After Certainty

A Reflection

Saint
Parousia

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The Violet Quill

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First published by The Violet Quill, an imprint of House of Parousia 2025

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National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia.

First edition

ISBN: 978-1-7641798-2-9

This book was professionally typeset on Reedsy.
Find out more at reedsy.com

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Preface

A Note Before the Words

This is not a spiritual book.

It does not offer salvation, certainty or lineage.
It will not tell you who you are, where you came from, or what you should believe.

I have read the old books.
Some moved me. Some misled me.
Most tried too hard to sound certain.

I have walked through belief systems the way one walks through abandoned houses —
curious, cautious, respectful of what once lived there,
and honest about what no longer breathes.

What follows comes from an embodied life, not a perfected one.
Mistakes were made. Assumptions were inherited.
Authority was claimed too early — and relinquished later.

That relinquishment mattered.

These pages are written from the other side of needing to

convince anyone of anything.

They are offered without hierarchy, recruitment, or instruction.

If something in you relaxes as you read, stay.
If something in you bristles, stay longer.
If you are looking for a system, a teacher, or a map —
this is not your book.

But if you are quietly hungry for something real
after years of circling borrowed truths,
you may recognise what remains when belief falls away.

I am not here to be understood.
I am here to be *present*.

Take what resonates.
Leave what does not.
Nothing here requires agreement.

Only honesty.

—

This book forms part of the **Embodiment** series — a sequence of reflections written from lived experience rather than instruction. Each volume stands on its own, yet together they trace the unfolding of embodiment as it is lived, questioned, and integrated.

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1

Chapter One — The Last Time I Defended Myself

There was no lightning bolt.

No choir. No spiritual Instagram moment where the universe clapped politely.

It happened the way most real turning points happen — quietly, almost rudely, in the middle of ordinary life.

I was speaking to someone who wanted my experience packaged into something they could recognise. They weren't cruel. They were simply hungry, and hunger makes people reach. They wanted names, categories, proof. They wanted the neat little story arc: *How did you get here? What practice did you use? Who taught you? What do you believe?*

And I felt the old reflex rise — the one I'd trained into myself over years. The reflex that says: *Translate. Explain. Soften. Give them a handle. Make it safe. Make it respectable. Make it palatable.*

That reflex has a long history in spiritual circles. It's the performance of certainty. The polished testimony. The well-behaved awakening.

It's also the reflex of anyone who has ever been misunderstood and tried to survive by becoming understandable.

So I began, the way I always used to. I started telling the story with the edges sanded off. I started arranging my life like a shop window. I started reaching for the old language that makes people nod along — the language of concepts and frameworks and "this is what it means".

And then something in me stopped.

Not dramatically.

Just... stopped.

A clean internal stillness.
A quiet refusal.

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It wasn't anger. It wasn't exhaustion. It wasn't even a boundary, in the way boundaries are often taught — like a fence you hammer in because you're afraid of what might happen if you don't.

This was different.

This was the body of the Master simply declining to perform.

In that moment I saw it with absolute clarity: explaining had become a habit of self-abandonment. A soft betrayal dressed up as kindness. A way of leaving myself so other people could stay comfortable.

And I realised something else, too — the part that stings:

Most of the time, people don't want the truth. They want something they can place on a shelf.

They want a belief system with your name on it.

They want a story that reassures them they're on the right path.

They want you to become a signpost, because then they don't have to stand in the wild unknown place of their own experience.

And I don't blame them. I've been that person. I've circled the old edicts. I've read the books. I've listened to the teachers. I've tried to find the "right" structure to contain something that was never meant to be contained.

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I even loved some of those books — wildly, sincerely.

I once devoured writings that claimed other worlds, other orders, other initiations. Some of it felt like oxygen at the time. Some of it, looking back, was theatre pretending to be truth. And if I'm honest, part of what I loved was the permission it gave me to believe there was *more* than the grey little cage of accepted reality.

But here's what age, embodiment, and hard-earned discernment taught me:

The hunger for "more" is real.
The marketplace that sells it is full of rubbish.

