

Between my mask and my mirror...

Alicia III

1993. The wagon from the subway was sliding smoothly, it was night and there were few passengers. I went in, exhausted, and dropped myself on a seat, dumping my two suitcases full of books. I closed my eyes...

When I opened them again there was an attractive guy sitting in front of me, with tousled light brown hair. He was about 38 years old. He looked here and there absent-minded, seemed not to go anywhere. In a short instant our gazes crossed.

I was about to get up to go down and I looked at my suitcases with sorrow, I did not want to carry them again. I worked as a salesperson in a major Catholic publishing house and my main activity was to put stands at events of priests, religious women and catechists to promote our titles. I liked the movement and the people. The books were sold at recess or at the end of the events and I was happy sneaking in all the courses I could (Liturgy, Bible, Theology) and had its shirt well put on – totally white – with a single word: evangelization.

When there were no events I would search for contacts with the sample book in my back. That night I was coming from a long excursion through the city and my tired gesture gave me away. The guy in front of me approached me and with a friendly tone and careful voice said: “may I help you with your bags?” I looked at him and I liked him a lot: his honey-colored eyes, his full lips, his expression as a

mischievous boy. He had a guitar without a cover. He carried my suitcases and I carried his guitar.

Arriving at the stairs he proposed a stop to dedicate me a song. "How crazy!" I thought, but I loved the idea and the song. And we were there, sitting on the stairs, during some more songs. He told me that he sang in restaurants and bars. His name was Roman and he had been an alcoholic; in fact, he escaped from an Alcoholic Anonymous farm. When he was telling me about his life, he looked like a helpless child who cried ...

His story touched me deeply. Then my heart jumped when he looked at me and said that I had beautiful eyes and a very tender expression. It was my first compliment in five years and I received it delighted.

I do not know how long we were there. He asked what did I do for a living. When I showed him the books he let out a laugh: he was an atheist. Then he wanted to know what a girl like me was doing in a job like that. I replied that I enjoyed it and he did not believe me. Then, I avoided saying that it was the only work that allowed me to apply the "knowledge" that I had acquired during the four years that I was interned in a religious house to consecrate myself to God. (I left three months before making the vows because of a strong nervous breakdown.) I did not tell Roman that after, I was a teacher during a year with the sisters and that was like having one foot in and the other out: I wanted to be with them again but the doctors would not let me. I did not tell him that my world during five years was "the good", what was clean before the eyes of God; everything else was

“the impure”, “the anti-values of the world” that had to be converted. That is why I never left home without my missionary cross on my chest, and I never missed an opportunity to “announce the Word of Life” as and wherever.

I did not say to him any of that, but he noticed other things: that I was dressed as a mourning lady and that my eyes were hungry for a male look; that I was twenty-six years old, but I was still a big little girl, that I almost did not understand his vocabulary ...

In that first encounter I thought: “Poor guy, he is very bad spiritually, he has to be evangelized!” Maybe he thought: “Poor naïve, she has to be taught a bit more about life”. But beneath the conscious discourse of both was an overpowering element: physical attraction. We agreed to see each other a few days later, at the exit of that same subway station.

Two weeks passed. I ran to my encounter with Roman with a very strong emotion that I could not control and much less explain, and it was not just the fact of listening a guy that I liked so much and who whispered romantic song to my ear, no; it was the anxiety and the mischievously curiosity of the forbidden.

I was the typical “good girl”, always attached to the family, with a rigid catholic education that highlighted the values of virginity, decency, good education, the horror towards sin in all its manifestations. How would I be dating a guy who was so much older than I, with someone so worldly, that has lived so much, and that besides he talked

like some drunken from the marketplace? Roman was the opposite of what a college girl from a good family would expect, but in another sense Roman was just what I needed. And I ran to meet him at the beginning of the night, sneaking out from my parents, lying for the first time in my life.

With Roman all the rules were broken, all the molds. We sat on a sidewalk, on the table of a nauseating sandwich-shop, in a parked car. I lied to myself then, with the idea that I was going to evangelize him – for example, carrying my Bible, as I did before –, but the reality was that his mellow tone wrapped me up; his damn sureness vanished all my fears and arguments. I started talking to him about God and he would shut me up with a compliment or an insinuation. I told to myself then, that if I really wanted to help him, I had to become his girlfriend. Deep down I was wishing it, but I was very afraid.

It had been almost six years without being touched by a man and of denying my body and my affection. I had the vague idea of returning to the nuns (no one knew, not even me in at that time, the cause of the nervous breakdown why I left). And suddenly Roman made me forget my deepest convictions. With him I did not think about any of that. It was another channel, unknown and fascinating. Also scary. Letting myself be carried away by the wave of sensations that were beginning to emerge, was like a leap into the void for me.

Roman knew how to win my heart and to fall upon me at the right moment. He had so much experience with

women! And I wanted for so long, crush and marginalize the torrent of feelings that struggled to get out!

Our first kiss, in a dark alley, lit the wick. I loved the feeling of feeling again the proximity of a man, his contact. I felt fragile, desired, full. I understood then, that my whole being yearned deeply for that part, that the past years with the nuns had not been able to erase the woman that throbs under my skin ...

The nightmare began when I began getting to know the environment of Roman. One thing was to imagine him as a Bohemian singer in a luxurious restaurant and another quite different, accompanying him to a brothel. The dark atmosphere or the shining lights, the wine glasses that came and went, the drunken with their stupidities, the prostitutes waiting for customers ... What a horror! It was a “dirty”, “shitty” environment, as my dad would say. And I was in the middle of total sin! Of course, I did not think there, that Jesus Christ conversed with publicans and sinners. Everything I saw – especially the children from the street getting high – hurt my eyes and was a violent irruption in my pink world. The straw that broke the camel’s back was when one-night Roman left me alone for a moment at the table, with the following words: “Stay here, no problem. If a client arrives and wants something to do with you, you tell him that you are already taken ...” That left me without breath. I, prostitute! (actually, confused with a prostitute, but for that matter it is the same). I felt like dying; I wanted the chair to open and disappear through the hole. That same week, at the book stand, I was

discussing with the seminarians of Theology about fragments of the ecclesial documents of Santo Domingo. When there were only two or three left, and in a less formal tone, I asked each one of them about their call to the priesthood. I loved listening to vocational stories, perhaps to know more and admire myself by the disconcerting paths of God for each soul, perhaps because I never had an authentic vocation, perhaps...

