

CommUnion

("Come Into Union")

Daily routine has me trekking outside for animal tending. Sancho (mini-donkey) and Sheep (a single sheep named as such by its owner) await my arrival. I am a caretaker, fulfilling a barter exchange arrangement, not the owner of these precious animals.

Trudging through the intense snowdrifts, arriving at the barn, I see Sancho's body shivering from the cold. My heart goes out to him, but there's not much I can do but sweet talk him into hanging on during this spell of frigid temps we're having. Sheep is nowhere in sight. This is uncharacteristic as he and Sancho always hang out together as stable mates.

A trail of blood leads me to Sheep lying upon the hard, cold, floor. Standing in his presence, I am thoroughly bewildered as to the cause of his writhing pain. I love animals dearly, know how to love them well, but as for having a knowledge base of how to respond to medical emergencies, I am clueless. Most thankfully, the owners, my landlords, are expected to return shortly. In the meantime, I turn to what I do know – love and spirit's guidance. Extending love and opening to divine guidance is the greatest offering I can give in this moment. And so, I do just that.

Crouching down next to Sheep, witnessing close-up his distress, was mighty difficult. It was, however, what I felt called to do. Sheep maneuvers his head into my lap, and I am deeply humbled to be here for him. Over and over again he moans trying to position himself in comfortable way. To no avail he continues moaning, as I caress the soft ears and thick, curly, lanolin coat that I so love. My mother instincts continue to console him as best I can. As Sancho appears on the scene, I am triggered to remember the Christmas story of Mother Mary, Joseph, and Jesus abiding in the cold winter's stable.

In these tender, difficult moments, Sheep and I are linked as one as I hold his head in my lap and stroke his soft ears. The innocence of my heart, tells me that my tender caring is making a difference, therefore, I continue cuddling what feels to be my child. Moved even deeper by the power of compassion, I am led to release the sweet, sacred, sounds rising from the depth of my soul. These tones are forming tears in my eyes for I know with each sound brings Sheep and I into deeper recognition of our true natures. It is this sacred space that I refer to as CommUnion that melts two into one.

Honoring the sacred journey of living and dying is the moment at hand. I can feel its truth in my bones. As difficult as the dying process can be in loving and letting go, I am most grateful for this extraordinary experience of union. Despite the blasted New England cold, there is no place I prefer to be other than providing loving support in time of need. Sheep transitioned later that day with the loving assistance of the affectionately known local mobile vet named Mowgli.

I share this story in dedication to the loving service of all compassionate animal lovers and caretakers of the world. ❤️

Renya 2010