brother passed from his side. And as he slipped from the bodily prison, and the twain met again in the world invisible, the gladness of the first meeting seemed reborn, and the

bright air gathered a new brightness from their joy.

Long his body slept, while the happy brothers found time all too short for their joyous converse, and the noon-sun was shining ere Walter came back to the duller life of earth. So changed and glad his aspect that all wondered as he came springing down the stairs, and stammering with eagerness told his wondrous tale. Small credence found he, though his parents could not be all displeased with a "dream" that gave their boy back to life and strength. So much had they feared for his life that even this "wild folly" was pardoned, and only to each other and nearest friends they

whispered that they feared his grief had injured his brain. But the old nurse believes him fully, and crosses herself as she relates, over the fire at evening-tide, how Christ, who was once a child Himself, took pity on the heart-break of a child, and bade his guardian angel—Cyril laughs softly when he hears this phrase—bring back his brother for a while from the dead to save her darling's life.

In the work, *Man : Whence, How and Whither* by Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, which records clairvoyant investigations made by them in 1910 into the long past of humanity, there is at its

end a glimpse *into the future*.¹ This vision of the future is not a literary creation like those of H. G. Wells, but a description of the world *as it will be*, because it has been so planned and decreed by the Logos of the Solar System. How the future can be "fixed," or how it can be "seen" now, are problems which have been dealt with in Theosophical literature, but are not germane to this present monograph.

But in that vision of the world, and *looking back* from about 2600 A.D. on what has happened to the world in the meantime, C. W. Leadbeater describes as follows.

¹ *Op. cit.*, First Edition, 1913, p. 454 ff. Also in *The Beginnings of the Sixth Root Race*, 1931, p. 160 ff.

THE FEDERATION OF NATIONS

Practically the whole world has federated itself politically. Europe seems to be a Confederation with a kind of Reichstag, to which all countries send representatives. This central body adjusts matters, and the Kings of the various countries are Presidents of the Confederation in rotation. The rearrangement of political machinery by which this wonderful change has been brought about is the work of Julius Caesar, who reincarnated some time in the twentieth century in connection with the coming of

the Christ to proclaim the WISDOM. Enormous improvements have been made in all directions, and one cannot but be struck with the extraordinary abundance of wealth that must have been lavished upon these.

Caesar, when he succeeds in forming the Federation and persuades all the countries to give up war, arranges that each of them shall set aside for a certain number of years half or a third of the money that it has been accustomed to spend upon armaments, and devote it to certain social improvements which he specifies. According to his scheme the taxation of the entire world is gradually reduced, but notwithstanding, sufficient

money is reserved to feed all the poor, to destroy all the slums, and to introduce wonderful improvements into all the cities. He arranges that those countries in which compulsory military service has been the rule shall make their conscripts work for the State in the making of parks and roads and the pulling down of slums and the opening up of communications everywhere. He arranges that the old burdens shall be gradually eased off, but yet contrives with what is left of them to regenerate the world. He is indeed a great man ; a most marvellous genius.

There seems to have been some trouble at first and some preliminary quarrelling, but he gets together an

exceedingly capable band of people—a kind of cabinet of all the best organisers whom the world has produced—reincarnations of Napoleon, Scipio Africanus, Akbar and others—one of the finest bodies of men for practical work that has ever been seen. The thing is done on a gorgeous scale. When all the Kings and prime ministers are gathered together to decide upon the basis for the Confederation, Caesar builds for the occasion a circular hall with a great number of doors so that all may enter at once, and no one Potentate take precedence of another.

Caesar arranges all the machinery of this wonderful revolution, but his work is largely made possible by the arrival

and preaching of the Christ Himself, so we have here a new era in all senses, not merely in outward arrangement, but in inner feeling as well.

Only the future will show whether all this is pure phantasy, or mere brilliant guess-work, or an instance of that mysterious fact—that the future can be seen as here and now. But, noting the radical changes in American policy since the war began in September 1939, C.W. Leadbeater was at least a far-seeing statesman when he talked of an “Anglo-American Anglo-Saxon Federation” thirty-five years ago.

May, 1941.