The fact is that my mornings, like so many others for months, passed between books and pious talks, visits to the chapel of the place, religious courses ... And suddenly at night, the play was drastically changed!

It was another world, everything seemed confused to me at first, terrifying; then I started to get used to it. The day Roman asked me to pretend to be a prostitute, there were two more women at the same table, white and round. I rejected them all at first, I thought it was disgusting what they did, but that day I watched them carefully. To my surprise, they were not dressed up strikingly, low-necked or with extremely bright colors, but both were "occupied" by customers. Before, Roman had already told me that the girls were not bad: among them were students, housewives and single mothers, but I did not want to believe him. Now, alone at the table, I began to open my eyes. One was wearing a closed white blouse, like me. Although at first I thought: "I would never be mistaken for a prostitute", I noticed that, in reality, I was much closer to them than I thought. I looked at my body with more kilos and

unattractive, but they were not really figurines. Actually, the only difference was that I had never had sex...

The thought troubled me: what if an aggressive drunken arrives and forces me to go with him? At that time, I did not accept it, but maybe, deep down, I wished something like that happen, and I also played with the idea of being a good prostitute. Of course, in my speech nothing of that appeared, I just felt a lot of anxiety. That is why I breathed calmly when Roman appeared with his guitar in the red circle that served as the stage. He was not an aggressive drunken who would force me to anything, but a charming guy who played the guitar with feeling.

But he had other subtler ways. Before his more or less itinerant *show* – it did not last long singing in one place – or in a break, we went to his van, whose front backrests were reclining seats.

Our encounters were brief, but very intense. I was very afraid of the sensual woman who I was beginning to discover in me. I did not know what to do with her. It took my sleep away.

Roman knew how to discover her, take her out, empower her, but I was not prepared. In the most passionate moment of our encounters, I would stop him sharply. And he kept repeating to me until exhaustion: “It is that ... understand it! having sex is not bad. If not, why did God do it?”, but I resisted one and thousand times.

Inside the van were our most intimate encounters, without ever reaching the sexual intercourse, because I refused (but I was dying of desire!).

Once we were almost at the entrance doors of a hotel – still inside the van – but I refused to enter. Then he took me to a dark alley and told me that he was very aroused, if I could please open my blouse. I obeyed him as an automaton, he pulled up my brassier and looked at my breasts with such an anxiety ... as if he was a thirsty man before a jug of water. He sucked them slowly, he touched them all over, he enjoyed a lot doing it. Not me. I felt nothing but guilt, a terrible guilt that crushed me. Also anguish in case someone discovered us...

The scene repeated itself, in other occasions and in different alleys in twilight. I pleased him as an automaton. I remember one day when he was lying horizontally on the seat and I was more or less on top of him, dressed, but with my breasts to the air. When I got up a bit, a lady that was passing by saw me. I will never forget the grimace of disgust on her face. She was short, brunette, about 55 years old, the typical housewife, but she was so horrified at what she was seeing that she made the sign of the cross over her several times. I wanted to die! I felt so low, so dastardly, so unworthy ... such a SLUT. I wanted to get out of the car, run after her and scream at her that what she was thinking was not true, that Roman and I were not having sex. So, while he continued caressing my body, I thought that from one thing to the other the distance was minimal, that this could not continue like this.

I drifted away from Roman and shouted at him that I wanted to leave. He was very puzzled but he drove silently to the subway entrance. He never accompanied me home

because I never stayed for his show to finish (at dawn). In order to get home, I returned alone through deserted and dark streets, like Cinderella, before midnight. I told my parents that I was going out with a friend who dropped me off at the door of the building. They believed me. They always believed me because I never disappointed them, I had never lied to them. Never, until that moment. That is why I felt so bad. my clandestine courtship with Roman – impossible to introduce him to them, they would have screamed up to heaven – was a nightmare that kept drilling into my head more and more. Our hot scenes troubled me, and I was not only worried about being discovered, but also angry at being so weak of character and letting myself be dragged by Roman.

Even though the beautiful biblical quotations and my words about the love of God to all without distinction, had attracted the attention of some of his musician friends or of some gentlemen who drank, Roman could not care less. As a catechist, I felt frustrated, very frustrated. Never had happened something like that to me!

One day that we went to Bosque de Tlalpan for a walk, in addition to the food, I took religious prints, beautiful thoughts and I even borrowed a tape recorder so that he would listen to a beautiful song of the Church, to see if his sensitivity as a musician allowed him to listen with attention the message. Nonetheless, he did not let me get anything out; we spent the hours just making out. Upon returning, I felt the worst. Sinner at the top. Guilt always obscured any enjoyment ... And to my internal scream of: “I want! I want!

I want more!” the other one overlapped, a projection from my parents and the Church: “It is bad, it is bad! You can not! You should not! Never!”

I thought that my experience as a catechist would turn Roman into a good catholic. He thought that because of his experience with women it would be easy for me to have sex with him. We both were wrong, and in what a way! But as time went by, he was gaining ground on me.

I was totally alarmed because, in fact, Roman was conquering me and I was giving in. But my convictions were so rigid that it was impossible to throw them overboard. I felt jerked into two opposite directions. And there was also the matter of double life: in the mornings I moved inside a pink world, among seminarians, priests and nuns, and at nights ...

In the end, where was I standing? Nowhere. I could not continue denying my body nor my sexuality, as I did since adolescence. It was not true that I was fat, ugly, unattractive to men, that I lived peacefully and content giving love to everyone; it was not true that I was daddy’s little girl, always obedient and demure; nor the good religious that others expected to see in me. LIE! I was quite a woman! But I could not accept it either because in the context of the relationship with Roman, everything was a sin, everything was against my principles (but was...!).

For me the courtship with Roman was very, very difficult. The three months that we lasted were hell. I was a bunch of contradictions. I used to go untidy on purpose so he would not like me, so as not to provoke him (or to justify

myself before my conscience?), but he did not care. He grabbed hold of me like a castaway of his little board...

Our deep encounters troubled me (and a lot!), they distracted my attention from the things of the Church, from by book records, from my apostolic groups. I looked forward with eagerness to the next encounter. All me was a pulse of passion, which overflowed more and more. I was afraid of myself.

And I broke up with him. I broke up with him before consummating the sexual act, because if we had continued, it would have been me who would have dragged him to the hotel, and then ... the collapse of my pink world. To live with Roman or to marry him? No way! We could not hold a conversation for more than twenty minutes. He did not like art, nor the books, nor anything of what my life was. He was separated and had two children somewhere. He repeated that he was small thing for me, especially when I entered the university. Our only matching spot was the physical attraction, and I avoided it. I fled. I let fear win over me.

