**Luisa and the Marriage of the Cross**

I remained all confused; I didn’t know what to say. My nature would do its part, being frightened and trembling, but I saw that my good Jesus was waiting for an answer – whether I accepted or not. So, seeing myself almost forced to speak, I said to Him: ‘Oh! my Most Divine Spouse, on one hand I would be ready to accept, but how is it going to work with the confessor: if he does not want to come every once in a while, how can it be possible that he will come every day? Free me from this cross – that the confessor be needed in order to free me – and then everything will be arranged between me and You.’ Then the Lord said to me: “Go to the confessor and ask him for the obedience. If he wants, you will tell him everything I told you, and you will follow whatever he says. See, it will not be only for the good of creatures that I want these continuous sufferings, but also for your good. In this state of sufferings I will purify your soul thoroughly, in such a way as to dispose you to form a mystical marriage with Me; and after this, I will make the last transformation, in such a way that both of us will become like two candles placed on the fire – one is transformed into the other and they form a single one. In this way I will transform Myself in you, and you will remain crucified with Me. Ah! would you not be happy if you could say: ‘The Bridegroom is crucified, but the bride also is crucified? Ah! yes, there is nothing that renders me dissimilar from Him.’

In order to speak about these marriages, I had to skip over a few things, for I was following the thread; and now I will tell them.

Going back to the beginning, when Jesus would deign to come, He would speak to me very often about His Passion, and would take care in disposing my soul to the imitation of His Life and of His pains, telling that, in addition to the marriage which is mentioned above, we had one more left to do – and this was the marriage of the cross.

I remember that He would say: “My Spouse, virtues become weak if they are not strengthened and fortified by the grafting of the cross. Before my coming upon earth, pains, confusions, disgraces, calumnies, sufferings, poverty, illnesses, and especially the cross, were considered dishonors; but from the moment they were borne by Me, they were all sanctified and divinized by my contact. They all changed their appearance, becoming sweet, pleasant, and the soul who has the good of having some of them, receives honor - and this, because she has received the vestment of Me, Son of God. Only those who look and stop at the cortex of the cross experience the contrary; finding it bitter, they are disgusted by it, they complain, as if someone had done wrong to them. But those who penetrate into it, finding it enjoyable, form their happiness in it. My beloved daughter, I yearn for nothing else but to crucify you, body and soul.”

And while He would say this, I would feel such infusion of yearnings for being crucified with Jesus Christ, that I would often repeat: ‘My Jesus, my Love, hurry – crucify me with You.’ And when He would come back, the first things I would ask of Him, which seemed to be the most important to me, were these: sorrow for my sins, and the grace to be crucified with Him. It seemed to me that if I obtained this, I would obtain everything.

Then, one morning, my most beloved Jesus made Himself present before me in the form of a Crucifix, and told me that He wanted to crucify me with Him. As He was saying this, I saw that rays of light were coming out from His most holy wounds, and within those rays, nails, which were coming toward me. At that moment, I don’t know why, though I desired so much to be crucified by Him as to feel consumed, I was caught by a great fear that made me tremble from head to foot. I felt such annihilation of myself, I saw myself so unworthy to receive that grace, that I did not dare to say: ‘Lord, crucify me with You.’ Jesus seemed to be suspended, waiting for my will. Who can tell how ardently I desired Him within the intimate part of my soul, though, at the same time, I saw myself unworthy? My nature was frightened, and trembled.

But while I was in this state, my beloved Jesus, through the intellect, solicited me to accept. Then, with all my heart I said to Him: ‘Holy Spouse, crucified for me, I pray You to concede me the grace to be crucified and, at the same time, not to allow any external sign to appear on the outside. Yes, give me suffering, give me wounds, but let everything be hidden between me and You.’

