

## THE SAGA OF SEXY SADIE

By Rob Gordon-McCutchan

One of the most important happenings of the '60s was the advent of the spiritual wisdom of India, through the arrival of the many gurus, rishis, and swamis who brought these teachings to the West. The most well-known of these was Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, whose person, teachings, and practice were to have a profoundly positive effect on the Beatles, and through their influence on millions more around the world. But there is a darker and much more negative story too – the story of why the Beatles broke with Maharishi and left his ashram in furious disillusionment. It began when the Beatles joined Maharishi at his ashram located on a cliff above the Ganges in the Himalayan uplands near the ancient pilgrimage town of Rishikesh. It ended when they filed out in disillusioned disgust.

There are three indispensable books on this subject: Richard Blakely's *Secret of the Mantras*, a warm and engaging account of what it was like to be in Rishikesh with the Beatles; Judith Bourque's *Robes of Silk, Feet of Clay*, a detailed story of her two-year affair with Maharishi; and Susan Shumsky's *Inner Light: How India Influenced The Beatles*, a scholarly exploration of the wide literature and personal memories concerning the Beatles and Maharishi. All three authors are well known to me and have been my close companions in writing this Saga of Sexy Sadie. It complements what they have to say with my own direct experience, during my own years with the Beatles' "Master." Taken together, the four of us have decades of direct experience with Maharishi and his Transcendental Meditation (TM) movement. I trust this gives us sufficient street cred, and the right, possibly even the duty, #MeToo a given, to speak whereof we know.

The latest and most comprehensive of these three guides is Dr. Shumsky's *Inner Light*. She provides not only an introductory course in the spiritual wisdom of India, but also brief biographies of the various Masters who brought these teachings to the West. She then explicates how the spiritual teachings of Maharishi, the Beatles' chosen "Master," suffused many of their songs. She plums, with great specificity and insight, the deep spiritual message of the lyrics. In addition, she provides the facts concerning each song, that is, its inspiration, who wrote it, when, where it was recorded, and so on. She does this in entertaining fashion, including many interesting stories that took place in the creation of each song. Into the bargain, she includes how Indian instruments and tonal structures began to pervade their work. She makes clear that the Beatles' time at the Rishikesh ashram was one of the most fruitful periods in their musical lives.

With the foregoing sunnier task accomplished, Dr. Shumsky undertakes a searching exploration of the biographical and historical events that unfolded in the Beatles' eventual divorce from Maharishi. These events, of course, reached their explosive crescendo when the Beatles left Maharishi's ashram in angry dismay. While it is true that Rishikesh benefitted the Fab Four both personally and musically, the darker story is why they bailed on the guru they had supposed to be the perfect Master. Here is the full dish. It all went down like this.

Soon after their painful departure from Rishikesh and return to London, it became widely reported in the press that the Beatles left India because he attempted to seduce Mia Farrow, (and

possibly another American girl as well) thereby exposing his unMasterful feet of clay. Rather than a life-long celibate Master detached from the attractions of the flesh, the press claimed he had turned out to be just an all too human old guy on the make. The truth or falsity of these press accounts has since been the subject of heated debate. Maharishi's true believers dismiss it as scurrilous nonsense – those who believe it say look at the evidence. Whom to believe? Why did the Beatles break with Maharishi, angrily leaving his Indian ashram and denouncing the guru they had supposed to be the perfect Master?

*La pistola fumar* ("smoking gun") as the Spanish have it, at least musically speaking, is the song *Sexy Sadie* on the White Album. The message of the lyrics: beware of the perils of flinging yourself wholeheartedly at the feet of someone you think has gotten spiritually to where you hope to get yourself. The song is Lennon's bitter musical statement of the reasons behind the final dramatic scene in Rishikesh as the remaining Beatles John and George (Ringo and Paul had left earlier for unrelated reasons) and several other key players in the drama filed past a glum and despondent Maharishi as he watched them angrily march out of the ashram to the taxis waiting to take them to New Delhi. What caused this dramatic scene? The evidence makes clear that it was indeed because John and George had painfully found out that their supposedly perfect and celibate Master was hitting on and getting it on with the chicks – an old and tawdry story that unfolded numerous times when many of the "Masters" from India that came West teaching Hindu spirituality were exposed as having the self-same feet of clay.

In his memoir *Lennon Remembers*, John makes clear that he wrote *Sexy Sadie* about Maharishi. As he sat seething with anger and disillusionment waiting for the taxis, he penned the first version of the song. It's pretty shocking and captures the depth of his bitterness: "Maharishi, you little twat. Who the fuck do you think you are? Who the fuck do you think you are? Oh, you cunt." It's very cosmic, or at least interesting that John, in this first cut, denounces Maharishi with terms denoting the very thing the "Master" was on the prowl for. When George saw these lyrics, he told John they were "ridiculous," that they had to be toned down. John had to admit those lyrics weren't really record-ready, and came up with a second cut: "Maharishi, what have you done? You've made a fool of everyone." When George objected that this was still too obvious, that they should substitute 'Sexy Sadie' for 'Maharishi,' John admits he "copped out" and gave in to George's proposed substitution. Thus, was born the song in its present form.

The first seismic tremor of the coming volcanic eruption hit on Mia Farrow's birthday, February 9, 1968. The afternoon of that fateful day, Maharishi arranged a birthday celebration for Farrow. He gave her the full celebrity treatment, as he was wont to do for all the famous and/or wealthy from whom he hoped to extract money or gain publicity. When some of the inner circle balked at Maharishi's fawning over Mia, he replied, "An international star like Mia can bring us good publicity. We must treat her special." And so he did throughout her time at the ashram. At her birthday celebration, Maharishi placed a silver crown on her head, cake and fireworks followed, and then all the course participants filed by her seated majesty, sort of kowtowed, and then presented her with trinkets purchased locally for the purpose by Maharishi's staff (Farrow later confessed to her confidants that she hated the whole thing – and that chintzy crown!). Afterwards, Maharishi invited Mia to his house to celebrate her birthday with a special puja, a Hindu blessing rite. When she arrived, he led her to the basement where he had a shrine room. After he performed the *puja*, he turned to her and began to stroke her hair, and then, as she later recounted in an interview, "suddenly I became aware of two surprisingly male, hairy arms going around me." She panicked and fled the basement.

Shortly after fleeing Maharishi's grasp, Farrow gathered with some of her close ashram friends, among them Nancy Jackson, a wealthy socialite and one of Maharishi's most ardent believers. She told them Maharishi had grabbed her and made clear he wanted to have sex. Visibly shocked by Mia's accusation, Jackson asked Farrow how she could even think, much less say such a thing. Farrow heatedly riposted, "Look, I'm no fucking dumbbell, I know a pass when I see one... Listen, I know a pass from a puja." At this same gathering, she also confided to her friend Avi Kohli (her travel guide) what had happened. Knowing that he planned a trip to Kathmandu and Goa the following morning, she said, "When you leave tomorrow, I'm going with you. That is final." Raising a glass of champagne, she then said, "To the last night in this holy place. Hah. That's a laugh. Maharishi's no saint. He made a pass at me when I was over at his house before dinner."

