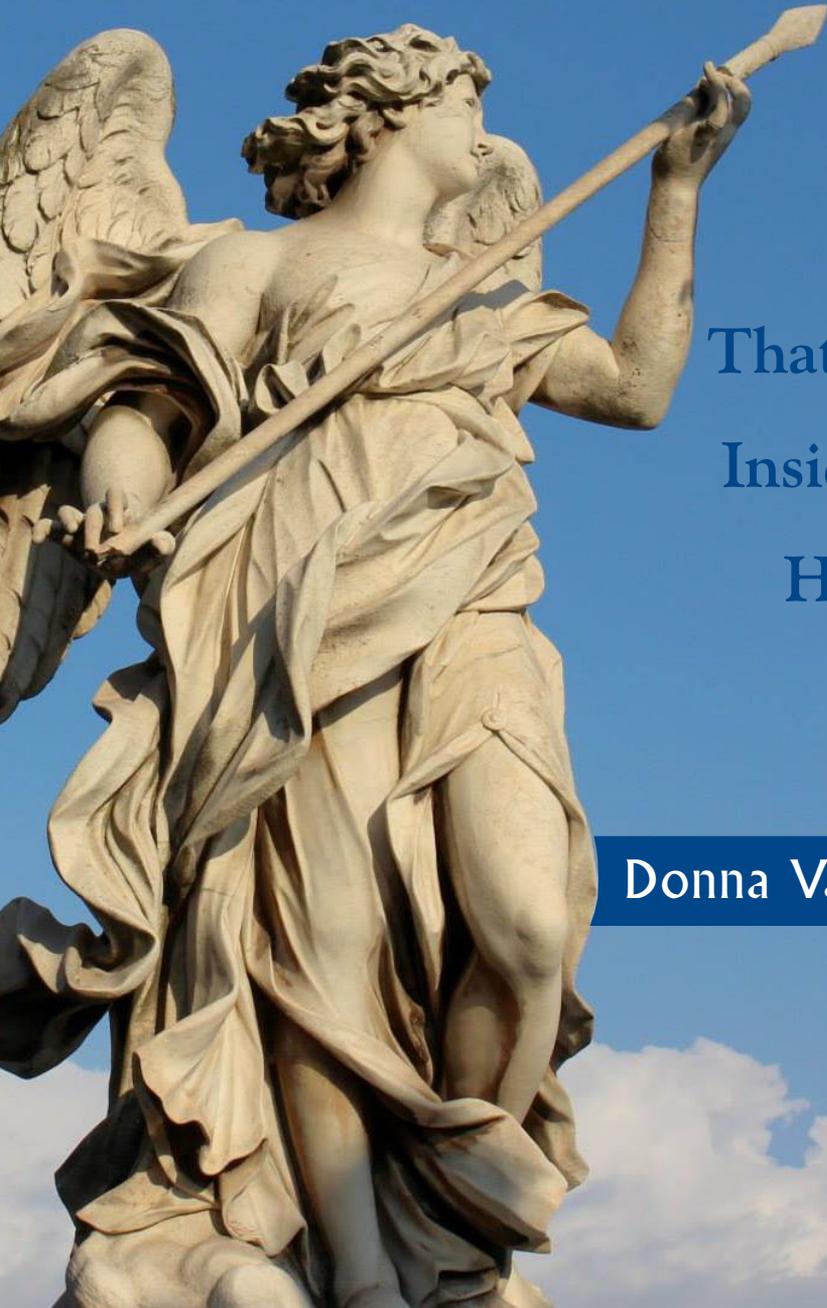


An E-Chapter from the Book "A Lesson in a Higher Love"

The Protector

That Voice
Inside My
Head

Donna Valentine



[A LESSON IN A HIGHER LOVE]

The Protector

That Voice Inside My Head

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The Voice

For years I listened to That Voice Inside My Head (The Voice). When I was seven and learning to ride a bike, The Voice kept me from letting dad take off the training wheels. At eleven -when puberty hit me like a Mack Truck- The Voice convinced me that I was ugly and uncoordinated, so I walked around with my head down between classes. At fourteen it told me not to sing out in choir because my classmates would laugh at me.

Throughout my childhood The Voice chastened and ridiculed me. It went with me through high school. It insisted I wasn't smart enough for my Physics 101 class in college. Certainly not tough enough for Navy boot camp.

For decades I thought The Voice was me, or a part of me. I realized it wasn't me when I read Eckhardt Tolle's, *The Power of Now*, and heard him refer to the process as "watching the thinker."



Naming The Voice

Aha! This Voice in my head wasn't really me after all. But The Voice eluded me- slippery as an oiled pig. I couldn't catch it, so I named it The Bitch. I even gave her a Long Island accent when I referred to her latest rants when telling my best friend about her. She was there, every day, all day long. She cut me down relentlessly, and I listened to everything she had to say. None of it was any good, trust me, but I listened anyway. On it went... "You look fat in that." "He doesn't love you." "You aren't good enough."

Once I named her, she became identifiable. I heard her everywhere. At work, she pitted me against other air traffic controllers. She rode me about a busy session on Sector 8, the McCook High sector. She pick, pick, picked about how I could have turned United 232 sooner or climbed Delta 438 to flight level 370 five minutes sooner if I were any good. I could have tightened up the sequence of arrival aircraft into Denver airport. "I can't believe you used that cowboy phraseology!" And... "You shoulda married a doctah!!"



