



*The  
Old  
Time*

THE SUPREME MASTER CHING HAI

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# Foreword

*The Old Time* is a rare collection of poems composed by Supreme Master Ching Hai from the time the Poet was a young adult living in Europe to the present day.

Candid and direct in both style and tone, Supreme Master Ching Hai's poems vividly portray the impermanent nature of life. In this collection, tale after tale of disillusionment, profound sadness, stinging betrayal and other disappointments all too common in our romantic endeavors are intimately told. Earnestly affectionate, yet sometimes struck by tragic or unrequited love, the Poet's intrinsic desire for the Truth constantly shines through, like a star sparkling in the night's indigo sky.

The yearning for belongingness, inherent in human beings, is coupled with a yearning for total freedom. Such is the paradox of the heart; it wishes to settle down and yet does not want to feel trapped in an ordinary life. This intense dissonance is indicative of a deep-rooted longing for a greater Love and Freedom. Admonishing against superficiality and hypocrisy, the Poet is impassioned about being Free and True to Oneself:

*I can't live in this confined world,  
Where people grab and control!  
I want to go beyond and above  
All these bondages and limits!*

*- Screaming Out Loud*

In pain and suffering, one often turns to the Creator. During moments of desperate inner struggles, defiance and compassion resonate in Her verses:

*I am on a hunger strike  
To protest the misery  
Imposed on humanity  
And other beings in the universe.*

*- Protest*

Supreme Master Ching Hai finds Herself living in austere settings, akin to a lotus flower growing in a muddy pond. And yet, Her abiding Love flourishes in even the harshest of these surroundings. Ultimately, through Her poems, we are drawn into the middle of our own Awakening. This Truth is difficult to imagine in a turbulent world, but in fact lies dormant within us all. Supreme Master Ching Hai offers Her readers the poetic inspiration to search within and reach for these most cherished intimacies of Truth and Freedom.

## *Biography of The Supreme Master Ching Hai*

The Supreme Master Ching Hai was born in Central Aulac (Vietnam). In Her early adulthood, She studied in Europe where She also worked for the International Red Cross. Later, She married a German scientist and doctor and settled in Germany. Although She was happily married at the time, it was with Her husband's blessing that Master Ching Hai left to pursue Her childhood dream of enlightenment. Thus began a time of arduous pilgrimages to many different countries that ended only when She met a perfect living Master in the Himalayas. From Her Teacher, Master Ching Hai received the divine transmission and learned a method of meditation on the Inner Light and Sound, which She later called the Quan Yin Method. After a period of diligent practice, She attained Perfect Enlightenment.

To satisfy the sincere longing of Truth seekers, the Supreme Master Ching Hai initiates people from different nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds into the Quan Yin Method of meditation. Her message of love and peace brings hope to people throughout the world, reminding them to live in Truth, Virtue, and Beauty.



*A*part from setting a noble example, Supreme Master Ching Hai also encourages others to beautify the world through spiritual practice. Expressing Her inner joy through diverse media such as painting, poetry, jewelry and clothing designs, and musical compositions, Master Ching Hai seeks to enhance the outer as well as the inner beauty of all people with whom She comes in contact. Her artistic creations, displayed at exhibitions throughout the world, remind us of the inner spiritual realms. Her poems have served as a source of inspiration for many renowned composers, who adapted the poems to music and performed the compositions to worldwide acclaim.

*A*t a banquet honoring the Supreme Master Ching Hai in 1993, Mayor Frank F. Fasi of Honolulu, Hawaii proclaimed: “The Supreme Master Ching Hai brings love to places around the world still plagued with hatred. She brings hope where there is despair, and She brings understanding where there is misunderstanding. She is the light of a great person, an angel of mercy for all of us.”