Further evidence that the above account is true comes from Ned Wynn, one of my two best life-long friends. He provides us with another piece of damning evidence concerning what went on in Maharishi's basement. Ned was the grandson of the comedian Ed Wynn, a star of early American cinema. Ned's father was Keenan Wynn, a well-known character actor from the 50's, 60's, and 70's. Ned grew up in the heady atmosphere of the then reigning Hollywood stars (he told me he got his first erection at 5 years old when, during a party at his parents' house, Ava Gardner dandled him on her knee), and was a childhood friend of Mia Farrow. It was he who first got her interested in Transcendental Meditation. Thus, when she returned in a huff from Rishikesh, she sought out her old friend to tell him what had gone down to make her leave the ashram. Ned was obviously eager to hear her out since by now the story of the Beatles' angry departure from India had become tabloid fodder. When Mia told Ned the tawdry story, he, a true believer, expressed great skepticism, asserting that she must have misunderstood Maharishi's intentions. She insisted, as Wynn recounts in his memoir *We Will Always Live In Beverley Hills*, "that Maharishi clearly wanted her to lie down and have sex with him." When Ned further expressed doubt, he tells us, "The former Mrs. Frank Sinatra turns to me, 'Ned,' she says with great patience, 'don't you think I know when a man wants to fuck me?'"

The morning after Maharishi's attempted seduction, Farrow made good on her resolve to leave the ashram and travel to Kathmandu and Goa. Ned told me Farrow said that Maharishi had her shadowed the whole time, his minions begging her to return to the ashram. From Goa, she flew to New Delhi, where a whole new and exciting drama was about to begin – John, George, and their wives were soon to touch down at Delhi airport on the way to Rishikesh. Paul, Ringo, and their wives would follow in a couple of days. Farrow had made arrangements to greet John and George upon their arrival at the airport, and soon enough she and the Beatles were all together in Rishikesh. Apparently, her eagerness to hang with the Mop Tops had overcome her creeps about Maharishi's seduction attempt, and she could make sure never to be alone with him again. So, on February 16, just a week after her birthday, Farrow was on her way back to the ashram where Donovan Leitch and Mike Love of the Beach Boys would soon arrive, too!

The Fab Four and their spouses soon settled into life at the ashram. While everything was generally positive and upbeat, volcanic rumblings in the earth were to begin which would contribute to the Beatles' eventual disillusionment. For one, they had a growing concern about Maharishi's hunger for money and publicity. Cynthia Lennon tells us that John "had begun to feel disenchanted with Maharishi's behavior. He felt that, for a spiritual man, Maharishi had too much interest in public recognition, celebrities, and money." Augmenting this concern was Maharishi's direct request that they "deposit 10 to 25 percent of their income to a Swiss bank account to benefit Maharishi's organization." Then too, there was the disquieting brouhaha that arose when

Maharishi promised exclusive rights to film the Beatles in Rishikesh to two different crews – one from the Beatles’ parent company Apple, and a second from Maharishi’s own Spiritual Regeneration Movement. The clash between these two claimants was unseemly, producing persistent tremors which disturbed the ashram’s peace and quiet.

While the Mop Tops all enjoyed their time at the ashram together, Ringo and his wife stayed little more than a week – they soon returned to England, saying they missed their children. About the same time (March 7), Farrow left too, flying to London to begin filming *Secret Ceremony* co-starring Elizabeth Taylor. However, before she left, she was sure to tell John about the *puja-pass* on her birthday, a fact that would be crucial in the coming drama. Paul and his girlfriend departed after a month or so (March 23) because Jane had a theatrical commitment in London. That left only John and George, undoubtedly the two Beatles most committed to the spiritual wisdom of India and the practice of meditation. George’s fascination with India and its music deepened when he took up mastery of the sitar. Thus, only John and George, importantly the two truest believers in Maharishi, were at the ashram when the lava finally began to flow and the dramatic split with their “celibate” Master came down.

Recall that the final volcanic eruption that swept the remaining Beatles from the ashram sounded its first warning on February 9 when Maharishi put the make on Mia Farrow. Now, two months later, the mountain finally blew its top. The final pressure necessary to set off the eruption began to build when Maharishi repeated his seduction routine, its intended victim this time a young educator from Brooklyn named Rosalyn Bonas. Maharishi had personally invited her to the Initiator training course in Rishikesh, ostensibly because of her enthusiastic commitment to the movement – her apartment in Brooklyn was the *de facto* Transcendental Meditation center, used for initiations and meetings. Note that the boys all loved her – she was said to resemble Farrow and actress Jean Seberg – and had a considerably alluring charm.

That Maharishi might have invited Bonas to Rishikesh for other than Initiator training purposes became apparent in early April, just two months after the Farrow grope. The first steam and smoke began to issue forth from the mountain when, during an afternoon lecture to the course participants, Rosalyn asked Maharishi a question, to which he but glancing replied and then told her that she needed to come see him privately for special instruction. About 9:30 that night, one of Maharishi’s Indian *brahmacharis* (a celibate monk pledged to life-long service to the guru) came to Rosalyn’s room and told her Maharishi would see her now, and escorted her to his house, where he greeted her and invited her into his bedroom. Then he embraced her in such a way it made clear where he wanted things to go -- she could feel his erection pressing against her – and he “sat on his bed and patted the bed for her to come over and get in.” Disgusted and dismayed, Rosalyn told him she had to leave to keep a promise to a friend. Maharishi told her to come back, that he would leave the door open.

Badly shaken and disoriented by Maharishi’s attempted seduction, Rosalyn hurriedly returned to her room to process what had happened and try to figure out what to do. After two days of agonizing deliberation, on April 9th, Rosalyn went to her friend “Magic Alex” Mardas (a member of the Beatles entourage and close with Rosalyn) and confided to him what had happened in Maharishi’s bedroom. Magic Alex, just recently arrived and no supporter of the guru, quickly sought out John and George and told them the shocking story. He denounced Maharishi as a sexual predator and warned that they all needed to leave Rishikesh and escape his hypocritical and malignant influence. John and George expressed utter disbelief and dismissed the possibility out of

hand. However, to be clear, and mindful of what Mia had told John about what had happened to her on her birthday, they went to Rosalyn to confirm what she told Magic Alex. When she did, John and George returned to their bungalow and began a heated discussion with others in the inner circle about this volcanic news. Mia's self-same story of the *puja-pass* entered the discussion and provided damning support for the truth of Rosalyn's claim.

What should they do? They formulated a plan to get evidence: According to the plan, Rosalyn should get in touch with Maharishi, telling him she would like to get together with him now if the door was, figuratively, still open. If he invited her to return, Magic Alex, and perhaps others, would hide in the bushes just outside his bedroom window, where they could see what happened. The plan was put into effect and got results that very night. Maharishi invited Rosalyn to come that evening and, at the appointed hour, when Rosalyn arrived at Maharishi's house, Magic Alex (and perhaps others) hid in the bushes outside the bedroom. The scene of two nights before repeated itself, and when things had gone far enough to make clear that Rosalyn had been telling the truth, she broke from his grasp and fled the bedroom. Rosalyn and the observers ("very upset by what they saw") then went to John and George, and when the Mop Tops heard the evidence, the mountain finally blew its top, the lava of disillusionment began to flow.

Confronted with the evidence of Maharishi's guilt, a heated debate arose among John, Paul, their wives, and others in the celebrity circle. The upshot was that they decided not only that Mia and Rosalyn were telling the truth, but also that they would all depart the ashram the next morning. Magic Alex was dispatched to arrange for taxis to take them to New Delhi. After they had all gone to bed, George's wife Pattie had what she described as a "horrid dream" about Maharishi having sex with women. The dream eerily amplified the truth of Mia's and Rosalyn's allegations. When George awoke Pattie in the morning, she recounted to him the dream and said, "Come on, we're leaving." Pattie's sister Jenny, part of the celebrity entourage, substantiated her sister's story. Concerning the Mia-Rosalyn allegations, Jenny relates, "When Pattie told George she'd had a dream depicting Maharishi in the same light, it confirmed their decision."

