

Running Commentary Following Gertrude's Death

Part 33 of 53

Franklin Merrell-Wolff

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There is a development that apparently is becoming stronger than it was a year ago. There are times when I seem to have a condition of stress in the region of the solar plexus, or at any rate, the region just below the rib cage and apparently reaching up above that. The general psychological and even physiological effect is to produce in me a feeling of a kind of subtle agony. It carries some threat within it—even tends to arouse a more or less irrational impulse to do almost anything to get away from it. As is characteristic of physiological or organic states, it's very difficult to reduce them to a verbal description. In fact, to communicate concerning a physiological or organic condition to someone else, it can be done really effectively only when the other individual has had a similar experience; and he will recognize it. Stress is a correct word. It leaves me in a state of a kind of agony. I feel an impulse to run. I feel again something of the impulse to self-destruction while in it. It's much more apt to happen when I'm in complete solitude, and I am frequently now entirely alone. I question the wisdom of my being in such a state if I am to continue to live here. This condition may persist for a couple of hours or so and then I've often noticed that there may come into the region a feeling of comfort, a release from the stress.

I am here merely reporting what is happening. I am not formulating a conclusion. However, I get the impression that the sense of comfort that comes into the region after a time is in some way related to Gertrude. That is an impression; it's not a considered judgment.