Your Love  
Is a  
Boring Game



*I am leaving in the morning,  
Bored with the game we are playing:  
No one moves any further,  
It's rather frustrating!*

*We are two such bad players  
Both afraid to be losers!  
Well, one of us has to give up  
It cannot go on forever...*

*I would rather be the one  
Who makes the move, or be on the run  
Than spending my precious time  
Waiting for things to arrive.*

*I have never won any game  
In love, in life, in fortune, in fame,  
So it's just one more time  
I guess I will get by.*

*So come on, move! My fellow player!  
Don't just sit there or stand by!  
You're stretching my patience too much;  
It's surely no elastic rubber!*

*You can either be honest as one should be:  
That you are in love and we shall marry  
Or if you're not, then the game is over.  
Either way, we'll both be free.*

*Life is waiting in some corners:  
Another game, another player.  
Some may lose, some might win.  
But at least be spontaneous and lively,  
For the love game is very exciting!*

München  
1978

We Don't Live  
More Than  
One Hundred Years!

*Sorry darling if I could wait no more,  
I am not a nun, and never want to be so.  
You don't wish to share your life,  
So let me go on my way!*

*I know you think I am crazy,  
But what difference will that be?  
I live my life as I please  
No matter what others think.  
Everyone has different things!*

*I mean tonight I was nuts!  
But so what: Aren't the rest of us!...  
Otherwise how could we carry on living,  
For life isn't worth a thing!?*

*You know that I am still in love with you!  
But that has nothing to do...  
I cannot please everybody,  
So I will please me!*

*That doesn't mean you are not right;  
We all have only one life!  
If you read others' philosophies,  
It's only theory!*

*You have no idea how it is to be a woman,  
From Asia and in Europe alone.  
I have a lot to worry  
Every day, every night!*

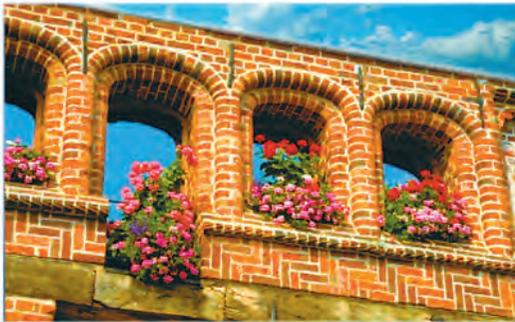
*So I am fed up being a fighter,  
To protect myself, against the world!...  
Sometimes I just want to die,  
Good-bye this meaningless life!*

*But I am just a coward!  
Therefore, I am still here!  
Standing in all this filth  
Shedding all these tears!...*

München  
2/1979



Go On Home  
and Marry  
Someone Else



*Go on home!*  
*Marry a secretary.*  
*Marry a sweet-and-twenty,*  
*Or one of your nurses.*  
*I am really through*  
*Waiting for you!*

*You are a doctor,*  
*A brilliant future!*  
*I'm a poor writer*  
*My work will probably never be in print.*

*Go on home!*  
*Marry a teacher.*  
*Or a female doctor.*  
*Marry anyone,*  
*Whose wealth and secure future*  
*Will enable you to your throne.*

*Go on home!*  
*Marry a rich widow.*  
*Many of her Deutsch marks*  
*Will pay all the debts*  
*To keep your "order,"*  
*Your luxurious home,*  
*Your private clinique,*  
*And enormous antique items.*

*Of course you won't marry me!*  
*You don't want to, and I know why:*  
*There are plenty of other flowers,*  
*On the papillon's way.*

*So go on home!*  
*Sleep with the big garden,*  
*Sleep with your twelve-bedroom palace,*  
*Sleep with your beautiful fireplace,*  
*Sleep with your luxurious kitchen!...*

*And find a "married widow"*  
*To sleep with you!...*

Rosenheim  
1978

# I Don't Belong to the World That You Do

*- for Thu*

*Though I have been acting like a princess or a queen,  
I never liked what I said!  
And you know quite well what I mean:  
That "the world is a bigger stage,"  
And "I am no one but a should-have-been"!*

*I'd like to keep the role you want me to play  
For a longer time, and for a better life,  
All the luxuries, all the glorious titles!  
But you know... the game doesn't pay!*

*I am packing, I am leaving today.  
Out with the birds I'll fly... fly away.  
You'll never catch me!  
For you're not born free!*

*There was a time  
I thought I would die,  
Leaving you and the possessions behind!  
But the wild is used to the jungle,  
I'll survive...*

*I don't belong to the world that you do!  
Oh! It hurts to hear! But it is true:  
"You don't belong to the world that I do."  
So farewell, Johnny...  
We are really, really through!*

München  
12/29/1978

What  
the  
Heck!