Early on the morning of April 10th, after a quick breakfast, John and George went to Maharishi's house to confront him. John told him coldly, "We're leaving." Startled, the guru asked "Why? What's wrong?" John shot back, "Well, if you're so cosmic you'll know why." When Maharishi replied that he didn't know, that they would have to tell him, John doubled down, "Well, you're supposed to be the mystic, you should know." Maharishi, unused to such insolence, glowered at John with a hateful stare. As John recounts, "He gave me a look like, 'I'll kill you, you bastard'....I knew then. I had called his bluff..." John returned to his room in a volcanic fury of disillusionment. He tore the poster of Maharishi from his wall, ripped it in half, threw it face down on the concrete floor, and walked over it as he packed for the impending departure. The lava was now gushing full flow and would soon carry the entire celebrity crew out of the ashram. Rosalyn, for all of them, summarized the reason why: "I left the ashram the day after I was totally disillusioned with my guru."

With their packing complete, the sadly once-faithful group began to load their taxis. Surprised by the sight, Nancy Jackson approached Pattie and asked why they were leaving. Jackson expressed her dismay at their departure, since just the day before all had seemed fine. Jackson said to Pattie, "You had definitely decided to go to Kashmir with the group and finish the course. Will you still meet us there?" A furious John turned to Jackson and witheringly replied, "We're not

going to join Maharishi there or anywhere – we’ve ‘ad it. If you want to know why, ask your fuckin’ precious guru.”

With the taxis now loaded, it was time to depart. John, George, their wives Cynthia and Pattie, Pattie's sister Jenny, Rosalyn, Magic Alex, and Tom Simcox (a well known film and TV actor and fixture in the celebrity crew) filed out of the ashram. Maharishi, seated forlornly near their exit route, cried out, “Why are you leaving? Don’t go. Wait! Please talk to me.” The departees walked on in glum silence and sped off in their taxis. When John returned to London, he told Paul the details of what had happened to make him and George leave. When the story of the attempted seductions had been recounted, John summed things up for Paul: “He’s just a bloody old lech just like everybody else. What the fuck. We can’t go following that.” And that was the end of the Beatles public support of Maharishi.

Now the Beatles were gone, but the question has long persisted: Did they make the wrong decision? Was the conclusion of the heated debate the previous night correct, that their Master was in fact a sexual predator and that they should all leave? Or was something else more cosmic in play, something they were too ignorant to understand? As Maharishi said when first confronted with the Mia-Rosalyn allegations, “The tip is only ten percent of the iceberg.” The Beatles anguished debate on this topic and what to do about it would have been fruitfully informed, and their decision’s correctness ratified, if they had dismissed the Mia-Rosalyn allegations and gone on to Kashmir and stayed until the end of the course. There they could have included in their debate the input of a young Swedish girl on the course named Gunilla, acclaimed by all as a great beauty. She was then the girlfriend of Richard Blakely, and later his wife. In his book *The Secret of the Mantras*, Blakely (hereinafter “Rikard,” as Gunilla fondly called him) has left us a fascinating account of his time on the course with the Beatles. Though not quite a member of the celebrity crew, he was friendly with all of them, and he could have told them the following story.

The early morning of the celeb crew’s fateful departure, Rikard was just getting his breakfast when he saw George running down the path, breathless and obviously upset. When George reached the dining room, he shook hands with the few that were there and told them that he and John and the rest of their entourage were leaving, that something had happened he hadn’t time to explain as the taxis were waiting. Rikard was especially sad and surprised to learn that the departees included Rosalyn, a warm friend of his since the outset of the Initiator training course. He was puzzled that she was going, especially since he knew that Rosalyn “had spent all her savings to come to India in order to become a better teacher when she returned to New York.” He’d talked with her not long before and she’d seemed perfectly happy with the course and her long meditations, and was excited about the prospect of becoming a teacher of TM. And now she was abruptly leaving, her dream unfulfilled? He, along with the other remaining course participants, were left in the dark as to why the celeb crew had left. They would all soon find out.

Not long after, very early one morning, Rikard’s girlfriend Gunilla sat up in bed and said that she had to go and see Maharishi and give him a flower. Rikard went back to sleep, and when he awakened Gunilla was still gone. When she finally returned, she reported that she had spent over an hour alone with Maharishi. “It was so beautiful!”, she said. “I came away flying.” Her report left him curiously “out of sorts and depressed.” Although he didn’t know it yet, he had good reason to be down, as he found out when the course participants moved from the ashram to Kashmir for their final stage of instruction.

Once in Kashmir, ensconced in houseboats on Dal Lake near Srinagar, the course participants faced their final hurdle – mastering the *puja* which is recited before each new meditator receives their *mantra* from their Initiator. After two weeks of diligent practice, the final moment of truth arrives when all the participants have to perform the *puja* for Maharishi, and if successful, would receive the secret of the *mantras* that they would be giving to new converts. Just before the *puja* tests began, Rikard was having breakfast with some of his friends when Gunar, a course participant from Norway, joined them. He looked upset and out of sorts. After Gunar placed his breakfast order, he turned to the others and asked if they had heard the rumor. When they asked, “What rumor?”, Gunar told them he’d just been in touch with friends in Norway who’d heard that “the Beatles left the ashram because they found out that Maharishi had been fooling around with one of the girls on the course.” His Norwegian friends had “read the story in an article somewhere that also contained an interview John Lennon gave shortly after he arrived back in London.” According to the article, Gunar said, “a man named Alex had hidden in the bushes outside Maharishi’s bedroom window and seen what happened with the blond American girl...they were caught with red hands,” (he said in his slightly stilted English). “And then this Alex,” Gunar continued, “he went and told the Beatles and John got very angry and they ordered taxis and left right away the next morning.”

Those at the breakfast table pondered the truth of this shocking story for a time, and then went their separate ways. When they left the dining room, Rikard continued the discussion with his friend Larry. When he asked Larry if he thought the story was true, “Larry said he was sure it was true, at least as sure as he could be.” Larry said he had talked with Tom Simcox just before Tom left the ashram with the celebrity crew, and that Tom had told him exactly the same story. Larry said that Tom was “really pissed!” Rikard replied, “Poor Rosalyn.” Larry shot back, “Yeah,” and with a short laugh continued, “But you gotta admit that she got what she came for.” When Rikard asked what Larry meant, Larry responded, “Well, she wanted to feel Maharishi’s vibrations from up close, remember? How much closer could she get?” Larry then slapped him on the shoulder and laughed out loud. Rikard concluded the story must be true because it made sense “that was why the Beatles left, on the spur of the moment like that.”

Now alarmed that his good friend Rosalyn had been the victim of Maharishi’s seduction attempt, Rikard’s mind wandered back to that early morning that Gunilla had spent an hour alone sequestered with the “Master,” leaving him strangely out of sorts and depressed. Had she been telling him the truth about what happened that morning? He decided to press the issue. He asked her again what happened that morning, and she suddenly became defensive, insisting that she had already told him what had happened. And with a strange “rasp” in her voice he had never heard before, Gunilla said, “Why is this so important all of a sudden, Rikard? What’s the matter with you anyway?” With that, she pushed him away, rushed to the bathroom and slammed the door.