And so, I broke up with Roman to return to what was before. Then ... surprise! Nothing was the same anymore. Not even the perception of myself – now I despised myself – not even the perception of the body of a man – now I looked at them differently –, not even that of my own body. What did I do with so many desires that I did not know before and now they were there making noise? Besides, when someday I met a street child, or a drunken at a party, or saw from a distance any prostitute, I remembered my talks with them, their clean eyes, what I shared of their

harsh reality; then my heart shrank and I wondered what Roman was doing.

Sometimes he phoned me (I never gave him my address, even though he asked me for it). Time later, he became Witness of Jehovah.

Roman and I discussed biblical concepts by phone because he was determined to convert me. That if I did not enter with them I would condemn myself. I used to laugh at how the roles were reversed...

The phone-calls from Ramon became increasingly sporadic.

I sought to marginalize all my emotions back and I achieved it, in part, immersing myself in the new responsibilities of the university (I had started studying Communication).

Then, Jose Alberto reappeared.

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Jose Alberto was one of many seminarians that I met in the sale of Catholic books. At that time, I went continuously to his house of training and the relationship with him and with some of his mates became very close.

Before the whirlwind that I lived with Roman, I believed that my relationships with the opposite sex were "very healthy and with trust". Apparently yes, but I cheated on myself. I cheated on myself by repressing or marginalizing any feeling of desire or attraction, diverting

my gaze to the men in the street or in the collective taxi – “you have to mortify the sight”, the nuns would say –, despising my body and my sensations for the sake of a misunderstood spirituality.

This contributed to the fact that 90 percent of the men with whom I was related were priests or seminarians. They were discarded from the beginning. I was setting boundaries. I did not even allow myself to fantasize with any of them.; it was something forbidden and punished by God. They were his chosen ones and I had to help with my prayer and clean friendship “to preserve them from the contagion of the world and its concupiscence”.

The exception to the rule was Jose Alberto. During the months that I visited the seminarians in their house of training with my books on back, I sometimes found myself thinking about Jose Alberto with affection, wishing for the next encounter, that he would take me by the hand when we said goodbye. They were brief flashes that I discarded right away.

There were several mates with whom a very beautiful friendship flourished. One of them, Ruben, immediately caught my spiritual search and my lack of identity, and he questioned me sharply through casual comments or tricky questions.

Jose Alberto, on the other hand, what he perceived most strongly was my affective emptiness. I saw him tall, hefty, very confident in every attitude and movement. He used to impose on me very much. At that time, I thought that he was older than me and that he had a lot of

experience. I considered him a bit my guide and I trusted to him my concerns and experiences, asking to him for advice.

Some time later, when I had stopped visiting them, I was surprised by a phone call from Jose Alberto: he had left the seminary and he wanted to see me.

It was July 4th, 1994, I remember it as if it was yesterday. It was a long talk on a park bench. He shared with me his departure from the seminar, it was because he was not sure of his vocation. He had asked for a year of permission to decide, he was going to work, although he was not sure on what ...

It started to rain hard. We ended up in a convention building, in a corner near the entrance door. We sat on the floor. He did not know what was going to happen with his life and I was well aware that maybe it would be the last time that we would see each other.

We were very close to each other and I looked at him slowly. Then, I noticed that I had always liked him, but I never wanted to recognize it. Now, it was different. Now I could look at him face to face because he was not in the seminar anymore.

We continued talking on the floor of the building while it was raining outside; then there was silence. A silence full of uncertainty about the future, of unspoken longings, of fantasies. I leaned against his chest, curled up in his embrace. I felt him closer than ever, spiritually and physically. We had been talking about *The Little Prince* and his flower. I slowly caressed his face, but when my fingers reached his lips, they stopped. What a desire to kiss him!

But no. If I kissed him, we could not be friends like we have until now. Then I would actually lose him and I would never see him again.

But the attraction won over me, I brought my lips to his. It was so delicious! I felt them asleep, as if waking up from a long sleep.

I pulled apart and looked at him. His honey-colored eyes caressed me. And I said to myself: “there is no guilt, he is not in the seminary anymore”. And I approached again. At the third kiss, he reacted ... and in what way! Soft, firm, he went from my lips to my face. He grabbed me by the waist when we stood up. I felt like I was touching the sky. How much time passed by? I did not know, but we reacted when a lot of people left the auditorium.

We walked slowly, it was already night. The trees wept raindrops that had remained there. It seemed that Jose Alberto and I had discovered the magic and strength of a kiss. We stopped step by step because we both wanted more, until he embraced me hard before going on the minibus.

I stayed with a wonderful sensation from his contact, but with the sadness of not seeing him again and hoping that it would be a lie, that someday he would look for me again.

So it was. Some months later, I heard his voice, vibrant, through the handset.

We saw each other in Cuemanco. We talked for a long time, for hours, without touching each other. He had started to work, he helped at a parish church and he wanted to do a lot of things. Also, if he could, he wanted to have the experience of loving someone, of a girlfriend...

He looked at me significantly, but I changed the subject. I realized that it was a huge risk to launch myself into that adventure with him. What if he decided to go back to the seminary?

But the head said one thing and the heart another. At the end of the afternoon, sitting on the grass, I could not resist to his contact. It was so spontaneous! We both turned around at the same time and the kiss burst. And then followed another and another. At night, when we left there, we continued the caressing in front of a vacant lot, more and more intense. The avenue was almost deserted, but suddenly he told me: "Wait, someone is coming".

A man passed by with his child, about six years old. A few steps forward, the kid turned around paying attention to see what we were doing. Then, I felt too guilty and I remembered the biblical phrase that says: "Shame on the one who scandalizes one of these little ones!" And I was being a reason for scandal! How awful!

I became aware that Jose Alberto and I were in the middle of the street, on public road, and we had no right to behave so intense.

I became aware too, that I was in the arms of a man who wanted to consecrate himself to God, and that I could become an obstacle in his way.

That is why, when we said good bye and he said to me eagerly: “When do we see each other?” I thought stupidly in his vocation and not in us, and I said to myself: “Do not pressure him, let him free ...” And instead of shouting at him, as it was my wish: “Tomorrow! I love you, I want you, I need you!” I said to him very calmly: “I do not know, whenever you want to, whenever you can”. Again the question was repeated, with the same answer, until he left me at the minibus.