And in the middle of that marketplace, people become desperate to sound certain — because certainty sells.

So I stopped selling.

I looked at the person in front of me, and I said something simple. Not clever. Not mystical. Not defensive.

"I'm not going to explain this properly."

They blinked, startled.

And in the blink, I felt the old self — the one who needed to be understood — loosen its grip. As if it had been holding its breath for years, waiting for permission to stop.

I didn't say it to punish them.
I didn't say it to be superior.
I said it because it was the first honest sentence in the room.

Then I added, gently:

"If something in you recognises what I'm saying, you'll know. And if you don't, my explaining won't create it."

That was the day I stopped explaining.

Not because I had nothing to offer — but because what I offer

cannot be proven, and it should not be performed.

Because the deepest things are not understood by the mind.

They're recognised.

And recognition does not require my defence.

It requires your presence.

Reflective Pause

- *Where in your life are you still translating yourself so you can be tolerated?*
- *Who benefits from your explanation — you, or their comfort?*
- *And what might happen if you simply... stopped?*

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2

Chapter Two — The Marketplace of Certainty

If you stand still long enough in the spiritual world, you start to hear it.

The hum.

It sounds like confidence, but it isn't.
It sounds like wisdom, but it's rehearsed.
It sounds like authority, but it's rented.

This is the marketplace of certainty — a place built on the unspoken agreement that doubt is dangerous and not-knowing must be concealed.

Here, answers are currency.
Here, clarity is staged.
Here, those who hesitate are quietly passed over.

I didn't see it at first. Most people don't. When you arrive

hungry, you're grateful for anything that looks like nourishment. You don't ask where it came from. You don't check the ingredients. You're just relieved someone seems to know.

And to be fair, many of them *do* know something. They've had experiences. Insights. Openings. Real ones.

The trouble begins when an experience is mistaken for a destination.

That's when the performance starts.

Because once you've spoken with certainty once, you're expected to keep doing it. The audience returns not for presence, but for consistency. They don't want truth — they want *the same truth again*, delivered with confidence, on time.

And slowly, almost imperceptibly, the role replaces the reality.

I watched it happen to others before I recognised it in myself.

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People learned the language. The phrases. The tonal cadence that signals "I'm awake." They learned when to pause, when to soften the eyes, when to smile knowingly. They learned which doubts were acceptable to share and which ones must never be spoken out loud.

And the strangest thing?
Most of them were sincere.

They weren't trying to deceive. They were trying to *belong*.

Certainty is rewarded in spiritual culture. Hesitation is treated as immaturity. Saying "I don't know" too often will quietly remove you from the stage.

So people learn to perform *knowingness*.

They stop checking in with their bodies. They stop letting experiences change them. They stop allowing silence to interrupt the story they're meant to keep telling.

Because silence is dangerous in a marketplace.

Silence doesn't sell.

I remember the moment I saw it clearly. Not as an accusation — but as a pattern.

We were all circling the same old ideas, polishing them, reframing them, dressing them up in modern language. New terms, same scaffolding. Ancient hierarchies wearing contemporary clothes.

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And beneath it all, the same unspoken fear:

If I stop being certain, will I still be seen?

That question drives more spiritual performance than any desire to serve.

I don't exempt myself from this. I participated. I learned the moves. I spoke the language. I could feel when a room wanted

reassurance and when it wanted mystique. I knew how to deliver both.

But something kept scraping inside me — a low, persistent friction.

Because certainty, when it's real, doesn't need defending.
And certainty, when it's borrowed, is exhausting to maintain.

The longer I stayed in that marketplace, the clearer it became: most people weren't lying — they were *trapped*. Trapped in identities they could no longer question without losing everything they'd built.

So they doubled down.

More claims. More confidence. Less listening.

And all the while, the body waited patiently in the background, holding the truth no one asked it for.

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That's the part most systems forget.

The body doesn't perform certainty.
It registers coherence — or the lack of it.

Which is where this inevitably leads.

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Chapter Three — The Body Knows When You're Lying

The body always knows.

Not in words.
Not in arguments.
Not in belief.