Considerable time passed and Gunilla finally came out of the bathroom, looking very grave. He could tell she had been crying. Then she sat directly in front of Rikard, and looking him in the eye, said, “Promise me that you will never repeat this to anyone, ever, as long as you live.” When he agreed, Gunilla confessed that her early morning visits with Maharishi had occurred frequently, that she had gone there many times to ask him questions. At first, they were philosophical, but they grew ever-more personal as time went on. He became for her a kind of substitute father for the one she had lost in childhood. She found all these early morning meetings beautifully uplifting.

But one morning, indeed the very morning Rikard was calling into question, something very different happened. It began with their normal morning banter, but suddenly there was a long silence. Then Maharishi instructed her to get up and shut the door, something he had never requested before. Then he said, "Will you do something for me?" When she affirmatively replied, he asked her to take off her shirt. When she did, he instructed her to come closer. And then closer. When she was within reach, he stretched out his arms and took her breasts in his hands. "And then he shook them," she confessed. "Just shook them back and forth. No one has ever done this to me and it felt so strange and so silly that I almost burst out laughing." Then the "celibate" Master took the shawl from his shoulders, and lay down on his back in his bed, with what appeared to her to be an erection, though she didn't really want to look too closely, and his thin silk robe concealed his actual flesh. By then she'd had enough, put her shirt back on, said goodbye, and left. Well, the great "celibate" Master was not done with Gunilla. Now that he'd had a taste of that delectable pie, he wanted a big piece. He soon set out to get it.

An air of tense excitement pervaded the air as the last stage of Initiator training arrived – the puja test and the revelation of the secret of the *mantras*. The anxious course participants were gathered in the large villa of a wealthy devotee. They were called one by one to Maharishi's room to face the final hurdle. Gunilla was summoned earlier than Rikard. When she passed her test, she sought him out in the waiting room, and he asked her the question gnawing at him as he waited. Had Maharishi made another sexual advance? "He wouldn't dare," she replied, but there was more to the story. It would have to wait until he had finished his test. Some three hours later Rikard also passed and returned quickly to their houseboat to compare notes. When he returned, he could see that she had been crying. When he asked her what was wrong, she confided to him what happened after her *puja* test. Maharishi inquired as to her plans after the course. She told him she intended to return to Sweden after travelling around India for two weeks. Then she revealed Maharishi's next seduction move: "He said why don't I stay with him instead? Go back with him to Rishikesh?" She continued, "He wants me to stay on after the course is over. After the others leave." She said it was more a command than a question, and, tears streaming down her face, she looked plaintively at Rikard and sobbed, "What shall I do?"

The moment of truth was at hand for poor Gunilla. Would she obey the command of the "Master," or heed her own inner wisdom about what his invitation really meant? Suddenly her eyes flashed with anger and she burst out, "Oh Rikard, it was so awful! I could see he was embarrassed. I could tell what he was really asking me. People have asked me that before. But he didn't have the nerve. He didn't dare say it right out because he's such a coward!" And then Gunilla found her inner wisdom and said the line that closes our story of why the Beatles left India. In a near-shouting voice she cried: "Rikard, I don't want to sleep with a fat, fifty-year old man, even if he is the greatest guru in the world!"

Were John and George right about Maharishi, were they justified in bolting the ashram? Was it true he was not a realized Master, just "Sexy Sadie," a sexual predator? Our fuller story of his behavior during the Beatles' Initiator training course answers the question. Consider, Maharishi made two unsuccessful seduction attempts, Mia and Rosalyn (twice). Then there is Gunilla – first fondled and then propositioned. And finally, there is a fourth girl, well known to me, who had an experience like Gunilla's "come closer" story, but who declines to be identified or quoted. Well, that's four women who all had a brush with "Sexy Sadie" -- I'd say the Beatles got out just in time. They were right to leave Rishikesh, and for the reason they did. But their departure does not erase



the fact that they took with them the spiritual wisdom and music of India and shared this precious discovery with their fans through their songs.

What about Maharishi? While he put on a good face during the puja tests and the imparting of the secret *mantras*, according to those close to him at the time, he was badly shaken, saddened, and defeated. As course participant Mike Dolan relates. “What has never been reported is the dramatic effect that The Beatles leaving India had on Maharishi. His brilliant beautiful yogic radiance was reduced to grey and ashen. He became physically sick when the course moved to Kashmir on Dal Lake...Maharishi now looked visibly frail and without that effervescence.”

Maharishi had good reason to be a little low on effervescence. After all, his whole success was based on his image as the saintly Master, untouched by the gnawings of the flesh. And now the Beatles had left the ashram, Lennon was denouncing him in the press as a hypocritical phony for hitting on the chicks, Paul told the press they left Maharishi because they found out “He’s human,” and the story was rocking the faith of his true believers too! Not only was it the subject of breakfast gossip amongst the Initiator trainees in Kashmir, but it was also reverberating with the faithful around the world. For example, back in London, Joyce Collin-Smith, Maharishi’s long-time personal assistant for British affairs, pondered the shocking news in the light of her own experience. In her book *Call No Man Master*, she recounts the effect of the news on herself and other British staffers in the TM movement there. The news recalled the days when Maharishi “first began locking his door in the afternoons, closeted alone with one young woman or another. We thought him to be giving ‘special tuition’ to chosen devotees – we now realized something different. We saw something he had intended to conceal.”

Even higher-ups in the TM movement were shaken. Charlie Lutes (the President of Maharishi’s Spiritual Regeneration Movement and one of his most devoted long-time acolytes), rugged clean-cut Charlie Lutes (he could have been cast as Superman) had his doubts. He asked Maharishi straight up if the stories were true. Maharishi trumped the answer and brazenly lied through his teeth, “But Charlie, I am a lifetime celibate; I don’t know anything about sexual desires.” Maharishi lied because he was only too aware that his movement would crash if what the Beatles were saying gained general currency and he became viewed as a sexual predator and hypocritical fraud. So, he strong-faced the news, denied its truth, the story died down, and he dodged the bullet.

Well, you’d think that Maharishi would have learned his lesson. Unfortunately for several young ladies to come, he could not escape his sexual cravings. Although the record goes a little dark from the time the Beatles left India – perhaps Maharishi cooled things for a while as he licked his wounds from the Beatles fiasco -- just nine months after their departure, his next victim arrived in Rishikesh. She was Britisher Linda Williams (later “Pearce” after she married), great granddaughter of the Duke of Grafton, pretty, and with money too – a threefer for Sexy Sadie – nobility, attractive, and dough! Maharishi homed right in, and she afterwards gave a detailed account of the whole sordid affair to a British newspaper, including the painful moment when she woke up and realized that Maharishi was not a perfect Master--just another dirty old man lusting after the young flesh of the women who surrounded him. The article was colorfully subtitled “I Gave My Mind To The Maharishi And He Took My Body.”