And so those rays of light, together with the nails, pierced my hands and feet through, and my heart was pierced by a ray of light together with a lance. Who can tell the pain and the contentment? As much as my soul had been caught by fear before, so much did my soul swim in the sea of peace, of contentment and of pain afterwards. The pain I felt in my hands, in my feet and in my heart was so great, that I felt I was dying; I felt the bones of my hands and feet being shattered into most tiny pieces. I felt as if there were nails inside, but at the same time, they caused me such contentment that I cannot express it, and gave me such strength, that while I would feel like dying because of the pain, those very pains would sustain me so that I would not die. However, nothing appeared on the external parts of the body, though I felt corporal pains. This is so true, that when the confessor would come to call me to the obedience and would loosen my hands, which were contracted, every time he would touch me at that point of my hands which had been pierced through by that ray of light together with the nail, I would feel mortal pains. However, when the confessor would command, by obedience, that those pains cease, they would mitigate very much. In fact, those pains were so strong that they made me lose consciousness, and if they had not mitigated at the call of obedience, I would hardly have been able to obey. Oh! prodigy of holy obedience – you have been everything for me. How many times I found myself clashing with death, so great was the intensity of the pains - and obedience has almost restored my life. May the Lord be always blessed; may everything be for His glory.

Now, while being inside myself, I could not see anything; but when I would lose consciousness, I could see the points marked by the wounds of Jesus. It seemed to me that the very wounds of Jesus had been transmuted in my hands, and in the rest; and this was the first time that Jesus crucified me. Indeed, there have been so many of these crucifixions that it is impossible to count them all. I will just say the main things about this.

Now, as Jesus would come back, I would say to Him: ‘Dear, my beloved, give me sorrow for my sins, so that, consumed by sorrow and by regret for having offended You, my sins may be erased from my soul, and also from your memory. Yes, give me as much sorrow, for as much as I have dared to offend You. Even more, let sorrow surpass this, so that I may draw more intimately close to You.’

I remember that once, while I was saying this, my always benign Jesus told me: “Since you are so sorry for having offended Me, I myself want to dispose you to feel sorrow for your sins, so that you may see how awful sin is, and what bitter pain my Heart suffered. Therefore, say together with Me: ‘If I cross the sea, You are in the sea, though I do not see You; I tread the earth, and You are under my feet. I sinned’.” And then, in a low voice, almost crying, Jesus added: “Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you.” While Jesus was saying this, and I together with Him, I was caught by such sorrow for the offenses given, that I fell flat to the ground; and Jesus disappeared.

Few are those words, but I understood so many things that it is impossible to say all that I comprehended. In the first words I comprehended the immensity, the greatness, the presence of God in each existing thing, such that not even a shadow of our thought can escape Him. I also understood my nothingness compared to a Majesty so great and holy. In the word “I sinned”, I understood the ugliness of sin, the malice, the daring I had had in offending Him. Now, while my soul was considering this, in hearing Jesus Christ say “Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you”, my heart was taken by such sorrow, that I felt I was dying, because I could understand the immense love that the Lord had for me in the very act in which I tried to offend Him, and even to kill Him. Ah Lord, how good You have been with me, and I – always ungrateful, and still so bad!

I remember that it was an alternation; every time He would deign to come, I would ask Him now for sorrow of my sins, and now for the crucifixion - and also for other things. As for example, one morning, while I was in my usual sufferings, my dear Jesus transported me outside of myself and showed me a man who had been killed by shots from a revolver, and who was then breathing his last and going to hell. Oh! how much pain it was for Jesus the loss of this soul. If the whole world knew how much Jesus suffers for the loss of souls, they would use all possible means so as not to become lost eternally – I am not saying for themselves, but at least to spare our Lord that pain. Now, while I was in the midst of the bullets together with Jesus, Jesus drew His lips close to my ears, and told me: “My daughter, do you want to offer yourself as victim for the salvation of this soul, and take upon yourself the pains which he deserves because of his very grave sins?” And I answered: ‘Lord, I am ready, as long as You save him and restore his life.’ Who can tell the sufferings that came to me? They were such and so many, that I myself I don’t know how life did not leave me.