Time passed. Our meetings were very sporadic. How many times, with my hand picking up the phone, I hung it up again and I would force myself not to phone him! And I said to myself: “He wants to be a priest, you have no right to disturb him ...”

However, from the few encounters, I made a wonderful fairy tale. For me, Jose Alberto was “my better half”, my ideal man. Unlike Roman, who only attracted me physically, I liked everything about Jose Alberto: his dark skin, his wavy hair, the strength of his gaze, his spirituality, his artistic sensibility, his analytical skills and his sense of humor, among a thousand other things. Each encounter was “magical” for me, “unique”, “special” ... because it could be the last. Then, time stopped, and gave us very brief moments of deep communion.

I idealized Jose Alberto; I idealized the relationship. I told myself that maybe it was not a courtship like the others, but in intensity...

Finally, he passed his probationary year. The next meeting was crucial, because he would communicate his decision to me.

I had done many times “prayer of abandonment”, repeating to God continuously that we were both in his hands, and if he called him to the priesthood, I was going to be satisfied with his will and happy for one more priest for our Church.

Nevertheless, when Jose Alberto told me face to face that he was returning to the seminary, I felt a bucket of cold water over me. Which prayer of abandonment nor anything! It was so painful, red-hot aching that penetrated me to the deepest! As if a piece of flesh was torn from me ...

And I wanted to throw myself into his arms and squeeze myself against his chest and cry and whisper him that I loved him very much and that the decision he had made broke my soul ...

But no. I stopped dead the torrent of feelings, I covered the volcano saying to myself firmly: “Do not make things more difficult, it is his vocation, God is calling him ...”

It was March 25, 1995, at the tip of the Cuicuilco pyramid. I swallowed saliva several times, I smiled and said to him “calmly”: “I am happy. I am glad that you are going...”

LIE! I had the guts knotted and I kept everything inside me.

I knew what the religious vocation was, because I had been in a novitiate; I knew about the internal struggles and how difficult it is to say a radical “Yes” to Christ, leaving everything ... until you learn to truly love and then no sacrifice becomes hard. But at that moment I felt that Jose Alberto was making a great effort and I did not want to complicate the situation with drama scenes.

But I refused. I once again denied my affectivity my sexuality ... I let him go and, as a woman, I did not fight for him.

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It had been over a year. I went into a self-help group and I lost some weight. I started going out with a guy...

In August 1996 I received a phone call from Jose Alberto, but I was not home. Some days later, Ruben phoned, the other seminarian, friends since 1993 that still was his colleague. He told me that both of them had come to the city for vacations and that he was inviting me to his parents' house to eat.

In the afternoon, after lunch, he took out an album: there were photos from the seminar, of Jose Alberto and his, of his activities ... my eyes filled with tears. Ruben closed the album and asked what was wrong with me; I started to cry like Magdalena. Finally, serious, he said it was important that Jose Alberto and I should see each other, that he had been listening to him for a year and now to me

... that we had not been able to get the feeling out of both of us and clarify things.

I responded to him that in the self-help group they told me that Jose Alberto was an unhealthy dependency with which I had to break, and that, in addition, I had a boyfriend. Ruben insisted, he arranged the appointment. It was the last day before they had to return, and I had classes at the university. I skipped classes for the first time in my life ...

This is how I met Alberto again.

In three hours there was everything: confidences, recriminations, tears, declarations of love ... we were both bundles of contradictions.

We ended up kissing passionately in a solitary place. We had very close physical contact, without reaching sexual relations. We stayed, as the saying prays, “dressed and rowdy” ... that is why the drama of the separation was higher.

I arrived at the university auditorium and sat on the last places. Several specialists gave lectures and we had to submit a report. There, sheltered by the darkness, I was weeping in tears for several hours. With difficulty I paid attention to the last talk.

I was burning by Jose Alberto's absence. That night I started to write a letter to him. I wanted to thank him for his kisses, his warmth, his expressiveness. But then it came to me, like a rock avalanche, the certainty that he was already in the seminary and rather what I should do was apologize for violating his chastity.

I took a paper, wrote down something and then changed my mind about it. And another, and another and many. That night I could not sleep. Between apologizing and thanking him, the wires got crossed in me...

The next night I did not sleep either. The matter that I had a boyfriend was drilling my head ...

I sinned...! I made Jose Alberto sin, a seminarian! I was capable to be unfaithful to my boyfriend! I could not believe it; the world was coming over me. How I, so good, fell so low? Impossible ... but it was so real that I could not accept it. I had a new nervous breakdown.

I was hospitalized in the psychiatric hospital for about a month. I missed Jose Alberto as never before, it had been the most intense encounter to date. And knowing that it was impossible, that he had returned to the seminary definitely, hurt me like never before ... I felt the loss of "my" man up to the deepest.

When I was discharged, I returned home, where arrangements were being done for my sister's wedding. And it made me mad; very mad, that while I saw the man I loved leave, she was getting married and was so happy – she was radiant –. The envy that I felt towards her – a year and a half younger than me, but thin and always well-groomed – worsened as never before, but I had to swallow everything and help distributing invitations in my stupid role as a "good little sister" who is happy with the great event.

We expected family from all places. Many of them knew that I had a boyfriend and they wanted to meet him. I was in a sea of confusion. My relationship with Armando,

for six months, was the ideal relationship. I met him in high school. He was my best friend for many years. Before we were boyfriend and girlfriend, we had been going out to have coffee for more than a year, every month.

I do not know if I became his girlfriend because I needed affection, because he was the man closest to me or because I thought that I loved him deeply (in fact I love him very much, but as my soul friend. He is a wonderful person).

We saw each other only every weekend, because of his job. I was convinced that Armando was my ideal partner: worker, responsible, generous, understanding, spiritual, very cultured ... and with a great heart.

The relationship was going excellent: a lot of communication, zero discussions, beautiful shared experiences. Everything was rosy, everything was fine ... Why did I deceive him with Jose Alberto? Why did I let myself be carried away by a moment of passion? I did not realize that I never loved Armando as a couple, that I was never attracted to him physically, that our courtship was of platonic friends more than anything else, that I was always dissatisfied because I wanted more "action" and I did not know how to tell him (what was he going to think about me? It was very important to him that I respected myself). When these emotions assailed me, I silenced them with reasoning like: "And who cares if I do not like him that much physically? What is most important in a relationship is communication and spirituality". With Armando I was the "good girl" who was going out with the most honest and holy guy on the planet.