It knows in contraction and ease. In fatigue that makes no sense. In sudden nausea when the story sounds right but feels wrong. In the subtle tightening that happens when you repeat something you no longer believe but don't yet dare to release.

Long before I admitted anything consciously, my body had started withdrawing its cooperation.

I would feel it when I spoke — a slight hollowness behind the words. Not dramatic. Just… absent. As if my voice was arriving a fraction of a second before I did.

I ignored it at first. Most people do. We're taught to override bodily signals in the name of discipline, service, professionalism, devotion. We learn to treat the body like a vehicle, not a witness.

But embodiment doesn't work that way.

The body doesn't care how elegant your explanation is.
It doesn't care how many people nod.
It doesn't care how spiritual your intention sounds.

It responds only to alignment.

When something is true *for you*, the body relaxes. Breath deepens. Timing improves. There's less effort in the movement of life.

When something is false — even subtly — the body compensates. It tightens. It dulls sensation. It leaks energy. You begin to need recovery time from conversations that should have been nourishing.

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That was my first real education.

Not in metaphysics.
In honesty.

I began to notice which sentences drained me and which ones didn't. Which explanations left me feeling hollow and which ones landed quietly and cleanly.

And I saw something humbling: the body had been signalling all along. I just hadn't been listening because the mind was too busy maintaining coherence.

That's when I understood why so many spiritual paths eventually collapse into illness, burnout, or bitterness.

You cannot out-talk the body forever.

Eventually, it will tell the truth on your behalf.

Sometimes gently.
Sometimes dramatically.
Always accurately.

Embodiment isn't about becoming more spiritual.
It's about becoming less divided.

It's the moment when what you say, what you feel, and how you live stop arguing with each other.

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And that moment cannot be performed.

Which is why the body is the great equaliser.
It doesn't care who taught you.
It doesn't care what lineage you claim.
It doesn't care how beautiful the theory is.

It only asks one question, again and again:

Is this actually true for you?

When I stopped overriding that question, everything else simplified.

I spoke less.
I listened more.
I allowed silence to interrupt me.

And in that silence, something honest finally had room to breathe.

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Chapter Four — Recognition Without Belief

There is a moment that arrives after belief has loosened its grip but before anything new rushes in to replace it.

It's an uncomfortable moment for people who like certainty.

It's a relief for those who have been quietly exhausted by it.

Nothing dramatic happens here.

No revelation. No doctrine upgrade. No new identity to announce.

Just recognition.

Recognition is different from belief. Belief is something you *hold*. Recognition is something that *happens to you*.

You don't decide to recognise something. Your body does it first — a subtle settling, a quiet click, the absence of argument. The mind might catch up later, or it might not. Recognition doesn't

require its cooperation.

This is where many people get lost.

They assume that if belief falls away, nothing will be left. That meaning will collapse. That life will become flat, grey, or directionless.

That fear keeps entire spiritual economies alive.

But belief is not the source of meaning.
It's a *substitute* for direct contact.

I learned this slowly, not through insight but through subtraction. One belief at a time stopped working. Not because it was "wrong" in some absolute sense, but because it no longer rang true in my body.

That distinction matters.

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Some beliefs serve you for a while. They stabilise you. They give language to experiences you don't yet know how to hold. I don't dismiss that. I don't mock it. I've lived it.

But recognition arrives when belief has done its job and quietly becomes unnecessary.

No announcement.
No graduation ceremony.

Just the realisation that you're no longer interested in defending

ideas you don't need to lean on.

Here's the thing most people don't expect:

When belief drops away, recognition doesn't feel grand.
It feels *ordinary*.

You recognise when someone is speaking from presence — not because they convince you, but because your body doesn't brace itself. You recognise when something is off — not because you can explain it, but because your energy pulls back without drama.

This is not mystical.
It's biological.

Humans are wired for recognition. Long before belief systems existed, bodies learned to read coherence, danger, safety, resonance. That capacity didn't disappear when we invented philosophy and religion — it just got buried under layers of explanation.

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Recognition is what remains when you stop outsourcing truth.