Now, while I was in that state of sufferings, my confessor had come more than one hour earlier to call me to obedience; and because I was in great suffering, I could hardly obey. So he asked me the reason for such a state, and I told him the fact, as I have described it above, telling him the place in town where it seemed to me that it had happened. The confessor told me that it was true, but that they thought he was dead. However, then it became known that he was very ill, but little by little he recovered, and he is still alive. May the Lord be always blessed.

I remember that, as I continued to ask for the crucifixion and Jesus would transport me outside of myself, He would take me to the holy sites of Jerusalem where our Lord suffered His sorrowful Passion, and there we encountered many crosses. My beloved Jesus would say to me: “If you knew what good the cross contains within itself, how precious it renders the soul, and what a gem of inestimable value one acquires, who has the good of possessing sufferings… It is enough to tell you only that, in coming upon earth, I did not choose riches or pleasures, but I cherished as dear and intimate sisters, the cross, poverty, sufferings and ignominies” While saying this, He would show such taste, such joy for suffering, that those words pierced my heart through like many burning arrows, to the point that I would feel my life leaving me if the Lord would not concede me suffering. And with as much voice and strength as I had, I would do nothing but say: ‘Holy Spouse, give me suffering, give me crosses. From this alone will I know whether You love me – if You content me with crosses and with sufferings.’ And so I would take one of the largest crosses I saw, I would lay myself upon it, and I would pray Jesus to come and crucify me. And He would be so good as to take my hand and begin to pierce it with the nail. From time to time, blessed Jesus would ask me: “Does it hurt very much? Do you want me to stop?” And I: ‘No, no, my beloved, continue. It hurts, yes, but I am happy.’ And I had such fear that He might not complete the crucifixion, that I would do nothing but tell Him: ‘Hurry, oh Jesus! Hurry, don’t make it so long.’ However, when the time would come to nail the other hand, the arms of the cross would be too short, while before they seemed to be long enough to make it. Who can tell how mortified I would remain?

This happened many times, and sometimes if the arms were fine, the length of the cross was not enough to be able to extend my feet. In a word, something had to be missing so that the crucifixion would not be accomplished. Who can tell the bitterness of my soul and the laments I made to our Lord, who was not conceding me true suffering? I would say to Him: ‘My Beloved, everything ends in a joke. You used to tell me that You were going to take me to Heaven, and then You would make me come back to earth. Now You tell me that You must crucify me, and we never get to the complete crucifixion.’ And Jesus, again, would promise me He would crucify me.

**September 14, 1899**

One morning – it was the day of the Exaltation of the Cross – my sweet Jesus transported me to the holy sites; and first, He told me many things about the virtue of the cross. I don’t remember all, but just a few things: “My beloved, do you want to be beautiful? The cross will give you the most beautiful features that can possibly be found, both in Heaven and on earth; so much so, as to enamor God, who contains all beauties within Himself.”

Jesus continued: “Do you want to be filled with immense riches - not for a short time, but for all eternity? Well then, the cross will administer to you all kinds of riches - from the tiniest cents, which are the little crosses, up to the greatest amounts, which are the heavier crosses. Yet, men are so greedy to earn a temporal penny, which they soon will have to leave, but do not give a thought to earning one eternal cent. And when I, having compassion for them, in seeing their carelessness for all that regards eternity, kindly offer them the opportunity - instead of cherishing it, they get angry and offend Me. What human madness – it seems that they understand it upside down. My beloved, in the cross are all the triumphs, all the victories, and the greatest gains. You must have no aim other than the cross, and it will be enough for you, in everything. Today I want to make you content; that cross which until now has not been enough to lay you on and crucify you completely, is the cross that you have carried up to now. But since I have to crucify you completely, you need new crosses which I will let descend upon you. So, the cross you have had until now, I will bring to Heaven, to show it to the whole celestial court as pledge of your love, and I will make another one descend from Heaven – a larger one, to be able to satisfy the ardent desires I have upon you.”