And suddenly I realized that my reality was different. That I vibrated with a man that made me vibrate and I forgot about everything else. Where was I then? I reproached myself a thousand times: “You are a whore who only seeks pleasure, and to top it off with someone forbidden”. “Look at your boyfriend, so good, so sweet ... how were you capable to cheat on him?” I magnified the figure of Armando, almost setting an altar for him; I felt “dirty” at his side. I also magnified my sense of unworthiness by putting myself to the lowest (even that Jose Alberto and I had not gone so far as to have sexual intercourse), and I did not even dare to look him in the eye. I felt so much guilt! We had to end it right away, I could not continue alongside that paragon of virtues while I was so vile. Explain something? No way! If I did not accept it before myself, I would not accept it in front of him (oh, the arrogance ...!).

I finished with him, without explanation, two weeks before my sister’s wedding. The social pressure of him being seen as my formal boyfriend, as a future husband, was huge. I could not stand it. And I arrived alone to the party, which was a martyrdom. Everyone, everyone who greeted me, made a comment: “Hey, and what happened to your boyfriend?” “And when will you get married?” “Skipped sister, stayed unmarried sister”, etcetera.

I wanted to silence them by slapping them, to disappear myself from the map. I wanted to say to the four winds: “Shut up! Go to hell! I am not who you think I am, who you want me to be!” It was horrible for my role as “the

image-keeper". It was the downfall of the "good girl" and her holy little boyfriend. I felt in chaos. At least with Armando, even with the dissatisfaction, the matter was serious, with plans of us getting married later. Now, I did not aspire to anything, neither with Armando nor with Jose Alberto ... and all because of me, my fault! That hurt, and a lot. I was burdened with guilt, and guilt that had no reason. It was terrible.

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My sister got married on November 26, 1996. A few days later, on the first Sunday of Advent, being alone at home in the morning, I felt that half of my face was paralyzing. Terrified, I phoned a friend's grandpa who was a healer more or less. He gave me several remedies and I felt better.

But there were many things that affected me. One of them, my self-image. Overweight since I was a little girl, the problem got bigger and it became a total rejection towards my body. I insulted myself continuously with the nicknames that others had called me or those that I felt: "Fat, disgusting, meatball with legs", etcetera. I never dressed up nice. To fix my hair, I would only see my face.

Shortly before my sister's wedding, thinking about the dress that I would wear, I went to the house of a neighbor that used to dress as a vedette and had a daughter my age. Maybe she could advise me. The girl was not home, but when I was leaving, the lady asked me what was that I

wanted and she made me come back in again so I could try on the dresses of her daughter, who at that time she was only a little thinner than me. What an impression! I had never worn a red dress, tight, low-necked and opened at the back! I had never seen myself in a mirror as big as that one! I had always rejected my body, but that day I liked myself. of course I did not admit it. “You are nuts! – I said to myself – “Not even as a joke could you go to your sister’s wedding like that! How did it occur to you coming here to ask for a dress?” But the lady made me change dresses several times, all more or less the same style. And to turn around in front of the mirror too. I loved the bright green sequined dress, and the pink one with which the whole leg showed out. Of course I needed a lot to be able to show them off. There it was when I realized, and the lady pointed out to me for the umpteenth time, that I had to lose weight...

I remember that visit as if it was yesterday. It brought out to the light a part of me which I strive to marginalize: my feminine and coquettish nature. I left there with a dress in my hand that I was careful to hide it at home. Finally, the outfit at the wedding was dark green, discreet and elegant, as expected, but I will never forget how I looked with the other dresses ...

That clash between my “ideal self” – that faithfully adjusted to the expectations of my family, which I thought I assumed as my own – and my “real self” – which I denied a thousand times – caused strong internal conflicts to me. In the university (I was in the middle of the degree) we had

started the subject of cinema and the group chose to film a short film about the use of condoms. Before the final version with the couple that would model, the trimester was gone in just rehearsals so that everyone had the opportunity to manage camera and lights.

Each session was a martyrdom. On top of two tables in the center that simulated the bed, any two companions of the group (man and woman), dressed, represented the couple-in-the-act. For me, it was pure suffering, whether I was down – because of my frustrated desires – as well as if I was up, because I would be paralyzed and, of course, I did not act naturally. I felt like the only stupid girl in the group who had not had sexual intercourse. And at the scream of: “I want, I want!” there was the other of: “It is evil, it is evil!” My head was exploding; sometimes I had to ask for permission and run out into the garden, but when I lay down on the grass, there were several couples totally lavishing attention on each other. There was no escape (how to escape from my own sexuality?).

For the theoretical part we had to do a work of analyzing a film. Since there was no computer at home, I went to the apartment of the newlyweds, who were enjoying their honeymoon, and I stayed there for several days. But every time that I looked at their double bed, I thought about on what they would be doing at that moment and I filled with anger. So, I worked like crazy to not think and spent many hours in front of the computer in nervous tension.

My neck started to twist. I attributed it to overwork and I did not give it much importance. The sensation of anger and anxiety increased, and I did not know why. I thought that when the pressure of working on the computer would have been completed, my neck would straighten up, but it did not happen like that. On the contrary. It was getting worse and worse, mainly in the film workshop classes with the magnificent story of the condom that never ended. I started using an orthopaedic collar, but it did not help at all. Maybe because it was borrowed and it did not fit me well. The thing is that, even with the orthopaedic collar, my head was sometimes at 180 degrees. I seemed like a disabled walking to the classroom (I was at that time). I could not conclude the trimester.

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It was December 1996 when my load of disasters began with the neck. In the Psychiatric Hospital I was sent to Rheumatology. Nothing. Then to Orthopedics. Nothing. So they sent me to Neurophysiology, where several studies were ordered. The results were not clear. There were discussions among some doctors about whether what I had was neurological or emotional. My psychiatrist insisted that it was psychological, but even with changes of medicines I did not get better. I confess that I did not help much either. I never told the doctor that I had seen Jose Alberto in

August. How could I tell her if she had forbidden me to see him and, besides, she was in close contact with my mother? She was not honest with me either, nor she related one thing to another. I felt so many things intertwined that it was a walking tangle.

About the tangle became complicated when a friend suggested me to go with someone who healed with massages, herbs and I do not know that else. After several sessions, the witch-doctor said: "This is more severe than I thought", I interpreted it as that he could not cure me. I wanted to be straight already and I stopped going there.