*I am so sad, so, so, so sad  
Don't know what the hell's going on!!!  
Why do I love you and suffer like that?  
Oh! I lost my heart! I lost my soul!*

*I want to run, a thousand miles a minute,  
I want to shout, shatter mountains,  
I want to fly through the universe,  
I want to dive into the deep ocean!!!  
Just to find the answer to my burning love,  
Just to see what else is on earth.  
But I am running within my heart  
With my soul on my shoulders!  
I'm shouting within my head  
Dropped on my knees and crying many hours...*

*I want to die  
Many a lonely night.  
I want to find death  
Many an empty day.  
Why am I still living,  
Waiting, waiting, waiting???*

Berlin, Germany  
1977

## The Masked

*Either you are a superb actor  
Or I am blind,  
Being in love!*

*But it was truly difficult to recognize  
Under the lambskin  
A veritable wolf!  
Under the mask of a Prince Charming,  
A real bloodsucker!*

*It is unbelievable,  
Still.  
To think that the person I love  
With all sweet passion  
And earth-trembling thrill  
Turns out  
To be... like this!*

*My feeling,  
So incredibly perplexed.  
It will take a long time  
To forget  
That the one you trust  
Betrayed,  
Did all this to you.  
Then turned around  
Playing “cool”!  
(or just pure wickedness?)*

*How on earth can a man change so fast  
And have no remorse in his feelings?  
I want to know  
The essence that made up his being,  
Whether it's human or what?  
'Cause I have never encountered  
Any like that.  
I'm both amazed and painfully surprised!*

*Now, every wound heals with time,  
Except mine, which is doubtful and hopeless,  
For I've given all I had  
And more!  
Now, it is difficult  
To get back.*

*I wonder  
How much longer will it take?  
Will I ever completely recover  
Or remain an invalid?*

*God seems too far...  
And the Buddha's vanished!  
Left me cold  
With the winter of my soul!*

*Everything seems not the way it looks,  
The people are not the way they are.  
Am I a fool  
Trying hard  
To understand the world?  
Ha!!!*

**For Ailien**

# Killer and Victim

*I'm trembling with shock and panic  
When you announce  
That you are with another woman.  
No matter if she's a princess or queen  
Or the ex:*

*How can any man  
Be so insensitive  
To the feelings of a loved one  
Or the once loved,  
To hurt deliberately and loud  
And feel even proud  
Of success?*

*God bless!  
God bless!  
God bless you ten thousand times  
For the things that you do today  
And the days ahead!*

*I pray that fate be kind,  
This hour and the rest,  
Bestowing grace and happiness  
Upon you  
And the one you choose  
To be with!*

*Or else how can a person  
Get away with it:  
Stabbing the spirit  
Killing without murder?*

*I am now half deaf, half blurred,  
Half alive,  
Half dead!  
O God be merciful  
Grant me peace and rest.  
How can anyone survive  
Such hazard?  
When the killer cannot be brought behind bars,  
And the victim has no visible wounds!*

*Why did you have to torture  
Someone who's already shattered  
With a stormy life  
And hurricanes from all sides?*

*O help me God!  
Help me Buddha!  
Help m... angels!  
Why are Y... so far?...*

# Convalescence

*While I am struggling between life and death  
In a small hospital room,  
You celebrate joyfully the deliberate reunion in a hotel suite!  
At the cost of my agony!  
Now, the true face of a so-called friendship's emerged, finally!*

*So much for the romance  
Talk about real love!  
Now, face to face with actuality  
Every word seems empty!  
When it's really happening  
Love amounts to nothing.  
Ha ha! To laugh or to cry,  
The pain is excruciating!  
Seems like the whole world falls apart,  
Seems like I never know God.*