While Jesus was saying this, that cross which I had seen the other times made itself present before me. I took it and I laid myself on it. As I was in this way, the Heavens opened and Saint John the Evangelist came down, carrying the cross that Jesus had indicated to me. The Queen Mother and many Angels, when they arrived near me, lifted me from that cross and placed me over the one which they had brought me, which was much larger. Then, an Angel took the cross I had before and took it to Heaven with him. After this, with His own hand, Jesus began to nail me to that cross; Queen Mama assisted me, while the Angels and Saint John were handing the nails. My sweet Jesus showed such contentment, such joy in crucifying me, that just to be able to give that contentment to Jesus, I would have suffered not only the cross, but yet more pains. Ah! it seemed to me that Heaven was making new feast for me, in seeing the contentment of Jesus. Many souls were freed from Purgatory and took flight toward Heaven, and quite a few sinners were converted, because my Divine Spouse let everyone participate in the good of my sufferings. Who can tell, then, the intense pains I felt while being stretched so well over the cross, and pierced through by the nails in my hands and feet? But especially the feet – the atrocity of the pains was such that they cannot be described. When they finished crucifying me and I felt I was swimming in the sea of pains and sufferings, Queen Mama said to Jesus: “My Son, today is a day of grace - I want You to let her share in all of your pains. There is nothing left but to pierce her heart through with the lance, and to renew for her the crown of thorns.” So, Jesus Himself took the lance and pierced my heart through; the Angels took a crown of thorns, well thickened, and handed it to the Most Holy Virgin – and She Herself drove it into my head.

What a memorable day that was for me – of sufferings, yes, but of contentments; of unspeakable pains, but also of joy. It is enough to say that the intensity of the pains was such, that for that entire day Jesus did not move from my side, but remained close to me in order to sustain my nature, which was failing at the liveliness of the pains. Those souls from Purgatory who had flown up to Heaven, descended together with the Angels and surrounded my bed, cheering me with their canticles, and thanking me affectionately because through my sufferings I had freed them from those pains.

It happened, then, that after five or six days of those intense pains, to my great regret, they began to diminish, and so I would solicit my beloved Jesus to renew the crucifixion. And He, sometimes quickly, and sometimes with some delay, would be pleased to transport me to the holy sites and to let me share in the pains of His Sorrowful Passion… now the crown of thorns, now the scourging, now the carrying of the cross to Calvary, now the crucifixion – sometimes one mystery per day, and sometimes everything in one day, as He pleased. This would be of highest pain and contentment for my soul. But it would become very bitter for me when the scene would change, and instead of I being the one who suffered, I would be the spectator, watching most loving Jesus suffer the pains of His Sorrowful Passion. Ah! how many times I found myself in the midst of the Jews together with Queen Mama, seeing my beloved Jesus suffer. Ah! yes, it is indeed true that it is easier for one to suffer himself, than to see the beloved suffer.

Other times, I remember that, in renewing these crucifixions, my sweet Jesus would say to me: “My beloved, the cross allows one to distinguish the reprobates from the predestined. Just as on the day of judgment, the good will rejoice upon seeing the cross, so even now it can be seen whether one will be saved or lost. If, as the cross presents itself to the soul, she embraces it, carries it with resignation and patience, kissing and thanking that hand which is sending it – here is the sign that she is saved. If, on the contrary, as the cross is presented to her, she gets irritated, despises it, and even reaches the point of offending Me – you can say that that’s a sign that the soul is heading on the way to hell. So will the reprobates do on the day of judgment: upon seeing the cross, they will grieve and curse. The cross tells everything; the cross is a book that, without deception and in clear notes, tells you and allows you to distinguish the saint from the sinner, the perfect from the imperfect, the fervent from the lukewarm. The cross communicates such light to the soul that, even now, it allows one to distinguish not only the good from the evil, but also those who are to be more or less glorious in Heaven – those who are to occupy a higher or a lower place. All other virtues remain humble and reverent before the virtue of the cross, and grafting themselves to it, they receive greater glory and splendor.”

Who can tell what flames of ardent desires this speaking of Jesus would cast into my heart? I felt devoured by hunger for suffering, and in order to satisfy my yearnings - or rather, to say it better, in order to satisfy that which He Himself infused in me - He would renew the crucifixion.

