

Seeing Orchids in my Soul of Love

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I became interested in orchids at the age of ten. I remember being fascinated with three or four native orchid species that the family had placed in wooden baskets around the house. The plants were not being taken care of and were surviving on their own being exposed to sun and rain and the environment of our garden. That is when I developed a strong desire to know more about these plants despite the fact that people generally had an wealthy gentlemen who formed themselves into exclusive orchids groups, but they grew mainly imported foreign orchids and the secrets of growing methods they employed they guarded jealously. Then there were many people whom I knew who felt, along with a great majority of people, that orchid were plants for the elite only, and out of reach of the common people.

But deep inside me I always viewed that orchids were orchids and people were people, and I did not understand why people should be segregated into elites and non-elites because of orchids. But the reality of what I was seeing was the use of money and knowledge to create a social fence between two groups of people. This realization was enough to motivate me. And this was the start of my own search into the secrets of orchid growing, a search which I undertook on my own time after work hours and using my own finances.

I loved to go out and be with nature. But I was fortunate that in those days natural orchid species could still be found in abundance in rural communities. Those were the times people were starting to migrate into towns and cities in search of jobs and the modern life. But I set myself as a life goal, way back then, that I would strive to discover the knowledge behind the life cycles of orchids and blend this knowledge into people' lives as much as I could. And I wanted to know as much about the life cycles of orchids as the inner workings of peoples' minds and souls.

This life goal I had set for myself cause me to start off on my journey of discovery while remaining true to myself and my beliefs. And I have always believed that if one could weave the beauty of the orchid flowers into the lives of people of whatever language,

religion, and viewpoints, then this world would be full of beautiful orchids decorating the souls of people and bring about peace for all. This would be “globalization” in the true sense of the word with all the peoples of the world living together in happiness.

The Technical aspect of Orchids

The desire to acquire knowledge required a great deal of concentration during the research as well as a strong sense of purpose. I learned that orchids were a group of plants with a wide variety of physical characteristics that grew in widely different natural environments. Orchids species could be found almost everywhere in the world wherever other green plants grew.

Some orchid flowers emit scents while others do not. Some emit scents in the morning only, others in the afternoon only, and others still emit scents at all times. But then what happens is that no matter how beautiful a particular orchid flower may be or whatever pleasant scent it may emit that are pleasant to the senses, eventually disappear as the orchid flower dries out to return in the next cycle of life.

By considering the scent of an orchid flower we have seen its impermanence and the cause and effect interrelationships among various things which is a law of the natural world.

But I have considered the scent of an orchid flower from another angle. Can all the factors that have made possible the growing and flowering of orchid flowers become a permanent focal point of interest for everyone instead of the scent of the flower itself? From that angle we can realize that the shape, color, and scent of that focal point will not decay from people's minds, unlike the physical orchid flower one sees in daily life.

The Truth of Life

All life forms born to this earth are all different and all have their own reasons for being, But society allows us to learn about them and make us of them for our benefit, but the real truth would tell us that each and every life has value.

Based on the path I have diligently followed ever since I was a child of less than 10 to old age, as I am now past 80, most people recognize me an expert on orchids and this feeling has been widely accepted in Society.

While most people's focus is today turned toward nature, people will be looking at trees, at forests and at the natural environment, but yet they will mostly fail to see the overwhelming importance of one item. That is they will fail to see the importance of the human soul. At this point I feel a bit heavy hearted because so many people do not understand the basic realities which exist in themselves. I would like to take this opportunity to explain my viewpoint to all.

If anyone makes the statement that throughout my whole life I have dedicated myself to work toward gaining knowledge from orchids I must accept the fact. But I would urge people to look at another level and consider the types and origins of the orchid plants I was studying. I believe that anyone can find out where my interests in orchid growing lay.

I am now 80 years but I still remember that I started germinating orchid seeds from an indigenous specie which was my favorite orchid plant in those days. Then after observing the young plants pierce out with young leaves full of life, I would become very excited and would very carefully nurture the young plants with deep feelings in my heart, feelings which remain with me to this day.

But very often I have had to fight against self interest of certain people, people who stand on the other side and would be happy to destroy or eradicate orchid plants if the action would benefit them.

These experiences have taught me to appreciate the value of my favorite orchid plants when we allow them to grow and produce beautiful flowers of people to enjoy as well as allow people anywhere in the world to have the same experience. I am supremely happy whenever orchids bring happiness to people.