At the hospital, the doctor commented that finally I would be healed because she would send me to physiotherapy. I loved the idea when they explained to me what that was about; a few days before I had gone to see some doctor, Dr. Juarez, masseur for football players, which according to a friend he was great. I howled when he squeezed me on his mini-bench of boards. I think that after that I was worse. The doctor of the physiotherapies, on the other hand, he had a rather elegant office; that, absurdly, made me confident. "If he is doing so well, it means that what he does works". This one told me with complete certainty: "In two weeks you will be like new, you will see".

But the two weeks went by, and I did not get better. Then, several months...the physiotherapist modified the treatment many times: with laser beam, with whirlpool, with exercises, etc., but my neck remained the same. They put me back in the psychiatric hospital.

As I was a sick poor thing, Armando, my ex-boyfriend, came to visit me several times, and on one occasion also Jose Alberto phoned from the seminary where he was and he even made me jump out of bed; but in my tangle of mixed feelings could not find the cause of my illness, neither could the psychiatrists. As I had already lost one trimester and the other was approaching, and I was fine except for the neck, they let me out of there with an orthopaedic collar, on March 15, 1997, just as crooked as I entered.

-o0o-

I went back to the self-help group. The previous year, I was more or less able to follow the program and lose some kilos. At least there I was not the only fat woman who had problems with her body and food, and I felt understood. There I found out that many of us especially are looking for bread, candy, chocolate, and other foods as compensation for our frustrated sexuality and low self-esteem, among other things. There I always found an outstretched hand to speak freely about the no acceptance – personal and social – of my body and other problems. They always helped me a lot, but now, after the absence because of the neck and so on, I was who would not let me be helped. For example, I could not make contact with my feelings. I saw how others cried and fell apart when sharing, and I instead spoke always as if telling a story about myself, as if I was outside.

“You are not being honest with yourself” – my guide in the group used to tell me –. I felt it, but I did not know how to get out of the predicament.

In those I was when Eduardo, a super nice gentleman who knew my problems, arrived one day saying: “Here is your healing! It is a workshop called `Return to childhood`. I am sure that from there you get out with the neck well”. But I did not understand why was he talking to me about an authoritarian father and about a hurt girl if what I had was a bad neck, not my childhood memories.

But he convinced me and I went.

-o0o-

In the event I met Dr. Ortiz, with a booming voice and a piercing gaze.

The workshop was very intense. They made us make contact with different stages of life ... there I realized (barely!) that I really had difficulties with my dad, whom I described as “The king of clubs”. The day passed in a flash and the next morning I hoped to wake up totally straight and... surprise! I was just a little better. I felt so disappointed!

I immediately called Eduardo: “You promised me that I would be cured, and it is not true! I am the same”. He did not know what to say to me. He sent me to Dr. Ortiz.

The doctor was finishing his class and I caught him up at the exit. He was with some other people. It was night and he was walking fast. I asked him: "What is wrong with me and my neck?" he stopped for a moment and told me very serious: "The thing has to get out as it came in. You decide. You know how you are. You can not be worse. You say what you prefer: to be a good crooked or a straight liar?" They were waiting for him and I was left standing in the middle of the parking lot. I did not understand – or I did not want to understand – what he said to me. I started crying while walking. The next day, I woke up suffering from gastritis...

I felt that I could not choose any of his options and that dilemma was increasingly distressing. "Of course I want to be a straight ...but not a liar. And what does it mean that the thing has to get out as it entered? Does it mean having sex with Jose Alberto? It can not be anymore ... "I ended up saying: "Who knows what that is; lets go find it some where else". It was always easier to make myself the victim than to confront the cost of my own decisions.

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The sad reality is that six months had already passed and I still had the same crooked neck. My last hope, some pretty rare cleanings, had been a failure. Was I going to stay like that for life? Maybe yes. And I began to resent, against myself, against God and against everyone.

At the university, I had come to a group of another generation – I missed the trimester – and in general they accepted my story about I having had an accident and that was why I was wearing an orthopaedic collar. But those who knew me from before, and knew something of contusions, told me: “It has been already a long time, right? And if it is something else?” And how could I explain what I could not explain to myself? and it made me very angry that the people at church, at the neighborhood, at school – and even the man who collected the garbage! – would give me advice which no one asked for to them: “And why do not you see some doctor?” “And why do not you put on this ointment?” “What if you see such bonesetter?” and – who totally exasperated me: – “In our group we are Christians and we firmly believe in the power of prayer, and with our prayer you will heal”. I wanted to shout at everyone: “Go fuck yourself and leave me alone!” but I smiled kindly and said to them: “Thanks for worrying”. I was fed up! Fed up of the drama that not even me believed it! I wanted to erase myself from the map. I ran away from my friends and increased the anger against everyone.

Around that time, I got a scholarship for a scriptwriting course for Educational Television. At another moment that would have been super-motivating, but now, it was just an excuse that made me stay in the university in the afternoons and not be bedridden, as was my wish.

My depression was horrible. I wanted to kill myself and I was there, as an automaton, supposedly studying. I began to lose my hair ... It was July 31, 1997, when I arrived at the

office of Dr. Ortiz, a psycho-corporal therapist (Bioenergetics).

The last time I saw him, in the parking lot, I did not understand what he had told me about being a “good crooked” or a “straight liar”. I did not understand and I went to ask for explanations, but the doctor did not answer any questions. He only interrupted my speech and, bluntly, expressed: “Here it is not about understanding anything, but about feeling”. “Feel what?” “Feel yourself”.

We started very hard exercises. The first surprise was when so much anger and repressed sadness began to come out (I never imagined that I had kept all that!)

The second surprise was when the woman that I am began to emerge ...

How hard it was (and it is!) to contact that woman who beats under my kilos and kilos of overweight! Also, existed (and exists, although a little less) a tremendous lag between my chronological age – 30 years then – and my affective age – close to preadolescence –. I had never been apart from the protection of my mom, from my dad’s control. Tucked into the family, apart from the chaos of the parties, with great difficulty to relate with kids my age – not so with older men, in whom I looked for a substitute dad – and protected by an impressive shell of fat, I lived ignoring my feelings and deeper needs.

The first stirring up of feelings was when Dr. Ortiz asked me one day: “And why do not you have sex?” The single idea was a very violent irruption in my scheme – made law of life – of “the good girl-daddy’s girl” Impossible!