For many months I could only observe her. I seemed powerless to change her or shut her up. I despised her. I wanted to get rid of her completely. I looked for that thing that could bring her down. I wanted to grab her, tie her up, and put a sock in her mouth. I caught myself hearing her an average of 63.7 times a day.

Slowly, something fascinating happened. A pattern. I always saw her as though she were a person, a form of me. But she was not a person. She was not even a she. She was a function. Not unlike the function of the autonomic nervous system which helps us automatically do things for our own survival—breathe, digest, and pump blood through the heart. She was necessary. She served a purpose.

My eyes were opened to her function in my life—protect. At all costs. The goal is safety. Achieved through smallness. This opposes the goal of the Creator of All (Creator), which is a grand, epic, wildly abundant life of excitement that makes you feel and come alive and is achieved through willingness and courage! Way too big for The Protector.



My whole life I've always taken what I thought the best opinion or advice from trusted friends and family. Why? Because I was "stupid and had no common sense." Now that wasn't my truth... but I made it my reality. It's what I was told and what I agreed to. Throughout my youth I heard the message that what I said didn't matter. When the dumb blond era came around, I let myself off the hook. I played the dumb blond card readily whenever I said something "stupid." Rather than look at me with disdain, people laughed. I didn't have to be smart. In high school when my grades traveled south it became an easy excuse.

I could see myself as Chrissy, the quintessential dumb blond on *Three's Company*, a popular TV show. Everyone loved Chrissy. My friends and classmates felt compelled to tell me their dumb blond jokes. I laughed. They laughed. Easy.

After high school graduation I was in a marriage that lasted five years. He helped to further the notion that I was stupid and had no common sense. I began to truly believe that about myself. I subsequently fell into a nineteen-year marriage, where again the notion of me not being smart proliferated. I continued this well into



my thirties. What once seemed funny and harmless, turned into something that changed me and suppressed the best parts of me. It did insidious damage, like a small hole in a roof that lets water in and goes undetected until the ceiling rots and the roof caves in.

I wasn't dumb... and I wasn't stupid. I had no faith in myself, so I lived my life the way others told me would be best. Not listening to my own Voice Within. After years of listening to other people's advice, the cacophony of other voices drowned out my Voice Within . It wasn't even discernible. In that state, I became quite vulnerable. When I follow that Voice Within, I have the power and protection of the Creator behind me. When I'm not, I need to be protected.



The Princess

The Bitch came along to keep me small. I couldn't take any risks. Risks were dangerous. She kept me little and fearful. That became cozy for me throughout most of my life. When I realized what she was actually doing for me, my attitude towards her changed. I began to refer to her as The Princess. I thanked her for her service. I let her know there was a new sheriff in town and I didn't need her any more.

I chose to stop listening to all the collective voices around a year and a half ago. Once I stopped asking for advice and stopped expecting others to tell me what to do, life changed dramatically. I actually got quiet. And That Voice Within, (The New Voice), grew louder and louder.

This NEW Voice had nothing bad to say. Only good. Goodness every day. Positive, uplifting thoughts. These thoughts began to fill my head instead and I became happy. Joyful. Sure.

The New Voice is the voice I listen to now. Since I've



started listening, it's never been wrong or let me down. Even more importantly, since I stopped listening to the other voices, I may have stumbled across a universal truth, perhaps, for everyone. The Creator actually does speak to us all, just like in the Garden of Eden.

I'm either crazy because I have voices in the back of my head—like everyone does—or I'm crazy because I think I am hearing the Creator—like everyone can. I guess if I had to pick one, I'll go with hearing from the Creator, because this way of life brings me great fulfillment, deep joy, and a sense of purpose and meaning.

Since my switchover to listening to The New Voice, when I need to make a choice, I keep quiet until I make a firm decision. Only then will I talk about it. At first, people missed my cues and still offered advice. I do believe I may have stepped on a few toes in the beginning as the power shifted back to me. Now, I rarely get advice. Some people think you need advice from others to help you make better decisions. That is not my truth. I make decisions on my own exclusively and The Princess only makes an occasional effort to stop me, which might look like a namby-pamby, “What if?...”



The Protector

I renamed The Voice again. Offering proper due, she is now respectfully called The Protector.

The Protector opposes everything the Creator has for me. Not consciously. Things the Creator has for me require faith. Courage. Patience. These are innately foreign to The Protector. Her job is to keep me safe. Which equals small. I can't reap big, beautiful, impossible dreams and live small at the same time.

Let's just take one comment for an example. "You aren't smart enough." When I dig deeper into that comment, I find insecurity at its genesis. The insecurity happening in my mind at that precise time produces an emotion in me. Fear. Fear in many forms, too. Fear of failure. Fear of making a huge mistake. Fear that others will judge me critically if I step outside of the box I have myself in. But now, let's look at the opposition to "You aren't smart enough." What does the Creator say about me? I am whole. I am protected. I am strong. I have the Creator's power and mind. Well, that pretty



much sounds like the exact opposite of “You aren’t smart enough.”

Where did that insecurity come from? My childhood. So why am I still thinking it after all these years then? Because I never stopped to apply the truth to the matter.

One day I sat down and really thought it through. Am I not smart? Of course not. I may not have a degree, but I was an Air Traffic Controller for 29 years. Whose bar am I holding up to measure my smarts? I was using other people’s standards, or what I believed them to be, and not my own. I’ve reset my standard to the only one that matters. The Creator’s.

There’s a new sheriff in town.