I remember that sometimes, after renewing these crucifixions, He would say to me: “Beloved of my Heart, I ardently desire not only to crucify your soul and to communicate the pains of the cross to your body, but also to mark your body with the mark of my wounds; and I want to teach you the prayer in order to obtain this grace. This is the prayer: ‘I present myself before the supreme throne of God, bathed in the Blood of Jesus Christ, praying Him, by the merit of His most luminous virtues and of His Divinity, to concede to me the grace of being crucified’.”

However, I have always had an aversion for anything that might appear externally – and I still do – but in the act in which Jesus was saying that, I would feel such yearnings being infused in me to satisfy the desire that He Himself was expressing, that I would yet dare to ask Jesus to crucify me in the soul and in the body. And sometimes I would say to Him: “Holy Spouse, I would rather not have external things; and if sometimes I dare to ask for that, it is because You Yourself tell me to, and also to give a sign to the confessor that it is You who operates in me. But for the rest, I would like nothing but those pains which You make me suffer when You renew the crucifixion. If only they were permanent - I would rather not have that diminution after some time. This alone is enough for me. As for the outward appearance, the more You can keep me hidden, the more You will make me content.’

I remember confusedly that, when I would be with Our Lord, I would often ask for sorrow for my sins and for the grace to be forgiven of all the evil I had done; and at times I reached the point of saying that only then would I be content, when I would hear Him say, from His own lips: “I forgive all your sins.” And blessed Jesus, who can deny nothing when it is for our good, one morning made Himself seen and told me: “This time I Myself want to do the office of confessor. You will confess all of your sins to Me, and in the act in which you do this, I will make you comprehend, one by one, the sorrows you have given to my Heart in offending Me, so that, by comprehending what sin is, as much as it is possible for a creature, you may be resolved to die rather than to offend Me. You, in the meantime, enter into your nothingness, and recite the *Confiteor*.”

On entering myself, I could see all of my misery and my wicked deeds, and I trembled like a leaf before His presence. I lacked the strength to pronounce the words of the *Confiteor*, and if the Lord had not infused new strength in me, by telling me, “Do no fear. If I am a judge, I am also your father. Courage, let us proceed”, I would have remained there, without uttering one word.

So I said the *Confiteor*, all full of confusion and humiliation, and since I saw myself all covered with my sins, at one glance, I saw that the greatest one, which had given affront to Our Lord, was pride. So I said: ‘Lord, before your presence, I accuse myself of the sin of pride.’ And He: “Draw near my Heart, and place your ear over It – you will hear the cruel torment that you have caused my Heart with this sin.” All trembling, I placed my ear at His adorable Heart – but who can tell what I heard and comprehended in that instant? Especially now, after so much time - I will say something confusedly. I remember that His Heart was beating so strongly, that it seemed that His breast was going to crack. Then it seemed to me that It was torn to shreds, and was almost destroyed by the pain. Ah! if I could have, I would have reached the point of destroying the Divine Being with pride.

I will give you a simile in order to make myself understood, otherwise I have no words to express myself. Imagine a king, and at the feet of this king, a worm, which, rising and swelling up, begins to believe it is something, and reaches such audacity as to rise little by little, reaching the head of this king, wanting to remove the crown from him and put it on its own head. Then, it strips him of his royal vestments; then, it throws him off his throne, and finally, it tries to kill him. But what’s more about this worm, is that it itself does not know its own being; it very much deceives itself, while, to get rid if it, it would take the king nothing but to put it under his feet and crush it – and so it would end its days. In reality, if this could be, it would make arise indignation and pity, as well as ridicule, toward the pride of this worm. So did I see myself before God, and this filled me with such confusion and sorrow, that I felt the torment that blessed Jesus suffered being renewed in my heart.