Even if I had accepted the possibility, my speech was: “I want ... but I can not”, and suddenly the doctor turned the matter around and made me see that the real speech is: “I can ... but I do not want to”. That was a shock so strong that I could not stand it. Of course I did not accept it! Besides, why having relations and look for trouble? This way I was fine, so peaceful! It was so much easier to play dumb and fill the gaps with food ...

But there still was the little worm of curiosity ... (or the savage colt, claiming its rights?)

This “savage colt” had its history. Dr. Ortiz told me one day to look for an animal to represent my sexuality, to name it and to talk to it. That way “Savage”, an indomitable, black colt, who claimed me for having him locked up, being that he wanted to run freely through the meadow. However, every time that I tried to make contact, I got stuck in my fear and cried a lot.

But the idea of having a spirited colt hidden somewhere in me, began to make me nervous...

The next task – quite hard on both sides – was that I had to begin being aware of my body. For me it was simply the recipient of the brain, the “brother donkey” as I was told that San Francisco called him; I felt little or almost nothing with him. Even when I showered, I was so absorbed in my thoughts that I did not know if I had already soaped myself or not. I never exercised, I never looked myself at the mirror full-body.

The doctor recommended me exercises to do in front of the mirror, and to talk to my body. The first time I

insulted it; I shouted to it a lot of profanity, I told it that I did not want it, that it made me sick.

It also came out that I hated my crooked neck. But when he asked what was obstructed (hidden?) there, I was unable to say anything ...

Then a little path started (not easy) on making contact with my feelings. Dr. Ortiz ordered exercises that moved some muscles. Then I lay down on the floor with my eyes closed and I heard him say: "Listen to your body", but I did not hear anything. "What did you feel?", but I did not feel anything. Later on, I began to notice: pain, tiredness, tranquility, desire to cry, etcetera. But it was a long time before I could feel pleasure. How difficult it was (and is) to recognize that I can feel pleasure! (much less to enjoy it!) As if it is forbidden for me ...

Parallel to the process with the body – or as a product of it – I began to notice how repressed I was as a woman. And the great discovery came later: "I am a sensual woman! I am not calm and good as everyone see me, as I have been taught to be. On the contrary! My slut part is a volcano, a torrent. I am very horny ... and I am very inconsiderate". So, I came to a conclusion: I am like this, but I have been forced to be the opposite; I am red, but they have painted me – I have painted myself –gray.

The matter was not easy: it was about opening a gap in super-rigid schemes sustained since childhood and reinforced in the time when I was with the nuns. (And what remains to be done!)

But I began to question myself and to connect things about the word game that bothered me: good/crooked; straight/liar.

The first thing was to discover the rigidity of my parents' education: I had to be "the good daughter", "the good student", "the good sister" (I am the oldest), "the good catechist" ... and I suddenly realized that I am not really like that, that I do not like to be like that.

So, being the "good" was a mask: good in the face of others, but crooked with myself because I denied my impulses, my affections, my aspirations.

Maintaining that "impeccable" image was a super-debilitating internal struggle. It was being responding, like a theater actor, to the demands of the role, in this case to all the social, church, and family conditions that, taken to the extreme, brought me an enormous guilt if I did not do things "as it should be".

And there it was, the root of my crooked neck: THE GUILT AND THE FEAR paralyzed me. I did not forgive myself, for example, having been unfaithful to my good boyfriend with Jose Alberto, with someone "forbidden". Maybe the crooked neck was a way to punish me for being "bad girl".

Now the challenge was (is!) to be a "straight-liar", in the way of daring to see my image in the mirror, to ask myself what I want and to be able to fulfill my expectations, not those of others about me. Authentic with me, "liar" with others. In other words: being able to be happy without feeling guilty.

Months went by and I was getting better of my neck, although I was not quite straight, only at times when I felt relaxed and happy with what I was doing. It helped a lot to get into a dance group, making contact with my body ...

I discovered that at my thirty years, I was a woman in fullness and I really wanted to live and also to have sex. All needed was with whom.

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Then, on January 10, 1998, I got at night a phone call from Jose Alberto. He was on vacations and he wanted to see me.

Once again I skipped classes. My whole being throbbled by his presence. He too, because he went out to meet me before the time and of arriving at the agreed place. We sat down in a park and chatted for a while. Once again he told me that he was not sure about his vocation...

Now it was me who took the initiative. Bluntly I proposed to him to have sex with me. At first he was disconcerted, but then he got happy and took my word for it right away.

When I bolted the door of the hotel room I thought that I was dreaming. Jose Alberto and I, alone, in a closed space, safe and without interruptions, with many hours ahead to let go everything that for so long struggled to come out! I could hardly believe it. he sat on the bed and I remained stood between his legs. We were like that for a

while, looking at each other in the mirror. Finally, he suggested we take off our clothes.

I felt like a queen when he pounced on me in that huge bed. I loved feeling him naked, soft, so fragile and so strong at the same time. I felt ecstatic caressing his hairy chest, staring at him naked, feeling him above, below and inside of me.

There were many details that showed our lack of experience, but it was not important: Jose Alberto had many fantasies and I loved to please him in everything he asked me for... and ask him for something else too. I felt so full in his arms! With the freedom to express everything at last, with my body and with my words. We spoke with many swearwords. I enjoyed it.

With Jose Alberto I felt complete, fulfilled, happy. My neck was straight as never and, for the first time in my life (as Dr. Ortiz would say), "I let myself flow". I did not care if I was fat, I did not care about the clock, I did not care if I was committing sin... it was the utmost to feel myself alive and throbbing...and discovering myself as a woman who loves and who vibrates. At last I gave myself the opportunity to uncover the volcano and let it explode with all its might ... and enjoy myself with it.

I do not remember how long we were there, apparently it was all morning. But the farewell was weak. In the street, next to the subway entrance, hastily, without cuddling, without a "thank you" or "I love you", as if we were going to see each other the next day. But when I turned the corner, alone, I became aware of the separation

and my heart broke. The possibility of never seeing him again, opened. In the joy of feeling him so close, got mixed the bittersweet taste of a defiant distance, I did not know how to handle it. of course: my awakening as a woman and the fire lit in the heart, no one can ever take it from me ...

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However, I had to hide this awakening, this deep and wonderful joy ...

My “good girl” mask claimed its rights.

The months of January to May, I lived them very confused, without “finding myself”, without fitting anywhere. In the process with Dr. Ortiz and after my first sexual relationship, the perception of myself and of everything around me was changing a lot, but both, the psychiatrist as well as my family, kept seeing me and treating me like the same silly girl as always.