Linda began TM in 1967, about the same time as the Beatles, and was present with them at some of Maharishi’s lectures in London. She got such good results from meditation that she

applied for the Initiator training course to begin in January 1969, again in the ashram at Rishikesh. It wasn't long after she arrived, that Maharishi laid on his seduction MO, and the besotted Linda succumbed. She began having sex with him regularly at the ashram during her Initiator training course. She told the reporter. "I was a virgin and knew nothing about sex...He said that he loved me and that I was the only one... We made love regularly. And I don't think I was the only girl. At one stage, I thought I was pregnant by him." When she finished the course and returned to London, she told some of her close friends of her affair with the "Master." They tried to warn her. "Others told me I wasn't his first girl...There was a lot of talk that he'd tried to rape Mia Farrow," she related. Undeterred, she returned to the ashram during the Christmas season 1969, and, she says, "the relationship just started up again." But this time Linda was put off by the tawdriness of it all and told Maharishi that what they were doing was "wrong and immoral." His response: "The Maharishi just laughed that off." Crushed and confused, Linda broke off the affair and returned to London, suffering devastating psychological consequences for years after. She "just couldn't stand being kissed or touched," and felt ashamed that she'd been manipulated by Maharishi, and "just couldn't see that he was a dirty old man."

Maharishi's next victim arrived at the ashram when a new Initiator training course began in January of 1970. That course brought into Maharishi's sites a young American girl named Judith Bourque. She was there for what would prove to be the last course for new Initiators at Shankaracharya Nagar, Maharishi's ashram. It wasn't long before Sexy Sadie singled her out for "special instruction." Judith tells the whole two-year story in her book *Robes of Silk, Feet of Clay*. Unlike the previous victims in our account, Judith fell in love, at least in the early days of her affair.

When a young girl gets hit on by her "perfect Master," she faces a difficult choice. She must decide either that he's just a dirty old man in "Master's" clothing, or that there is some cosmic reason why the once forbidden is now somehow OK – that she is the Chosen One, called to sexually service the "Master" for some higher cosmic purpose. We have seen that Mia, Rosalyn, Gunilla, the unidentified British girl, and even Linda (finally) made the first choice. Judith chose Door Number Two. Events would prove that she was not the Chosen One, just another bamboozled victim. But the ride was great while it lasted, and I was right there for it too!

I began the practice of TM in Fall 1967, a little before the Beatles were initiated. I was then an undergraduate at the University of Colorado in Boulder, majoring in Philosophy. Soon after I started TM, I had a life-changing experience of the awakening of Kundalini and decided to get more involved in the TM movement. I was accepted to attend a month-long course in Squaw Valley, CA with Maharishi during the Summer of 1968. Its purpose was to deepen our experience of meditation, our understanding of the spiritual principles that undergirded it, and to train us in starting TM groups on the various campuses where we were students. After the course, I returned to Boulder and established a student club, arranged for initiations of new TM practitioners, and quickly built the Boulder center into one of the most successful in the country. Interestingly, given our Beatles focus, the first Initiator to come to Boulder was Terry Gustafson, immortalized by the Beatles in their song "Get Back." He was on their course in India, and became "Jojo the Loner," I'm sure the only U.S. Forest Service ranger to have a Beatles' song written about him. It is another of the many songs which were inspired by the Beatles' sojourn in Rishikesh.

Based on my success in Boulder, I was accepted to attend the next Initiator training course in India, set for Fall 1969. After four months of travel to Europe, North Africa, Turkey (everyone nice), Iran (everyone friendly and gracious), and Afghanistan (when the Taliban had not yet blown up the

towering Buddhas of Bamiyan, and an American could still drive the Khyber Pass), I finally arrived in New Delhi and met for the first time my fellow course participants. We spent a few days in Delhi, then flew to Kashmir where, like the Beatles course, we spent two weeks in houseboats on the shores of Dal Lake near Srinagar. From there we travelled to the ashram in Rishikesh, where long meditation would begin in earnest.

During the phase in the Initiator training when I was meditating 14 or 15 hours per day, I had even more powerful experiences of awakening Kundalini which produced not only bliss, but also the external experience of what was then called in the movement God Consciousness – the actual visual appearance of the divinely radiant golden light suffusing all relative existence. When I recounted these experiences during one of the evening lectures at the ashram, Maharishi responded by saying “Beautiful, Beautiful,” repeatedly. When the lecture ended, I spontaneously leaped to my feet, rushed to the side of the stage where he would exit, knelt before his sandals, and held them as he put them on. When I arose, he stroked my long hair and said, “You are my golden boy.” I now became one of his “favorites.

When we had been made Initiators and were set to leave the ashram, Maharishi asked me if it would be possible for me to stay on for the next course, set to begin in January of 1970. He wanted me to help with the new trainees and with other duties at the ashram. I eagerly accepted and became, along with Abhay, Maharishi’s skin boys. The name derives from the fact that the skin boy carries Maharishi’s deer skin and places it wherever he is to sit. It was the most coveted position in the TM movement because the skin boy is always with the Master, getting his darshan or spiritual juice, thought to be the greatest boost to one’s spiritual evolution. Abhay (just a wonderful Indian boy from the Himalayan town of Nainital) and I quickly became the dearest of friends and shared the joy of serving the Master. We all pitched in to ready the ashram for the next Initiator training course.

Soon after the new trainees arrived, Maharishi began showing a lot of interest in Judith. After she read a poem at one of the evening lectures, Maharishi asked her to come to his house to read him more poems. That night, he sent me and Abhay to escort her to his house, and he then told us to “go and rest,” quite uncommon since one or the other of us was always with him until his last visitor departed and he went to bed. Although he would tell us to go and rest, instead, often we would sit, wrapped in thick woollen winter blankets, in a secluded nook where we could neither be seen nor heard -- our quiet voices masked by the roar of the Ganges down the cliffs from the ashram. From this vantage point we regularly saw Judith coming down the path to Maharishi’s house late at night after everyone else had retired. At first, we didn’t make much of these furtive, nocturnal visits. But as they continued, we began to make jokes about the “poetry girl,” and the real purpose of her visits.

During daylight hours, Judith was clearly Maharishi’s favorite, always greeted effusively and asked to sit near the Master. So effusively, in fact, that I began to suspect what was going on during their secret, late nights together. I also noticed that she began dressing differently from everyone else. Instead of the poor-student, hippy chic, or cheap cotton Indian Punjabis commonly worn, she was suddenly rocking expensive sarees, gold jewellery, and make-up too! All very uncommon in the ashram’s almost anchoritic vibe. I wondered at this change, since in a casual chat she had told me of the work, scraping, and saving that enabled her to accrue the funds necessary to cover her travel costs to India and the course fee.

Meanwhile, Abhay began to deteriorate. He neglected his appearance and became ever more negative about Maharishi. Instead of talking about the joys of service to the “Master,” he began talking about immigrating to the U.S and starting a new life. I now think this change was because he had direct knowledge that Maharishi and Judith were lovers. After all, he lived in Maharishi’s house, and could have easily heard what was going on behind Maharishi’s closed bedroom door. But we never discussed this subject openly, and so strong was my “true believer” mentality that I couldn’t face that possibility. It’s very hard to admit what you don’t want to know.

If things looked suspicious to me and Abhay from the outside looking in, *Robes of Silk, Feet of Clay* makes abundantly clear what was really going on from the insider perspective. Maharishi first softened up his target by giving Judith special attention in public. Then he invited her to his house for private instruction. He led her to his shrine room in the basement (where the Mia grope occurred) and had her sit on the floor to his left. She got the impression that Maharishi “was going to give me some kind of advanced meditation technique.” Instead, “he raised his hand and began stroking my hair.” She felt herself flush, and recounts “It was at that point that I finally realized the reason I was getting special attention might have something to do with me being a woman and him being a man.” Then Maharishi, laughing nervously, admonished her, “Don’t tell anyone.” She agreed to keep their secret.