After this, He left me, and I felt such pain, comprehending how ugly the sin of pride is, that it is impossible to describe it. After I chewed all this thoroughly within myself, my good Jesus came back and told me to continue the confession of my sins. And I, all trembling, continued to make the accusation of my thoughts, words, works, causes and omissions; and when He would see that I was unable to continue the confession because of the pain I felt at having offended Him so much… in fact, I had such a vivid clarity, being in front of that Divine Sun; and especially could I see my littleness, the nonentity of my being, and I was stunned at how daring I had been, wondering from where had I taken that courage to offend a God so good, who, in the very act in which I was offending Him, assisted me, preserved me, nourished me. And if He had any rancor with me, it was for the sin I committed, which He greatly hated, while He loved me immensely, He excused me before divine justice, and was all occupied with removing that wall of division between the soul and God, which sin had produced. Oh! if all could see who God is, and who the soul is in the act of sinning, they would all die of sorrow, and I believe that sin would be exiled from the earth …So, when blessed Jesus would see that I could not take any more because of the pain, He would withdraw and leave me, to allow me to comprehend well the evil I had done. And then He would come back again, and I would continue the accusation of my sins.

But who can tell all that I understood, and explain, one by one, the different affronts and the special sorrows which I had caused Our Lord with my sins? I feel it is almost impossible for me to explain myself - also because I don’t remember it too well.

Then, when I finished the accusation, which lasted about seven hours, lovable Jesus took the aspect of a most loving father. And since I was exhausted in my strengths because of the sorrow, more so since I saw that that sorrow was not enough, to be sorry as much as it befitted my sins - to encourage me, He told me: “I Myself want to make up for you, so I apply to your soul the merit of the pain I had in the Garden of Gethsemani. This alone can satisfy the divine justice.” After He applied His pain to my soul, then I seemed to be disposed to receive the absolution.

All humbled and confused as I was, prostrated at the feet of the good father Jesus, through the rays He was sending into my mind, I tried to excite myself more to sorrow by saying - though I don’t remember everything: ‘Great, immense, has been the evil I have done against You. These powers of mine and these senses of my body were meant to be as many tongues with which to praise You. Ah! instead, they have been like many poisonous vipers which were biting You and were even trying to kill You. But, holy father, forgive me – do not want to cast me away because of the great wrong I have done to You by sinning.’

And Jesus: “And you - do you promise to sin no more, and to banish from your heart any shadow of evil that might offend your Creator?”

And I: ‘Ah! yes, with all my heart I promise You. I would die a thousand times rather than sin again. Never again, never again.’

And Jesus: “And I forgive you, and I apply to your soul the merits of my Passion, and I want to wash it in my Blood.”

And as He was saying this, He raised His blessed right hand and pronounced the words of the absolution – exactly like the words that the priest says, when he gives absolution. And in the act of doing this, a river of blood poured down from His hand, and my soul was completely inundated by it.

After this, He said to me: “Come, oh daughter, come to make penance for your sins by kissing my wounds.”

All trembling, I stood up and I kissed His most sacred wounds; and then He said to me: “My daughter, be more vigilant and attentive, because today I give you the grace not to fall, ever again, into voluntary venial sin.”

Then He gave me other exhortations, which I don’t remember too well; and He disappeared.

Who can tell the effects of this confession made to Our Lord? I felt all soaked with grace, and it made such an impression on me, that I cannot forget it. And every time I remember it, I feel a shiver run through my bones, and also taken by horror in thinking of what my correspondence is to so many graces received from Our Lord.

The Lord deigned other times to give me the absolution, Himself. Sometimes He would take the form of the priest, and I would confess as if He were the priest, although I would feel different effects, and then, once it was finished, He would reveal Himself as Jesus; or He would come unveiled, making Himself recognized as Jesus from the beginning. Sometimes He would also take the form of the confessor, so much so, that I believed I was speaking with him, telling him all my fears, my doubts, but from the answer I would receive, from the gentleness of that voice, alternating between that of the confessor and that of Jesus, from His lovable gesture and from the interior effects, I would discover that it was Him. Ah! if I wanted to say everything about these things, I would be too long, so I finish, and I stop here…

**Fiat!**