Of course there were moments and moments ...

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The month of July arrived. I arrived, like so many people, to an adorned church. It was the priestly ordination of our friend Ruben. It was a beautiful ceremony, of several hours,

where he confirmed before the community his certainty of giving his life in a consecration to God, renewed day by day in service and prayer. Ruben was radiant. His serene joy of 1993 had transformed into a huge smile, very broad, that barely fit in his face.

A few days before, when he handed me the invitation, I asked him: "And Jose Alberto, when will he be ordained?" Ruben became serious and replied: "He will have to wait a lot longer, still. He has to work hard on his chastity".

I knew that it had to do with me and our recent intimate encounter, but I did not feel guilty. I thought: "What I have lived, nobody can take it away from me. And he was the one who looked for me ..." Besides, it was the test of fire. Jose Alberto had to define himself: if he really loved me as much as he said, after the experience he could have hung up his robe and returned (what is not a man capable of doing when he is really in love with someone?) That was my fantasy, but the reality was different. He returned to his seminar and he had not called or written again. So, if after an encounter so intense as the one we had he had decided to continue, he had to fight for his vocation, and seriously fight, and I had to help him.

The ordination of Ruben stirred me everything up from the novitiate and the deep ceremonies of perpetual vows of the nuns: so many faces full of light, which radiated to God, that I had known and knew. The radical following to Christ was a joyful reality for those who were committed from the heart, for life.

I saw Jose Alberto dressed as an acolyte at the ceremony. Finally, he was on his path; he had overcome the test year, he had returned. And before he would tell it to me, I already knew it from his conversation, because of how he was focusing everything.

Then I decided, before the tabernacle of the adorned church, that if I really wanted to help him, I had to get out of the middle forever. It was time to put aside our ambiguities ...

At the end of the ceremony I approached him, I greeted him and said firmly: "I come to ask you not to call me, not to look for me anymore; I will not do it either".

There were no more words. I turned my back on him and walked away without turning my face. It cost me blood...

I remembered our beautiful encounter and I kept it as a treasure. I know I was very radical (I did not say so much!) but it was necessary to do it like that. Now he was on another channel, with his fellow seminarians waiting for him to leave together.

When I was a long way off, I turned around and saw the hubbub from afar, without distinguishing anyone. I asked God for everyone and for each one.

Each one its path, each one its life.

Epilogue

It has been almost three years...

My life has taken many turns: end of the university, work, friends, groups...

I have had some occasional sexual encounters (very few), but no stable partner. Perhaps I am afraid of falling in love and suffer a disappointment, as it happened with Jose Alberto (from whom I did no longer know anything more).

In 1998 my friend Armando married a great girl who knows how to value and motivate him.

In 1999 my neck was fully straightened and at the beginning of 2000, the therapeutic cycle with Dr. Ortiz ended (now I am in other therapies...)

I have intensely lived rich experiences, important changes. The only constant has been my overweight.

Dr. Ortiz used to say that it is a defense mechanism to escape from male eyes and continue denying my sexuality. Maybe he is right, although I think there are other background problems that lead me to overeat.

One of them is that at my 34 years old I am still living with my parents, now as an only daughter because my younger sisters are already married. I have not made necessary ruptures.

I use my mask of "good girl" at home and, outside, when it is convenient for me. I am afraid to define myself completely...

I want and I need to become independent, but I do not have the economic means to do so.

Meanwhile, I am struggling (and my therapists are helping me!) to put aside that mask which unfolds into a thousand more, and to dare look without fear at the image in the mirror ...

I recently found my neighbor (the lady who made me try on those tight dresses in 1996), a deep and meaningful encounter. It is helping me a lot...

I am starting to lose weight. I feel that I am starting a new stage.

It has been very important to dare tell my story...

-o0o-

Paulo Coelho says, in his book *The Alchemist*:

Certain merchant sent his son to learn the Secret of Happiness with the wisest of all men. The young man walked for forty days through the desert until reaching a beautiful castle, on top of a mountain. There lived the wise man he was looking for.

Nevertheless, instead of finding a holy man, our hero entered a room and saw an immense activity: merchants who went in and went out, people talking in the corners, a small orchestra that played soft melodies and a table full of the most delicious delicacies from that region of the world. The wise man talked with everyone, and the young man had

to wait for two hours until the time came for him to be attended.

The wise man listened carefully to the reason of his visit, but he told him that at that moment he did not have time to explain the Secret of Happiness. He suggested him to take a walk around his palace and come back two hours later.

-But I want to ask you a favor – the wise man completed, handing him a teaspoon in which he dropped two drops of oil –. While you are walking, take this teaspoon being careful so that the oil does not spill.

The young man started going up and down the palace steps, always keeping his eyes fixed on the spoon. After the two hours, he returned to the presence of the wise man.

-How was it? – the wise man asked – Did you see the tapestries of Persia that were in my dining room? Did you see the garden that the Master of the Gardeners took ten years to create? Did you notice the beautiful parchments of my library?

The young man, embarrassed, confessed that he had not seen anything. His only concern had been not to spill the drops of oil that the wise man had entrusted to him.

-Well, then come back and get to know the wonders of my world – said the wise man –. You can not trust a man if you do not know his house.

Already calmer, the young man grabbed the spoon again and walked around the palace again, this time looking attentively at all the works of art that adorned the ceiling and the walls. He saw the gardens, the mountains around

him, the delicacy of the flowers, the care with which each work of art was settled in its place. Back to the presence of the wise man, he told him in detail all that he had seen.

-But where are the two drops of oil that I entrusted to you? – the wise man asked.

The young man looked at the spoon and noticed that he had spilled them.

-Well, this is the only advice I have to give you – the wisest of the wise men told him –. The Secret of Happiness is about looking at all the wonders of the world, but never forgetting the two drops of oil in the spoon.

-o0o-

I already made my first trip clinging to the spoon that was entrusted to me, conditioned by so many conventionalities and rationalizing everything continuously. Too attentive not to spill two drops of oil...and I forgot to live and enjoy.

I already made, also, my second trip, ecstatic by the wonders of new experiences, “traveling” through fascinating adventures...but I forgot to put my feet on the ground and I spilled the oil without realizing it.

I want this new stage to be my third trip: “Alice in wonderland...”, without letting myself be surrounded by “the wonders” of the road. That is why I chose as a pseudonym “Alicia-third trip” or “Alicia III”.