But with the passing of time I know better now. The orchid species that most people look at are species that most people can see easily and that is understandable, but eventually as mentioned before they will decay and wither away. This is the law of nature. But the hypothetical orchid specie which I started to plant when as was a child still exists to

this day, and at the age of 80 I still continue to nurture it close to my soul. It is a species that many people do not see.

I would like to call that species "loving kindness to mankind" and whoever has a similar outlook as mine in his heart will understand what it is and accept it.

I firmly believe that there is only one such orchid species which was created in a person's heart and is closely linked with nature. And this orchid species will never wither away and disappear but will remain as long as that person lives on without falling prey to the temptations of the world.

Furthermore the possibility exists to propagate this species to a few members of younger generations who have similar perspectives. Our natural feelings tell us that this species has great value in our own lives.

Coming back to this moment, we have now witnessed 17 World Orchid Conferences that have been organized throughout the years. This makes me think of the very first Conference held in St. Louis, Missouri in 1954. And I remember one particular person who back then was a young man full of enthusiasm and who wanted to use orchids as a medium so that human beings throughout the world would understand one another. And he was instrumental in initiating the First World Orchid Conference there.

His name was Mr. Gordon W. Dillon. At that time I was still fairly young and I was still working diligently on orchids in Thailand but in the back of my mind I was looking with my fellow human beings. And I heard about this gentleman and his aspirations and I immediately left a great deal of admiration for him. But I thought the topic was somehow too large for myself to become involved in at that stage.

Thus I was not yet interested in being involved with that human aspect and on that scale. And I kept on developing my knowledge on orchids by starting studies on important features of indigenous orchid species, and that included studying the ways of life of people living around orchid habitats.

And based on the technical knowledge about orchid plants I had accumulated I started to disseminate that knowledge to other people, and I did so without ever having given thought to doing it for money.

One day something happened which I did not expect. The work I was doing on orchids had been disseminated to various circles as happens normally in scientific circles,

and one day I was suddenly invited to be a speaker at the 4th World Orchid Conference in Singapore in 1963.

In that Conference I mingled and collaborated with peoples from various countries and various languages and started relationships very earnestly. I never gave a thought that as a result of that exposure my life would change to the extent that it has over the years.

Professor Haruyuki Kamemoto, an acquaintance and a good friend of mine from Hawaii, introduced me to Mr. Gordon W. Dillon for the first time.

I was impressed by Mr. Dillon's personality and the kindness that seemed to radiate from him. That made a big impression on me, a young man who was a new participant in a World Orchid Conference Forum although I did not feel I was sufficiently qualified and my English was not that fluent, and at that age I was still fairly susceptible.

After that event which allowed me to get to know many people my satisfaction from working with people from various orchid circles grew, and in addition I gained enough trust to be invited to become a member of the Committee of the World Orchid Conferences.

I felt then that my knowledge of orchids was still rudimentary, but I learned a great deal from people from various countries with whom I interacted. And I was often rewarded by frequent comments that I caused people to be happy whenever they interacted with me.

From 1963 onward World Orchid Conferences were organized every three years, and then the European Orchid Congress had their own Conferences which they organized every three years as well but on alternate years and I was invited to be guest speaker in those Conferences as well. I was therefore fortunate to have been able to increase my experience by meeting a wider circle of people. And I have always felt that those I met at these meetings were all extremely welcoming to me at all times.

In 1970 I was invited to be one of the guest speakers at the 2nd European Orchid Congress in London by Mr. Eric E. Young the Congress Chairman. Mr. Young was one gentleman who had given me his friendship and encouragement throughout the years.

At that Conference I listened to a presentation by Mr. Gordon W. Dillon which I felt was very insightful. Mr. Gordon W. Dillon gave a presentation entitled "See Orchids through my Window" in which he spoke about the importance of the diversity of

personalities in orchid circles, although this time he did not mention orchids as mean of communication and a mean of learning from one another.

Mr. Dillon passed away several years ago but I am still impressed by him and remain impressed now. I cannot mention all my internationally well know friends who have devoted so much for the word's orchid circles. But I would like to say that they all have the same ideals for peace in the world even though orchids might be seen as a narrow perspective for world peace.

Between the 4th World Orchid Congress to the 17th some forty years have elapsed and my age is past the age of involvement with World Orchid circles. But I would like to thank all the dear friends I have made throughout the world, friends from many nations, friends speaking various languages and friends with different religious beliefs. And no matter what feeling people may have toward me I feel that everyone teaches me to value myself and make me appreciate deeply the value of every human being.

Finally I hope that what I have mentioned can be understood if only by a few members of the younger generation, so that in the future they may play a role in developing a better quality of life for people in the world.