And this is where it gets confronting for belief-based systems:

Recognition cannot be organised.

You can't build a hierarchy around it.
You can't credential it.
You can't sell it in neat steps.

Which is why recognition is often quietly discouraged.

Belief keeps people aligned. Recognition makes them autonomous.

I noticed the shift in myself when I stopped asking, *"Is this true?"* and started noticing, *"Is this alive in me?"*

Truth became less interesting than coherence.

I didn't need to agree with someone to recognise their presence.
I didn't need to reject an idea to notice it wasn't mine.

This softened everything.

Arguments fell away. Not because I became more tolerant, but because there was nothing left to defend. You don't argue on behalf of something you're not carrying.

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And here's the part that surprises people most:

Recognition doesn't make you passive.
It makes you precise.

You say no faster.
You leave sooner.
You stop explaining earlier.

Not out of arrogance — out of efficiency.

Belief demands loyalty.

Recognition asks only for honesty.

That honesty isn't always comfortable. Sometimes recognition tells you that something you once loved no longer fits. Sometimes it shows you that a teacher, a system, or even a version of yourself has reached its natural end.

But recognition never shames you for where you've been.

It simply says, *"This is where you are now."*

And that's enough.

You don't need a worldview to stand in that place.
You don't need language polished enough to convince anyone else.

You only need the willingness to trust what is already registering.

Recognition without belief is not emptiness.
It's intimacy with reality, without the buffer of ideology.

And once you've tasted that, belief — no matter how beautiful — feels like a step backward.

Not wrong.

Just unnecessary.

Reflective Pause

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- *Where are you still maintaining beliefs out of loyalty rather than aliveness?*
- *What do you recognise instantly, without needing to explain it?*
- *And what might change if you trusted that recognition — quietly, without turning it into a position?*

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Chapter Five — The Price of Speaking Too Soon

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There is a story often told about spiritual maturity — that once you "know better," rejection no longer touches you. That the realised human floats above such things, unbothered, serene.

That story is tidy.

It's also false.

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When I was belittled, sidelined, quietly corrected and edged out, it hurt — not because my identity was fragile, but because I was human.

I felt small in moments I hadn't expected to.

I felt foolish for having been sincere.

I felt the heat of embarrassment rise in my chest when my work was smiled at instead of met.

No one shouted. No one attacked.

Which somehow made it worse.

It's easier to stand your ground against open hostility.

It's much harder when the message arrives wrapped in politeness.

The whispers behind hands didn't sound cruel — they sounded *reasonable*.

The tone was never, *"You are wrong."*

It was, *"You're a bit ahead of yourself."*

And I believed it for a while.

I questioned myself late at night.

I replayed conversations.

I wondered if I'd misunderstood what was moving through me — or worse, if I'd imagined it altogether.

That's the part spiritual writing often skips:

the loneliness of being early, unpolished, and earnest in spaces that reward composure over truth.

I didn't feel enlightened in those moments.

I felt naïve.

Exposed.

And quietly ashamed — not of what I'd said, but of having expected generosity.

The body remembers those moments vividly.

A tightening in the throat before speaking.

A slight bracing before sharing anything unscripted.

The instinct to soften, disclaim, qualify — *"This is probably wrong, but..."*

That's not humility.

That's self-protection learned through social correction.

And this is where the real cost landed:

I began to mistrust my own timing.

Not my integrity — my *timing*.

As if truth must wait its turn.

As if embodiment requires external validation before it's allowed to speak.

That confusion is corrosive.

Because when you're told — implicitly — that your experience is premature, you start living half a step behind yourself. You hesitate where you would otherwise move. You translate where you would otherwise speak plainly.

And something vital dulls.

I want to be clear about this, because it matters:

Being sidelined did not destroy me.

But it did exhaust me.

It taught me how easily belonging can be withdrawn.

How quickly warmth cools when you stop performing famil-

iarity.

How subtle the mechanisms of exclusion really are.

And yet — here is the part that surprised me most:

Even in the moments where I felt diminished, something in me never collapsed.

The hurt was real.

The confusion was real.