Judith now became one of Maharishi’s inner circle and a special favorite. He invited her to join him and a select group of insiders to travel with him to New Delhi, where he planned to visit a wealthy Indian family in their sumptuous home. When they arrived, out of the blue, Maharishi expressed dissatisfaction at the way Judith was wearing her only saree, made of cheap plain cotton. He instructed one of the women in the family to show her how properly to drape it. She practiced until she got it down, but Maharishi was still not satisfied with her appearance. He complained “that the cloth in my saree was too coarse...it should be silk.” So, Judith (though on a very tight budget) bought a pink silk one, and wore it for the Master’s approval. Still not good enough, Maharishi opined. He said, “the silk should be of better quality.” He then introduced her to an Indian couple and instructed them to take Judith to the Delhi market and help her pick out “some sarees and gold jewellery.”

The threesome spent the whole day shopping, Judith selecting sarees of “celestial” color and some simple gold jewellery. Maharishi picked up the tab -- she notes there was never a question of costs. When she displayed for him her new finery, he still wasn’t impressed. He said the silk should be thinner, the highest quality silk chiffon, and the jewelry should be thinner and more refined too. Back she went for a fourth attempt, and finally hit the mark. The thin gold bracelets, the delicate gold chain necklace with coral beads, and the bright pink silk chiffon saree printed with small flowers really flapped Maharishi’s jacks – “This is beautiful, bee-uu-tiful!!!”, he burst out. And like any good sugar daddy, Maharishi piled on the gifts. From then on, Judith recalls, “he gave me money to buy silk chiffon sarees in a multitude of colors.” And topped the buying spree off with “a red wedding saree with the most amazing sequined embroidery.” Bear in mind this saga of the sarees. It will be a serious tell when we come to the story of Belinda and Sexy Sadie in Mallorca.

Now that she was properly dressed to fulfil his fantasy image, Maharishi moved on to consummate the courtship. Judith relates that the “first time for Maharishi and me as a man and woman” came one night when, instead of taking her to his basement as always before, he now invited her to his bedroom. They began hugging and kissing -- she “could feel his desire” -- followed by some heavy petting. She wondered: “How far is this going to go?” She soon found out. “In the

wee hours of the morning,” she relates, “our bodies finally joined as man and woman, and I felt both shocked and happy as I snuck back to my room.” The affair was now fully on, and the newly minted lovers continued to meet late at night to have sex.

But sex can have undesired complications, and Judith finally got up the courage to ask him something that had now been on her mind for weeks: “Maharishi, what would you do if I became pregnant?” His answer was “quick and ruthless.” “Get married.... quick,” he said. When she asked him “To whom?” he replied, “Some good choice in the movement.” In other words, he would pick out some devoted young sap in the movement, tell him that for cosmic reasons he had to marry a pregnant Judith, and Maharishi would be done with it. He would leave the poor pawns in the game to figure things out for themselves! Needless to say, this answer was highly disconcerting for Judith – “the beginning of a wake-up call,” as she describes it. It was her first inkling that she was not the Chosen One, destined to be Maharishi’s life-long companion, “in a self imposed mixture of being his lover/nun,” as she had been fantasizing since they began having sex. The fallacy of that besotted fantasy would soon become abundantly clear ten months later, on the dreamy island of Mallorca.

Now the Initiator training course was at an end. Maharishi made Judith an Initiator on her birthday (April 19), and she began packing to accompany Maharishi on his travels over the next ten months to southern India, Europe, and finally America, where the next Initiator training course was scheduled to begin in the Fall. During this whirlwind tour, Judith was still deeply in love and having sex with Maharishi. But the opportunities were now rarer, and their times alone diminished because of the demands on his time from the crowds that surrounded him. Gone were the peaceful intimate days of Rishikesh. But the travel and adventure had its own rewards, and she was happy – until she reached Mallorca. There, the wake-up call that slightly opened her eyes would soon jolt her out of her fantasy bed.

As for me, I had had my own wake-up call in Rishikesh. I had seen and heard just enough of the goings on between Maharishi and Judith to plant a tiny seed of doubt in the grove of my true-believerhood. It would grow into a mighty Oak in Mallorca. But that was ten months away, and I left the ashram in April to travel throughout southeast Asia for five months, concluding my ‘round-the-world odyssey with a picture-perfect scene, when the ocean liner I was aboard cleared the sun-lit Golden Gate Bridge and docked in San Francisco. Back in the USA after my long *hegira*, I returned to Boulder in September to complete my last semester at UColorado. As for the ashram, Shankaracharya Nagar, where I had spent so many blissful days, it was shuttered, never again to be used to train new teachers of TM.

Maharishi decided to hold his next Initiator training course in the beautiful Colorado mountain town of Estes Park, just a pleasant drive from my Boulder campus. The course was being held in what was usually a Summer-time camp – but now activated in Winter for the TM’ers. It was a full Colorado mountain scene: green-roofed log cabins, stately pine trees, and snow-capped peaks. I went to visit a few times, and at one of our meetings I suggested to Maharishi that he come to Boulder and give a public lecture. He agreed, I made the arrangements, did the PR, and was right there to greet him when his car pulled up before Mackey Auditorium, the largest lecture hall on the Boulder campus. It was packed with eager attendees and many members of the print and television media. As we were walking to his car after the lecture, he thanked me for its success, and said I should get much of the credit for the growth of TM in Colorado. He then asked what my plans were, and I told him I had just graduated from CU and now planned to travel giving

lectures on TM and initiating new meditators. Then he said, “Why don’t you join my international staff and come with me to Europe? You will be more valuable there.” I was overjoyed at this opportunity, and within days was winging my way to the Spanish Island of Mallorca where the next Initiator training course, the second outside of India, was to be held.

When we got to Mallorca, I was alone with Maharishi one night, and told him that I hoped to be with him always, that I would like to become a *brahmachari*, one of his celibate monks. He agreed, and soon initiated me into the *brahmachari* brotherhood, making me the first Westerner to take this solemn vow. And with that I once again became the skin boy, along with my dear friend Casey Coleman, who took the same vows shortly after me and became the second Western *brahmachari*. Now, in the Hotel Samoa, near the little beach town of Calas de Mallorca, on the beautiful sun-kissed island of Mallorca, I would meet up again with Judith, where she would be bumped as the Chosen One, replaced, as Judith so searingly puts it, “with the next piece of candy in his box of Western chocolates.”

On her flight to Mallorca, Judith had a feeling of impending doom. It would be crazier than she could have imagined. “Little did I know,” she says, “that I was about to land in the middle of a soap opera.” Soon after her arrival, Judith began a crash course in disillusionment. Although she had sex with Maharishi one last time when she arrived at the Hotel Samoa, she could tell that “the needy passion was gone from his side.” From then on, Maharishi no longer seemed delighted to see her, “and stopped asking me to come to him at night.” She began to suspect that something was up with a new squeeze. When she saw a beautiful German girl leave his room crying, her lovers’ warning system triggered, and she went directly to Maharishi and asked him point-blank “what was going on.... were they having a love affair?” He met that question with a look about like the one he gave Lennon when John called him out on the Mia-Rosalyn allegations, and indignantly replied, “How could she think such a thing?”