But beneath it all was a steady, quiet presence that never once said, *"You were wrong to speak."*

It said, *"You spoke honestly — and honesty has consequences."*

That distinction changed everything.

Because once I stopped trying to avoid the consequences, I stopped negotiating with myself.

I let the discomfort be what it was — human, aching, unglamorous — without turning it into a lesson or a failure.

And slowly, the need to be included dissolved.

Not because I hardened.

But because I softened toward myself.

That's when I realised:

the Master does not bypass the human — the Master *includes* her.

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And inclusion, when it finally comes from within, cannot be taken away by whispers, sidelining, or polite dismissal.

It doesn't erase the memory of being hurt.

But it ends the argument about whether you had the right to be there.

You did.

You always did.

Reflective Pause

- *Where have you doubted your timing rather than your truth?*
- *What did it feel like — in your body — to be quietly diminished?*
- *And what might change if you allowed that human hurt without turning it into self-correction?*

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Chapter Six — On Being Done with Becoming

There comes a point where growth stops feeling expansive and starts feeling compulsory.

You don't notice it at first. It masquerades as dedication. As commitment. As "doing the work." You keep refining yourself, updating your language, adjusting your posture toward life — always slightly out of sync with where you actually are.

Becoming is seductive like that.

It promises arrival while quietly postponing rest.

For a long time, I believed becoming was synonymous with maturity. That staying open meant staying unfinished. That if I ever stopped improving, refining, evolving, I would calcify — become irrelevant, complacent, stagnant.

That belief kept me moving long after movement was necessary.

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And then, one day, it simply stopped making sense.

Not because I had arrived somewhere special.
But because the effort no longer matched the reality.

I realised I was no longer changing in any meaningful way — I was just *maintaining momentum*. Polishing edges that didn't need polishing. Questioning instincts that had already proven trustworthy.

Becoming had become habit.

And habit, when it outlives its usefulness, becomes noise.

What finally broke the spell wasn't insight. It was fatigue — the honest, unglamorous kind. The kind that doesn't ask for a breakthrough, only for truth.

I didn't want to be better.
I wanted to be *done*.

Done negotiating with imaginary standards.
Done explaining my readiness.
Done interpreting my life as a draft.

That was a frightening admission.

Because if you're done becoming, what are you?

The answer arrived quietly:
You're *here*.

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And here, it turns out, is enough.

Being done with becoming doesn't mean nothing changes. Life still moves. Experience still deepens. Understanding still refines itself.

But the orientation shifts.

You stop reaching forward and start standing *in*.
You stop aspiring and start inhabiting.
You stop narrating yourself and start listening again.

The relief of that shift is hard to describe without sounding dramatic, so I won't try. I'll just say this:

When I stopped becoming, my body softened.

Breath settled lower.
Decisions simplified.
Silence stopped feeling empty.

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I no longer needed to frame my experiences as steps toward something else. They were allowed to be what they were — complete in themselves.

And something else happened, too — something unexpected.

I became less tolerant of what wasn't true.

Not harsher.
Just clearer.

When you're no longer becoming, you don't have to entertain paths that aren't yours out of politeness. You don't linger in conversations that require you to shrink. You don't stay in rooms where your presence is tolerated but not welcomed.

You leave earlier.
You say no faster.
You recover your time.

This isn't detachment.
It's self-respect without ceremony.

I noticed that people reacted differently to me after that. Some leaned in. Some drifted away. Some seemed unsettled, as if something unspoken had been withdrawn.

I understood then that becoming had made me *legible*.

Being done made me free.

Free people are harder to place. They don't advertise where they're headed. They don't offer improvement narratives others can follow. They don't promise transformation.

They simply live.

And that, oddly enough, is what so many people are hungry for.

Not another path.
Not another practice.
But the quiet permission to stop trying to earn their own

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existence.

Being done with becoming doesn't make you finished.

It makes you *available*.

Available to life as it actually unfolds.

Available to the body's intelligence.

Available to moments that don't need to be leveraged into meaning.

It's not the end of growth.

It's the end of chasing it.

And when that chase stops, something profoundly human returns — a steadiness that doesn't need to announce itself.

You don't become a Master by becoming endlessly.

You become one the moment you stop running from where you already are.

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Reflective Pause

- *Where are you still treating your life as a draft?*
- *What would it feel like — in your body — to stop becoming and start inhabiting?*
- *And what might finally rest if you allowed yourself to be done?*

7

Closing Chapter — Living Without a Script

There was a time when I believed life required interpretation.

Every experience needed to *mean* something.
Every feeling needed a framework.
Every pause needed justification.

I lived as though existence were a text to be deciphered — and if I failed to understand it properly, I might miss the point of being here altogether.

That belief kept me alert.
It also kept me tired.

Living without a script did not arrive as a philosophy.
It arrived as a gradual loosening.

I stopped asking what moments were for.
I stopped scanning conversations for lessons.

I stopped assuming that clarity was always waiting just beyond the next insight.

Nothing dramatic happened when the script fell away.

Life didn't become louder.
It became quieter.

I noticed how often I had been narrating myself — internally, constantly — as though an invisible audience were waiting to be convinced that my life made sense. Without that narration, things unfolded with less resistance.

I didn't feel wiser.
I felt more present.

Living without a script doesn't mean drifting or disengaging. It means responding without rehearsal. It means letting situations meet you as you are, rather than as who you think you should be next.

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Some days are still awkward.
Some moments are still uncertain.
Some choices are still made without full visibility.

But they are no longer treated as problems to solve.

They are simply life, occurring.

Without a script, there is less need to curate yourself. You speak when something is true. You stay silent when it isn't. You move

when movement is natural, and you rest without turning rest into failure.

You become less impressive.

And far more real.

I've noticed that people sometimes expect a closing statement here — a final insight, a takeaway, a neat summation of what it all means.

There isn't one.

Because living without a script does not end in understanding.
It ends in **contact**.

Contact with the body as it breathes.
Contact with the moment as it unfolds.
Contact with the quiet intelligence that doesn't announce itself but never leaves.

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Nothing in this book asks you to abandon your beliefs.
Nothing asks you to adopt mine.

If something resonated, let it rest.
If something didn't, let it go.

There is no practice required here.
No allegiance.
No next step.

Just the simple, radical permission to stop preparing for life and start inhabiting it.

Not as a project.
Not as a path.
Not as a becoming.
But as this —
unscripted, unfinished, and quietly enough.

Final Reflective Pause

- *What might you stop rehearsing if no one were watching?*
- *Where in your life could you allow yourself to respond instead of prepare?*
- *And what becomes possible when you trust the moment more than the story you tell about it?*

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Closing Reflection

This book does not conclude a journey.

It pauses one.

What follows is not more knowledge, but deeper inhabitation. Not certainty, but presence lived without scaffolding.

If something in these pages felt familiar, it is because it was never new.

And if something fell away as you read, let it.

Embodiment does not ask to be believed.
It asks only to be lived.

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The Embodiment Series

The **Embodiment** series explores what it means to live realisation within ordinary human life.

These books are not teachings or manuals. They do not instruct, prescribe, or resolve.

Each volume stands on its own, yet together they trace the lived process of embodiment as it is questioned, tested, relinquished, and integrated — not as belief, but as experience.

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About the Author

Saint Parousia writes from lived experience rather than belief, instruction, or spiritual lineage.

Her work explores embodiment as it unfolds within ordinary human life — not as a state to achieve, but as a reality to inhabit. These books do not seek to instruct or persuade, but to reflect what remains when certainty, hierarchy, and borrowed authority fall away.

The name *Saint Parousia* speaks not to sanctity as status, but to sovereignty as presence — a life lived in clarity, integrity, and embodied awareness. *Parousia*, from the Greek παρουσία, means presence or arrival: the quiet recognition of what is already here.

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Saint Parousia lives and writes in Western Australia, where the rhythms of ocean, wind, and migration shape a life attentive to change, stillness, and return.

She writes under **The Violet Quill**, an imprint of **House of Parousia**.

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