Well, Judith had every reason to think such as thing, as made abundantly clear when the following scene went down. Judith was standing in the hallway of the Hotel Samoa with many other devotees. Maharishi came walking down the corridor, gathering flowers from them and exchanging “Jai Guru Devs” (the universal greeting in the movement) when Maharishi caught sight of a newly arrived ‘lovely’. It was evident that the “Master” and the ‘lovely’ had history. Judith recalls, “I saw how pleased he was when she came walking toward him in the corridor. He said something to her in a low voice, and she put her face quite near his to hear what he was saying. I saw her focus, catching every word, and then a slight nod of the head, with a beaming smile. They had just made an agreement that she would come to him in the night. I knew the signals.”

This finally burst what Judith calls her “Golden Bubble,” and she ran to her room to face the truth: She was not now, had never been, and never would be the Chosen One – there were others too! Cue the scene in her hotel room: “The pain that welled up in me was excruciating.... I remember sitting alone in my room in Mallorca, just beating my chest harder and harder to help the pain come out. I cried and cried and cried.”

The stage was now set for the endgame in Mallorca. Cue the entrance of Belinda onto the stage. She was a fresh young girl from Oregon with blond hair, melting brown eyes, and a quirky, intelligent kind of beauty. I certainly noticed her arrival. My *brahmachari* vows did not blind me, and I was considerably smitten with Belinda, although my vows prevented me from expressing that fact. But we were warm and friendly with one another -- I had come to know her well since she

had become a favorite of Maharishi's from the outset of the course. Sometime after she arrived, Maharishi sent me to summon her to his hotel room where he told her he would like her to help him with his personal mail. She eagerly agreed, and thereafter, I brought her to his room a few times, usually in the late afternoon, to do this work. After one of these mail sessions, Maharishi made of me a strange request – he wanted me to call a devotee in Delhi and ask her to purchase sarees (“one for each day of the month,” he told me) of the finest silk chiffon in the brightest and most beautiful colors. She was to include in the package (“sent as soon as possible”) a refined golden necklace and three bracelets of similar quality. Shortly thereafter a big box arrived Air Freight, and I was with Maharishi when he eagerly opened it to ascertain the quality of its' contents. He was pleased.

Two days later, this time late at night, Maharishi told me to go get Belinda “to work on the mail.” Imagine my surprise when she answered my knock and appeared wearing one of the new sarees, the gold jewellery, and now make-up too. My mind flashed back to Rishikesh and Judith similarly arrayed, with a built-in excuse for a late-night visit – to read him some poems. Now Belinda was Judith all over again, differing only in the change of excuse from poems to mail. My little Oak of doubt, planted in Rishikesh, got a big dose of Miracle Grow and leafed further out. More leaves appeared when I brought Belinda to Maharishi's room. He greeted her effusively, told me to “go and rest,” and shut the door – again a strange request since the skin boy never leaves until the last visitor is gone and Maharishi is done for the day. And more late night “do the mail” visits followed. I became ever more suspicious about what was going on, especially when, one night, Maharishi failed to tell me to “go and rest” when I brought Belinda to him. And so, I dutifully waited outside Maharishi's door until Belinda finally emerged -- looking all rumpled and mussed. Later, my fellow skin boy Casey told me he went to fetch Belinda once, and it seems she wasn't up for cosplay that night – he could see she was naked except for a none-too-well-secured bathrobe. Now the final act in the drama was to confirm my growing suspicions.

The final actress in the soap opera now takes the stage. She is June, a bright, bubbly, blond, blue-eyed bundle of energy, a member of the international staff and one of my closest friends. From the outset, we became like brother and sister, so dear was our bond. Soon after Belinda's late night “bathrobe” visit with Maharishi, I had just left the “Master's” room and was on the way to bed when I encountered June in the hall of the Samoa. She was evidently discombobulated and distressed, so I asked her what was wrong. She told me that evening she had been working with Maharishi on some project when he suddenly put his hand down her peasant blouse and copped a lingering feel. In a sternly rebuking tone, he then told her not to wear such a low-cut blouse – the old blame the victim ploy. She said she managed some sort of apologetic reply, and quickly left.

Now she asked me what I thought. “Was this some sort of cosmic lesson about being too alluring,” she wondered, “or was it a Mia Farrow type of thing?” Farrow's story, which of course we had heard when it first broke after the Beatles left India, and had long ago true-believerishly discounted, suddenly took on much greater credibility. What if Mia and the Beatles' spoke the truth? The image of Maharishi's hand in June's blouse – one we had bought together in Palma, the capitol of Mallorca, on some mission for Maharishi – now suddenly burst with graphic clarity in my mind's eye. This image finally breached my psychic dam of true-believerhood (did it to my sister!). I now poured out my heart to June. I revealed my growing misgivings about the “Master.” I told her of Judith's late-night visits with Maharishi in Rishikesh to “read poems”, and Belinda's latenight visits, on-going in the Samoa, to “do the mail.” And the sarees, and gold jewelry, and make-up. And the “rumpled and mussed” part, and Casey's “bathrobe” story, too. And now, before my very eyes, was a much beloved and deeply trusted sister with a Maharishi #MeToo story of her own. Many

new leaves sprouted on my Oak of doubt. Many more would green-up when the following went down.

Next night, June heard a knock on her door. It was none other than Belinda, who during the previous weeks on the course had become good friends with June. My conversation with June of the night before well-primed her for what she was about to hear. Belinda, in obvious distress, painfully divulged her bawdy story. She revealed she had been sleeping with Maharishi for some time now, that it was becoming ever more disgusting, and that she was in crisis about what to do. Did she have a special cosmic role to play in Maharishi's life, or was he just a hypocritical lecher – preaching celibacy to the flock while himself taking delight in the flesh of the choicest young ewes? It was clear that Belinda thought she was the only one and had no knowledge of Maharishi's other dalliances. June now stirred the simmering pot of disillusion. It would soon be brought to a furious boil.

With the heat turned up by Belinda's tawdry revelation, June went directly to Judith to confront her with what I had surmised – that Judith was also Maharishi's consort. June straight up asked, "Did you fuck Maharishi?" Judith's sheepish look and embarrassed silence gave June her answer. June then told Judith that she wasn't the only one, "that there was another woman also on the course who had an ongoing, intimate relationship with Maharishi now." June also told Judith her peasant blouse story. The two now bonded as members of the sisterhood of Sexy Sadie victims, and June left to have a further talk with Belinda, the other woman on the course who was in an "intimate relationship with Maharishi now."

June went straight to Belinda and told her that she couldn't be "special" because "I just talked with a girl right here in the Hotel Samoa named Judith, who has been Maharishi's sexual partner ever since the last Initiator course in Rishikesh." Deeply angered by this revelation, Belinda decided to confront the "other." Judith tells us what happened next: "One or two days later, the other woman involved, Belinda, snuck into my room at night so we could speak openly." Speak openly they did. When they had shared their stories (and outrage), Judith says they formed a sort of sisterhood since they were both "in the middle of a situation that we didn't really know how to cope with." Ned Wynn, in *We Will Always Live In Beverly Hills*, tells us of Belinda's mindset in this moment. She told him after the fact that she "felt Maharishi used his power and his aura to take advantage of her. Once the blinders were off, she felt abused and cheated, as if she had been fucked in a stupor. I was amazed by the distaste with which Belinda referred to her sex with Maharishi." Now all three girls knew of each other's Sexy Sadie story, and were pissed – June had been fondled, Judith and Belinda fucked – all by the supposedly perfect, celibate "Master." Long simmering, simmering, simmering, the pot had been brought to the boil.

June, one to poke the bear, then went directly to Maharishi with stick in hand. She told him that Judith and Belinda had compared stories about the "Master" and knew what he was up to. Maharishi now had a serious problem. Both of his "Chosen Ones" were now aware they were neither cosmically 'Chosen' nor the only 'One.' It was patently clear that if there were two, neither could be the Chosen One. And there was every reason to believe that there were others too! And what would he do if they talked, as Mia and the Beatles had done? The bear was in high dudgeon.

June then returned, first to Judith, and then to Belinda, to tell them Maharishi now knew they were on to him. Alone with June, Belinda told her she was considerably worried about what was to happen now that Maharishi knew she had revealed his feet of clay. She decided she didn't



want to be around to find out -- she and June conspired to hatch an escape plan. The drama only intensified the next morning when, throughout the Hotel Samoa, the hue and cry rang out, "Where's Belinda?" This scene opened first thing that morning, when Maharishi called me into his room to begin the days' activities. I could tell he was considerably low on effervescence. No wonder, given the soap operatic happenings of the night before, when Maharishi found out that his two "Chosen Ones" had met and blown his cover. He gravely told me to summon Belinda to his room. When I knocked on her door, I got no answer. When a second knock went unanswered, I tried the door and peeked in to see if she might be sleeping. The room was empty. The 'ol effervescence took a devastating hit when I brought Maharishi this disquieting news. His face darkened, and he curtly told me to spread word of her disappearance and find out if anyone knew where she had gone. Late that afternoon, one of the international staff reported that he had seen June and Belinda loading suitcases into the trusty little VW Beetle June and I drove about the island when on missions for Maharishi. "They left just before dawn," the staffer reported, "and then drove north on the road to Manacor," (today the site of Rafa's famous tennis academy).

June was called on the carpet and confessed that she had driven Belinda to the airport in Palma. Further interrogation revealed Belinda's destination – Haus Seeblick, previously a boutique luxury hotel and now the international headquarters of the TM movement, located in the beautiful little Swiss town of Seelisberg. Perched on a rocky outcrop, Haus Seeblick overlooked the Rutli, a grassy knoll sacred in Switzerland as the birthplace of Swiss democracy. Lapping this lovely site was Lake Lucerne, ringed by distant often-snowcapped mountains. I had spent many nights at Haus Seeblick during various European missions for Maharishi. It was the perfect refuge for Belinda, as June explained, "for her to be away from Maharishi and sort out her feelings and options."

Maharishi immediately had me call Bev and Fran, the good-hearted Australian lassies that ran the international office, and tell them to inform him of Belinda's arrival. Soon after, they rang, and put him through to Belinda's room. When she came on the line, he told me to leave and close the door. I sat there for over an hour as he pleaded with her to return. He sounded like a love-sick teenager who had just been dumped by his girl. Much new foliage now grew on my Oak of doubt. He did not sound very much like a fully realized, perfect Master, untouched by emotions of the common folk. He sounded just like any other guy who wanted his gal back.

**Denouement:** That night, great branches sprang forth on my Oak when June and I took a long walk on the beach, and she told me the whole story – the story of her boiling the pot, poking the bear, and blowing things up (to mix three metaphors). Now June, Belinda, Judith, and I all faced the same problem – we had discovered that our silkrobed perfect "Master" was a clay-footed sexual predator. The ladies suffered this revelation because they were his direct victims. I, because I was not just a devotee, I was his first Western *brahmachari*, who had to face the fact that the very Master with whom I had taken my vows was in fact himself a serial violator of them. What were we going to do? All four of us would decide, each in our own painful way, that we could no longer call Maharishi Master.

**Scoreboard:** Recall now the heated debate we set out to settle at the beginning of this saga, when the press widely reported that Mia Farrow left India because Maharishi attempted to seduce her. Controversy arose over the veracity of this account – scurrilous nonsense or evidence-based fact. Here's the score for Team Evidence: Mia -- groped and attempted seduction; Rosalyn -- *ditto*, but twice; Gunilla -- groped and propositioned; the unidentified British girl -- groped; Linda -- full sex; Judith -- full sex; Belinda -- full sex; the 'lovely' -- full sex (likely, so a point); June -- groped; and

finally -- the young British girls Maharishi entertained behind locked doors in London (victim numbers and consequences unknown, so no point, but worth remembering). Final Score: Team Evidence 9, Team Nonsense 0.

And then there's the tally kept by Susan Shumsky, the world's expert on this subject. In *Inner Light*, she tells us, "I personally know fifteen women who have said that Maharishi made sexual overtures towards them. Some liaisons lasted months or years." During her twenty years with Maharishi, she also came to know many of his skin boys. She reports, "Maharishi's doorkeepers often witnessed women coming and going from his private chambers early in the morning or late at night. They jokingly nicknamed the women 'girlfriends,'" while unaware they actually were girlfriends." Susan tells of one skin boy who was regularly asked by Maharishi to leave the "Master's" room key with various young lovelies. Oh, and Susan has also turned up a grown woman, said to be Maharishi's daughter, "who bears an uncanny resemblance to him." Game over.

**Afterword:** Many years after I left the TM movement, out of the blue I got a call from Judith Bourque, with whom I had had no contact since our days together in Rishikesh and Mallorca. She was calling with a specific purpose. She had been reading the exchanges in a chat group of ex-TM'ers to which I belonged. She explained that the exchanges nurtured in her a growing desire to tell her Sexy Sadie story. After long years of silence and soul-searching, she had decided it was time to write an expose of her two-long year affair with Maharishi. She said that when she was reading one of my posts in the chat group, she came across my discussion of a plan I once had to write a book on the very same subject.

The plan arose out of a chance discussion I had with a literary agent at a party in New York. I was then in grad school at Princeton University, my scholarly focus the wisdom of Ralph Waldo Emerson. I had taken the hour-long train ride into the Big Apple for the party. In casual chat with the agent, the subject of TM came up, and I told him the reason why I left the movement (the Sexy Sadie stuff), and that I had been thinking of writing a book on the subject. He immediately saw the commercial potential for such a book, given the fact that Maharishi's movement was now at its zenith. He was confident that a tell-all book had the potential to really sell. He especially liked my proposed title, *Robes of Silk, Feet of Clay*. In the event, when I had written the chapter outlines the agent requested, I realized there was no way I could both write a book and fulfill the onerous demands of the doctoral program at Princeton. I put off writing the book for some vague other day.

And now, all these many years later, Judith was calling with a specific purpose – she wanted permission to use my proposed title for her own book. She said that when she read in a chat post those six words of my title, she realized they were the perfect (and catchy) summation of her own story. I was only too happy to grant her permission, and even offered to write an "Afterword" for her book. It would corroborate her account from my own direct experience. Well, Judith did write the book, which did include my "Afterword."

You can imagine my pride and joy when the final exclamation mark was struck on the Saga of Sexy Sadie. It came to pass when I drove to LA from my home in Palm Springs to be with Judith on the movie lot of Warner Brothers Studios. We were there for the annual awards ceremony of the Society of Voice Arts (SOVAS). It was a real Hollywood red carpet and tuxes (good thing I had a nice Perry Ellis) and gowns affair. The glitz and glamour of the whole magical night was topped off when Judith won the award for "Author Performance – Best Voiceover" for the audio version of *Robes of*

*Silk, Feet of Clay.* And, having flown in from Florida for the occasion, was Rosalyn Bonas, yes that Rosalyn, the one who blew the Beatles volcanic top in Rishikesh! Her presence somehow brought the Saga of Sexy Sadie full circle.